

Housing News

Winter 2025

The magazine for Ealing Council tenants

Homes



Neighbourhoods 

Opportunities



Merry Christmas

We hope you have an enjoyable time this festive season.
Find out more about our opening hours on page 4



Let's look out for each other this winter

Councillor Louise Brett

Cabinet member for safe and genuinely affordable homes



Small acts of kindness, neighbourly check-ins, and looking out for those sleeping rough can make all the difference this winter.

As the festive season approaches, I'm reminded of the warmth and community spirit that makes our borough so special. For many, this time of year brings people together. But for others, it can be a time of loneliness, hardship, or uncertainty.

Growing up in social housing, I remember no one had very much. But at this time of year, friends, family, and neighbours came together to support each other - from checking in to see how a neighbour was doing, to donating presents to those in need. The community spirit was always there but it definitely came alive during the festive season.

These experiences shaped my belief that everyone deserves to feel safe, supported, and part of a caring community, especially during the winter months.

That's why I'm encouraging everyone to look out for one another. If you're happy to help, and think they might appreciate it, take a few minutes to knock on your neighbour's door (during daylight hours), say hello, and see if they might need any support. If you're comfortable, swap numbers so you can stay in touch.

No one should face the cold alone. Our council officers work tirelessly to connect local people in need with safe shelter and support. Together with the incredible work of local organisations and charities, we want to create a future where everyone has a place to call home. If you see someone sleeping rough, please report it. Find out more on page 5.

An inspection by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) has found that the service we provide to you is heading in the right direction. We aim to provide you with the highest standard of service and support.

Inspections are a great opportunity to reflect on our progress and keep improving. This judgement reflects the huge amount of hard work under way behind the scenes to continue improving our service – from repairs and compliance to tenant involvement and complaint handling. I'd like to thank every council officer and tenant who took the time to prepare evidence and meet with the RSH panel to discuss the standards we were being assessed against.

Wishing you and your loved ones a safe, peaceful, and joyful festive season.



Positive outcome from housing inspection



Our housing service is heading in the right direction to ensure all our residents have high quality homes and services.

The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) sets standards for social landlords like us, and inspects them to see how well they are meeting those standards.

In our recent inspection, we received a C2 - the second highest rating. It means that we have made significant progress towards meeting the regulatory standards but still have some areas for improvement.

As you might recall, in 2022, we self-referred to the regulator to flag concerns with meeting statutory health and safety responsibilities across a range of areas. There was also failure to monitor remedial works in relation to electrical, asbestos, and water safety.



The inspectors recognised the real progress we have made since then:

- a restructure has refreshed the housing service, with permanent leadership, better aligned functions, more staff resource, and new training and systems. We have also appointed new repairs contractors
- a full stock condition survey of all our homes shows that 93% meet the Decent Homes Standard. A funded plan is in place to reach 100% by 2028
- over the next five years we're investing £425 million on improving our homes, including upgrades to kitchens, bathrooms, lifts, and roofs, and £10m on safety upgrades across 27 of our buildings
- we are approaching 100% compliance with safety checks, and all fire risk assessments are up to date
- we've improved how we handle complaints and how we listen to and involve residents, including representation on our independent housing board

This fair and accurate assessment of our housing service includes many positives, but we know there is still more to do. We have a clear plan, strong foundations, and a shared commitment to becoming a better, safer, and more responsive landlord for you.

Feeling at home: award for LGBTQ+ inclusion



Creating safe, inclusive communities is central to our housing mission



We are proud to announce that Ealing Council has been officially recognised with Pledge Pioneer status for the HouseProud LGBTQ+ Housing Pledge. This national accolade celebrates our commitment to ensuring that lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans residents feel safe, respected, and able to enjoy their homes without fear of discrimination.

The HouseProud Pledge was developed in 2019 in response to the University of Surrey's No Place Like Home study, which explored the experiences, concerns, and preferences of LGBTQ+ social housing residents. The research revealed that many LGBTQ+ tenants felt invisible, misunderstood, or unsafe in their housing environments. It highlighted the need

for landlords to take meaningful steps toward inclusivity, representation, and equity.

In response, HouseProud created a framework that calls on housing organisations to actively engage with LGBTQ+ residents and shape policies and practices that promote true inclusivity. By signing up to the pledge last year, we made a clear and public commitment to improving the experience for LGBTQ+ residents.

