

# Housing News

Autumn 2023

The magazine for Ealing Council tenants

Homes



Neighbourhoods



Opportunities



## Enjoy your balcony safely

Tips to keep your balcony safe this summer. Find out more on page four.

# Introduction

Councillor Bassam Mahfouz is Ealing Council's cabinet member for safe and genuinely affordable homes



Dear Residents,

For almost two decades, I have represented Northolt West End, the ward in the borough which has the most council housing. I have worked closely with residents and tenants across my estates and I know how much pride and passion we all have for wanting to live in a safe and decent neighbourhood.

And whilst most of the time, things go well, I know these are incredibly difficult times for everyone, with costs biting and whilst this can throw its challenges, I want you to know that as a council, as your landlord or freeholder, that we are on your side. Here during the difficult times, as well as the good, working to provide a service that you can rely on and is there, listening and delivering on the promises we make.

I will be the first to say that we are on a journey as a housing team to get to a point where we need to be, but we are taking huge strides and I want you to join us in helping us get to that goal sooner.

To that end, I would like to provide a big welcome to Nicky Fiedler our new strategic director for housing and environment, who I know shares the same passion for good housing and services that I do and is as determined as I to ensure that we deliver it for you.



I want to engage in conversations with you, seeking feedback on our current services and where we can improve. If you want to get involved then now is a really exciting time to do so – your voice will be heard and we are open ears – do check out more about our new residents forum! We will also be introducing new and regular surveys to give you the chance to have your say more frequently and feed into how our services improve.

But, I am delighted to say that over the past year we have made some significant achievements that we are looking to build on in the coming months...

- 67 properties purchased for temporary accommodation: We said that we would purchase 59 homes for use as temporary accommodation last year, and we have exceeded that target by purchasing 67 properties or temporary accommodation, all of which are providing safe and secure spaces for people to stay
- £4.5 million investment in fire safety improvements: We have allocated £4.5 million towards enhancing fire safety in council tenants' homes. This investment includes installing 3,000 new doors, implementing fire-stopping measures, installing hard-wired smoke detectors, and upgrading emergency lighting.
- 74 new supported places for rough sleepers: Our efforts have created 74 new supported places for rough sleepers — an achievement that stands as the best in London in preventing homelessness, and we are the best in London at preventing homelessness
- We are rapidly improving our repair service to ensure we meet the standards our residents should expect. A new streamlined process will help expedite repairs and maintenance to our housing stock.

And finally, please do not hesitate to reach out to our service departments or me personally with any suggestions to enhance our homes.

Very best,

*Bassam Mahfouz*

Councillor Bassam Mahfouz





## New contractor appointed to tackle damp and mould issues

**Damp and mould damage our health, and we take your reports very seriously.**

We have recently partnered with ZapCarbon to implement the Healthy Homes mould prevention programme to assist with mould related issues in your home.

If you are a council tenant and have reported an issue with damp and mould to us, a Healthy Homes assessor will be in touch soon to arrange a visit.

The visit from the Healthy Homes assessor will include:

- A comprehensive mould assessment of your home

- Adjusting your heating and hot water systems to operate efficiently
- Report repairs that are directly influencing mould growth to us
- Provide advice on how to keep your home mould free
- Clean and apply a patented mould shield the mould in your home
- Install a Healthy Homes sensor, where applicable.

## Building safety notice



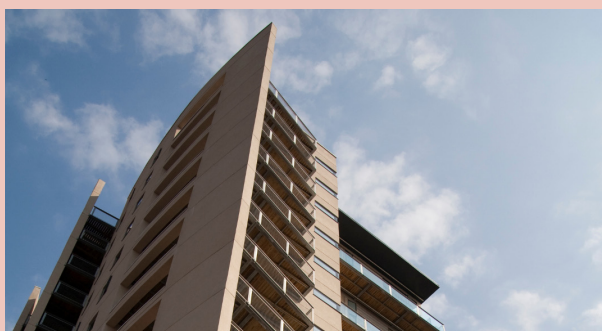
### Building safety managers and building safety officers

**New roles were introduced for buildings over 18 metres to put a focus on fire and building safety.**

The Building Safety Act 2022 requires all occupied higher-risk residential buildings to have an accountable person for building safety. A higher-risk residential building is classified as a building of at least 18 metres in height or having at least seven storeys with two or more private residential dwellings.

