

## DUMPED CARS

These encourage vandalism and are potentially dangerous. If you think a car has been dumped, please contact the Council and ask them to arrange for it to be removed. Advise your Housing Officer if the Council does not act within a reasonable time.

## RUBBISH

Do not dump large items of rubbish in common areas, on the estate or in your garden. The Council will take away unwanted furniture, fridges and small amounts of garden waste - free of charge or for a very small fee. If you don't get rid of your rubbish, we will treat it as a nuisance and may take legal action against you.

## COMMUNAL AREAS

All tenants are expected to co-operate with other tenants in keeping common areas clean, tidy and free from obstruction. If others regularly obstruct hallways, talk to them and try to reach some agreement about using shared areas. Blocking escape routes can increase danger if there is a fire.



**Innisfree**  
Housing Association

A charitable Housing Association



**In business for neighbourhoods**

# LIVING IN YOUR HOME

# 7



**This leaflet is about how you can use your home and your estate to ensure they are pleasant places to live.**

## WHEN YOU FIRST MOVE IN

As soon as you move in you should check the position of the main stop taps for gas and water, and the position of the electrical fuses, in case of an emergency.

You will need to contact some other authorities for certain services. These include:

- The local Council about your council tax. You must do this, even if you receive full council tax benefit. This does not apply to shared housing.
- DSS Benefits agency and the council's Housing Benefit team.
- Gas and Electricity suppliers - they may want you to complete a form or pay a deposit. You will need to let them in to connect the service. We advise you to read the meters first, so that you don't get charged for the previous tenant.
- The Sewerage and Water authority. With the exception of shared housing for which Innisfree makes the arrangements.
- The Post Office to arrange for your mail to be re-directed.
- BT or other telephone company, if you want your own phone.
- Your GP, or a new one if you have left your previous GP's area.
- An Insurance company to arrange contents insurance. This is very important as IHA's insurance does not cover your contents
- The TV Licensing Company (Except tenants of sheltered and shared housing)

## OVERCROWDING

Your tenancy agreement identifies the maximum number of people that can live in your home, and lists the persons who live with you at the start of your tenancy. You should tell us if a member of your household moves in or out at any time. We will not permit you to take in lodgers, friends or extended family (except for a brief stay) if this would cause your home to become overcrowded. If your immediate family grows too large for your home please see your Housing Officer for help arranging a move.

## RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUR NEIGHBOURS

When you sign your tenancy agreement, you agree not to cause a nuisance to your neighbours or to others legitimately using the estate or building. Most of our properties are in blocks of flats or close to or attached to other houses, so that your behaviour may disturb your neighbours. Please be aware of their comfort.

Remember that you are responsible for the behaviour of everyone in your household (especially children) and of your visitors. If they damage Innisfree property or cause a nuisance or harassment, we will take action against **you**.

Innisfree will not get involved in personal disputes between neighbours, unless behaviour of one party creates a serious nuisance.

See also our leaflet 'Anti Social Behaviour, Harassment and Domestic Violence' for more information about how you can avoid causing anti social behaviour and what you and Innisfree can do if you are experiencing anti social behaviour.

## USE OF THE PREMISES

You may not use your home for any **illegal, unlawful, immoral or disorderly purposes**. Innisfree will take legal action against you if you break this clause in the tenancy agreement.

Tenants of **shared housing** must ensure that communal facilities for example lounge, kitchen and bathroom are kept clean, tidy, comfortable and available to all. From time to time this may mean sharing their use or waiting for another to finish.

## Working at home

Innisfree recognises that more and more people now have the opportunity to work at

home. You must not work at home without first discussing this with your Housing Officer and getting Innisfree's agreement.

We will:

- Consider whether the work could disturb others, including causing noise, smell, extra visitors or traffic;
- Consider whether you would be using or storing dangerous substances or equipment;
- Consider whether you need any external approvals e.g. food safety certificate, childcare registration;
- Advise you of the potential effect of your work on any benefit income;
- Normally permit work that you can do quietly, safely and inconspicuously;
- Confirm or withhold our consent in writing within 28 days.

## PETS

You do not need Innisfree's permission to keep fish or one or two small creatures in suitable containers e.g. hamsters or birds. **We do not allow any other pets in flats**. This is because dogs and cats may foul communal areas and may make noise that could disturb your neighbours. A registered guide dog is permitted, but please tell your Housing Officer about it.

Tenants in **shared houses** may not keep any pets because animal fur can cause or worsen allergies such as eczema and asthma.

You must ask permission for any other pet in properties other than flats or shared houses. We will respond within 28 days, and if we refuse, will tell you why.

If we allow you to have a pet, you must keep it under control at all times and ensure it does not cause damage and is not a health risk, in your home or in the communal areas. If you allow it to cause a nuisance, we may withdraw our permission. If you do not then remove the pet from your home, we could seek a Court Order to require you to do so. In extreme circumstances, Innisfree would consider taking legal action to end your tenancy.

If someone else's dog is causing a problem, contact the Police, Environmental Health Service or the Council's dog warden.

## TV/CABLE/SATELLITE DISHES

All of the Association's properties are supplied with a TV aerial and connection point. We do not permit satellite dishes to be erected so would encourage tenants to consider installing cable TV as an alternative. However, you must ensure that any cable installation does not damage our property (including external surfaces), so please check first with your Housing Officer.

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Everyone wants to keep their fuel bills down and as this also has a positive impact on the environment, you may wish to consider the following suggestions:

- Reduce your annual heating bill by 8% by turning the heating thermostat down 1° Centigrade;
- The ideal room temperature is 18-21°C and water temperature is 60°C;
- If you have them, adjust the radiator thermostats in each room to reflect usage;
- Use low-energy light bulbs – they cost more to buy but last longer and are cheaper to run;
- Use the shower more often than the bath;
- Wash up in a bowl rather than under running water; **and**
- Replace washers immediately if ever you have a dripping tap.

## SECURITY

It is almost impossible to make your home burglar-proof, but there are a number of things that you can do to make it more secure.

- Close all windows and lock external doors when you go out;
- Don't hide keys under a mat or on a string inside the letterbox;
- Cancel your milk and newspapers when you go away;
- Fit extra locks to windows and outside doors (but please speak to your Housing Officer first).