Specifically, the pledge commits us to:

- ensuring LGBTQ+ residents have a voice at executive and strategic levels
- increasing LGBTQ+ visibility across our housing services
- delivering a programme of staff training

Pledge Pioneer status is only given to landlords able to provide clear evidence of having made meaningful changes to the way it supports LGBTQ+ residents.

To mark the occasion, members of our resident engagement team attended a national award ceremony, proudly joined by our LGBTQ+ resident champion. It was a moment of celebration and reflection, highlighting the importance of advocacy, visibility, and inclusive practice in housing.

Opening hours during the festive period



Here is some important information to know for the upcoming festive period.

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

The last day the housing hub receptions will be open in 2025 will be Monday 22 December. They will reopen in the new year on Monday 5 January. The last day the Havelock Advice Centre (the HAV) will be open is Tuesday 23 December, and it will reopen on Tuesday 6 January.

Our phone lines will be open as usual until the end of the day on Christmas Eve, Wednesday 24 December. They will be closed until the new year, and during this period, for urgent repairs or assistance only, you can call the repairs emergency line on **020 8825 5682**. The housing hubs will provide a reduced telephone service between 29 and 31 December for urgent queries only. Phone lines will reopen again as usual on Friday 2 January.



Christmas parties at sheltered schemes

We're excited to let you know that we will once again cater for Christmas parties at all 34 sheltered housing schemes. That means nearly 1,000 of you can enjoy a festive spread together and celebrate in style. The menu includes tasty finger sandwiches, turkey and cranberry, vegetarian options, finger foods, and sweet treats like mince pies and Christmas cakes. We hope you have a fantastic time with friends and neighbours.

Remember to keep communal areas clear this Christmas 🏠

Corridors and balconies could be vital escape routes in the event of an emergency - so please don't block them with Christmas trees or decorations.

If you live in a building with multiple flats, communal areas like entrances, stairwells, corridors, landings, and service cupboards must be kept completely clear of personal belongings, including Christmas decorations.

In your home, you can put up as many decorations as you would like to, but please remember to keep any escape routes

clear – and never put them up in communal areas outside your front door. In the event of a fire, they could block important escape routes and obstruct firefighter access to emergency equipment.

Follow London Fire Brigade guidance by clearing any items that you may have outside your home, in communal areas, or in service cupboards, including:

- doormats, shoes, and shoe racks
- bikes, including e-bikes
- pushchairs, mobility scooters, and e-scooters
- plants
- decorations
- furniture, including white goods
- household rubbish
- candles or candle holders

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



Recycling, waste, and Christmas trees



As we head into the festive season, let's work together to keep our estates tidy and clean

Recycling correctly helps reduce waste, protects the environment, and helps to free up capacity in the rubbish bins - but it only works if we all do our part.



Christmas trees: Do not put Christmas trees in or around the bins. The council offers a free collection service for trees from a number of outdoor drop-off locations. Find out where and when collections take place using the link below. Alternatively, drop off your tree at Greenford Reuse and Recycling Centre (you will need to pre-book using the council's website).

Flatten cardboard boxes: Large boxes take up valuable space in recycling bins. Before you recycle them, flatten them.

Use the right bins: We encourage you to recycle as much as possible, but please make sure you're putting the correct items in the recycling bins. When they are contaminated (for example with non-recyclable items such as plastic bags and wrappings, or food waste), the bins might not be collected, and the entire load could be sent to landfill instead of being recycled.

No fly-tipping: Do not leave rubbish outside the bins – this is fly-tipping and you could be fined up to £1,000. More than 1,500 fines have been issued in the first 6 months of our campaign: 'This is our home, not a tip', to crackdown on fly-tippers

Find out more at www.ealing.gov.uk/recycling

Look out for vulnerable people this winter



As temperatures drop, it's vital we look out for those most at risk in our communities.

Winter can bring challenges for vulnerable neighbours, especially those who are isolated or without family nearby. Severe weather can strike suddenly, so being prepared and proactive helps keep everyone safe. Some small ways you can help could make a big difference:

- identify neighbours who may need support
- check in with them regularly - knock on their door during daylight hours to say hello and offer support
- offer help with groceries or essential tasks
- clear snow or ice from walkways

If you're worried about a neighbour's wellbeing, you can call 020 8825 5000 and we will check on them.

