

If you would like to receive this newsletter by email instead, please send your details to [enquiries@partnersislington.net](mailto:enquiries@partnersislington.net)

PARTNERS

# gazette

Residents'  
Newsletter  
Dec 2025  
Issue 78

## Christmas Party Celebration

### Season's Greetings to Partners residents, their friends and families!

We had a great time at celebrating at the Partners Residents' Christmas party on the 3 December at the Lift, White Lion Street. We all enjoyed a festive meal along with bingo and a raffle with the winning tickets being pulled by the Mayor of Islington, Cllr Jason Jackson. Thank you to everyone who came along to the party, we hope you enjoyed it as much as we did.

It's never too early to register for the 2026 party! Email [Katrina.Dalby@partnersislington.net](mailto:Katrina.Dalby@partnersislington.net) to reserve your place.



### In this issue...

- How to dispose of your Christmas Tree
- State Pension Age
- What to do in a Gas Emergency
- Winter Fuel Payments Scam Texts
- How To Use Candles Safely
- Residents Corner
- Cyclical Decorations 2026







## How to dispose of your Christmas Tree

A real Christmas tree in your home is always a beautiful thing to see and smell, but once the new year arrives you see many discarded trees littering the streets reminding us that the holidays are over.

Here are a variety of locations where you can dispose of your tree appropriately:

- **Reuse and Recycling Centre**

The Hornsey Street Reuse and Recycling Centre accepts Christmas trees and green waste all year. It's open daily from 8 AM–8 PM, except on Sundays when it's open from 8:30 AM–8 PM.

- **Christmas tree retailers**

Some garden centres, like Camden Garden Centre and Boma Garden Centre, accept old trees for free in their car parks.



## Good Neighbours

If you usually see a neighbour regularly and are worried because you haven't seen them for a few days, please contact us on **0800 587 3595** so that we can check on them.

If you're planning on going away for Christmas or New Year, consider letting your neighbours know, and they can keep an eye on your empty property. Report any concerns to the police in an emergency on 999 or a non emergency on 111.

## Use Light Timer Switches to Reduce Burglaries

Burglars love this time of year as it's dark from 4pm and they can easily walk down the road and spot properties in darkness which are probably empty.

Using a timer switch to turn your lights on in the late afternoon if property is empty will make it appear like someone's home and deter burglars.

Timers can be purchased from retailers such as Argos, Amazon and Wickes.

## Regift and Recycle

Many of us will have a good clear out or spring clean after Christmas is over. Why not do this before Christmas this year so you can donate your good quality pre-loved items to a Charity shop?

Many people are struggling with the cost-of-living crisis and will be turning to Charity shops to purchase Christmas presents affordably for their loved ones. You can help to ensure their shelves are well stocked.

You could also consider donating new, unused items to charity appeals such as The Salvation Army who arrange gifts for those experiencing hardship. Full details are available on their website:

[www.salvationarmy.org.uk/christmas-present-appeal](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/christmas-present-appeal)

## Prevent Parcel Theft

Online Christmas shopping leads to lots more parcel deliveries. Please ensure that parcels are not left on your doorstep otherwise thieves will be enjoying all your Christmas shopping instead of you.

# State Pension Age

If you were born between 6 April 1960 and 1970, use GOV.UK's online calculator tool to find out your State Pension age.

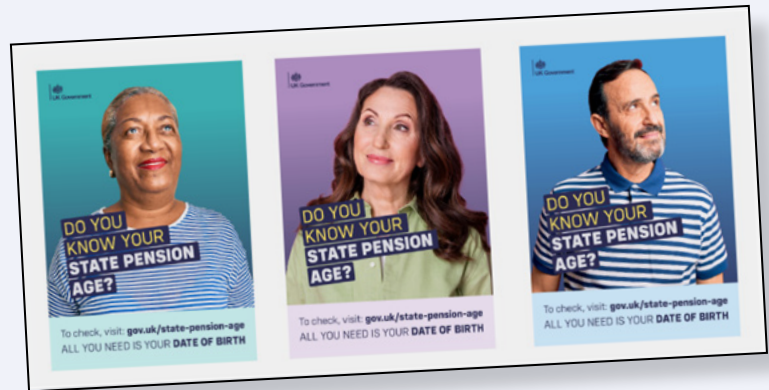
## Why does this matter?

