

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



All change, please, all change!



Has anyone found their way around the Overground recently? Been on the Lioness Line? Or the Weaver Line? Can you remember what colours they are on the map?

I'm a fan of the change – though it'll take me a while to get used to it – and the fact that we'll have the reminders of the Windrush generation and the Suffragettes and the others in our everyday lives.

Even more significantly this year, we've had a change of Government after the General Election, and some of us have new MPs representing us in Parliament and we will all start to see the impact of the changes they bring forward, whether it's on tax, benefits, pensions, health...the list goes on.

We've also had change at Innisfree: some changes that affect all housing associations, such as new standards we have to meet in the way we deliver services to you; other change that's just for us, such as the recruitment of new Board Members and our new IT system.

There's much talk of Artificial Intelligence (AI) changing all our lives too – I haven't been in a driverless car yet, but our new IT system uses AI to be able to "read" invoices we receive from suppliers, so we can get them into payment! It's a long way from how an accounts department operated when I first started work.

Thankfully, although the cost-of-living pressures that affect us all haven't gone away completely, the rate of inflation has dropped – but we still offer a range of support to anyone who is having particular difficulty, so please ask us about that.

As the world changes around us, it's even more important for us to know how things are going for you all. There's mention later of our group of Involved Residents meeting and offering their thoughts on our service, and we'd really value you giving us feedback in whatever way suits you best.

And as we think about the change that the New Year might bring, I share some thoughts from the poet Brendan Kennelly from his poem "Begin":

***Though we live in a world that dreams of ending
that always seems about to give in
something that will not acknowledge conclusion
insists that we forever begin.***

I wish everyone a very peaceful and Happy Christmas and New Year.

Nollaig Shona Duit

Best wishes
John Delahunty,
Chief Executive



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Our News

Involved Residents Meet the Board

Recently, our Involved Residents group met Innisfree's Board Members for the first time and it provided an opportunity to get to know each other and share ideas in an informal setting. Residents invited Board members to attend their next meeting when there will be more discussion, looking at any concerns residents have and how further enhancements can be made to services and improving the already high levels of resident satisfaction.

Maggie, one of the involved residents who attended, said:

"It was lovely to be able to chat to the board members at the meeting. Sharing views and opinions is always productive. I would like to see more meetings where Board Members would attend."

Other residents felt it was a good beginning and are looking forward to more opportunities for engagement with the Board.

Events like this help us keep the lines of communication open and strengthen our sense of community.

If you'd like to join our Involved Residents group or explore becoming a Board Member, reach out to George Kirby at residentengagement@innisfree.org.uk or call 0207 625 1818. We would love for you to get involved and help shape the future of Innisfree.



Would you be interested in joining our Board in the future? When we have vacancies, we identify the particular skills we need at that time (e.g. financial, legal, development etc) and would welcome applications from our residents.

Want to know more? Contact George Kirby on residentengagement@innisfree.org.uk.

Struggling to pay your rent or now in arrears?

If you are in arrears or struggling to pay your rent, please get in touch with Sean on 020 7625 1818. He can offer advice on welfare support and may be able to help in other ways. Please don't ignore the problem as it will likely get worse.

Who Are Acuity and Why Might They Be Calling You?

Innisfree works with an independent company called Acuity to gather valuable feedback from our residents through a telephone survey. Acuity may contact you on a private number to discuss a recent repair you requested or to hear your overall views on Innisfree as a landlord.

Your feedback can be as confidential as you wish. If you prefer to stay anonymous, Acuity will share your feedback without attaching your name or address. If you'd like us to know who you are or would like a member of our team to

follow up, Acuity will ask your permission before sharing your details.

We want to extend a big thank you to everyone who has participated in these surveys over the past year. Your insights help us understand what we're doing well and where we can improve, making a real difference to our services.





Money Matters

Pension Credit and How It Can Help You

Pension Credit is a government benefit designed to boost your retirement income if you're on a low income. It gives additional financial support for those over State Pension age, helping to top up your pension to a minimum level. Not only does Pension Credit increase your income, but it also acts as a "passport" to other valuable benefits and entitlements.

If you qualify for Pension Credit, you may also be eligible for additional support such as Cold Weather Payments, reductions on your Council Tax, and assistance with health-related costs, like free NHS dental treatment and help with glasses and transport costs for hospital visits.