If you're concerned about someone sleeping rough, you can help by referring them to Streetlink. This service, run in partnership with Homeless Link and St. Mungo's, connects rough sleepers with local outreach teams.

When you refer a rough sleeper to Streetlink, it is important to give as much information as you can including a detailed location, time of day you saw them, and how often. This information helps outreach workers find and support the individual quickly. For urgent medical needs, always call 999. Refer a rough sleeper by visiting thestreetlink.org.uk



Your feedback shows we are improving



Halfway through the 2025-26 reporting year, we are pleased to share that most of our Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) have shown positive progress.

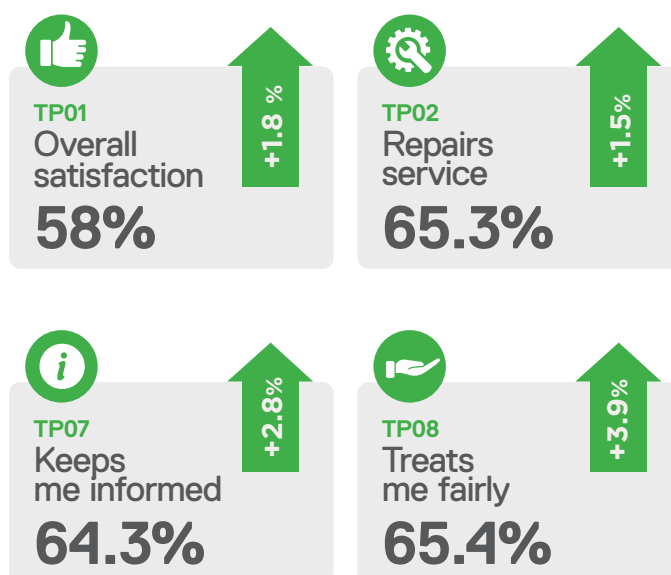
Since the end of the 2024-25 reporting year, the majority of TSM scores have improved. These scores reflect how tenants feel about key aspects of our services.

The most significant improvement was in the category for 'handling antisocial behaviour', which rose by 4.6%. This was followed by 'neighbourhood contribution' and 'listens to me' categories. The exception was safety which saw a small dip of 1.8%.

Some areas still require attention, such as 'complaints handling' which is at 22.6%, and 'listens to me' which despite improvement, stands at 50.1%.

All of these areas are being closely monitored with immediate improvement plans in place.

We've been working hard to respond to your feedback and improve services through the TSM improvement project. To help us understand how to improve, we are contacting dissatisfied residents to discuss their TSM answers with them. Find out more below.



