

*"Go n-éiri an bóthar leat...
(May the road rise up to meet you)"*



Welcome to the Summer edition of our newsletter



It feels like it's been a summer of competitions! Obviously the first one to come to mind is the Innisfree Gardening Competition (see story later) and it's such a pleasure to see the results of tenants' hard work.

Then we've had sporting competitions, with the Commonwealth games in Birmingham and the England Women's Football Team winning the Euro 22 final at Wembley (and I was wondering if residents of our Waterfront Heights scheme, with views of the Wembley Stadium arches, heard the excitement on the night?).

We couldn't fail to notice the competition to become leader of the Conservative Party – and by the time you read this, the resulting new Prime Minister might be in No 10! But who could forget the competition for us to have the hottest day on record, ever! (Too hot for me, by far.)

And we've got a bit of a race to run this coming year with all the cost-of-living challenges to face. So, we want – more than ever – to know how things are going for you this year.

In this edition, we introduce George Kirby, our new Resident Engagement Officer and he'll be looking to get to know you and to make sure that we've got the best arrangements for you to engage with us. We are trying out a new type of survey this year too – not just asking you what you think of our services currently but also what could we do differently that would have a positive impact for you and your family. Look out for that survey soon.

There's extra information in this newsletter about different offers and services that could help you with the cost-of-living pressures at the moment. Would that be an area you think we could improve on?

To finish, I'd repeat what I said in the last newsletter about how we see our work. It's not just about being a landlord; we want to see our residents "enjoying healthy and fulfilling lives"

So, again, if there's something we can do to help, please just ask.

Best wishes

John Delahunty
Chief Executive

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Competition

Innisfree Creative Gardens Competition 2022 – the winners!

Thank you to everyone who entered our **Creative Gardens Competition** this year! We were pleased to hand out over £100 in grants at the beginning of the competition which meant we saw some great gardens!

The gardens were judged by our Chief Executive, John, along with our Resident Engagement Officer, George, and they were amazed by what they saw! Here are the winners:



- **Best small space** – the prize of £75 went to a **tenant at one of our Hammersmith and Fulham properties** who created a leafy green oasis.



- **Best individual garden** – the prize of £100 went to **Gerry and Mary at Erconwold Street** whose garden was lovingly created with some really unique design features.





Competition



- **Best community project** – the prize of £100 went to **Innisfree House** for their beautifully manicured garden which is enjoyed by the local community.



- **Communal garden** – the prize of £100 went to **Clochar Court** for their spectacularly colourful entry!

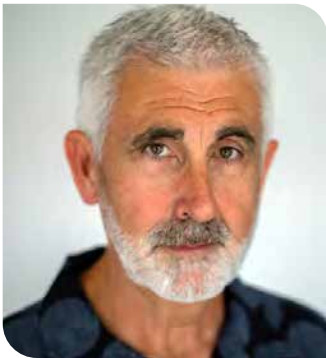


We can't wait to see the entries for next year!

Resident Involvement

Welcome to our new resident engagement officer – George Kirby

We are really pleased to announce that George Kirby has joined us as our new Resident Engagement Officer. George started with us at the end of July and



comes with over 30 years of experience working with tenants at housing associations all over London, such as Peabody and Amicus Horizon.

No doubt some of you will hear from George soon, so please give him a big Innisfree 'hello' if he gives you a ring! He is looking forward to building relationships with you all!

#WithTpas **with Tpas** 

Great news, we're Tpas members

As a member it means our tenants can access a range of services to help you become more involved in shaping the services we offer.

Speak to our tenant engagement team about how to access:

- Skills development opportunities
- Fortnightly electronic newsletters to keep you up to date on the tenant engagement agenda and housing news
- Access the online resource hub for good practice
- Policy briefings; toolkits and example documents from landlords and tenants across the country
- Attend free Webinars and online events
- Join the online networking platform 'Tpas Connect' to network with other Tpas tenant members
- Help influence national policy

Speak to our tenant engagement team about how to access these benefits.

Or visit:
www.tpas.org.uk/member-search
Find your landlord and register your profile.



 @tpasengland  tpasengland

BME London Landlords

We've previously mentioned the new **BME London Tenants Forum** for tenants of the twelve BME landlords in London, which includes Innisfree.

