

Housing News

Winter 2024

The magazine for Ealing Council tenants

Homes



Neighbourhoods



Opportunities



How we performed

Read extracts from our 2023-2024
annual report on pages 5 to 9



Looking after our residents and their homes is our top priority

In this edition of our housing newsletter, you will find an extract of our housing annual report.

We want all our tenants to live in safe, high-quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods. While this is the case for many of you, we know that there are still improvements that can be made by our team. Being open and honest about how our housing service is performing is very important to us. We are working hard to improve the way we work with you and make all our homes great places to live. There is much work to be done in the housing sector and we are committed to improving our customer experience and to providing safe and genuinely affordable homes.



Councillor Louise Brett

Cabinet Member for Safe and Genuinely Affordable Homes



Nicky Fiedler

Strategic Director for Housing and Environment

Our annual report is an opportunity for us to be open and transparent with you on how we have performed as a housing service in the past year and what we are doing to improve. As our residents, you have provided us with valuable insight into what is important to you in the services we provide. We are using this to help shape our future service delivery and look forward to continuing to work with you to improve.



Festive period 2024



With many of our team enjoying a well-deserved break, we will be running a reduced service over the festive period.

Tuesday 24 December will be the final normal working day of 2024. The council will only be open for business on 27, 30 and 31 December for emergency and essential services.

Normal service will resume on Thursday 2 January.

We wish all our residents a very happy Christmas and New Year.

Festive fun and things to do

Check out the Ealing Culture website for fun things to do across the borough over the festive period. From pantomimes to caroling, and from pop-ups to networking, there is something for everyone to enjoy.

Search:

www.ealingculture.org/new/festive-fun-and-things-to-do



Our pledge to be an inclusive social housing provider

We have signed up to the LGBTQ+ Housing Pledge scheme, designed to ensure LGBTQ+ residents are able to enjoy their homes without fear of discrimination.

In a major step toward improving LGBTQ+ inclusivity, the adoption of the pledge reflects our commitment to building communities where people can thrive and know that differences are embraced. We are working towards Pioneer accreditation.



What we're doing

We're improving LGBTQ+ inclusion within the borough by:

- ensuring communication with residents is inclusive and respectful
- setting up and running staff training to improve awareness of LGBTQ+ lives and interactions with residents
- being an openly LGBTQ+ supportive organisation
- improving accessibility to relevant information and services
- working to involve LGBTQ+ residents and allies to help design and review policies

Get involved

To get involved you can:

- share your experiences (both positive and negative)
- sign up to be an Equality Champion
- join our networking of Equality Champions, to work with us on key areas that affect the LGBTQ+ community

For more information or to register your interest in getting involved, email: residentinvolvement@ealing.gov.uk

Love your streets



Want to report fly-tipping, potholes, anti-social behaviour, or another environmental issue?

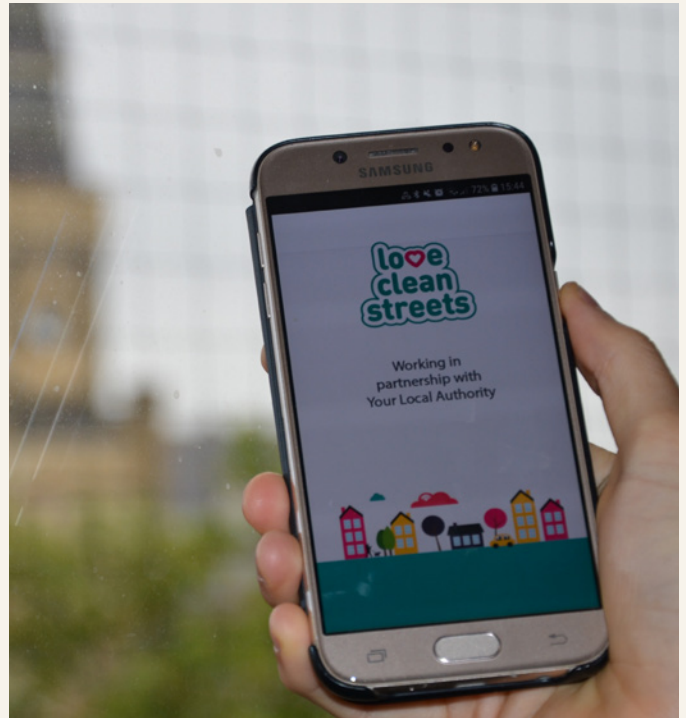
You can quickly and easily report issues you encounter on local streets with the Love Clean Streets app. You can report everything from fly-tipping and dog mess to potholes. Just visit the app store on your phone or device, search for 'Love Clean Streets' and download.

