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PARTNERS

gazette

Residents' Newsletter
February
2024

Home Improvements

Over the last 20 years the tenanted homes that Partners manage have had replacement kitchens, bathrooms and central heating systems and alongside these internal improvements, we delivered a programme of external decorations.

During the life of the PFI contract which runs until 2033, every property will continue to have a cycle of external decorations every 7 years.

Kitchens that were replaced before 2008, are now nearing the end of their life cycle and many of them need to be replaced.

Our Repairs and Kitchen teams are led by managers who have over 20 years' experience at Partners and along with their dedicated teams they know the properties literally inside and out!

Resident feedback is important to us, and we review all feedback we receive. When we residents tell us we can do better we act on what we're told. We're also thrilled to read positive comments on the impact our service has had on residents. Once a kitchen has been completed, our surveyor, Frank Dennis, visits to check the quality of the work and that residents are happy with their new kitchen. Here are some of the comments he's recently received:

Mrs Hegstarty informed me that she was very happy with her new kitchen, everyone was clean, polite, efficient, worked quietly and quickly, they were brilliant.

Mr Doyle informed me that so far he was very very happy, everyone was very good.



Miss Doyle informed me that she is very happy with the kitchen, the works caused her no trouble, everyone was very good.

Ms Elliot informed me that she was very happy, everyone was very respectful and very good.

If you have any questions about the kitchen replacement programme or any of our services, please contact us on 0800 587 3593 or enquiries@partnersislington.net.

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Clean Out, Cash In!

You could receive a £250.00 payment for leaving your home clean and tidy when you move out.

In exchange for £250, we need you to leave your property clean, tidy, in good repair and clear of your belongings. This will enable new tenants to move in quickly, after you have moved out.

To be eligible for the payment ALL the following criteria must be met:

- Notice Period - you must give us 4 weeks-notice that you are leaving by completing a Notice of Termination form and giving us your forwarding address.
- Vacant Possession -nothing must be left in the property

when you are ready to move out. No furniture or white goods should be left in the property. All rubbish must be removed.

- Keys - you must return us a full set of keys, including any communal door keys.
- Alterations - if you have made any changes to the layout of the property, the original layout may need to be reinstated. If you are unsure on this point, please contact your Housing Services Officer.
- You must leave any garden areas you are responsible for maintained and free from rubbish. Sheds and loft spaces, which you have sole access to, should also be left clear.

- Only carpet or flooring that we have agreed can remain, should be left in the property. All other floor coverings must be removed.

At the end of your tenancy, when you hand your keys back, your Housing Officer along with our Voids Supervisor will carry out an inspection of the property and if all the above criteria have been met, they will authorise the payment of £250, to you.

PLEASE NOTE: If you have outstanding rent arrears; the £250 payment will be added to your rent account.

For any further information on this scheme, please contact us at enquiries@partnersislington.net or on 0800 587 3595.

Residents in receipt of benefits can apply for a reduction of 50% on bulky waste collections. Full details are available here: www.islington.gov.uk/recycling-and-rubbish/large-items/bulky-waste/collection-costs-and-items-collected

Keeping You Safe



Thank you to one of our resident's nephews – Wolfie aged 10 for his take on communal area safety'

The internal communal areas (stairs and landings etc) of your building should be kept clear of personal belongings.

This is to ensure that there are no obstacles which would prevent a quick exit if there was an emergency and also to reduce the risk of a fire starting and spreading in the communal areas.

Partners' Communal Area Risk Assessment Officer, John Canham regularly checks the internal communal areas to ensure that they are clear and safe. If he finds items stored in them, we write to all residents in the building asking them to remove the items, otherwise we will dispose of them. Following this, our Housing Officers check whether the items have been removed and if not, will add

stickers to them informing residents that they will be removed. We then arrange for the area to be cleared and any stickered items which remain will be disposed of. We do not store items we remove, so if you don't want your possessions disposed of please do not leave them in the communal areas.

If you have a bike you'd like to store check out the Council's bike hanger scheme: www.islington.gov.uk/roads/cycling/cycleparking.

If you are concerned about items being stored in your communal area or have any questions about the policy, please contact us on 0800 587 3595 or enquiries@partnersislington.net

If you attended our resident's Christmas party and have feedback you'd like to share or ideas for this year's party, please contact Katrina.dalby@partnersislington.net.



Chance to Chat

Do you have a question you'd like to ask us? Do you want to give us feedback on our services? If so then Chance to Chat is for you!

Chance to Chat is the opportunity for you to meet with a member of our Service Improvement Team via Zoom or Teams.

You might have a question about one of our policies, feedback on our service you'd like to share, or you just might want to know more about how Partners works. We might not be able to answer all your questions on the call but will agree a timescale with you on responding to everything.

Request a slot on our website www.partnersislington.net or call Katrina Dalby on 020 7288 7733 to book in. You can choose to meet on Teams or Zoom and we'll send you a link beforehand.



Tech Help

If you'd like help with understanding the internet, getting online or using phones, tablets or laptops please contact Katrina Dalby on 020 7288 7733 who will put you in touch with support services in the borough.

Fire safety guidance for e-scooters and e-bikes.

