

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



## You can rely on Innisfree

*I don't usually spend much time making grand claims about what Innisfree does.*

In past newsletters, I've mentioned that I am often telling others what we do and about our history – that we were set up to challenge the discrimination that the Irish communities faced in the past, and from those experiences, now being ready to welcome Londoners into our homes, however far you've travelled to be here.

But at this time, I want to go a bit further and say to you: You can rely on Innisfree.

There's a lot going on in the world at the moment, and even though much of it is far away from London, many of us feel worried about how our lives will be affected, whether because we have family and friends in some of the places experiencing war or because of the economic impact of oil and gas prices pushing up our cost of living.

However you are feeling, remember; you can rely on Innisfree.

I recently heard the Northern Irish poet, Damian Gorman, reading a poem that he described as "an instrument of resilience" - a tool to use to help us get through difficult times. It offered me a moment of calm reflection; I hope it does the same for you.

Best wishes

**John Delahunty,**  
Chief Executive



Poll na Brón dolmen

### Acts of Resilience by Damian Gorman

*If you are lost,  
If you are out of your depth,  
If you cannot explain  
Yourself to yourself,  
If you're too tired to sleep,  
Too tender to touch,  
And if even a little  
Is much too much.*

*If the trails to what's sweet  
Have all grown cold  
Or you're full of fright  
Like a falling child,  
Then the thing is to act  
As brave as you are not-  
Act like your life  
Depended on it.*

*Act like a child  
Who is simply free;  
Pretend you're as big  
As the shadows you see.  
Borrow from dreams  
That you've had – and you will;  
Gather the pieces;  
Know you are whole.*

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## Community News

# 2026 Gardening Competition Launch:

Now open: Innisfree Creative Gardens Competition 2026



It's that time of year when we ask you to showcase your beautiful gardens and outdoor spaces. It's one of the Innisfree diary highlights and we can't wait to hear from you!

Early Bird entries received by 31 May 2026 can receive a small grant to help buy plants and materials. Grants are £15 for hanging baskets or window boxes, £20 for a small space patio or balcony edible garden, £25 for an individual garden/wildlife garden, and £25 for a communal garden.

### How to Enter

To enter, please contact Judy Maher, Resident Engagement Officer on email [residentengagement@innisfree.org.uk](mailto:residentengagement@innisfree.org.uk) or mobile **07484 900 639**. You can also contact us by email at [housing@innisfree.org.uk](mailto:housing@innisfree.org.uk) or you can find competition details on our website here: [www.innisfree.org.uk/news](http://www.innisfree.org.uk/news).

The final closing date for all entries is 14 June 2026, and judging will take place in early July.

**Voucher prizes of between £50 and £100 are available in all categories including:**

- Best individual garden
- Best hanging baskets or window boxes
- Spectacular small space patio or balcony
- Best garden for wildlife
- Best community project or communal garden
- Best edible garden.

We look forward to receiving your entries and please remember to take photos so we can see your garden in its prime.

# St Patrick's Day Celebrations

Central London burst into a sea of green this March as thousands gathered to celebrate the annual St Patrick's Day Parade. A much-loved fixture in the city's cultural calendar, the 2026 event once again transformed Trafalgar Square and the surrounding streets into a lively showcase of Irish music, dance, and community pride.



As in previous years, the parade brought together a vibrant mix of community groups, marching bands, Irish dance schools, and cultural organisations. Colourful floats rolled past iconic landmarks, accompanied by traditional tunes that had spectators tapping their feet along the route. Families, Londoners, and visitors

from across the UK lined the streets, many dressed in emerald hats, scarves, and shamrocks to mark the occasion.



## Pocket Power

We are pleased to share with you that Innisfree have established a referral partnership with Pocket Power – [www.pocket-power.co.uk](http://www.pocket-power.co.uk).

Pocket Power is a social enterprise that helps people reduce their everyday household costs and improve their financial wellbeing.



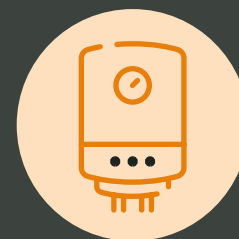
This service is delivered by telephone and is designed for residents who struggle with digital systems or lack confidence engaging with energy suppliers. Support includes advice and support to reduce energy and water bills, switching suppliers, applying for social tariffs and grants, addressing energy and water debt, and accessing essential household items where eligible.

If you would like to be referred please contact [residentengagement@innisfree.org.uk](mailto:residentengagement@innisfree.org.uk) or call Judy on 0748 490 0639.

## HACT Fuel Fund

We are pleased to be collaborating with HACT (a charity in the social housing sector) again this year to support eligible residents with fuel vouchers. We can refer our tenants to HACT for support and apply for vouchers on your behalf.