The State Pension age is currently 66. Between 6 April 2026 and 5 March 2028 the State Pension age will increase in gradual steps to 67, as set out in the Pensions Act 2014. If you were born between 6 April 1960 and 5 March 1961, your State Pension age will be 66 plus a number of months – not simply 66.

And here's what catches people out: your State Pension doesn't just appear automatically – you must apply. The Pension Service will send you invitation letters to claim your State Pension around four months before you reach State Pension age with application details. But wouldn't you rather know your exact date now?

That's where the 'Check your State Pension forecast' at [www.gov.uk/check-state-pension](https://www.gov.uk/check-state-pension) service comes in handy – it shows how much State Pension you could get and whether you can boost it by filling any gaps.

Ready to find out your State Pension age? Use the State Pension age calculator tool on GOV.UK. And please spread the word to family and friends too!



# What To Do in a Gas Emergency

If a gas appliance has been badly fitted or poorly serviced, potential risks include gas leaks, fires, explosions and carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. Here's what to do if you smell gas or suspect CO poisoning.

## What to do if you smell gas:

It's crucial to act quickly in a gas emergency. These are the steps you need to take to stay safe:

- Get fresh air immediately; make sure you open all doors and windows to ventilate the area.
- Turn off the gas emergency control valve (also called gas emergency shut off valve) at the meter.
- Extinguish all naked flames and don't smoke.
- Don't operate electrical switches (including turning light switches on or off) because this can ignite escaping gas.
- Contact the National Gas Emergency service on **0800 111 999**.

- If the attending emergency operative identifies an issue with any gas appliances, follow their advice concerning the use of the equipment. Where advised, contact a Gas Safe registered engineer to fix the appliance and check it's safe.
- If you're feeling unwell, visit your GP or hospital immediately and let them know you may have been exposed to carbon monoxide.
- Don't turn the gas supply on again until it's been checked by a Gas Safe registered engineer.





# Residents' Corner

In the last edition of the Gazette, we invited residents to contribute an article, story, advert, poem, quiz or picture etc to future editions.

Thanks very much to Jess who got in touch and wanted to share details of her experience with her gas provider to help other residents. Here's Jess' article:

## Understanding Gas Meters: Metric (m<sup>3</sup>) vs Imperial

### Did you know there are two types of Gas Meters?

- **Metric Meters (m<sup>3</sup>)**
  - Show readings in cubic meters (m<sup>3</sup>).
  - The display usually includes m<sup>3</sup> alongside the meter reading digits
  - They are standard meters today (both smart and non-smart)
- **Imperial Meters**
  - Show readings in hundreds of cubic feet (100s of ft<sup>3</sup>).
  - This is an older style.
  - If your bill says "100s of ft<sup>3</sup>", it's being calculated as imperial.

### Why does it matter?

Gas is calculated differently depending on whether your meter is metric or imperial.

- Metric (m<sup>3</sup>) = smaller readings.
- Imperial (100s of ft<sup>3</sup>) = larger readings.

👉 If your energy supplier treats a metric meter reading as imperial, your usage will be over-calculated and you'll be overcharged!

### Here's where to spot it on your energy bill:

When checking your bill (online or paper):

- Under the meter readings it will say Metric (m<sup>3</sup>) or Imperial (100s of ft<sup>3</sup>).
- Make sure this matches your actual meter.

### Here's an important tip! You have a Unique Meter Number

- Every gas meter has a unique meter number (like a serial number).
- You'll find it printed on your meter and also on your bill.

- ✅ These numbers must match.
- ❌⚠️ If they don't, you may be paying for the wrong meter — the wrong calculation and the wrong usage.