We are still looking for a tenant who would like to be involved. The meetings are held online 3-4 times a year. The group's purpose is to:

- empower BME LL Tenants to champion their voices so that they are heard separately to influence policy and shape service delivery;

- dialogue with the National Housing Federation – the national body for housing associations;
- provide a direct audience with Deputy Mayor of London for Housing;
- provide a direct audience with Council Leaders;
- contribute to co-production of Housing Manifesto for London.



If you'd be interested in joining the Forum, please email George.residentengagement@innisfree.org.uk and we can arrange to have you speak to Khalid, who is coordinating the meetings, to explain how it works.



Resident Involvement

Combatting loneliness

October is Older Persons' month so we thought this would be a good time to remind you of the Silver Line charity, founded by Dame Esther Rantzen in 2013.



The service offers support to the 1.2 million older people in Britain believed to be struggling with loneliness and social isolation. The helpline is free to use and is open 24 hours a day seven days a week, 365 days per year. They offer friendship, conversation, and support for older people, especially people who may be experiencing feelings of loneliness and isolation.



Everyone needs someone to talk to sometimes, so if you are feeling lonely pick up the phone, give them a call

and enjoy a chat on **0800 4 70 80 90** or find out more here: www.thesilverline.org.uk.

Brent Irish Advisory Service (BIAS) Active Aging Club

If you live in Brent – do you like to dance? Do you like to drink tea? Do you like to chat with Irish people? If so check out the Active Ageing Club which runs every Thursday from 1pm to 4pm at the Trades Hall in Cricklewood 134-136 Cricklewood Lane, London NW2 2DP.

Each week they provide various activities. Live entertainment is held from 2:30-3:45pm. Membership is not required so people may attend the club on a week-to-week basis, and it's only £5.00 including sandwiches! Sounds fun!



- SUPPORTING VULNERABLE PEOPLE
- SOLVING PROBLEMS
- BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

Brent Irish Advisory Service has supported the UK's largest Irish Community since 1978, helping over 50,000 people during this time.

We operate Welfare Advice services and an Active Ageing Club.

CONTACT US FOR ADVICE ON:

WELFARE ENTITLEMENTS

HOUSING

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

ACTIVE AGEING

IRISH ADVICE MATTERS



Please support us to continue our work with the most vulnerable in our community.

www.biasbrent.co.uk
0208 459 6655



Charity no: 1059801

Our Services

Keeping your data safe

It is important that we keep your personal information safe. When you call our offices to discuss your tenancy, our staff will ask you a few questions to confirm your identity. We will need to do this even when we know you well or speak to you regularly.



At times you might wish to give us permission to discuss your tenancy with someone else. You will need to give us signed authorisation to do this. Please ask for a PERMISSION TO DISCUSS YOUR

TENANCY FORM from our Housing Team. You can use this form to let us know who we can talk to about your tenancy, and what we can speak to them about.



Investors in People Silver award success!

Investors in People (IIP) is a framework for organisations to assess the way that they manage and support their staff.



With our fifteen people employed at Innisfree, we first used the framework in 2018 and have just had our reassessment completed – and have been rated at the Silver standard!

The independent assessor found improvements in the way that we lead, manage and support staff – looking at the way we communicate and run our team meetings, the training available for staff and the way that objectives and targets are set for everyone.

We'll have another assessment in three years' time, so we are aiming even higher – going for Gold then!

Follow us on Facebook!

Have you liked our Facebook page yet? We regularly post really useful information on our page to keep you up to date with things happening here at Innisfree, in your area or general stuff that might be useful to you as a tenant.

To give you a bit of encouragement, we are offering a £25 shopping voucher to the person who becomes the 250th follower!



You can find us on Facebook here
[@InnisfreeHousingAssociation](https://www.facebook.com/InnisfreeHousingAssociation)



Health and Safety

Gas safety – quality control checks by PCM

Your safety is paramount to us and, by law, we are required to do an annual safety check on any of our properties which have a gas fuelled heating system or have a gas supply connected to the property.



Our contractor **John O'Connor** carries out these safety tests and services on our behalf. We have and continue to maintain a level of 100% compliance in relation to this important area of safety, and we thank our residents for providing access to their property so our contractor can undertake the annual tests.

As part of this process, we also have to carry out checks on John O'Connor to ensure they are carrying out their works correctly. In order to do this, we employ the services of Phoenix Compliance Management.

Their role is to conduct audit inspections and undertake a thorough examination of the contractor's service regime, installations, and repairs to ensure works have been completed correctly, in a safe manner and in accordance with relevant regulations and manufacturers' instructions. This is so that we know they meet our contractual specification and, most importantly, ensuring your safety.