Over 20 of our tenants have so far received £147 in fuel vouchers through this scheme. You may be entitled to £147 in fuel vouchers if you are in rent arrears and have a prepayment meter – please contact Judy Maher to find out more [residentengagement@innisfree.org.uk](mailto:residentengagement@innisfree.org.uk).



**HACT**  
ideas and innovation in housing

## Engagement

# Let us know your comments

We have a draft strategy and two draft policies for your comments.



### Resident Engagement Strategy

We've been working on a new Resident Engagement Strategy that sets out how we'll stay connected with you, involve you in decision making, and building a stronger sense of community across our homes. The draft is now ready and before we finalise it, we want to make sure it truly reflects the voices of the people who live here. You know your community best.

By sharing your thoughts on the draft strategy, you can help us:

- Make sure our plans match what matters to residents
- Strengthen the way we communicate and work together
- Create more meaningful opportunities to get involved
- Build a more inclusive and supportive community

This strategy is for you – and it should be shaped **with you**. We would really value your perspective as we take the next step. See the bottom of this page for how to comment.



### Aids and Adaptations Policy

This policy explains how we support residents who need changes to their home to help them live safely and independently. This can include small adaptations like grab rails, or by working in collaboration with your local authority we can provide larger adaptations such as level access showers. We want to make sure the policy is clear, fair, and easy to understand for anyone who may need support now or in the future.



### Home Improvements Policy

This policy sets out how tenants can request permission to make improvements to their home - from changing light fittings, installing different flooring, to more significant alterations. Your feedback helps us ensure the policy is practical, transparent, and supportive of residents' needs, while keeping homes safe and well-maintained.

## We'd like to hear from you



Your views help shape how we deliver our services and keep our strategies and policies in line with what residents need. If you have comments, suggestions, or questions about any of the above, please get in touch – even if it's just a small point. Every bit of feedback makes a difference.

You can view our draft documents online at [www.innisfree.org.uk/residents/resident-consultation/](http://www.innisfree.org.uk/residents/resident-consultation/) or contact us to request a copy. You can share your thoughts via email to [residentengagement@innisfree.org.uk](mailto:residentengagement@innisfree.org.uk) or by calling **020 7625 1818 (option 4)** before 29 May 2026.

# Tenant Satisfaction Measure Surveys: Why Your Voice Matters

We want every resident to feel safe, supported and proud of their home. We carry out telephone 'Tenant Satisfaction Measures' (TSM) surveys every 3 months to ask for feedback on our services. The surveys helps us understand how well we're doing and where we need to improve.

The survey looks at things like the quality of your home, repairs, communication, feeling listened to, and safety in your building or neighbourhood. All social landlords must publish these results each year so residents can see how their landlord is performing. We will publish our performance results for 2025/2026 on our website in the coming months.

## Who Will Call

Our independent partner Acuity carries out the survey for us. If you get a call from **0203 769 4298**, that's them — if you are concerned about scam callers you could add this number to your contacts so you can be certain it is a genuine call on behalf of Innisfree. You can you also choose for your answers to be confidential.

**acuity** making sense of housing Acuity Research & Practice (Acuity) provide tenant satisfaction surveys and benchmarking services, helping housing providers to improve services and engage with their residents through an understanding of satisfaction, performance and profiling data. They have been providing consultancy services to the social housing sector for over 27 years.

## How It Helps

Your feedback shows us what's working and where we need to do better. It helps us shape services around what residents need and strengthen our community focused approach. Your views guide real improvements, from repairs and communication to safety and neighbourhood investment and we will keep you updated on how your feedback has been considered and influenced our services.

## Thank You

We're proud of the strong community spirit across Innisfree. Thank you for sharing your voice and helping us to keep improving. To show our appreciation for contributing to a Tenant Satisfaction Measures survey, we are now introducing a quarterly **£100 prize draw**, the winner will be drawn from those of you who have taken part. (We survey around 60 people each quarter – that's a 1 in 60 chance of winning!)



## Your Service

# Complaints



We know that we don't always get things right, and we genuinely appreciate hearing from you – whether it's a quick request, a concern, or feedback about your experience. Every comment helps us improve the service we provide and understand what matters most to you. With that in mind, it's helpful to know the difference between a service request and a formal complaint, as each is handled in a different way.