Your building safety manager and building safety officer for your building will visit regularly. We encourage you to speak with them regarding any questions or concerns you have about building or fire safety.

Keep an eye out for their details on display in the foyer of your building.



### We want to hear about you

**Telling us about you and your family can help us keep you safe.**

If you live in a high-rise residential building over seven storeys, we want to hear from you. We are asking all residents of these buildings – whether you are a council tenant, private tenant, or leaseholder – to get in touch with us to update the information we hold about you.

The information we are requesting relates to all personnel residing in the same property:

- Age
- Ethnicity
- Number of dependants
- Language profile (written and spoken)
- Any reduced mobility
- Any disability.

### Why do we need this information?

This information can help us identify areas where we might be able to implement further measures to help keep you safe in the event of an emergency. For example, knowing your language profile will ensure that all safety related information we provide is shared in a language you can understand or if you have reduced mobility, you might benefit from having a personal emergency evacuation plan – also known as a PEEP – put in place.

You can update your information via your online account or by speaking to your building safety manager or building safety officer.



## Be safe on your balcony

If a fire breaks out on your balcony, it could spread much faster than a fire inside your building. This is because inside buildings there are walls and doors that help to contain fires, as well as a more limited supply of oxygen to keep the fire burning. Outside on your balcony, a fire can quickly be blown by the wind, spreading it upwards and outwards and putting flats around you at risk.

We want you to be able to enjoy your balcony safely during the summer months when the weather is nice. Generally, the less you have on your balcony the more fire safe you will be. Here are some tips to keep your balcony safe.

- A suitable table and chairs are fine. Remember, some types of plastic furniture will melt in the event of a fire
- Plants are fine to allow you to enjoy your balcony space
- Keeping your balcony clear of rubbish will help prevent the starting and spreading of fires
- If you smoke on your balcony, make sure to always extinguish cigarettes fully. Keep an ashtray or bucket with water or sand on your balcony in to dispose of them safely. For help giving up smoking, go to [www.nhs.uk/smokefree](http://www.nhs.uk/smokefree).



## What is NOT allowed on my balcony?



Do not store any flammable items like timber, decorating materials, and plastic toys on your balcony



Never use fireworks of any type



Do not install reed fencing or other combustible screening around your balcony



You must not use an outdoor patio heater (gas or electric) or a flame pit



White or electrical goods such as fridges and tumble driers must never be stored on your balcony



Do not dispose of cigarettes by flicking them over the side of your balcony



Do not use barbeques on your balcony. Falling embers can burn items on your balcony and other balconies around you



Never store gas cylinders or any item containing flammable liquid on your balcony



## Items in communal areas

Your corridors and balconies could be vital escape routes in the event of an emergency.

We need to work together to ensure everyone who uses these areas – you, your neighbours and visitors - are kept safe.

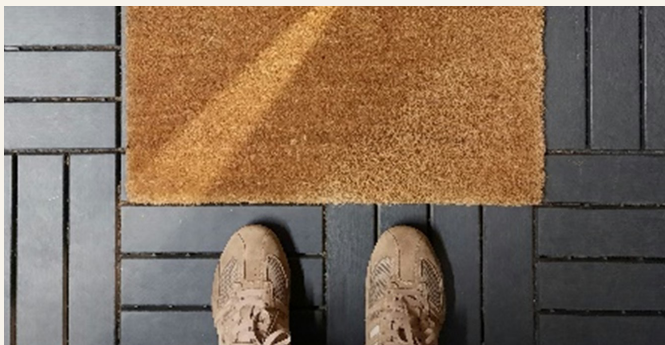
If you live in a shared building, you must make sure you keep these areas clear of items that would slow you down if you had to leave your home quickly in an emergency, or delay firefighters on their way in.

