



# **CONTRIBUTING TO HOUSING NEWS**

If you have an item you would like to see featured in Housing News, simply send us your suggestion.

Also, we'd like to hear from you if you have feedback or comments about how we could improve our Housing News newsletter.

HousingNews@enfield.gov.uk









# We're developing a new local plan A vision for Enfield's future

Whether you live, work or study in the borough, the Local Plan

affects us all. Learn about future changes in your local area.





### Message from your Cabinet Member for Social Housing, Cllr George Savva

As part of our ongoing programme to improve building safety and reduce any fire safety risks, we have carried out a programme of inspections on high-rise blocks across the borough to make sure we understand how safe residents feel in their building and inside their home. We want to thank all residents who participated in the surveys. The results will help shape how we improve building and fire safety. Read more on page 6.

We are continuing to maintain homes with a focus on improving their quality and safety. Internal and external upgrade works are being delivered across the borough. For details on some recent works carried out see page 4.

In this issue you can read more on Customer Voice, the main representative body for tenants and leaseholders in Enfield. The central aim of Customer Voice is to ensure that customers' views, aspirations, and priorities are at the heart of the housing service. Read more about some of the issues the Customer Voice have recently been involved in and also the variety of ways you can get involved, see page I2.

As part of the Customer Voice Improvement Fund (CVIF), more proposals for estate improvement works have been approved following resident consultation. To read more on these improvement works and details on how to submit a proposal for the CVIF, see page I4.

A range of free Easter events will take place across the borough, for more details see page 14.

Finally, remember to book a place at our free tenants' and leaseholders' conferences. For details on how to book a place see the back page.

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Housing News is produced by Enfield Council's Communications Team. We thank the Customer Voice group members for their contributions to this newsletter. The content is correct at the time of printing this publication. It is available online at **www.enfield.gov.uk/councilhousing** 

If you require any content in this newsletter translated, please email HousingNews@enfield.gov.uk

# IMPROVING OUR COUNCIL HOMES

WE ARE CONTINUING TO MAINTAIN HOMES WITH A FOCUS ON IMPROVING THEIR QUALITY AND SAFETY. INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL UPGRADE WORKS ARE BEING DELIVERED ACROSS THE BOROUGH THROUGH DIFFERENT CONTRACTS.

Recent works include:

- External upgrade works including roofing replacement, new or upgraded loft insulation, replacement rainwater goods and repairs to the building fabric
- Heating Upgrade Programme along with new boilers, some properties have had their radiators upgraded as well
- External and common part repairs and refurbishment programme at I-18 Dorman Place N9
- Upgrading storage heaters to flats where the previous heaters have been failing
- Communal decorations and new flooring is progressing at Jersey, Guernsey, Sark & Herm
- Installation of sprinkler systems and smoke/fire alarm upgrades nearing completion at Jersey, Guernsey, Sark & Herm

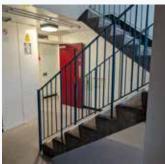
• Front entrance doors, communal doors and service cupboard doors have been replaced with the regulatory required fire doors at Jersey, Guernsey, Sark & Herm.

"I have had my replacement door installed and want to say a big thank you to the guy who made it happen. Very professional, very polite and extremely knowledgeable."

Resident from Severn Drive

Consultation with residents either at an individual or block level will be carried out as the requirements are refined and you will be contacted regarding your choices on those elements where appropriate e.g., kitchen units, flooring, and colours.

If you have any queries on the works carried out, contact majorworks@enfield.gov.uk















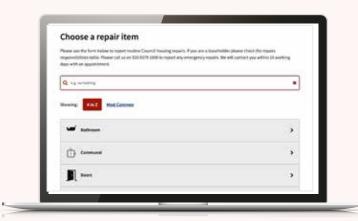


# **ENFIELD REPAIRS DIRECT** update



REPORTING REPAIRS ONLINE IS EASIER AND **OUICKER.** 

You can report repairs online using our **webform** at: www.enfield.gov.uk/repairs



# PLEASE SCAN HERE



You can easily and quickly report any routine repairs and we will contact you with a convenient appointment. The online diagnostic tool will help you to identify what your repair is and provide advice and assistance.

Please continue to report any emergency repairs on 020 8379 1000 (option 4, option 2).

You can also report repairs via **Webchat** and receive an immediate response. The webchat page can be found at: www.enfield.gov.uk/repairs



#### **REPORTING A REPAIR**

**Critical Repairs** (for example total loss of power, total loss of water supply, dangerous structures, water leaks, lift breakdowns, drainage and sewage issues) can continue to be reported 24 hours a day by calling **020 8379 1000**. We aim to respond within 4 hours in order to make safe and fully resolve where possible.

**Emergency Repairs** (such as heating and hot water breakdowns, electrical repairs, door entry failures, blocked toilets and sinks) can continue to be reported to us 24 hours a day by calling **020 8379 1000**. We aim to respond within 24 hours in order to make safe and fully resolve where possible.