### What is a service request?

A service request is when you get in touch to ask us to take action for the first time. This is how you let us know something needs attention. Examples include:

- Reporting a repair or fault in your home
- Telling us an area hasn't been cleaned properly
- Asking us to investigate noise or antisocial behaviour
- Requesting an update on something you've already reported

When you report an issue, you're giving us the chance to put things right. We'll log your request, explain what will happen next, and work to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

### What is a formal complaint?

A complaint is different. You can make a formal complaint when you've already raised a service request but aren't satisfied with our response or how the matter has been handled. This might be because:

- We didn't respond within the timeframe we promised
- A repair wasn't completed properly (or wasn't done at all)
- You were unhappy with how a staff member spoke to you
- We failed to follow up or take appropriate action

A complaint focuses on how we managed the issue, not the issue itself. Our team reviews complaints to learn from them and continually improve the service we provide.

Keep an eye out for our annual complaints handling report, which will be published on our website in the coming months. You can find out more about how we handle complaints here: [www.innisfree.org.uk/residents/complaints-and-compliments/](http://www.innisfree.org.uk/residents/complaints-and-compliments/).



# STAIRS

## Social Tenant Access to Information Requirements



From October 2026, a new set of rules called the Social Tenant Access to Information Requirements (STAIRS) will come into force. These changes are designed to give social housing tenants greater access to information about how their landlord operates, how decisions are made, and how services are delivered.

STAIRS aims to make social landlords more open, transparent, and accountable.

Under the new requirements, tenants will have stronger rights to request and receive information about a range of issues, including:

- How decisions are made – such as policies, procedures, and governance information.
- How money is spent – including certain financial data and service performance information.
- How services are run – such as repairs, maintenance, safety compliance, and housing management processes.

The goal of the legislation is to ensure that tenants can better understand how their landlord works, raise questions more easily, and feel confident that services are being managed fairly and responsibly.

### What will this mean for you?

As a tenant, you will be able to make formal requests for information, and landlords will be required by law to respond within clear timeframes. This brings social

housing more in line with the principles of the Freedom of Information Act, giving tenants stronger routes to challenge, question, and influence their housing services.

You won't need to do anything now. Over the coming months, we will be preparing for these changes, updating our systems, and ensuring our teams are ready to respond to requests quickly and clearly.

### We'll keep you updated

Closer to October 2026, we will provide all tenants with detailed guidance on:

- What kinds of information you can request
- How to make a request
- How long responses will take
- What you can expect from us

We're committed to being open and transparent, and we see STAIRS as an important step in strengthening tenants' voices and building trust.

If you have questions in the meantime, our team is here to help at [housing@innisfree.org.uk](mailto:housing@innisfree.org.uk).

## Rights

# New law and your rights

A new law called the Renters' Rights Act comes into effect on 1 May 2026, bringing important improvements for people renting across England.

The Act is being implemented in two parts – changes are being made to those living in private rented homes from the 1st May 2026, and changes to social housing tenants (Innisfree tenants!) are coming in 2027.

Innisfree are taking a phased approach, implementing some of the good parts of the act earlier than we need to.

### Changes to Tenancy Types

From 1st of May, we will no longer be issuing any new Assured Shorthold Tenancies (ASTs). This means that new Innisfree tenants will not go through a Starter Tenancy period or be on a time-limited tenancy.

We will also convert some of our existing ASTs to Assured tenancies – this change is currently only aimed at tenants in our Rent to Buy schemes, which are coming to an end. If this applies to you, we will have already written to you to let you know and will write to you again once the change takes effect.

All other ASTs will be converted to Assured Tenancies in 2027, once phase 2 of the Renter's Rights Act comes into effect. We will write to you all again closer to the time.

We are adopting this change early, as moving to an Assured tenancy gives greater rights to tenants, including:

- **The Right to Exchange** – the ability to swap your home with another social tenant via a Mutual Exchange.
- **The Right to Succeed** – allowing a close family member or partner to take over the tenancy in certain circumstances.

### Changes to Notice Periods

Under the Act, landlords and tenants will need to give at least two months' notice to end any tenancy. This applies to all social housing tenants and provides greater stability and time to plan if circumstances change.

If you would like to read more about the Act, you can do so here: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/guide-to-the-renters-rights-act/guide-to-the-renters-rights-act](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guide-to-the-renters-rights-act/guide-to-the-renters-rights-act)

If you're unsure what type of tenancy you currently have or need reassurance, our team is always here to help at [housing@innisfree.org.uk](mailto:housing@innisfree.org.uk) or on **0207 625 1818 option 4**.



## Rightsizing with HomeSwapper

As a resident of a small housing association with limited stock, it can take several years for a suitable property to become available if you are looking to swap homes.

To give you more options, we also offer free membership to HomeSwapper.co.uk, a website where social housing tenants can find a mutual exchange (a home swap) with other tenants.