### Here's a real resident's story

- Her gas meter was replaced in 2019 with a metric (m<sup>3</sup>) meter. A yellow sticker detailed this and was stuck onto the new meter.
- The new meter was not updated and the resident kept being billed as imperial (100s of ft<sup>3</sup>).
- For 4 years, bills were more than twice as high as they should have been.
- This meant the resident didn't use their heating, rushed showers and baths were a no no! She was so cold because the bills were so high.
- After finally working out the problem and proving the mismatch, the bills were recalculated, and a large refund was paid back.
- This took almost a year of calls asking why her small flat was costing so much money? She persisted and researched and finally realised the problem herself!

### How can you Protect Yourself?

- ✅ Check your meter type (m<sup>3</sup> vs 100s of ft<sup>3</sup>).
- ✅ Check your bill shows the correct type.
- ✅ Check your meter number matches on both the meter and your bill.
- ✅ If there's a mismatch, contact your supplier immediately.

### Key Takeaway

🔑 A simple error can cost you thousands, cause years of overpaying, and unnecessary hardship and even illness. Please check your bill, your meter, and your meter number.



# Winter Fuel Payments Scam Texts – Message from the DWP

Nearly all Winter Fuel Payments are made automatically without the need to claim. DWP have not issued any messages.

DWP never send text messages or emails requesting your bank details for Winter Fuel Payment purposes.

If you have any doubt whether a text is genuine, forward it to **7726** (free of charge) and you will receive a reply confirming if it's legitimate.

You should block the telephone number and delete the message without clicking on any links.

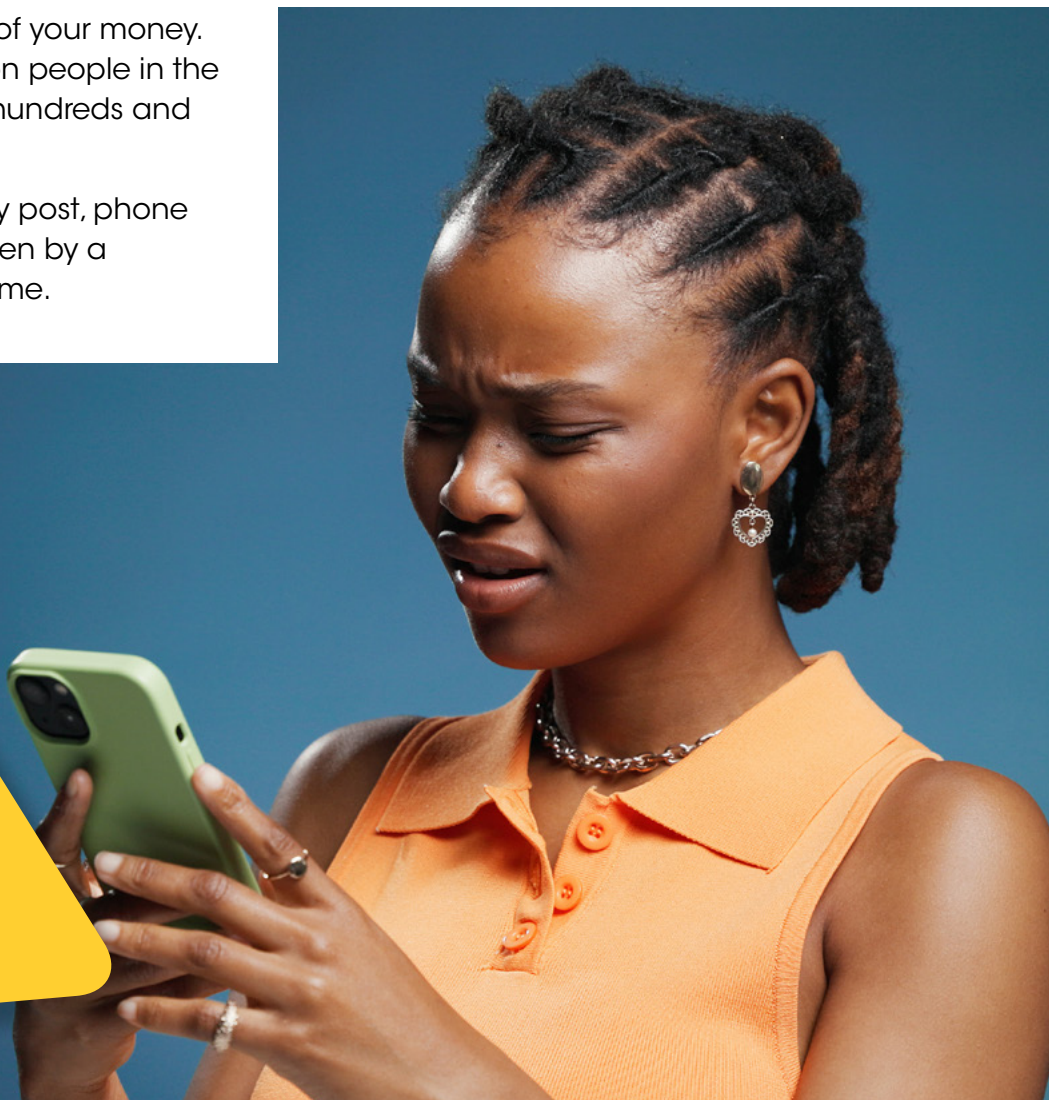
Scams are ways to trick you out of your money. Every year more than three million people in the UK lose money to scams, losing hundreds and even thousands of pounds.