It is simple, free to use and, once set up, any environmental issues encountered on the borough's streets can be logged quickly.

Reporting an environmental issue is four-step process and only takes a few seconds:

1. See a problem.
2. Open the Love Clean Streets app.
3. Take a picture, your location is automatically detected.
4. Enter some basic information and post the report.

Your report is sent directly to the council to deal with. You will be kept informed of the progress with an email notification when you report an issue and again when it is closed. If you do not get an email, please check your junk or spam folders.



Keep an eye on vulnerable neighbours this winter



We're asking residents to look out for elderly or vulnerable neighbours, particularly while the days are cold, and the nights get darker earlier.

Winter can be a difficult time for some people, with isolation increasing as they are less able to get out and about. We are asking our residents to be good neighbours and look out for each other at this time – especially for those who don't have family nearby or regular visitors.

Little things can make all the difference, like asking them if they need any shopping, or taking their bin out for them if it's snowy or icy. Severe weather can strike quickly and catch people out, but by thinking of others, we can prevent them from going hungry or even getting hurt.

Here's how you can play your part in making your community more prepared:

- identify neighbours who may need an extra helping hand if severe weather strikes
- check in with them
- offer to help with grocery shopping or other essential tasks
- clear ice or snow from pathways



If you're happy to help, take a few minutes today to knock on their door (during daylight hours), to say hello and find out if you could offer any support. If they are happy to, swap numbers so that you can get in touch easily.

It's also important that you get in touch with us if you are worried about a neighbour so that we can check on them. If you're at all worried about the welfare of a vulnerable person, it's much better to say something than do nothing. Please call **020 8825 8000** to speak to our team.



Residents annual report

April 2023 to March 2024

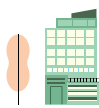
Round-up of the year

Our housing

Up to 31 March 2024, we had:

10,959

Council
homes



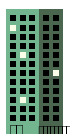
4,719

Leasehold and
shared ownership
homes



29

High-rise
buildings
(over 18m)



19

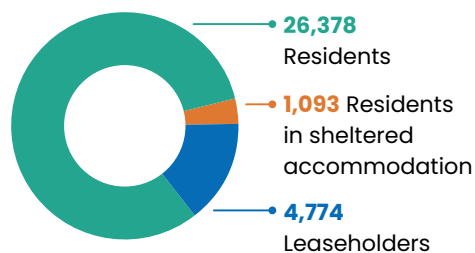
Hostel
buildings



Our residents

Up to 31 March 2024, we had:

32,245 Total residents



2023–2024 finances

Figures previously reported were a forecast during the financial year.

The figures below are our actual financials for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

£77,296,000

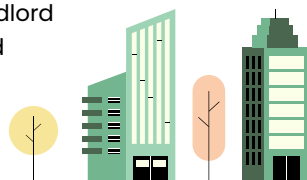
Total income
(from rental income
and service charges)

£81,430,000 Total expenditure

**inclusive of £4,134,000 drawn down
from HRA including reserves**

£11,424,000

Housing landlord
services and
community
housing



£6,441,000

Property and estate services



£1,616,000

Housing development



£40,627,000

Other (HRA delivery, utilities,
financing)



£21,322,000

Housing asset
management (repairs,
building safety, not
inclusive of major works)



Repairs



57.5% satisfaction with repairs service



58.7% satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair



57.5% satisfaction that landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained

Looking after your home



General repairs:

13,854 Total completed

1,682 Emergency completed

746 Out of hours completed



Domestic heating repairs:

14,527 Total completed

1,236 Emergency completed

How we are improving

We are increasing our capacity to respond to repairs by engaging a second day-to-day contractor and a specialist damp and mould contractor.



We are improving how we collect and manage data to ensure that we can respond quicker where timescales might be slipping.

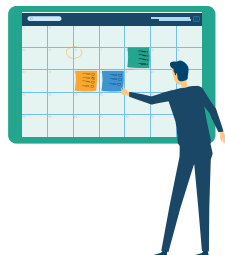


We are making it easier for residents to report repairs directly by telephone, online, and to a member of staff.