Please clear any items that you may have outside your property, in communal areas or in communal cupboards. This includes:

- Bikes including e-bikes
- Buggies
- Mobility scooters or e-scooters
- Shoes or shoe racks
- Potted plants
- Furniture, including white goods
- Household or building rubbish
- Decorations or ornaments.

We understand that you want your building to feel homely, but safety must come first. Just one person breaking these rules can put the whole building at risk.

We will remove anything which blocks important escape routes or access to emergency equipment. If we remove something that belongs to you, you will have seven days to collect it before it is disposed of. We will not tolerate any aggression against our staff while they do this job.



### Doormats

Each household can place a single purpose-made door mat outside their flat entrance door which will help keep inside of their property clean. The mat may only be placed directly in front of the door. Mats may not be placed at the top of stairs or anywhere they could cause a tripping hazard. The mat must have a non-slip backing material, be in good condition and no wider than the flat entrance door.



### Balconies

If you have one, please keep your balcony free from clutter – particularly things which could easily catch light like gas canisters, cables, glass bottles, privacy fences, paints or anything which burns easily. A small table and chairs and small plants are fine and will help you to enjoy your balcony. White electrical goods like fridges and tumble driers must never be stored on balconies.



### Rubbish

Rubbish bags should always be taken to your bin area or, if you have one, dropped down your bin chute. If the bag does not fit into the chute, please split it into smaller bags and try again. Under no circumstances should rubbish bags that do not fit in the chute be left on the floor next to the chute. As well as being a fire hazard, they also attract pests.

### Communal cupboards

Riser cupboards are in constant use and under no circumstances should personal belongings be stored in them. Riser cupboards contain important firefighting equipment and combustible materials in an electrical or service cupboard can catch light and cause a fire.





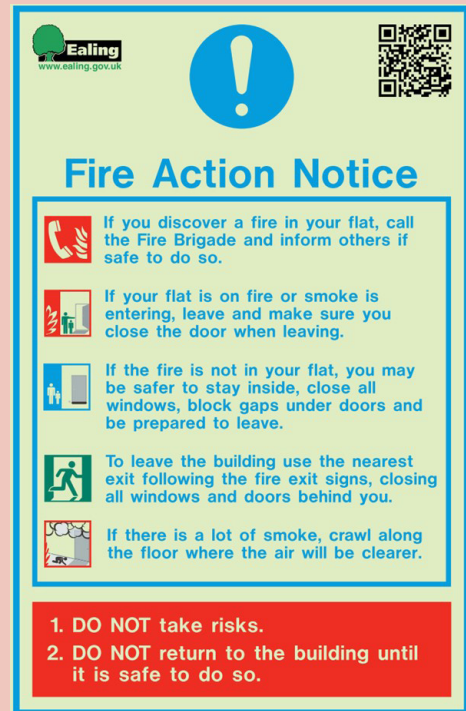
## Know your emergency plan

It is important that everyone in your family knows what to do in the event of an emergency.

Make sure you take the time to discuss your plan with everyone in your household. It is especially important that children know what to do in an emergency.

Familiarise yourself with the wider evacuation plan for your building. You should note that different plans and evacuation strategies apply for different building types and layouts. Remember, if you live in a shared block and a fire starts in another part of your building, stay in your home unless directed to leave by the fire brigade.

Have a look at the fire action notices and plans around your building to familiarise yourself with your evacuation policy or ask your neighbourhood housing officer for more details.



## Tell us if you need help to evacuate

We understand that if you have a disability, health concerns, or mobility problems, you will feel more vulnerable to emergency situations.