You can get a scam message by post, phone call, text message or email, or even by a 'scammer' turning up at your home.

If you have been targeted by a scam, or know someone who has, report it through Action Fraud **[www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk)**, the national fraud and cyber crime reporting centre.

**If debit cards, online banking or cheques are involved in the scam, contact your bank or credit card company.**

You can read more helpful information about avoiding scams on Islington Council's website: **[www.islington.gov.uk/advice/consumer-advice/scams-awareness](http://www.islington.gov.uk/advice/consumer-advice/scams-awareness)**



*Congratulations!*

Congratulations to Ms I of Essex Road who was this quarter's winner of the £100 vouchers for completing a repairs satisfaction card. All resident satisfaction questionnaires completed on cards, email, or phone calls are entered into the quarterly prize draw.



## Farewell Mrs C

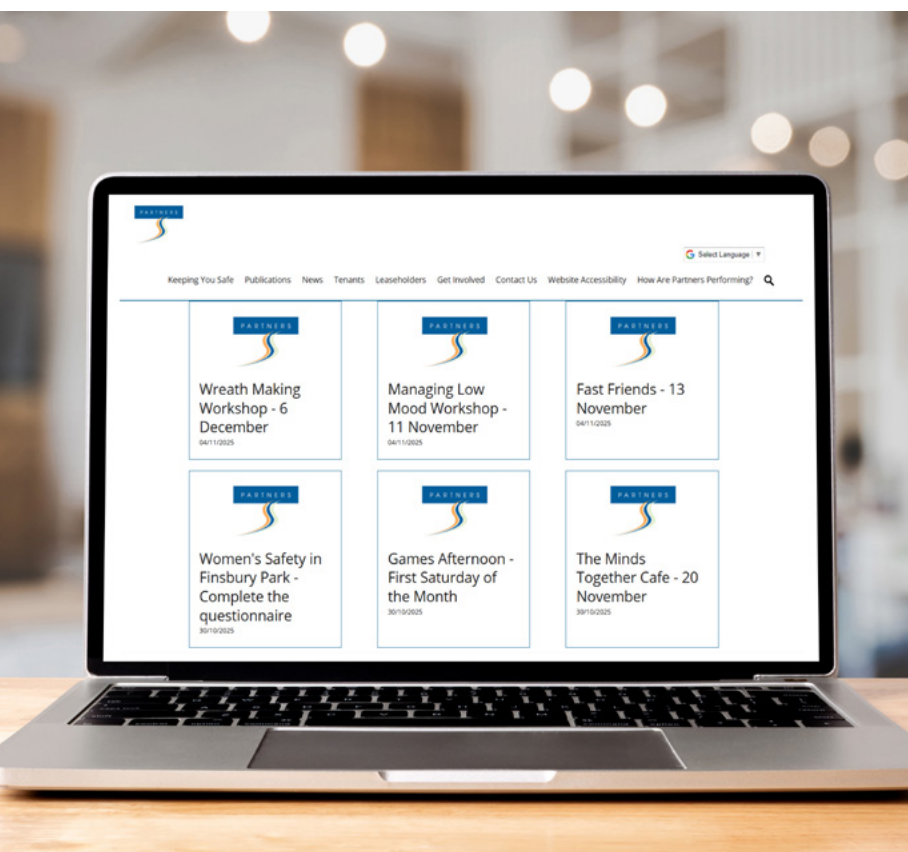
In Partners Gazette in 2022 we published an interview with our oldest Partners' resident who at the time was 102 years old. We wanted to share the sad news that 'Mrs C' as she was referred to in the article has passed away at the age of 105.