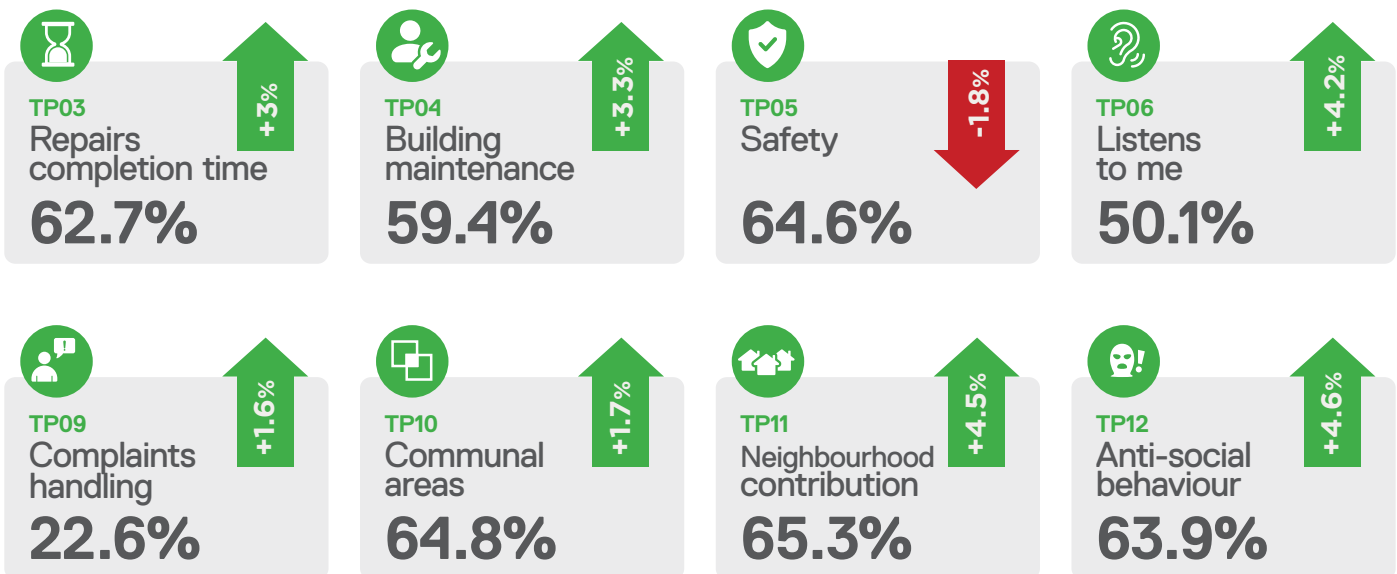
Listening to you



In this first part of a new series, we wanted to share some examples with you where we've responded to questions or concerns you have raised with us.

YOU SAID	Residents raised an issue with abandoned vehicles on the Golf Links estate.
WE DID	As part of an action day at the estate in November, we removed 21 vehicles which had been left there without moving for months on end. This was the last step in a long running process where we had left stickers on the cars and written to the registered owners to warn them the cars would be towed unless they taxed and insured them. This means more parking spaces have been freed up for residents. We'll update you further about our ongoing work to remove abandoned vehicles from your estates in your next issue of Housing News.
YOU SAID	Residents who attended the recent Resident Housing Forum told us they wanted help to better understand tenant satisfaction measure (TSM) data.
WE DID	We ran 2 resident workshops, one of which was attended by representatives from TLF, which carries out the TSM surveys on our behalf. They explained how the data was compiled and what it means. We have also updated our website with clearer TSM information, and you can find a simple breakdown of the latest data above.

You can find out more
by scanning the QR code.



Estate action days: building on success



Our estate action days aim to bring residents and council teams together to tackle issues and deliver visible improvements.

Earlier this year, we ran a pilot estate action day at Radcliffe Way estate. The event proved highly successful and following the event, we are now rolling out a programme of estate action days across the borough.

The most recent event at the Golf Links estate delivered significant results - we addressed key estate issues, including the removal of 21 abandoned vehicles from the estate and completion of more than 20 grounds maintenance actions. We worked directly with residents to log repairs and clear problem areas.



Estate action days are also about connecting residents with wider support. At the event, residents engaged with services offering cost of living advice, took part in a uniform swap to help families with school clothing, and learned more about the estate regeneration plans. Feedback from residents has been very positive.

One resident commented: "From the community's perspective this event was quite useful and we would like to see it happen more often."

By working together, these events strengthen community ties and show the council's commitment to listening to residents. They also highlight how collaboration across different service areas can make a real difference to everyday life on our estates.

More estate action days are planned, and residents are encouraged to come along, get involved, and help shape the future of their communities.

You can find out more by visiting www.ealing.gov.uk/estate-action-days

If you have any questions or suggestions, please reach out to the resident engagement team by emailing residentinvolvement@ealing.gov.uk or calling 020 8825 6535.

Keeping you safe in your home

Your safety is our top priority. Every day, our teams work behind the scenes to ensure your buildings and homes meet the highest standards.

Regular safety checks and inspections matter

To make sure your home remains safe, we carry out routine inspections throughout the year. If we find anything that needs attention, we act quickly and often within the same day for urgent repairs.



Our checks include:

- ✓ fire safety checks
- ✓ gas and electrical safety inspections
- ✓ water safety testing
- ✓ building condition surveys
- ✓ smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors
- ✓ asbestos testing
- ✓ lift safety

Let us in for vital safety checks

There are some essential safety checks we can only do from inside your homes - so you must ensure we can gain access when we need to.

As your landlord, we have a legal responsibility to test and inspect your gas fittings every year, your electrics every 5 years, and update the fire risk assessment for your building regularly too. We also need to get into your homes for other reasons, such as repairs.