If you need our help, we can support you in a number of ways.

We can carry out a person-centred risk assessment, known as a PCRA, where we will visit you at home to discuss your needs with you and decide how best to help you keep safe.

We can provide you with a personal emergency evacuation plan, known as a PEEP, if required. This is a plan for keeping you safe in an emergency. This will be either by allowing you to evacuate safely yourself with the aid of specific equipment or information, or by establishing a process whereby you receive assistance from the fire brigade.

The London Fire Brigade carry out home fire safety visits across London. During a visit, brigade officers will visit you at home, and provide fire safety advice suited to your individual needs and home.

We are here to help, so please let us know if your condition changes and you need support. Speak to your neighbourhood housing officer or building safety manager.



## Housing allocations policy is changing

Ealing Council will start using its revised housing allocations policy from Monday, 4 September 2023.

The policy was last reviewed in 2013. If you are an existing council tenant who has a current application to transfer to more suitable accommodation or are a homeseeker in the borough looking to be housed by the council, these changes could affect you.

The policy sets out who is eligible to be considered for social housing within the borough, how their housing needs will be assessed, and what relative priority their application will be given. It also determines how the council's housing register or waiting list will work and how social housing in the borough will be allocated and let.

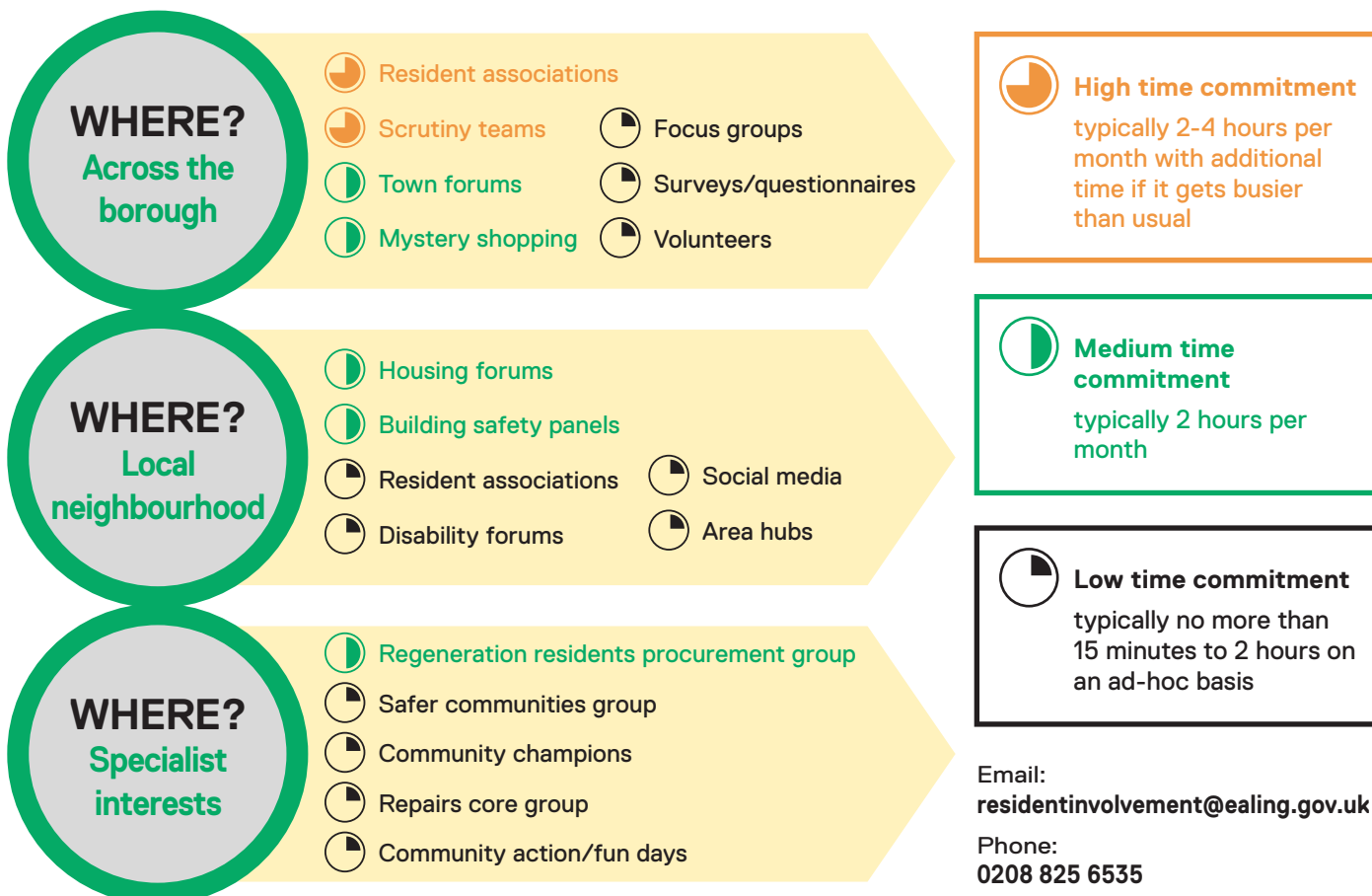
Due to the shortage of available social housing in the borough; and the growing number of applications on the waiting list, we have had to review how we prioritise applications to ensure that current and future affordable housing is allocated to those in the greatest housing need and those that have little or no prospect of being rehoused by the council are aware so they can consider alternative housing options.