At the time of her passing, Mrs C was still living independently in her own home. When we interviewed Mrs C back in 2022 we asked her what advice she would give her younger self. She replied saying, 'I am very happy with the life I have had. I have been very lucky and am very content with everything. If I had the chance to live my life over again I would do exactly the same. I had a very happy childhood with my 6 brothers and my sister, a very happy marriage and was blessed to have my own child and grandchild.' Such a wonderful way to look back on your life and I am sure one we all aspire to. on.

## Partners Website – it's for you!

As well as lots of information for tenants and leaseholders Partners website is regularly updated with local events and information which you may find useful.

Go to the news section for more information:  
**[www.partnersislington.net/news/](http://www.partnersislington.net/news/)**



## Partners Open Forum 2026

Here are the dates for next year's Open Forums.

15 January 2026

19 March 2026

21 May 2026

16 July 2026

17 September 2026

19 November 2026

The Open Forum is for all Partners residents. There is no membership, you don't need to apply to join, and you can attend as often as you choose.

At the meetings you'll get chance to meet other residents and hear from a selection of Partners staff. You can ask questions, share information or just listen to everyone else.

Meetings are generally held on Zoom and are chaired by Partners. They last for one hour and notes from each meeting are published on Partners website: [www.partnersislington.net/get-involved/open-forums/](http://www.partnersislington.net/get-involved/open-forums/)

If you have any questions about the meetings, please contact **Katrina Dalby** on **020 7288 7733** or **Katrina.dalby@partnersislington.net**.



If you suddenly don't have electricity check your fuse box as you may have a tripped switch. Also check with your electricity provider to see if the problem is with them.



# How to use candles safely

**Candles are one of the common causes of fires in the home.**

Christmas can see us light candles, dress up, and display lots of decorations – increasing the risk of fire. Make sure all your decorations are kept away from naked flames.

Though they create a warm glow, candles need handling with care.

Did you know that flameless LED candles are a much safer alternative to real candles or tea lights?

## Benefits of flameless candles

Sometimes called LED, battery-operated, or electric candles - flameless candles have a number of advantages:

- You can leave them unattended
- You don't have to worry about pets or children knocking them over
- If you doze off while a flameless candle is on, it's not a problem
- You can use them outdoors
- You can buy flickering, rechargeable, coloured and waterproof versions