**Urgent Repairs** (for example a containable water leak) can be reported by calling **020 8379 1000**. We aim to respond within 5 working days.

**Routine Repairs** (for example a leaking tap). We aim to respond within 30 calendar days. If you need to report a new routine repair where possible please book online at

www.enfield.gov.uk/repairs

**Planned Works** (for example roof or brick work repairs). We aim to respond within 90 days. If you need to report a new planned repair where possible please book online at

www.enfield.gov.uk/repairs

## **HELPING US IMPROVE**

# **BUILDING SAFETY**

AT THE END OF LAST YEAR WE CARRIED OUT A PROGRAMME OF INSPECTIONS ON HIGH-RISE BLOCKS ACROSS THE BOROUGH TO MAKE SURE WE UNDERSTAND HOW SAFE RESIDENTS FEEL IN THEIR BUILDING AND INSIDE THEIR HOME. THIS IS IN RESPONSE TO NEW LEGAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE BUILDING SAFETY REGULATOR TO ENSURE OUR BUILDINGS ARE FIRE SAFE AND STRUCTURALLY SOUND.

We invited residents living in high-rise blocks to take part in a telephone survey to help us understand how safe they feel in their building. More than 600 residents living in 52 high-rise blocks across the borough took part.

Residents were also invited to give their views online and in person at drop-in sessions. We want to thank all residents who participated in the surveys which will help shape how we improve building and fire safety.

Part of those improvements are understanding residents' needs and how we engage with residents. You may have noticed a red Premises Information Box (PIB) is located in the communal area by the entrance of high-rise blocks. The fire brigade will use the information stored in the PIB in the event of a fire or



an emergency to assist residents with evacuation, so fire fighters can go to where they are needed most. To keep our records up to date, contact the Duty Team on 020 8375 8008.

As part of our ongoing programme to improve building safety and reduce any fire safety risks, we have completed a programme of Fire Action Notices with over 400 signs installed across our high-rise blocks and an additional I,000 signs throughout the remaining blocks.



An example of a fire action notice

We are also developing a residents' online portal which will provide block specific information about how buildings of at least 7 floors or over I8 metres high are managed. Residents will be able to find specific information about their block.

For more information on how we are keeping residents safe, visit: www.enfield.gov.uk/buildingsafety



# SAFETY IN THE HOME

THERE ARE THINGS YOU CAN DO TO PREVENT FIRES AND KEEP YOUR HOME, NEIGHBOURS' HOMES AND THE COMMUNITY SAFE.

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#### **ELECTRICAL HEATERS**

Electrical heaters can be a great way to warm up a room quickly but can cause fires if used incorrectly. For advice on how to keep warm and stay safe, visit the London Fire Brigade website at: www.london-fire.gov.uk/safety/the-home/portable-heaters-gas-fires-and-open-fires

If you use an electric blanket, we recommend you visit the London Fire Brigade website for advice on how to reduce the risk of fire, at: www.london-fire.gov.uk/safety/the-home/electrical-items/electric-blankets

#### **OIL BURNING HEATERS**

You must not use portable heaters that burn oil, paraffin, gas or other combustible materials.



#### **CANDLES**

Residents are not allowed to use candles, tea lights or incense burners in communal areas. If you use these items inside your home, visit the London Fire Brigade website for safety advice, at: www.london-fire. gov.uk/safety/the-home/candles

#### **COOKING SAFELY**

Don't leave cooking unattended on the hob or grill – if you have to leave the kitchen, turn off the heat. For more practical steps on safer cooking visit the London Fire Brigade website at: www.london-fire.gov.uk/safety/the-home/cooking

#### **SMOKE ALARMS**

Council flats fitted with smoke and heat alarms should be tested weekly by pressing the small button marked 'test'.



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#### **BARBECUES**

Council residents are not allowed to use barbecues (BBQs) inside their homes, including balconies or roof terraces. The storage and use of contained gases (for example, Calor gas) is also prohibited in council properties. If your flat has a private garden, you may use a wood or charcoal fuelled BBQ.

### KEEP COMMUNAL AREAS CLEAR AND SAFE

Communal areas must be kept clear of all personal items and rubbish at all times.

This is important to ensure residents can get out quickly and safely if there is a fire or other emergency. This will also help emergency services work safely within the building.

#### OTHER PRACTICAL SAFETY TIPS

#### Accessing your gas or electricity meter

If you are asked to carry out a meter reading by your supplier, do not risk your safety by using a ladder. Contact your energy supplier to request assistance. For advice on moving your gas or electricity meter visit the Citizens Advice website at:



www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/ energy/energy-supply/your-energy-meter/ move-your-gas-or-electricity-meter

**Keep windows locked** and do not disconnect the window restrictor on your window, unless you need to open the window fully to clean it.