Allowing us access to your home is a condition of your tenancy agreement. Our contractors will always contact you to book your test or inspection. They'll arrange a time that works for you and send reminders by letter, email, phone, or text. It's really important that you keep your appointment and allow the contractors access. There must be someone over the age of 18 at the property while any contractors visit and carry out the tests.

Please let us know as soon as possible if you need to rearrange. Missed appointments cost time and money and, more importantly, they could leave your home at risk if something dangerous goes unnoticed.

A tiny minority of tenants have failed to respond to our repeated requests. In these cases, we have taken legal action in order to gain access, which can incur extra costs to the tenant. Some of these tenants now have County Court Judgements against them and are liable for our legal

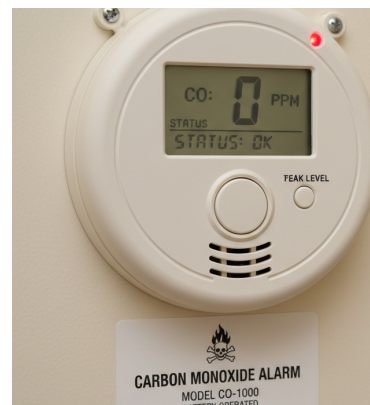
fees. In some cases, abandonment notices will be put up on front doors if we don't hear from people when we ask to get in. To keep you safe, we may also have to disconnect services, like gas.

Gas checks are the most frequent reason we would

need to enter your home. When you receive a letter or a phone call from our contractor T Brown telling you that your inspection is due, please get in touch to make an appointment as soon as possible. The longer you leave it, the more you risk exposing your family to carbon monoxide poisoning or the risk of a fire or explosion.

T Brown also check your carbon monoxide alarm and smoke alarm during the visit. Any property with a gas appliance must have a working carbon monoxide alarm.

If you don't know when your last gas safety check was, or you think your next check is overdue, please contact our contractor T Brown Group at servicing@tbrown.com or call 020 8786 1240.





Fire safety

Fire safety is something we often talk about, but its importance was brought into sharp focus recently when a fire broke out in a resident's flat in Acton in October. Thanks to the building's safety measures, the fire was contained within the flat and did not spread to other homes. The property's compartmentation and the fact that the fire rated entrance door was closed played a crucial role in preventing further damage and keeping residents safe until the fire brigade arrived.



This incident is a powerful reminder of how vital fire doors and proper safety measures are in protecting lives and property. Fire doors are specially designed to withstand fire and smoke for a set period, helping to contain it within one area.

Remember to keep your front door and communal doors closed and report any issues with them immediately.

24/7 repairs service

We know problems don't always happen during business hours. That's why our emergency repair line is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Whether it's a power outage, a leak, or something has broken, our emergency teams are trained to respond quickly and make your home safe as soon as possible. You can call our emergency repair line on **0800 181744** from a landline or **020 8825 5682** from a mobile.

Support for vulnerable residents – tell us if you need help

Some residents need extra help to stay safe at home. Our team can arrange to:

- personal emergency evacuation plans for anyone who may need assistance during an emergency
- welfare checks and support referrals
- adaptations such as handrails or specialist equipment
- help connecting with local health and wellbeing services



Residents who have a disability, health concerns, or mobility problems may feel more vulnerable to emergency situations.

If you, or anyone that lives with you might need assistance to evacuate your building in an emergency, please contact us to arrange a plan to set out the support you might need in the event of a fire or other emergency.

We can support you in a number of ways. We can carry out a risk assessment where we will visit you at home to discuss your needs and how best to help you keep safe.

We can also provide you with a personal emergency plan which will state whether you are able to evacuate safely yourself. If not, we will establish a process whereby you receive assistance from the fire brigade.

We are here to help, so please let us know if you think you need support. You can contact us confidentially by emailing **tenancymanagement@ealing.gov.uk** or calling **020 8825 5387**.

We will then arrange a suitable time to meet with you to discuss your needs and make sure you have the right plan in place.