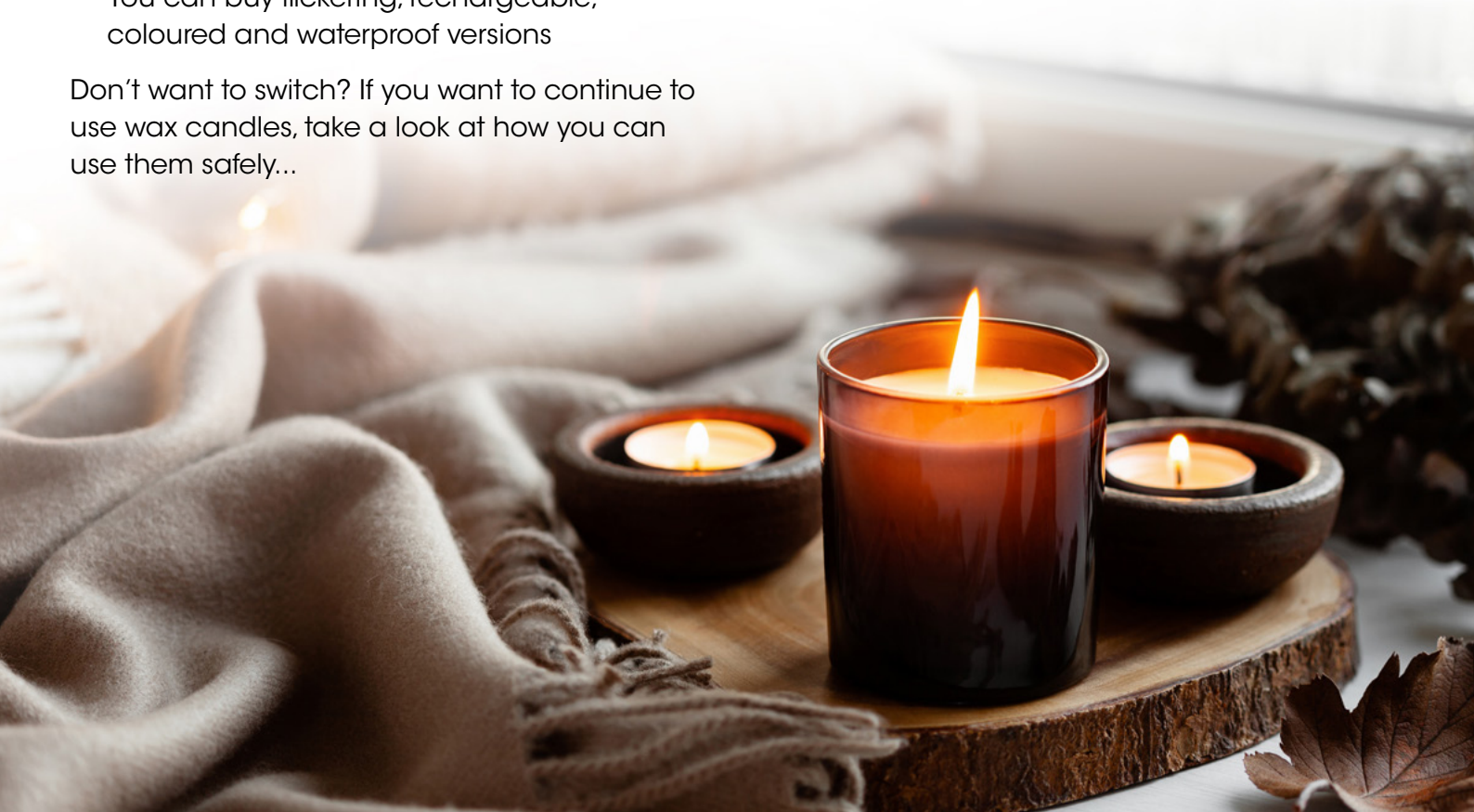
Don't want to switch? If you want to continue to use wax candles, take a look at how you can use them safely...

## How to use candles and incense safely

- Never leave candles, incense sticks and oil burners unattended - this includes 'Diya lamps' often used for worship and religious festivals.
- Make sure you put them out when you leave the room and especially before bed.
- Keep them in heat-resistant holders placed on a stable surface.
- Don't put them close to anything that can catch fire, such as curtains, papers, furniture, and clothes.
- To avoid accidents keep candles and all naked flames (including matches and lighters) out of the reach of children and pets.
- Tea lights get very hot and without proper holders can melt through plastic surfaces like a TV or bath.

Use the London Fire Brigade's Home Fire Safety Checker to get tailored advice for your home or for someone you care for:

**[www.london-fire.gov.uk/safety/the-home/home-fire-safety/home-fire-safety-checker-hfsc/](http://www.london-fire.gov.uk/safety/the-home/home-fire-safety/home-fire-safety-checker-hfsc/)**





# 4 Week Yoga Programme *With Lorraine*

Every Friday  
commencing  
**16th Jan - 6th  
February 2026**  
at 2pm - 3pm

## VENUE

Vibast Centre  
167 Old Street  
London  
EC1V 9NH

Stay for tea, biscuits  
and a chat after the  
session.