To apply for Pension Credit, you must be over State Pension age and meet specific income requirements. It's easy to check if you qualify by visiting the official government website at gov.uk/pension-credit/eligibility, or by calling the Pension Credit claim line at **0800 99 1234**. If you need any help checking your eligibility or applying, please contact us on **0207 625 1818**.

Stay Safe from Scams

Scams are crimes where criminals trick people into giving away money, bank details, or personal information. These scams can come in many forms, from a well-planned scheme over time to an unexpected text message or phone call. Scammers often take advantage of uncertain times, such as the cost-of-living crisis, and may pressure you to make quick decisions.

Scammers often pose as legitimate organisations, promising financial help or requesting personal information. Remember, no genuine organisation, like your bank or local council, will contact you out of the blue asking for sensitive information, especially your bank details. If you receive a suspicious call or message, avoid engaging with it directly. Instead, contact the organisation using a trusted phone number—found on a bank statement, official website, or phone book.

Be especially wary of "too good to be true" offers or deals that

put pressure on you to act quickly. Legitimate organisations won't rush you or force you to make a snap decision.

If something doesn't feel right, trust your instincts. Take time to think, and never feel pressured into sharing information or transferring money. Seeking independent advice is also a good idea, especially if you're making a significant financial decision.

Scammers are becoming increasingly sophisticated, and unfortunately, many people fall victim to their tricks. If this happens, remember: it's not your fault. Scams are designed to deceive, and anyone can be a target.

If you suspect you've been scammed, contact your bank immediately to secure your accounts. Then, report the scam to Action Fraud, the national fraud reporting service, at **0300 123 2040** or actionfraud.police.uk.

Your report helps protect others by raising awareness of these crimes.



Resident Engagement

Policy Consultations

We value your feedback! Resident surveys and input help us continually improve our policies and procedures, ensuring they reflect residents' needs and current legislation.



At present, we're seeking your views on four policy documents under consultation: the Antisocial Behaviour Policy, Domestic Abuse Policy, Pets Policy, and Unacceptable Behaviour Policy.

To review these full documents or to provide feedback, please contact our Resident Engagement Officer, George Kirby, at residentengagement@innisfree.org.uk or **0207 625 1818 (option 4)**.

You can also view the documents online at: www.innisfree.org.uk/residents/resident-consultation/.

Antisocial Behaviour

This policy explains how our Housing Team investigates reports of antisocial behaviour in and around our homes. It defines behaviours that are considered antisocial and outlines how your Housing Officer will address these concerns impartially and without bias.

We work closely with partner agencies such as the police, local authorities, and support organisations to resolve issues as swiftly as possible.

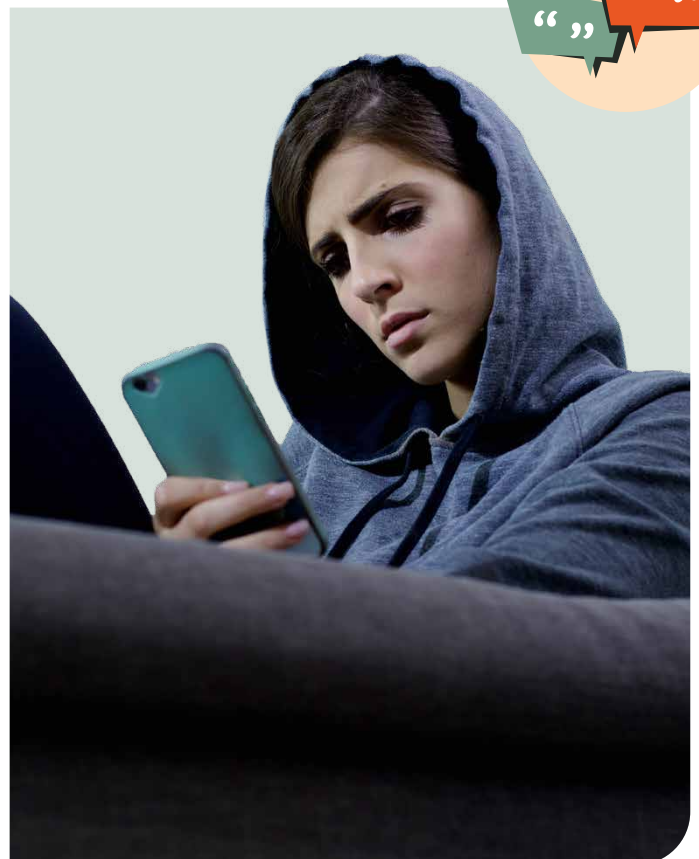
For further details, please visit our website or contact your Housing Officer at **0207 625 1818** or housing@innisfree.org.uk.