Your feedback shapes our approach

If you report a safety issue, however big or small, we will take it seriously. Many of the improvements we make have come from your suggestions. Thank you for helping us by reporting concerns, following safety guidance, and working with us to keep your building safe. We're here to help, so if you ever feel unsafe or notice something that doesn't seem right, please contact us immediately by emailing **buildingsafety@ealing.gov.uk**

Put your finances first



Paying your rent is a priority, even over the festive period - nothing is more important than having a secure roof over your head.

If you do not pay your rent or keep to an agreed arrangement to repay any money you owe, you could end up losing your home if we have to take legal action. If you cannot pay the rent you owe in full, we can consider affordable repayments. This may mean paying an extra amount with your rent each week or month until the debt is paid off.

Our financial inclusion team can talk you through a range of things from help to claim welfare benefits, grants, and loans to advice to save money. If you would like to speak to the team, please get in touch with your housing hub and staff will arrange an appointment for you.

Local welfare assistance is a discretionary support scheme, and the fund is there to help people to try to maintain an independent life or for those facing an immediate financial crisis. If you're in crisis and need help to pay your rent, you can apply for a special one-off payment. The local welfare assistance team can also help with debt advice, budgeting, and improving chances of finding a job. Find out more about the support available and apply by scanning this QR code.



Moving to Universal Credit

If you are receiving benefits, you may need to move to Universal Credit if you receive a migration notice, if your legacy benefits stop due to a change in your circumstances, or if you choose to switch voluntarily. A migration notice is an official letter stating your current benefit will end and giving a deadline to apply. You can also claim housing costs to cover your rent.

To keep receiving financial support, you must claim Universal Credit before the deadline. Moving isn't automatic, so you must apply yourself. Once you claim Universal Credit, you cannot return to legacy benefits. Find out more by scanning the QR code or call the Universal Credit Migration Notice Helpline on **0800 169 0328** Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm.



Useful links



Cost of living

For cost of living support and advice, visit www.ealing.gov.uk/costofliving

Debt

For help dealing with debt, visit www.ealing.gov.uk/debt

Money Advice Services

Money Advice Services is an independent service set up by the government, and it provides free money advice. Visit www.moneyadvice.service.org.uk or call **0300 500 5000**

London Community Bank

Anyone who lives or works in the borough is eligible for free membership. Visit www.londoncb.co.uk or call **020 8756 3864**

Turn2us

Turn2us is a national charity who provides practical help to people who are struggling financially. Head to their site to find a useful benefits calculator and details of grants available. Check out www.turn2us.org.uk or call them on **0808 802 2000**.

A home run: more affordable homes coming soon



We have bought another 110 new homes in Acton as part of our commitment to tackling the borough's housing crisis.

The homes, currently under construction at Acton Gardens by developers L&Q and Vistry Group, were originally intended for private sale but will now be let to council tenants at genuinely affordable rents. They are due for completion in autumn 2026 and will provide a mix of 1, 2 and 3-bedroom properties, including several designed for residents with mobility needs.

This marks our second major bulk purchase this year, following a deal in June to secure almost 200 homes at The Green Quarter in Southall. Together, these bulk purchases will deliver 290 new homes for local families on the waiting list for a council home, which currently stands at nearly 7,500 households.

The cost of housing in the borough makes it one of the least affordable places to live in the country. In recent years, we have seen a record number of people at risk of becoming homeless asking for emergency help. We are now providing short term emergency housing for more than 2,500 local families, at huge financial cost.



By acting quickly to secure homes under construction, we are providing families with safe, modern housing and a firm foundation for better health, education, and employment opportunities.

Rooting out tenancy fraud



Tenancy fraud is a criminal offence.

Tenancy fraud happens when a tenant misuses a council home, such as sub-letting it without permission, or by providing false information when applying for council housing. Since April 2024, we have recovered 26 unlawfully occupied council properties and prevented 22 fraudulent tenancy applications.

In one case, a sub-tenant contacted us after being locked out of the property they were renting in Southall, not realising they were illegally renting a council home. Council tax records, school admissions data, and bank statements confirmed the actual tenant lived in Northampton, and received rental income from sub-tenants. This property was successfully recovered.

Tenancy management officers may carry out unannounced visits to council homes. If visited, tenants will be asked to provide photographic ID, proof of address, and details of who lives in the property. The interview is brief and designed to confirm that the rightful tenant is living there.