Charging e-scooters and e-bikes can be dangerous and should not be done in the communal areas.

Lithium-ion batteries, similar to the technology in our mobile phones, are used to power many of these e-scooters and bikes. If these or the charging equipment being used are substandard, damaged or misused then there is a risk of the batteries overheating. This can lead to an unusually intense fire that can give off toxic gases and large amounts of smoke with very little warning.

An investigation by the consumer safety charity Electrical Safety First discovered nearly 60 listings on popular online marketplaces, such as Amazon, eBay, Wish.com and AliExpress, were found to be highly dangerous e-bike chargers. All 60 failed to meet UK safety standards.

It is important when charging e-bikes and e-scooters, you do so safely to avoid a risk of a fire starting and putting your families and homes at risk.

If your e-bike or e-scooter catches fire, do not attempt to put it out. Get out, stay out and call 999.



Open Forum 2024

We continue to meet via Zoom with some in person meetings, in agreement with the attendees. Always check our website www.partnersislington.net for up-to-date information about the meetings and details of which Partners teams will be represented. A member of Islington Council's Clienting Team also usually attends.

Thanks to everyone who attended our January meeting where we discussed fibre broadband, scaffolding, cyclical decorations and reviewed a draft letter we're sending.

Meeting dates for this year:

21 March, 16 May,
18 July, 19 September,
21 November 2024.

If you have any questions about the Open Forum, please contact Katrina Dalby on enquiries@partnersislington.net or 0800 587 3595.

Contact Us

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.

Leaseholders Email Alerts

Leaseholders can now register for automated email alerts notifying you when a S20 or Final Account has been posted.

Sign up by emailing PFIHOT@partnersislington.net with your name, address and the email address you'd like us to use.

We'll record your details and when we post you a S20 or Final Account you'll get an email telling you it's on its way. If you don't receive the item after 10 days, contact us and we'll issue a replacement.



Sport and Activity – Keep fit and have fun!

Islington Council have created a great guide to local activities to help you keep active, healthy and have fun. The pages include:

- An interactive map showing what's on, including leisure centres, parks, sports clubs, community centres, community organisations, schools, libraries, adventure playgrounds, children's centres, and commercial organisations.
- The offer by type of activity, for targeted groups (gender, disability, age, LGBTQ+), and free and low-cost activity.
- The health benefits of physical activity.

Full details are available here: www.islington.gov.uk/physical-activity-parks-and-trees/sport-and-physical-activity

Tenant Repair Responsibilities

You can report a repair to us via our website www.partnersislington.net, over the phone on 0800 587 3595 or via email enquiries@partnersislington.net, but Partners aren't responsible for all repairs in your home.

Your tenancy agreement sets out your repairing obligations but here are a few common repair requests which we are not responsible for:

- Changing the locks to your flat door
- Decorating internally
- Fixing internal doors
- Connecting cookers and washing machines
- Changing light bulbs
- Kitchen cupboard doors

If you're unsure about whether we'll carry out a repair or it's your responsibility, please just contact us and we'll check for you.



Provisional Cyclical Decorations Provisional Programme 2024

Our provisional cyclical decorations programme is available in the news section on our website www.partnersislington.net.

If your decorations are scheduled for this year either Nikki Donnelly or Linda Padden will be in touch with you beforehand to explain what work is planned and answer any questions you may have. They'll be your point of contact throughout the work.

Help
...you?

HERE TO SUPPORT ISLINGTON RESIDENTS



Help on Your
Doorstep



WE CAN SUPPORT YOU WITH

- **Advice, Information and Guidance**
On housing, money matters, welfare benefits, health and well-being, employment, legal issues and more
- **Support for the cost of living rises**
- **Community-led groups**

CONTACT US

Monday- Friday
10am - 4pm



020 3931 6080



connect@helponyourdoorstep.com





HOW CAN WE HELP ?

WE CAN HELP

- Advice appointments on money management and debt
- Support navigating your welfare benefit entitlements
- Advice appointments on money management, debt and energy
- Guidance about mental health support in the borough
- Advice on employment opportunities and training
- Grants support for residents experiencing financial hardship
- Referrals into Macmillan for specialist cancer support, counselling, grants & more



All our support is free and confidential
Contact us on 020 3931 6080
Monday to Friday 10am-4pm

Disturbed by noise?

Your home is a converted Georgian or Victorian building, which was built as a single house. This means that you live close to your neighbours and often share entrances and stairs and because the building is not soundproofed, and you will hear general living noise from your neighbours.

You must be mindful that sound will travel easily between homes, and you should consider how you can minimise this. When you have guests, or if you're a leaseholder and have let your property, please remember that YOU are responsible for the actions of anyone in your home.

Please be mindful of your neighbours and do what you can to minimise noise. Try not to slam doors including cupboard and internal doors. A great way to cut down the noise caused by closing cupboard doors is to use sticky furniture pads, which stops them banging. These can be used on table and chair legs too.

Don't lay laminate or hardwood flooring as this makes noise from your home sound louder. If you're a tenant your tenancy agreement says you must:

'keep the floors of the property, other than kitchens and bathrooms, covered with carpet or other similar floor covering'.