Domestic Abuse

Innisfree has a zero-tolerance stance on domestic abuse and is committed to the Make a Stand pledge.

Residents affected by, or concerned about, domestic abuse can contact our Housing Team for support. Our Housing Officers provide a listening ear and work with agencies such as refuges, the police, and advocacy groups to ensure safety for those affected and their families.

Learn more about our pledge at: www.innisfree.org.uk/residents/domestic-abuse/.





Resident Engagement



Pets

Recognising the importance of pets as companions, we updated our policy following the pandemic to allow residents to keep cats and dogs under certain conditions.

You may request permission to have a pet, depending on your home type and location. However, this doesn't apply to those in our sheltered scheme, shared houses, or certain newer properties within larger housing estates.

We kindly ask that you consult with your Housing Officer before bringing a pet home to ensure it's suitable for your residence and that you're prepared to care for it.

If you already have a pet and haven't informed us, or if you're considering getting one, please contact your Housing Officer at **0207 625 1818** or housing@innisfree.org.uk.

Unacceptable Behaviour

This policy is designed to help protect our staff when dealing with difficult or unacceptable interactions, whether with tenants, residents, members of the public, or other agencies.

If a staff member encounters unacceptable behaviour, they will address it politely and request the behaviour to stop. Should it continue, they may pause contact and resume the conversation once the situation has settled. In rare cases where unacceptable behaviour persists, we may impose temporary restrictions, such as limiting communication to writing, having conversations with a witness present, or restricting office visits.

Though used infrequently, it is important to share this policy with our community.

We appreciate your time and thoughts on these policies and look forward to receiving your feedback.

Staying safe this Christmas

With winter upon us and Christmas just around the corner, it's important to us that you have a safe, warm, and comfortable home so that you and your family can enjoy the festive season safely and it wouldn't be Christmas without lights!

So here are some steps you can take yourself to ensure electrical appliances are safe:

- visually check leads and wires on appliances for any damage
- switch off electrical appliances when they are not being used
- do not overload plug sockets as these can overheat and cause fires
- keep leads and wires for appliances away from any heat sources
- when using extension leads, make sure these are completely unwound when using to prevent overheating
- check plug sockets and other accessories to ensure there are no signs of damage
- be vigilant of plug in festive lights, especially when used on a tree. Some low quality or older style lights can get very hot and can cause fires to start.

We hope you all have a wonderful and safe Christmas and holiday season.



Housing Matters

Staying Independent with Aids and Adaptations

To help residents live independently and comfortably your local council, in partnership with Innisfree, offers a range of aids and adaptations for your home.

If you feel you need an aid or adaptation made to your home to help you live comfortably, an Occupational Therapist (OT) from the local council will assess your needs and many recommend helpful adaptations. Once agreed, they'll let us at Innisfree know, and we will work together with you to get things set up.

Small adaptations like grab rails or shower seats can add safety and support, while larger changes, such as wet rooms or stairlifts, provide greater accessibility.



If you have any questions, contact our housing team at **0207 625 01818** or email housing@innisfree.org.uk.

Fire Safety: Keeping Your Home Safe

Fire safety is a top priority for us, and we take every step to ensure your home and block meets safety regulations. In addition to the checks we carry out, here are some simple tips to help keep your home safe through the winter:

- Never leave candles unattended, and always extinguish them before leaving a room.
- Keep space heaters away from furniture, curtains, and other flammable materials.
- Ensure smoke alarms are working by testing them regularly.
- Avoid overloading electrical sockets and check wiring for any signs of wear.
- Have a fire escape plan in place and ensure everyone in your household knows it.

By following these precautions, you can help reduce the risk of fire in your home. Stay safe, and if you have any questions, feel free to contact us at maintenance@innisfree.org.uk.