You are allowed to have lodgers and houseguests. Our concern is with cases where the tenant has vacated the property entirely and is re-letting it to others. These fraudulent subletters could face up to two years in prison, a £50,000 fine, and be required to repay all profits made



from the illegal arrangement.

If you suspect tenancy fraud, you can report it on our website by scanning the QR code. You can also call the fraud hotline for free on **0800 328 6453** or email **fraud@ealing.gov.uk**

All allegations will be treated seriously and in confidence. You do not have to give your name or address when submitting a report.

Helping you understand your tenancy



We have created a new tenant's handbook - a comprehensive guide to help you understand your tenancy, your rights and responsibilities, and the services available to you.



The handbook is provided at the start of every tenancy, and the most up-to-date version is available online. It's your go-to resource for everything from understanding your tenancy agreement to accessing support services and managing your housing account.

The handbook is part of our commitment to delivering high-quality housing services and supporting you throughout your tenancy.

Your tenancy agreement is legally binding and sets out the terms and conditions of your tenancy. All tenants currently have a secure tenancy, which can only end by court order for valid reasons. To remain a secure tenant, make sure to follow all terms of your tenancy.

Find out more in the tenant's handbook which you can view online by visiting www.ealing.gov.uk/tenants-handbook or scanning the QR code.



Turn your passion into a business

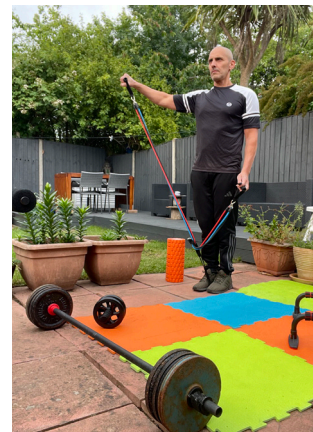


Do you have a pastime that you would like to turn into a business, and don't know where to start?

Join the Startup School - a part-time, 6-week online course, funded by Ealing Council.

Free to people out of work or low earners, the course includes more than 25 hours of pre-recorded videos, support from like-minded people during weekly networking sessions, one-to-one mentoring, and specialist workshops to improve your business skills.

The next course starts on 22 January 2026. If you'd like to start your own business journey, sign up to the course at www.startupschoolforseniors.com



Read the story of Mohamed from Perivale, founder of MoJeMo Fitness, about how he turned his passion for fitness into a business opportunity by visiting www.aroundealing.com

Useful contacts

For tenancy management or rent queries, you can visit your local housing hub or the Havelock Advice Venue:

Acton and Ealing hub

Acton Resource Centre (inside Everyone Active), W3 6NE
Appointments must be prebooked

Greenford, Northolt, and Southall hub

Gainsborough Tower, Academy Gardens, UB5 5PF

Hanwell hub

2 Ipswich Court, Copley Close, Hanwell, W7 1DX

Havelock Advice Venue

33 Hunt Road, UB2 4QB

Drop in Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9am to 5pm

Alternatively, you can call or email depending on your query:

Tenancy queries

Phone: 020 8825 5387

Email: tenancymanagement@ealing.gov.uk

Rent queries

Phone: 020 8825 8477

Email: housingrents@ealing.gov.uk

Paying your rent

Phone: 020 8825 8346 (24-hour payment line)

Repairs and maintenance

Phone: 0800 181744 from a landline

or 020 8825 5682 from a mobile

Safer communities (antisocial behaviour)

Phone: 020 8825 5994

For noise nuisance: 020 8825 8111

Email: safercommunities@ealing.gov.uk

Home ownership

Right To Buy enquiries:

Phone: 020 8825 5583

Email: homeownership@ealing.gov.uk

Downsize to a smaller home

Phone: 020 8825 8317

Email: housinginitiatives@ealing.gov.uk

Caretaking services

Phone: 020 8825 8593

Email: caretaking@ealing.gov.uk

Compliments, complaints, and suggestions

Phone: 020 8825 8855

Email: regenhousingcomplaints@ealing.gov.uk

Resident involvement team

Phone: 020 8825 6535

Email: residentinvolvement@ealing.gov.uk

We want to ensure everyone can access and understand the information in this magazine. If you require this document in a different format - such as large print, Braille, audio - or in another language, please contact us and we'll be happy to provide it in a way that suits your needs.