This is a very important part of our Gas Safety Management process therefore we are requesting that if you receive an appointment request from PCM to attend your property you provide access to their engineer in the same way as you would for John O Connor.

As always if you have any concerns about anyone requesting access to your property always contact us to confirm that they are genuine and acting on our behalf, and always check their ID before you let them in.

Money Matters

Struggling financially? Here are some things that may help



Household Support Fund

Each local authority has some funding available for people struggling financially. Eligibility varies from Council to Council so will depend on where you live. Check out your Council website to find out more.

Thames Water: WaterHelp

If you live in London and earn below £19,565, Green Doctors can help you to apply for a discounted water bill through the WaterHelp scheme. If you qualify, you may be eligible for a 50% discount on your water bill.

Thames Water: WaterSure

If you are on a water meter, Green Doctors can help you to apply for the WaterSure scheme if you are in receipt of a means tested benefit, have a large family, or a medical condition which makes it hard for you to save water. If you qualify, your water bills may be capped.

Warm Home Discount

This is a one-off discount of £140 on your electricity bill which is automatically credited to your energy account or prepayment card/key during the winter. The scheme is open between September to March each year. You may be eligible for extra help, but you need to apply as schemes are only open for a short period. Contact Green Doctors to find out more.

Ofgem

The Priority Services Register is a free support service to help people in vulnerable situations. Energy suppliers and network operators offer it. Each keeps their own register. You need to contact your energy supplier or network operator to get on it. Find out if you are eligible here www.ofgem.gov.uk/getting-extra-help-priority-services-register.

£400 discount off energy bills

The UK Government will pay the £400 directly to energy suppliers who will deliver this support to households with a domestic electricity account over six months from October.

Direct debit and credit customers will have the money credited to their account, while customers with pre-payment meters will have the money



Money Matters

applied to their meter or paid via a voucher – this will depend on whether they have a smart meter or not. This will not need to be repaid.

DWP Pension Credit Take Up Campaign

It's estimated that up to £1.7bn of pension credits are left unclaimed. To help with this, the government is encouraging pensioners to check what they're entitled to. Even if you're receiving a state and private pension or have savings, it's worth contacting them on **0800 99 1234**.



Cost of Living Payment

Over 7.2 million households should have received a cash payment of £326 by the end of July 2022 to ease cost of living pressures. If you're on qualifying benefits, you'll have been paid automatically in the same way you usually get your benefit or tax credits – you don't need to apply. A second instalment will be paid later in the year with separate payments for pensioners and disabled people. Find the details at gov.uk/guidance/cost-of-living-payment.

Healthy Start

If you're more than 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under 4, you may be entitled to get help to buy healthy food and milk.

If you're eligible, you'll be sent a Healthy Start card with money on it that you can use in some UK shops. Money will be added every 4 weeks.

New financial service comes to Innisfree: Tenancy Sustainment Officer

As part of a group of four small London based Housing Associations; Innisfree Housing Association, Ekaya Housing Association, Hornsey Housing Trust and Shian Housing Association, have decided to work together to create this important new role to provide additional support to our residents.



From September, **Taju Oyedeyi** will be joining Innisfree as Tenancy Sustainment Officer to provide support to our tenants one day per week. The purpose of the Tenancy Sustainment Officer is to help residents sustain their tenancies, to make sure they can access all the support and funds that are available to them, so that they maximise their income and can afford to live independently and with dignity.

If you feel you would benefit from speaking to Taju, please contact our housing team on **020 8625 1818** or email housing@innisfree.org.uk.

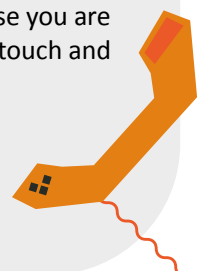
Get debt help from StepChange

Debt is a small word, but it can be a big problem, and it can get bigger the longer you wait to deal with it. StepChange Debt Charity helps thousands of people every week to overcome serious debt problems.

For free confidential and impartial advice to help you get your finances back on track contact StepChange via their website www.stepchange.org or call **0800 138 1111**. Calls are free from all landlines and mobiles. Lines are open Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm and Saturday 8am to 4pm.

Starting the conversation about debt might be the last thing you want to do but 5 simple questions could help you understand how close you are to having a debt problem. If you find you do need help, get in touch and they'll guide you through what you need to do next.

StepChange
Debt Charity



Struggling with your energy bills?



We can help.