Gas Safety: Annual Checks for Your Safety

Thank you to all residents who have allowed us in for their annual gas safety check. This important check ensures your home's gas appliances are safe and working properly.



If you haven't yet had your annual gas safety check, please remember it is a legal requirement. Our contractors will be in touch when it's time for your inspection. The check won't

take long, but it's essential to ensure that all gas appliances in your home are safe to continue using.

If you have any questions about the process, please contact our Maintenance team on **0207 625 1818** or via maintenance@innisfree.org.uk.

Health and Safety

Our electrical testing programme maintains our homes appropriately whilst achieving better value for money, meeting resident expectations, ensuring compliance with our statutory and regulatory obligations and delivering a more environmentally sustainable asset base in the process.

The Asset Management Strategy also sets out how the essential legal and regulatory requirements expected of us are planned to be met, as well as identifying how a range of other objectives can be met, including energy efficiency and sustainability.

To read our Asset Management Strategy in full, please visit our website innisfree.org.uk or if you would like a paper copy or wish to provide feedback, please email our housing team at housing@innisfree.org.uk or call **020 7625 1818**.

Electricity is part of our lives. We use it from the moment we wake up and throughout the day. As a result, we sometimes forget how powerful and dangerous it can be. So, as a landlord, Innisfree has a responsibility to carry out a periodic safety check on the electrical installations in your home to ensure that they are in a satisfactory condition and are safe for continued use.

We will notify you when your home is due for an electrical safety check, and our contractors will then contact you to arrange for an appointment, it is essential that you provide

access to your home for our contractor to undertake the inspection.

A periodic inspection will:

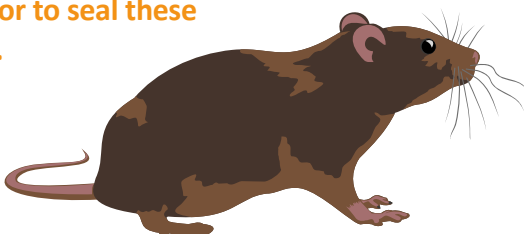
- reveal if any of the electrical circuits or equipment are overloaded
- find any potential electric shock risks and fire hazards
- identify any defective electrical work
- highlight any lack of earthing or bonding

Tests are also carried out on wiring and fixed electrical equipment to check that they are safe. A schedule of circuits in the property is also provided. Any defects or remedial works identified will be rectified as part of the inspection and testing process, and a certificate of compliance will be issued to ourselves.



Pest Control: Your Responsibility and How We Can Help

At Innisfree, we are committed to helping keep your home pest-free. While residents are responsible for preventing pests from entering and addressing any infestations that occur, we're here to assist. If pests are entering through gaps or holes, we can arrange for a contractor to seal these access points.



Residents are responsible for arranging and covering the cost of pest control or extermination services. We recommend contacting your local council for trusted pest control contractors who can help you manage the issue. Taking action quickly is key to preventing a larger problem, so please contact a professional if needed and keep our Maintenance Team informed.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact us at maintenance@innisfree.org.uk or on **0207 625 1818**.



Opening Hours

Holiday season opening hours and emergency service



Tuesday	24th December	Christmas Eve	<i>Innisfree closes at 3pm</i>
Wednesday	25th December	Christmas Day	<i>Innisfree closed (Bank Holiday)</i>
Thursday	26th December	Boxing Day	<i>Innisfree closed (Bank Holiday)</i>
Friday	27th December		<i>Innisfree closed</i>
Monday	30th December		<i>Innisfree closed</i>
Tuesday	31st December		<i>Innisfree closed</i>
Wednesday	1st December		<i>Innisfree closed (Bank Holiday)</i>
Thursday	2nd January		<i>Normal working Day</i>

While the office is closed, emergency repairs will be dealt with by our out-of-hours repairs service. Please call **020 7625 1818** and select **option 1**. Please note, non-urgent repairs will be dealt with when the office re-opens.

To find out which repairs qualify as an emergency, please see our webpage www.innisfree.org.uk/residents/your-resident-handbook/repairs-and-maintenance



Season's greetings and a happy new year to you all!



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 Housing Association, 190 Iverson Road, London NW6 2HL
Tel: 020 7625 1818 | Email: housing@innisfree.org.uk | www.innisfree.org.uk