We are improving how we communicate with you about the status of your repair.

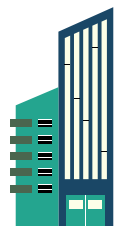
We are offering more flexibility around when repairs operatives can visit you.



We are making sure that we follow up with you following a repair and remedying it if you are unsatisfied.



We are prioritising repairs that pose a potential risk to health and safety.



We are prioritising aids and adaptations that will improve residents' quality of life and allow them to remain in their home.

Building safety

The safety of our tenants and leaseholders is our utmost priority. We work hard to ensure that all our homes are safe.



54.5% satisfaction that home is well maintained



62.1% satisfaction that home is safe

Building safety compliance

As at 31 March 2024, our building safety compliance was at:

95.1% Asbestos

96.1% Communal gas

90.4% Domestic gas

99.6% Fire Risk Assessments

94.3% Lift insurance inspection (LOLER)

91.3% Electrical installation condition reporting (EICR)

99.7% Water risk assessment compliance



Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)



57.9% satisfaction that landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhood



54.7% satisfaction with landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour

In 2023-2024, the service:

- Carried out 2,300 targeted proactive patrols
- Engaged with over 4,000 residents
- Dealt with over 1,500 incidents
- Carried out 2,000 visits to residents to investigate and assess reports of environmental nuisance
- Issued over 900 warnings
- Issued over 100 fixed penalty notices for breaches of the borough-wide PSPO
- On over 600 occasions used PSPO and Community Safety Accreditation Scheme (CSAS) powers to disperse people from an area

Resident engagement



43.8% satisfaction that landlord listens to tenants views and acts upon them



58.0% satisfaction that landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them



61.2% satisfaction that landlord treat me fairly and with respect

Complaints



16.3% satisfaction with landlord's approach to handling complaints

We know we have work to do to improve resident satisfaction with our approach to handling complaints. Understanding and learning from the issues raised will help us to improve the service we provide.

Overview

576 Stage 1 complaints

119 Stage 2 complaints

Over 90% of complaints about repairs

How we are improving

We follow the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. The purpose of the code is to enable landlords, such as the council, to review their current complaints procedure and performance in relation to social housing tenants and to name areas for improvement to ensure complaints are dealt with quickly and efficiently. In March 2024 we carried out a self-assessment against the Complaint Handling Code and created a new [complaints policy](#) and procedure to help comply with the code.

Over 90% of our stage 1 and 2 asset management complaints (91% at stage 1, 95% at stage 2) were about repairs. We are increasing our capacity to respond to repairs by engaging a second day-to-day contractor.

We are implementing a digital IT programme to improve complaints data availability and accuracy to allow for better customer insight and quicker resolution of issues.

We are revising the categories in our customer relationship management system to assist the effective allocation of complaints and strengthen our ability to report on trends and themes. We will be looking at the responses from the TSM questions to understand what our residents are telling us and build that into our service delivery, aided by residents who will review the service standards with us.

Lessons from complaints will be systematically fed back into housing services, incorporated into project plans, and reported at programme boards.

To read the annual report in full, use your phone camera to scan the QR code and click the link.

If you would like to receive a printed copy of the annual report, please contact the resident engagement team to request a copy. Please submit a request by 17 January 2025. You will receive a printed copy via post no later than 31 January 2025.

Email: residentinvolvement@ealing.gov.uk

Phone: 020 8825 6535



Your safety and wellbeing are our top priority. All reports of damp and mould will be investigated.

What is damp?

Damp is the build-up of moisture. As well as causing damage, some types of damp can lead to mould growth. Mould is a type of fungus that grows in moist conditions and can cause health problems. Damp can occur in homes for many reasons and affects both building materials (like walls, floors, ceilings, foundations) as well as fittings and furnishings (like carpets, curtains, wallpaper, furniture, clothing).

Types of damp

Condensation - condensation occurs when moisture or water vapour generated inside the home cools and condenses onto colder parts of the building. Black mould is frequently seen as a result of this type of damp.

Penetrating damp - penetrating damp is caused by water passing through the external walls or roof of a house because of a problem with the repair of the building, such as missing roof tiles, damaged brickwork, or cracked render.

Rising damp - rising damp is the name given to the process of water in the ground entering a property by travelling up through the pores in brickwork. It is usually caused by a broken or missing damp proof course.