Contact Lorraine - [info@yogawithlorraine.org](mailto:info@yogawithlorraine.org)



**Week 1:** Breathwork & Yin Yoga  
**Week 2:** Breathwork, Sun Salutation A & Yin Yoga  
**Week 3:** Breathwork, Sun Salutations A & B, Yin Yoga  
**Week 4:** Breathwork, Sun Salutations A & B, Standing Postures

## Do's and Don'ts - Leak through a Ceiling

A leak can significantly increase the risk of a ceiling collapse, and it is important that you act quickly to reduce the likelihood of damage to you and your possessions.

If you suspect a leak from above, do not use the room below it until a repairs operative has repaired the leak and made the ceiling safe.

Look out for sagging ceilings, cracks or dripping water and if you spot any of these, contact our Repairs Team immediately on 0800 587 3595. We will then arrange for one of our Repairs Team to visit within 24 hours.

If you have a leak, and there are flats below your property, please let your neighbours know to take care and consider moving their possessions away from the leak until the repair is complete.

Please remember, contents insurance is your responsibility, and Partners will not cover the cost of replacing items damaged by a leak. Islington Council offers a low-cost insurance scheme run by Aviva which is available to Partners tenants and right-to-buy leaseholders.

Full details are available on their website [www.islington.gov.uk](http://www.islington.gov.uk) or call the Tenants and Leaseholders Home Contents Insurance Scheme team to request an application form, on **020 7527 2000**.

### 5 Partners staff received recognition this Christmas for receiving multiple customer compliments throughout 2025.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to tell us that one of our team had done a good job. Compliments are shared with staff and at the end of the year we recognise those colleagues who've done exceptionally well. Tell us when someone does a good job via [enquiries@partnersislington.net](mailto:enquiries@partnersislington.net)

Familiarise yourself with where your water stop cocks is. If your pipes freeze it can lead to water leaks when they thaw out.



Check [www.partnersislington.net](http://www.partnersislington.net) for up-to-date information on how we're performing against the targets set by Islington council.





# Cyclical Decorations 2026

Early in 2026 our Cyclical Decorations team will be starting work in these streets:

- Ecclesbourne Road
- Rotherfield Street
- Mitchison Road
- Shepperton Road

A full list of this year's programme is available on Partners website: **[www.partnersislington.net](http://www.partnersislington.net)**.

Here's what to expect when we decorate the outside of your home:

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

**We will paint and decorate:**

- ▶ External parts of the building, including all previously painted areas
- ▶ External woodwork, including windows and front and rear entrance doors. Note works to doors only apply to tenanted and communal doors.
- ▶ Railings and gates to the front of the property
- ▶ Previously painted steel staircases to rear gardens
- ▶ Whilst the scaffolding is erected, we may need to carry out repair work or replacements to the following:
  - Roofs
  - Windows | Doors
  - Pathways and external walls
  - Rainwater goods

## SCAFFOLDING

Scaffolding will be erected to the front and back of your home to provide access for the external decoration.

During this time the security of your home will be your responsibility. To support you with this we advise you to inform your insurers of the scaffolding.

To ensure we do not damage any of your belongings we advise you to remove all items (plant-pots, bird-tables, furniture, etc.) from the external window cills and surrounding areas. This is to ensure we have full access to carry out the works required. The Partners Cyclical Decorations Team will need to remove any items which haven't been moved or could impede works, but will not be held responsible for any losses that you may incur. Please check with your Resident Liaison Officer if you are unsure which items in your garden this refers to.

For your safety and the safety of others please note that the scaffolding is for the use of Partners representatives only and no unauthorised access is permitted.

If you have any questions about the Cyclical Decorations programme please contact us via email on **[enquiries@partnersislington.net](mailto:enquiries@partnersislington.net)** or call **0800 587 3595**.



## TV AERIALS & SATELLITE DISHES

With the erection of scaffolding during the redecoration works you may experience some interference to your television reception.