And

'You must not carry out, cause or allow without first receiving the council's written permission:

...the installation of laminate or wooden or tiled or other similar flooring'.

If you're experiencing noise from your neighbours a good place to start is to talk to them. Approach them calmly and respectfully and explain what it is that they're doing that's disturbing you. They may not realise that you can hear them. If a neighbour talks to you about noise please be understanding and polite. It may have taken courage for them to approach you. Try to come to a joint understanding. Everyone makes noise, it is inevitable, but try to be respectful, considerate and fair in any discussions with your neighbours. This will hopefully lead to a happier home for everyone.

If you do experience problems with noise which you have been unable to resolve yourself, we will support you and try to help with the problem. Please contact us on 0800 587 3595 or enquiries@partnersislington.net.

If you're bothered by noise at night and feel like you can't deal with it alone you can contact the Noise Patrol Team at Islington Council on 020 7527 7272. The Noise Patrol Team will tell us about any incidents in Partners properties.



Contents insurance

Contents insurance is your responsibility. If you experience a leak from a flat above and you don't have contents insurance, you are not covered for the replacement of your possessions. Partners are not liable for any unforeseen incidents, and our building's insurance will not cover your personal belongings.

We understand that there are always financial pressures but can you afford not to have contents insurance? Islington Council operates its own low cost contents insurance scheme. Full details are available here: www.islington.gov.uk or 020 7527 2000

Gas Flues and Boilers

You must not paint your gas flue or boiler. This is because it becomes a hazard when painted due to the temperature increase when the boiler is being used. If you have any questions about this, please contact our Gas Team on 0800 587 3595.



Fibre Broadband Update

Islington Broadband is a partnership between the council and full fibre broadband providers to offer faster, more reliable internet services across housing estates and council managed street properties, alongside a range of other community benefits.

The council has signed legal agreements with three broadband providers to install, keep and maintain their fibre broadband equipment on all housing land and buildings owned by the council's housing department.

Residents should have been, or will be, written to directly by providers when the equipment and connections are available in their areas.

Full details are available on the Council's website www.islington.gov.uk/housing/repairs-and-estate-management/major-works-and-improvements/broadband.

If you have any queries, contact the Council direct via IslingtonBroadband@islington.gov.uk



Check www.partnersislington.net for up to date information on how we're performing against the targets set by Islington council.

New Universal Credit Tool available on our website and here: <https://uc-helper.co.uk/partners-for-improvement-in-islington>

Date for Your Diary

This year's Partner's residents' Christmas party will be on Wednesday 4 December 2024. The party will be at the same venue as last year, The Lift, White Lion Street.

To book your place please contact Katrina Dalby on katrina.dalby@partnersislington.net or 020 7288 7733.

Procedure Reviews

Alongside the Council, we regularly review our procedures to ensure that they are accurate and efficient. We are currently reviewing our damp, mould and general repairs procedures. If you'd like to be involved in the review, please contact Katrina Dalby on katrina.dalby@partnersislington.net or 020 7288 7733.

Candles Can Devastate

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

Candle related fires result in around 350 casualties each year. Forty per cent of candle fires result in injury or death.

Up to five house fires each day are caused by unattended candles, with most breaking out between 9pm and midnight. This is often in the living room or bedroom but increasingly in the bathroom where they are used around the bath-top.

Just before Christmas a Partners resident unfortunately experienced a devastating fire caused by a candle on a window ledge which set the curtains alight. The fire quickly spread causing damage throughout the resident's home. Fortunately the residents escaped without injury, but their home and belongings were severely damaged.

We recommend not using candles at all, but if you choose to please follow this advice:

- Never leave a candle unattended
- Extinguish candles before you go to sleep or leave the house
- Ensure the candle is standing upright and firmly fixed in a suitable container or holder. This should be designed to withstand the heat of the burning candle and hold the melting wax safely
- Always place candles on a heat-resistant surface. Tealights can melt plastic surfaces such as a bathtub or television, especially if they are not in a suitable container
- Only melt the recommended product, such as wax melts, in their correct container
- Keep candles away from curtains, blinds, other combustible furniture, bedding, fabrics and clothing
- Do not place candles underneath shelving or furniture units
- Keep candles out of draughts and away from open windows, other heat sources or direct sunlight
- Keep lit candles away from the reach of children and pets
- Keep space between candles if you are using more than one. A 10 centimetre gap is best
- Never lean across a lit candle. It's too easy to catch hair or loose clothing
- Do not move a candle whilst lit
- Always extinguish the flame with the correct product lid - if using a jar type candle with lid included - a spoon or 'snuffer'. These remove the oxygen from the flame and ensure it safely extinguishes. Blowing does not always completely kill the flame or smouldering wick
- Never use outdoor candles indoors
- Never play with candles

Opposite: The damage caused by the candle





Wordsearch

Can you find **Partners For Improvement**? If you can't find it, email enquiries@partnersislington.net for the location!

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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 purporting to be from Partners isn't from Partners, please end the call and call us back on 0800 587 3595 or 0207 288 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.**

How to contact us

You can contact any of our teams by email at 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

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)



PARTNERS



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