Traumatic damp - leaks from water and waste pipes in the home are fairly common, especially from bathrooms and kitchens.

Help tackle condensation

Condensation is the most common form of damp. Normal day-to-day activities like cooking, showering and even breathing can add to condensation in your home. Here are some top tips for reducing condensation in your home:

- when you notice condensation, wipe down affected surfaces with a dry cloth

- keep your curtains open during the day
- if you have them, use extractor fans in the kitchen and bathroom
- try not to block air vents or trickle vents
- use lids on your pots and pans whilst cooking
- open windows after a bath or shower
- hang wet washing outside to dry whenever possible or keep windows open when drying washing indoors
- keep kitchen and bathroom doors closed to prevent moisture escaping into the rest of your home

Report damp and mould

You should report any signs of damp or mould to us right away.

We will call you to ask some questions to establish how much of a risk the damp or mould poses to you. We will then ask our specialist damp and mould contractor to arrange a visit to your home to conduct a comprehensive assessment. They will inspect your home and complete a clean and shield of affected areas to remove the risk to you. They will advise and support you on any changes that you can make to reduce damp and mould.

They will then provide us with a detailed report with recommendations on any repairs or building issues that may need to be addressed to tackle the root cause of the damp and mould. These reports and recommendations will be actioned by our dedicated damp and mould team. We will ensure that you stay informed every step of the way.

Contact us

Email: dampandmould@ealing.gov.uk

Phone: 020 8825 5682



Electrical heaters: know the risks



Electric heaters can be a great way to keep warm – especially if you only want to warm up one room. However, they should be used with care.

You can prevent a fire from starting by using your electrical heater safely. Electrical heater fires typically start when bedding, blankets or clothes are placed too close to them causing them to catch on fire. People with mobility issues are also at risk of tripping or falling onto a heater.

Top tips for using electrical heaters safely:

- make sure your heater is well maintained and in good working order
- don't take risks with old heaters – if it's electrical and getting older, get it tested by a qualified electrician or buy a new one
- keep heaters at least one metre away from clothes, curtains and furniture
- never use an electrical heater to dry clothes
- turn off your heater and allow it to cool before attempting to move it
- check that your heater is not on a recall list



Take care when using extension leads



Overloaded electrical sockets are a leading cause of house fires. Take care when using extension leads this festive period.

With Christmas lights and decorations being put up this time of year, it can be tempting to ignore important safety guidance, but it is vital that you help keep you and your family safe from the devastating affects of fire this festive season.

Top tips for using extension leads:

- only use one extension lead per socket
- never plug an extension lead into another extension lead
- use a multi-way bar extension lead rather than a block adaptor as they put less strain on the wall socket. Some block adaptors also do not have a fuse which increases the risk of overloading and fire
- check the current rating of the extension lead before plugging anything into it. Most are rated at 13 A, but some are rated at only 10 A or less - the rating should be clearly marked on the back or underside of the lead
- check regularly for danger signs and stop using the lead immediately if you find any of these:

- a smell of hot plastic or burning
- sparks or smoke coming from a plug or appliance
- blackness, scorch marks, or burnt plastic around a socket or plug
- damaged or frayed leads
- coloured wire from inside the cable showing



Do you have a community space for hire?



Our arts and culture team have launched a venues for hire directory to support venues and creatives across the borough.

Film studios, conference rooms, community centres, cinemas, exhibition spaces, indoor and outdoor venues are some of the extensive list of spaces already available for hire via the ealingculture.org website.

If you have a community space available for hire for cultural or creative events and want to reach new customers, you can list your space on our directory. Go to ealingculture.org/add-your-venue-for-hire/



Useful contacts

Tenancy queries

020 8825 5387

tenancymanagement@ealing.gov.uk

Paying your rent

020 8825 8477

housingrents@ealing.gov.uk

Compliments, complaints and suggestions

Phone: 020 8825 8855

Email: housing.environ.complaints@ealing.gov.uk

Housing hubs

Housing hubs are open on Mondays and Thursdays, 9am to 5pm.

Acton and Ealing

Address: Everyone Active, High Street, Acton W3 6NE

Hanwell

Address: Copley Management Hub, 1 and 2 Cheyne Path, Hanwell W7 1QR

Greenford, Northolt and Southall

Address: Gainsborough Tower, Academy Gardens, Northolt UB5 5PF