The Partners Cyclical Decorations Team will endeavour to carry out the works in as short a time as possible to minimise any disruption to your viewing. We understand the inconvenience this may cause to you and apologise in advance for any disruptions.

We may need to temporarily relocate satellite dishes in order to facilitate works.

## LISTED BUILDINGS

If you live in a listed building, there may be a requirement to submit an application to the Planning Department at London Borough of Islington. However, this is dependent on the works which are identified to be done. Please note the approval process can take up to 12 weeks, and therefore works may be delayed.

## PROGRAMME OF WORKS

We endeavour to complete the works as quickly as possible with minimal inconvenience and disruption to residents and neighbours. If there are any leasehold properties in the block, section 20 notices will be issued and no work will start until the 30 day consultation period has elapsed and any queries have been dealt with. Once the scaffolding has been erected, there will be a period of 3-4 weeks where no works will take place. During this time a number of surveys will be carried out to understand exactly what works need doing. Following these surveys, works can commence. Your works will take approximately 6-8 weeks, weather permitting and depending on access.

### STAGE 1

Following a letter to you, the scaffolding is erected to both the front and back of your home.

### STAGE 2

We check the scaffolding to ensure it is safe, and then one of our surveyors will carry out a full external survey to the front and back of your home and to any internal communal areas if required.

### STAGE 3

The survey information is collated and goes through the approval process ready for works to start

### STAGE 4

The works are carried out.

### STAGE 5

The works are inspected and 'snagged', and handed over as complete.

### STAGE 6

The scaffold is then removed. A satisfaction survey will be issued to you so that we can gather your feedback.







If you have a vulnerability which affects the how you would prefer to receive services from us, now or in the future, please tell us so that we can record your preferences. Contact our Housing Team on **0800 587 3595** or **enquiries@partnersislington.net**. This information will allow us to try to meet your requirements and if your needs cannot be met, we will tell you clearly why and work with you to find a reasonable solution.



## Partners Office Christmas Opening Hours

Partners office will be closed on the Christmas Bank Holidays – 25 & 26 December and the 1 January. You can report emergency repairs during these times by calling **0800 587 3595**.

When we call you, we will always give you our name and say we're calling from Partners.

If you are concerned that a caller who says they're from Partners isn't from Partners, please end the call and call us back on **0800 587 3595** or **020 7288 8310** so we can investigate.



Please treat Partners staff with respect. When you call, we must ask you for information to make sure that we understand your query and can transfer you to the right team. **Please be patient, we want to help. Staff will end a call if a resident continues to be rude or offensive.**

### How to contact us

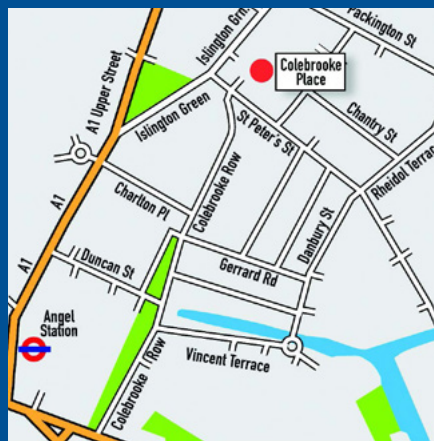
You can contact any of our teams by email at [enquiries@partnersislington.net](mailto:enquiries@partnersislington.net) or by phone on 0800 587 3595 or 020 7288 8310

You can also reach us through our website at [www.partnersislington.net/contact-us](http://www.partnersislington.net/contact-us)

If you want to contact us by post, our postal address is 4-6 Colebrooke Place, N1 8HZ and our Freepost address is Partners for improvement in Islington, FREEPOST NATE 1235, London N1 8BR.

### Where to find us

Our Main reception is at 4-6 Colebrooke Place, N1 8HZ and is open between 8.30am and 5pm, Monday to Friday (closed Bank Holidays)



Tell us what you think! We want to know...

Partners wants to receive your comments, complaints and compliments. You can tell us what you think about our services or your experience of our services in a number of ways:

- Correspondence • Letter
- Over the telephone
- E-mail • In person • Website