We are a charity which helps residents to save money, stay warm, and improve energy efficiency in their homes by offering free and impartial telephone energy and wellbeing advice.

Our advice sessions are available to anyone on a low income OR over 65 years-old OR with a long term health condition or disability OR with children under 5.

Your Green Doctor will help you:

- Save money on your energy bills
- Switch energy providers
- Access prepayment meter support
- Access the Warm Homes Discount
- Apply for grants for energy or water debt
- Get additional wellbeing support

Visit greendoctors-london.org or call **0300 365 3005** to book an **energy and wellbeing advice session** or to find out more.

 [greendoctorsldn](https://www.facebook.com/greendoctorsldn)

 [GreenDoctorsLdn](https://twitter.com/GreenDoctorsLdn)



Green Doctors are part of Groundwork London, a registered charity No. 1121105

Save money: Save the planet

There are many ways that you can help create an energy efficient home and reduce the cost of your household bills.

We have seen some extreme weather over the summer so this will also lower the carbon emissions from your property and help the climate.

As we move into Autumn and the weather starts to cool, some of these ideas will help keep you and your property warm. Some changes are practical and can be purchased or installed but some things are behavioural and are simple changes you can make to your everyday life.

- use your central heating controls effectively and turn your thermostat down by 1°C. Don't forget to test your heating before the weather turns!
- adjust your hot water temperature;
- make sure radiators aren't covered or blocked by furniture, so the heat can get into the room. Fit radiator reflector panels to reflect heat back into the room;
- install draught proofing like curtains, letterbox and keyhole covers. Keep the warmth in and the cold out;
- replace your light bulbs. Light emitting diodes or LEDs are the most efficient;
- monitor your energy using a smart meter. Identify which appliances use the most electricity;
- switch lights off when you leave a room and turn electrical goods off when you're not using them. Do not leave appliances on standby;
- buy the most energy-efficient appliances possible;
- defrost your freezer to make it more efficient;
- save water by changing to eco shower heads and reducing shower time. This will reduce the amount of energy needed to heat the water. Use a shower timer and set it to 5 minutes;
- put lids on pans [this will also help with condensation]. Use the toaster instead of the grill, microwaves instead of a conventional oven, manual tools over electric ones – and slow cookers or air fryers;
- don't overuse your kettle, only boil as much water as you need;
- after you've finished using the oven, leave the door open to keep the kitchen warm;
- run your washing machine with full loads, on 30°C, with short cycles;
- use your tumble drier sparingly but if you do use it clean the filter and use eco balls;

If you need any further advice please see the Green Doctors advert opposite. If you are of pensionable age, are on benefits, or a low income, you may be entitled to some of the energy saving devices for free.



Our News

Changes in our Board of Management

As you know, Innisfree has a Board of Management responsible for the overall running of the organisation – though they delegate the day to day running of services to the staff team.



After seven years of service, we've just said goodbye to two of our Board Members – Liz and Mairéad – pictured at an event at which we thanked them for their service.

We've had two new Members join the Board this year, bringing new skills to our meetings.

All the Board Members are keen to have a really good understanding of how services are working for you – they want to know what you think. We'll be organising more ways for them to have the chance to meet and speak to tenants in the coming year – and they'll be coming out on a Board tour of some of our schemes in September, so look out for them then!



'My Tenancy'

Are you a busy working person who struggles to get in touch with us during working hours? Don't forget that you can sign up to **My Tenancy** on our website here: innisfree.mytenancy.co.uk/signin

My Tenancy allows you to access many of our services 24/7! If you would like to find out more, call us on: **020 7625 1818** for a chat or check out our web article here which explains how to sign up: www.innisfree.org.uk/news/how-to-use-your-online-account

Stock Condition Surveys

Stock Condition Surveys have been, and continue to be carried out in our homes – thank you to residents for providing access. We will be saying more in our next newsletter about our Stock Condition Survey – keep an eye out for this.



Who to contact

When contacting us, please dial **020 7625 1818** and select one of the following options:

- to report a fault with your heating or hot water system press 1
- to discuss your rent account or make a rent payment press 3
- for all other repair and maintenance enquiries press 2
- for all other tenancy matters and general enquiries press 4

Innisfree

Innisfree Housing Association, 190 Iverson Road, London NW6 2HL

Tel: 020 7625 1818 | Email: housing@innisfree.org.uk | www.innisfree.org.uk



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE
We invest in people Silver

Irish
in Britain

BME
national



An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade