

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



## Remembering our yesterdays



***I'm in one of those phases when I'm spending time looking back and remembering. Some of the memories are linked to things here at Innisfree.***

With this edition of the newsletter, we've included our Annual Report for last year, and the whole team at Innisfree are proud that you rated the service we provide so highly, with overall satisfaction running at 88%.

Then we've just said goodbye to Ciara Chivers, one of our Board Members for the last six years, as she has come to the end of her term on the Board – and so I've been remembering the first time we met Ciara as we recruited her! (Look out for the advert for new Board Members included here too.)

Thinking about people we have lost during the year, this included Martin Joyce one of our tenants who has left us great mementoes with his artwork, some of which is on display in our office reception. Remembering Martin also triggered memories of so many other great characters we've known over the years at Innisfree – with so many comedians, story tellers and musicians amongst them.

We're also marking the completion of our newest homes at John Pierce House in Neasden – and the naming of the scheme is a special memorial to one of our London Irish housing colleagues who died suddenly and very young. I love the fact that John's name will be spoken for years as our tenants give the name of where they live.....!

On a personal note, my Mother is going to be 90 years old on 29 August and we're having a big celebration at the Tyneside Irish Centre– so as you'd expect that's led to many, many conversations about her past and our own family stories!

I'm a big fan of reminiscence – it helps us to know who we are and what we're part of. It would be great to hear more of your stories and reflections on how life has changed/ is changing too, so please get in touch if you'd like to add another chapter to the Innisfree history!

I'll leave you with some words of the Co Kerry poet, Brendan Kennelly which remind us of the way each of our lives shapes the world around us.

Best wishes

**John Delahunty, Chief Executive**

### **"We Are Living" by Brendan Kennelly**

*What is this room  
But the moments we have lived in it?  
When all due has been paid  
To gods of wood and stone  
And recognition has been made  
Of those who'll breathe here when  
we are gone*

*Does it not take its worth from us  
Who made it because we were here?*

*We are living  
In ceiling, floor and windows,  
We are given to where we have been.  
This white door will always open  
On what our hands have touched.  
Our eyes have seen.*

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## Our News

# Estate Inspections

**Our next round of Estate Inspections is taking place, and we want you to be a part of it.**

Led by your Housing Officer, these inspections take place at our blocks of flats every three months. They are your chance to walk around the block, chat with neighbours, and help us ensure everything is as it should be.

We will be checking communal area cleaning, grounds maintenance and overall safety issues like lighting and security.

Look out for an invitation from your Housing Officer before each inspection. Your input is invaluable in keeping our community clean, safe, and welcoming for all.

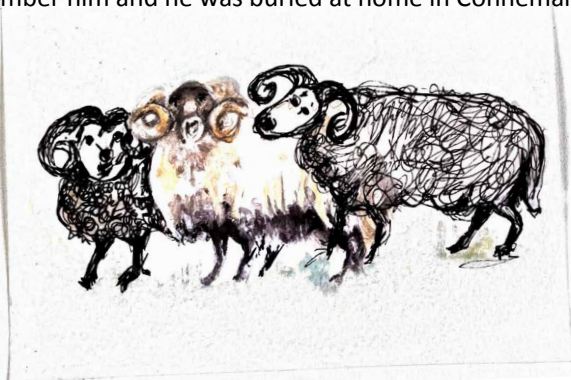
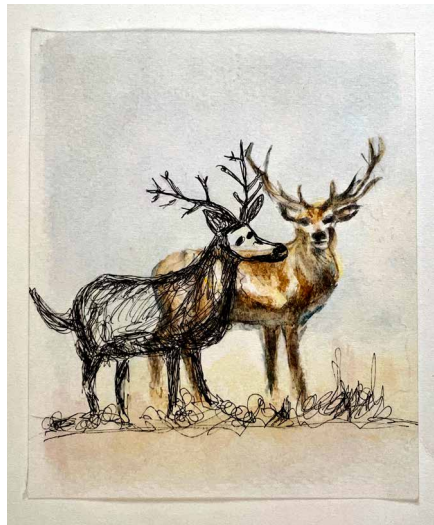
If you have any questions, contact your Housing Officer for more information.



## Martin's legacy of pictures

Originally from Connemara, Martin Joyce was a great character, with a big smile around the corridors at Clochar Court, in Harlesden. Then a few years ago, we arranged an afternoon art class, led by the artist Bernard Canavan – and Martin the Artist was revealed to us all!

He'd draw on anything – old envelopes, the backs of letters (even letters from Innisfree) and sometimes on the inside of the cardboard box from breakfast cereal – he just had to be drawing. His neighbours at Clochar Court gathered to remember him and he was buried at home in Connemara.



## New Development: John Pierce House

We've recently welcomed new tenants to our latest scheme of 9 flats at John Pierce House in Neasden. We've had to be patient with this scheme, as we've been working on it since 2018 – but it's been well worth the wait now.

The site was actually a piece of "spare" land that was owned by TfL and they had originally acquired it when some road widening was being considered at that point on Neasden Lane North and we were successful in bidding to buy it from them as a site for new homes.

We've named the scheme after John Pierce, originally from Cork, who was a London Irish housing activist, and who had worked with us at the National Housing Federation, the organisation that represents housing associations. He was also a councillor in Tower Hamlets and fought for people who didn't have power themselves, speaking out so that they could have better lives. John died suddenly in 2021, aged just 40, and we felt that giving his name to the scheme was a fitting way for him to be remembered.

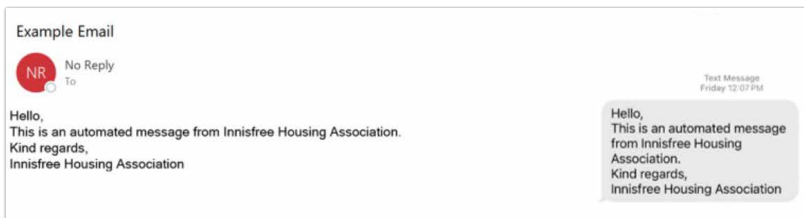


## Our News

### Introducing HomeMaster: Our New System/Portal

In Our Spring 2024 newsletter, we mentioned the launch of HomeMaster, our new Housing Management system designed to manage our properties, your tenancy, rent account, and our communication.

Among other new features, HomeMaster allows us to send you important updates, notifications, and reminders via email and text messages directly from our portal. Please note that these messages are not spam. Notifications will come from an email address: [noreply@innisfree.org.uk](mailto:noreply@innisfree.org.uk), you cannot reply to them as they are automated messages from our system. You may also receive texts from us. Rest assured; these are legitimate communications aimed at keeping you informed.



### Watch This Space: Tenant Portal Coming Soon

Exciting news – we are developing a Tenant Portal within our new system, HomeMaster. This portal will provide you with easy access to your account information, your rent account, let you raise and follow maintenance requests, and more. This portal will take the place of our old portal, which has now been turned off. Stay tuned for updates on its launch over the coming months.

## Innisfree Tenant wins Irish in Britain Award

Irish in Britain held its annual Volunteer Awards ceremony at the Hammersmith Irish Cultural Centre in June and the winner of the Trustee of the Year Award, was Innisfree tenant, John McCarthy who is also a Trustee of The Traveller Movement. John had been nominated by two people, Sabrina Franklin from The Traveller Movement and John Delahunty, Chief Executive of Innisfree.

Sabrina said that John always “went above and beyond... his passion for the cause is evident in every interaction.” She described him as a “powerful advocate and spokesperson... who also leaves a lasting impression as a true champion for social justice and equality”. John Delahunty described John as an “ambassador for Innisfree” and “the best neighbour you could ever hope for”. John told the audience that he felt emotional accepting the Award and thanked both organisations for nominating him.



*Congratulations John from all of us at Innisfree!*

## Money Matters

# Helping with the cost of living

Acuity Research & Practice Ltd carry out surveys with our residents to gain feedback on the services Innisfree provide. Through these surveys we have asked residents how they feel about the cost of living: in 2023/24, 75% of residents surveyed were still concerned with managing their income alongside the cost of daily living.

There are a number of agencies that offer free service on debt management and money advice, that can make a real difference to how you are managing your day-to-day costs:

### Green Doctors:

If you are on a low income or on benefits, disabled or have long term health conditions, pregnant or with children under 10, Green Doctors can help!

These are some of the ways they can support you when you sign up for a free phone consultation or home visit:

- Help you to switch your energy tariff to a better deal.
- Advise you on how to reduce energy use in your home.
- Support you to access the Warm Homes Discount or Priority Services Register
- Help you with applications for energy or water debt relief.
- Refer you for the installation of larger measures if needed.
- Deliver small efficiency measures, such as LED lightbulbs.

Find out more at [london.greendoctors.org.uk](https://london.greendoctors.org.uk) or give them a ring on **0300 365 3005**. They can also provide advice via video call with a British Sign Language interpreter and have language interpreters available for non-English speakers.



### Step Change:

Facing debt can be stressful, especially as a tenant. Innisfree supports your well-being, so we wanted to highlight StepChange, a FREE and confidential debt charity.

- Get expert advice on managing debt and budgeting.
- Negotiate with creditors for affordable repayment plans.
- Explore debt solutions if needed.
- They specialize in helping people on low incomes, including tenants.
- Their support is confidential.
- They empower you to manage your debt.

Visit StepChange or call **0800 138 1111 (free)**.



### Entitled to:

To check that you are getting all the benefits that you are entitled to, use a free online benefit calculator tool to input your circumstances and find out what benefits you could claim. We recommend a tool like that provided on [www.entitledto.co.uk](https://www.entitledto.co.uk).

If you need any help applying for benefits, please contact our Housing Team on **0207 625 1818 (option 4)**, or at [housing@innisfree.org.uk](mailto:housing@innisfree.org.uk).





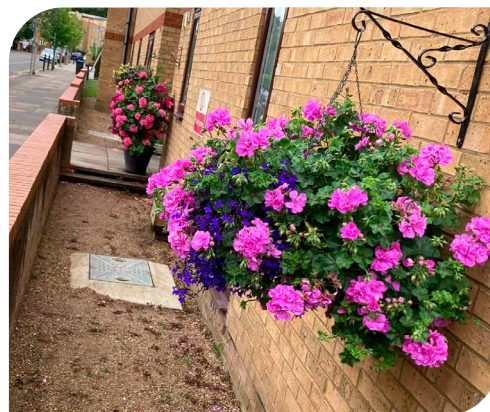
# Gardening Competition Winners



**Congratulations to the winners of our annual Gardening Competition! Your beautiful gardens have brought colour and joy to your communities. Thank you for your hard work and dedication. Here are some pictures of our winning gardens:**

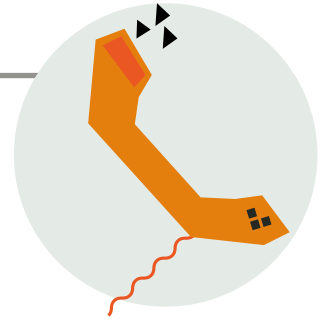
- Clochar Court – Best Communal Garden Category
- Innisfree House – Best Communal Garden with Hanging Baskets Category
- West Hampstead – Best Edible Garden Category
- Belsize Square – Best Communal Taming a Wild Garden Category

*We look forward to seeing more stunning gardens next year.*



## Resident Engagement

# Complaints Handling Code



You may have heard about the Housing Ombudsman, the body that helps landlords resolve disputes with tenants through an independent complaints scheme. All social landlords, including Innisfree, now need to produce an annual complaints report that shows how we follow the requirements of the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code – and we’ve put ours on our website ([www.innisfree.org.uk/residents/complaints-and-compliments/](http://www.innisfree.org.uk/residents/complaints-and-compliments/)).

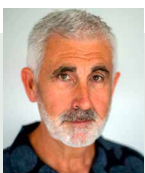
We really do encourage you to let us know if our service isn’t to the standard you’d expect. We always try to get things right first time, but sometimes we don’t – and we want to learn from those situations so that the same problem doesn’t happen again.

## Becoming an Innisfree Board Member

Could you help us to keep oversight of the way that Innisfree runs now and how it operates into the future? We are looking for someone with these kinds of skills:

- Experience in evaluating, problem-solving, and making decisions – that doesn’t have to be in a formal way – you might have gained this experience in a job or even juggling a busy family – the important thing is that you are willing to grow and learn.
- Ability to work together as part of a team – we rely on our governing board to pull together to make the decisions we need so teamwork is important.
- Good listening skills and great communication skills – you will already be used to listening to other’s views and speaking in a group and be interested in learning more.
- Not afraid to challenge the team in a constructive way and raise questions about the work we do – you will be the vital voice of our residents so you must be interested in thinking about this diverse and wide perspective.

What’s in it for you? We pay an annual allowance of £1500 (subject to tax and national insurance), meet reasonable expenses costs – and would invest in the training you need to be effective in the role.