For more information on the forthcoming changes, please visit the council website.

## Resident engagement



### Get involved with your community



# Resident engagement



## C.A.S.H

### Campaigning for Action in Sheltered Housing (C.A.S.H) needs you.

The resident engagement team have been running C.A.S.H since May 2008. The aim of C.A.S.H is to become an umbrella association that will help shape, be the voice of, and support all 34 sheltered housing schemes.

C.A.S.H has helped residents to resolve issues concerning cleaning, repairs, antisocial behaviour, and have organised social activities to combat social isolation.

C.A.S.H aims to:

- Ensure that sheltered housing is a safe, secure, and environmentally friendly place to live
- Be the communication bridge between sheltered housing residents and Ealing Council
- Have a legal constitution and ensure all elected officers are residents in sheltered housing schemes

- Invite professionals to discuss subjects of interest and concern to residents. Meetings are held every six weeks at Bakers House

- Acknowledge that resident associations are a powerful tool in claiming rights and funding. C.A.S.H offers support and advice to schemes willing to set up an association.

Representation at C.A.S.H has gradually grown to 18 out of 34 schemes, with representation still mainly coming from the east of the borough. If you are a sheltered housing resident that lives in Southall, Northolt, Greenford, or Perivale and want to get involved – we want to hear from you.

C.A.S.H knows there is untapped talent and experience within sheltered housing that is not being used, so join us on this mission – C.A.S.H needs you.

## Get involved



### Act for Ealing and take climate action

Climate change is widespread, rapid, and intensifying. ActforEaling is a central hub for anyone interested in taking environmental action in the borough. The resident-led initiative, supported by the council, aims to promote and encourage actions to make the borough greener and more sustainable – from not wasting food and energy to planting window boxes and repairing clothes.

For ways to get involved and make a difference to the environment, please visit [www.actforealing.org](http://www.actforealing.org)



# #ACTFOREALING





## Copley Close Fun Day

Copley Close Residents Association in partnership with the Ealing Council resident engagement team are hosting a fun day at Copley Close on Saturday, 16 September from 1pm to 5pm.

The event is to celebrate the opening of the new refurbished community centre and the association's ongoing commitment to the community.

All residents of the estate are invited to join in the festivities. The Hanwell housing hub and resident engagement team will be present.

Entertainment and refreshments will be provided.

## Become a Community Champion

Community champions are volunteers who live or work in Ealing and want to make a positive difference to the health and wellbeing of people in their community.

Trust is so important when sharing information, especially for health and wellbeing, which is why community champions are trained and supported to share reliable information and signpost residents to relevant support services available.



### Is this role for you?

The voluntary role is flexible, and champions can share this information with their community, however they want.

Your connections in the communities can be small, large or represent a specific group of people or social network.

Conversations can take place at a convenient space - from a café and library to a place of worship and school fair.

### Training and support

Training and support is provided to all community champions.

**Forums:** Forums take place every two months and give you an opportunity to meet with, hear, discuss, and learn from specialist guest speakers, other champions and colleagues on a range of topics related to health and wellbeing and their 'building blocks', the life conditions that create good health.

**Training:** Free training courses are provided to develop your skills - from digital to social media and communications to networking.

To find out more, or apply, visit [www.dosomethinggood.org.uk/communitychampions](http://www.dosomethinggood.org.uk/communitychampions) or email [communitychampions@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:communitychampions@ealing.gov.uk).



Racecourse Together is a project that aims to create new or enhanced community space on the Racecourse estate in Northolt.

## Floating community room project launched

The council has launched the floating room project, and associated grants programme, to support Northolt's community and community space operators. These project recommendations came out of the Racecourse Together Feasibility Report, which was completed earlier this summer.

### What is a floating community room?

These are existing community spaces in and around the

Racecourse estate interested in hosting community activities. The aim is to support existing venues to generate income and increase community involvement across the estate.

You can sign up to be part of the floating community room network by emailing

[visionsfornortholt@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:visionsfornortholt@ealing.gov.uk).

## Visions for Northolt funding up for grabs

Grants of up to £1,000 are available for community groups to host events in and around the Racecourse estate. The grant aims to promote community engagement and cohesion.

Grants for up to £20,000 will support in the delivery of construction and repair works to improve existing community venues on and around the estate, making these facilities more accessible for hire to local people.

These grants are part of the Racecourse Together project and supported by the Ealing Civic Improvement Fund. The project is about creating safe and attractive places for the local people to come together.

For more information on the floating community room and grants projects, please visit [www.visionsfornortholt.co.uk](http://www.visionsfornortholt.co.uk) or email [visionsfornortholt@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:visionsfornortholt@ealing.gov.uk).



# VISIONS FOR NORTHOLT



## Cost of living



### Get free mobile data

Many local people are feeling the pinch, which is why the council's four community hubs are now registered data banks and can give away free data sim cards to those who qualify.

The sim cards, provided to us by the Good Things Foundation, can be given out to help people who may not have online access or are struggling to pay for mobile data.

For more information about the scheme and who can qualify, please visit [www.ealing.gov.uk/costofliving](http://www.ealing.gov.uk/costofliving). You can also find a comprehensive list of ways you can get support with essentials here.

### Don't throw it away, give it away

Ealing Freegle is an online community group where local people can both give and get stuff for free – from furniture and kitchen utensils to clothes and electronics. It's all about reusing and keeping good stuff out of landfills.

The group, owned and moderated by one of our Community Champions, has over 19,000 subscribers. So, if you have stuff you do not need or are looking for something, see what is being 'freegled' near you – [www.ilovefreegle.org/explore/Ealing-Freegle](http://www.ilovefreegle.org/explore/Ealing-Freegle)



## Public health



### Measles is circulating

Measles is extremely infectious and can be serious.

Make sure your children get two MMR vaccines on time; the first at 1 year of age and the second at 3 years and 4 months.

If you or your children missed these vaccines, it's not too late. Ask for the free vaccine from your family doctor (GP) if you or your children aren't up-to-date.

If you have symptoms of measles, stay at home and phone your GP or NHS 111 for advice. Stay away from GP surgeries and A&E departments – you could spread the illness to others.