With thousands of homes listed nationwide, it helps you connect with other tenants and find a move that better suits your household needs.



Through this scheme we have also successfully facilitated swaps between Innisfree tenants who have connected with each other via the site.

If you are interested and need any support to register on this site or you would like our help to connect with other Innisfree tenants who are registered, please contact us on **0207 625 1818 (option 4)** or [housing@innisfree.org.uk](mailto:housing@innisfree.org.uk) and we will be happy to assist.

## Spring cleaning the natural way

Fresh, simple homemade recipes for a brighter home:



### Lemon Surface Spray

A refreshing all-purpose cleaner. Mix equal parts water and white vinegar, add a few lemon slices, and wipe down counters and sinks for a natural shine.



### Citrus Degreaser

Warm water + a little dish soap + a squeeze of lemon = an easy, gentle way to cut through kitchen grease.



### Natural Drain Refresher

Pour ½ cup baking soda down the drain, followed by 1 cup vinegar. Let it fizz, then rinse with hot water for a clean smelling sink.



### Baking Soda Freshener

Sprinkle baking soda on carpets or mattresses, leave for 20 minutes, then vacuum to lift odours and freshen fabrics.



### Streak-Free Glass Cleaner

Combine 1 cup water with 1 cup vinegar. Spray and polish with a microfibre cloth for sparkling windows and mirrors.



## Money Matters

# Moving from Housing Benefit to Universal Credit



The switch from Housing Benefit and other legacy benefits to Universal Credit (UC) has been happening gradually for several years. Many people have already moved over, but there is now a final push from councils and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to complete the change nationwide.

Over the coming months, some tenants may receive a formal letter from Housing Benefit explaining that it's time to move to Universal Credit. This is known as Managed Migration, and once you receive the letter, you will have a set deadline (usually 3 months) to make your UC claim.



## If you receive a letter – don't panic, and don't ignore it!

The most important thing is to open the letter and read it carefully. If you're unsure what it means or what you need to do next, please contact us. You are not alone in this process.

## We're here to help you switch to Universal Credit

Moving to Universal Credit can feel daunting, especially if you're not confident with online forms or uploading documents – there is support available to help you.

If you receive a letter about moving to Universal Credit – or if you're just worried and want some reassurance – please get in touch:

- **Brent Irish Advisory Service:** 0208 459 6655, [welfare@biasbrent.co.uk](mailto:welfare@biasbrent.co.uk)
- **London Irish Centre:** 0207 916 2222, [info@londonirishcentre.org](mailto:info@londonirishcentre.org)
- **Citizens Advice:** [www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/universal-credit/claiming/contact-us-about-universal-credit/](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/universal-credit/claiming/contact-us-about-universal-credit/)

You can also speak to your Housing Officer directly if that feels easier: 020 7625 1818 (option 4), [housing@innisfree.org.uk](mailto:housing@innisfree.org.uk)

***We're here to make sure you get the right support at the right time.***

# Free Training and Support for Social Housing Tenants

**Four Million Homes**  
Knowledge and action for change in social housing

Four Million Homes is a national programme designed to help social housing tenants feel more informed, confident, and empowered in their homes. It offers free training, advice, and resources to help residents understand their rights, get involved in shaping services, and work more effectively with their landlord.

Through the Four Million Homes website and events, tenants can access:

- Free online training sessions on topics like repairs, safety in the home, how housing services work, and how to raise issues effectively.
- Practical guides and short videos explaining your rights, including how to make complaints, how your landlord is regulated, and what standards you should expect.
- Opportunities to build skills for getting involved in resident groups, scrutiny panels, or tenant associations.
- In person and virtual events, bringing tenants together from across the country to share experiences and learn from experts.

**The aim is simple:** to give tenants across England clear, trustworthy information so everyone can feel confident speaking up, asking questions, and getting the most from their housing services.

You can explore all the free learning and resources at [www.fourmillionhomes.org](http://www.fourmillionhomes.org).

If you'd like help accessing training or want to get more involved in resident engagement locally, our team is always here to support you.



## Community

# Staff Changes



**George Kirby, our Resident Engagement Officer, has now left Innisfree; we wish him all the best for the future!**



**Judy Maher is now your new Resident Engagement Officer.**

Judy already works at Innisfree and has a lot of experience working with our residents – you may already have spoken with her on the phone.

Judy is looking forward to working with residents in her new role to promote resident engagement and ensure views are taken on board in how we deliver services.

Judy's contact details – [residentengagement@innisfree.org.uk](mailto:residentengagement@innisfree.org.uk), Tel no. **07484 900 639**.



**Board members at a recent meeting. We have four new members and we will be introducing them to you in future newsletters.**



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



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