For more information or to express your interest, please contact George Kirby at [residentengagement@innisfree.org.uk](mailto:residentengagement@innisfree.org.uk) or call 0207 625 1818



## Resident Engagement

### Resident Consultations

We value your feedback. Resident surveys and complaints help us constantly improve our policies and procedures, ensuring they reflect resident needs and current legislation. We currently have three policy documents under consultation and would like to hear your thoughts. These documents are the Contractors Code of Conduct, the Responsive Repairs Policy, and the Rechargeable Repairs Policy.



If you would like to read the full documents or provide any feedback, please contact our Resident Engagement Officer George Kirby on: [residentengagement@innisfree.org.uk](mailto:residentengagement@innisfree.org.uk) or on **0207 625 1818** (option 4). The documents can also be seen at [www.innisfree.org.uk/residents/resident-consultation/](http://www.innisfree.org.uk/residents/resident-consultation/).

#### Contractors Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct outlines the standards expected of contractors working with Innisfree. Following feedback from our Involved Residents group, we have summarised the key points of the Code below for all residents. Contractors are expected to:

- Contact you to arrange a visit and introduce themselves to you.
- Not enter your property unless someone over the age of 18 is present.
- Treat all tenants with fairness and respect as well as minimise disruption to your home.
- Use safe materials and tools.
- Keep Innisfree informed of the works progress, including taking photographs before and after works.
- Maintain confidentiality and comply with data protection laws.
- Safeguard keys and access codes to communal areas where appropriate.
- Not undertake private work for residents.
- Not offer or accept bribes or accept gifts or hospitality.
- Report any concerns to Innisfree

#### Responsive Repairs – Consultation

We also invite all residents to review our updated Responsive Repairs Policy. This policy outlines:

- How to report a repair: Call **0207 625 1818** (option 2) during office hours, or option 1 out of hours in an emergency. Email [maintenance@innisfree.org.uk](mailto:maintenance@innisfree.org.uk) if not an emergency repair.
- Details the repairs Innisfree is responsible for: Innisfree are responsible for maintaining the property, its fixtures and fittings, and external decoration.
- Specifies the timescales for completing repairs: Emergency – 24 hours, Urgent – 7 days and Non-urgent – 28 days.

#### Rechargeable Repairs – Consultation

This policy is in place to recharge tenants for repairs that are not Innisfree's responsibility. Most commonly, the policy applies to damages caused by tenants, their household, or visitors to their home – on purpose or by behaving irresponsibly, through neglect, or through misuse. It also covers the cost of removing items that have been left behind when a tenant moves out, or when items have been fly tipped.

## FourMillionHomes – training to empower residents

Four  
Million  
Homes

Residents living in social housing now have access to a new government-backed training scheme, helping them to raise issues with their landlord. This is all part of wider government reforms that will give social housing residents a stronger voice. A partnership of experts in the sector has received a government grant to roll out a new training package open to anyone living in social housing in England.

The scheme aims to help residents engage effectively with their landlord to demand a higher quality of service, where needed. Residents can learn how to take an active role in how their home is managed – through a series of workshops, forums and online resources. You can find out more at [www.fourmillionhomes.org](http://www.fourmillionhomes.org).

## Housing matters

# Addressing Damp & Mould

In most cases, the cause of condensation and mould in homes is due to too much water vapour in the air.

Our leaflet – available on our website – identifies the different types of damp, what can cause it and what can be done to reduce it. It also helps identify where it could be a fault in your property and how to report it.

Examples of problems that may cause damp and mould where a repair would help are:

- a leaking roof
- blocked gutters
- leaking pipework
- defective brickwork or rendering
- defective damp proof course
- defects around window frames



If you are struggling with condensation, damp, or mould you should report any concerns to our Maintenance Team on **020 7625 1818 (Option 2)**. We will ask you some questions about damp or mould in your home and we may ask you to take some photos. We will most likely arrange for one of our contractors to visit your home and provide us with a report on their findings.

We will share that report with you and make a plan to resolve the issues.

## Useful numbers

**National Debtline:** 0808 808 4000 or use their online webchat

**Citizens Advice:** 0800 240 4420

**Universal Credit Helpline:** 0800 328 5644



## 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](mailto:housing@innisfree.org.uk) | [www.innisfree.org.uk](http://www.innisfree.org.uk)



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We invest in people Silver

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An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála  
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