Symptoms include: high fever; sore red, watery eyes; coughing; aching and feeling generally unwell; a blotchy red brown rash, which usually appears after the first symptoms.

Go to [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) for more measles information.

#### Symptoms



Rash



Temperature



Runny nose



Red eyes



Cough



# Work and training

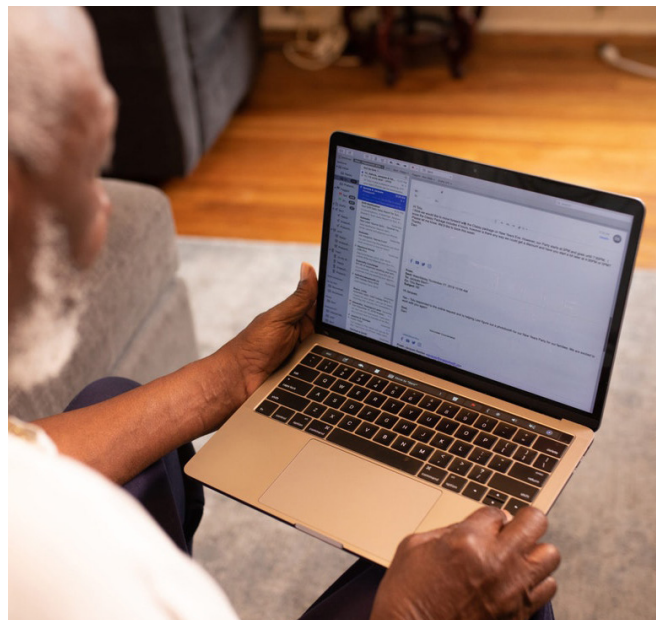


## Looking for a new career? Find your next job, training course or apprenticeship with Work Ealing

The council's employment, learning and skills team (Work Ealing) can help you find your next job in the sector that suits you most - from digital skills and finance to construction and hairdressing.

The team also offer bespoke training and support including CV building, Interview preparation and cover letter writing.

For more information, please visit [www.workealing.com](http://www.workealing.com) or email [workealing@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:workealing@ealing.gov.uk).



## Useful contacts

### Tenancy management and paying your rent

Please contact your local housing hub:

Acton

Phone: 020 8825 5387 option 1

Email: [actonhousinghub@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:actonhousinghub@ealing.gov.uk)

Ealing

Phone: 020 8825 5387 option 2

Email: [ealinghousinghub@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:ealinghousinghub@ealing.gov.uk)

Greenford

Phone: 020 8825 5387 option 3

Email: [greenfordhousinghub@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:greenfordhousinghub@ealing.gov.uk)

Hanwell

Phone: 020 8825 5387 option 4

Email: [hanwellhousinghub@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:hanwellhousinghub@ealing.gov.uk)

Northolt

Phone: 020 8825 5387 option 5

Email: [northolthousinghub@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:northolthousinghub@ealing.gov.uk)

Southall

Phone: 020 8825 5387 option 6

Email: [southallhousinghub@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:southallhousinghub@ealing.gov.uk)

### Repairs and maintenance

Phone: 0800 181744 from a landline

or 020 8825 5682 from a mobile

### Safer communities (anti-social behaviour)

Phone: 020 8825 5994

For noise nuisance: 020 8825 8111

Email: [safercommunities@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:safercommunities@ealing.gov.uk)

### Home ownership

Right To Buy enquiries:

Phone: 020 8825 5583

Email: [homeownership@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:homeownership@ealing.gov.uk)

### Caretaking services

Phone: 020 8825 8593

Email: [caretaking@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:caretaking@ealing.gov.uk)

### Resident engagement

Email: [residentinvolvement@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:residentinvolvement@ealing.gov.uk)

### Compliments, complaints and suggestions

Phone: 020 8825 8855

Email: [regenhousingcomplaints@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:regenhousingcomplaints@ealing.gov.uk)