The restrictor is a safety device which prevents the window opening wide enough for anything to fall out. It's important you report any fault or damage to your windows, balcony railings or glazing to us at once, so we can make them safe or carry out an urgent repair.

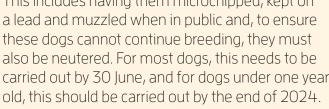
# Ban on unregistered **XL BULLY DOGS** NOW IN FORCE

SINCE I FEBRUARY, THE BAN ON XL BULLY DOGS IS NOW IN FORCE MAKING IT ILLEGAL TO OWN AN UNREGISTERED XL BULLY DOG.

Anyone found in possession of a XL Bully dog who is not meeting the strict rules will have their dog seized and faces prosecution and a criminal record.

In order to safely manage the existing population of these dogs, owners of XL Bully dogs must register their dogs and make sure they comply with set rules.

This includes having them microchipped, kept on a lead and muzzled when in public and, to ensure these dogs cannot continue breeding, they must also be neutered. For most dogs, this needs to be carried out by 30 lune, and for dogs under one year old, this should be carried out by the end of 2024.



# New guidance to enhance E-BIKE AND E-SCOOTER SAFETY

#### **INFORMATION AROUND HOW TO SAFELY PURCHASE, CHARGE AND USE E-BIKES** AND E-SCOOTERS WAS PUBLISHED BY THE **GOVERNMENT ON I FEBRUARY, TO IMPROVE CONSUMER SAFETY.**

The guidance on battery safety for both e-scooters and e-bikes will raise awareness for owners on how to safely purchase an e-cycle or e-scooter, ensure it meets manufacturing requirements and is only bought from reputable sellers. The guidance also covers safe storage and charging, the warning signs for fire risk and how to address them, and how to dispose of batteries responsibly.

The guidance also reminds people that e-scooters cannot be used legally on roads unless they are part of an official rental trial.

The Council wants to reduce the risk to residents as far as possible, so our approach is to insist you need our written permission to bring an e-Bike or e-Scooter onto our land - this includes our estates, shared communal areas of flats, and individual properties.

We will **never** give you permission to charge an e-Bike or e-Scooter in or around one of our blocks of flats, because the risks to you and your neighbours are too great. Don't forget the Council has a zero tolerance approach to storing any items in the communal areas of flats, because they are the safe route for residents and firefighters in the event of a fire.

For more information visit: www.gov.uk/transport/cycling-and-walking



# **CONSUMER** STANDARDS

THE SAFETY AND QUALITY STANDARD IS THERE TO PROTECT RESIDENTS BY STRENGTHENING THE SAFETY REQUIREMENTS THAT AS YOUR LANDLORD WE MUST MEET. THIS IS TO PROVIDE OUR RESIDENTS WITH SAFE, GOOD QUALITY HOMES AND DELIVER EFFECTIVE LANDLORD SERVICES.

The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard makes sure we are open with our residents and treat you with fairness and respect. We will be accountable and encourage resident engagement and involvement.

The Neighbourhood and Community Standard makes sure we work with other organisations to help ensure you live in safe and well-maintained neighbourhoods.

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Finally, the Tenancy Standard covers how we allocate and let homes fairly. It also sets requirements for how landlords manage and end tenancies.

To read more on the Consumer Standards, visit:

www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-the-consumer-standards





# REPORT A VEHICLE YOU THINK IS ABANDONED

TO HELP IMPROVE OUR SERVICES ACROSS ALL OUR ESTATES WE ARE PILOTING AN ONLINE REPORTING FORM, TO ENABLE RESIDENTS TO REPORT VEHICLES THAT ARE SUSPECTED AS ABANDONED. REPORTS CAN THEN BE INVESTIGATED.

You can access the form at: https://forms.office.com/e/ QpkJ5nej5u or by scanning the OR Code.

Vehicles parked on council housing land must have current Road Tax and be in a roadworthy condition.





Permission is not granted for vehicles that have been declared as OFF ROAD with the DVLA through SORN (known as Statutory of Road Notice). Also, permission is not granted to leave or store trailers.

To view our Place Operations Parking Strategy, visit: www.enfield.gov.uk/services/housing/council-housing/place-operations-parking-strategy

# **RENT CHARGE**

# **CHANGES**

THE RENT INCREASE FOR 2024-25 HAS NOW BEEN AGREED AT 7.7% IN LINE WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S SOCIAL HOUSING RENT STANDARD POLICY WHICH PERMITS ALL LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO INCREASE RENTS BY THE SEPTEMBER CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (CPI) + 1%. LAST SEPTEMBER CPI WAS 6.7%.

Council tenants should now have received their rent notifications letters outlining this increase.

Due to the cost-of-living crisis rents were capped by the Government for 2023-24. During this time construction and building material costs outstripped inflation and energy costs have been at unprecedented levels. However we remain



committed to building strong, healthy and safe communities, and delivering more and better homes.

If you receive Universal Credit, you are responsible for notifying the DWP of the rent changes by signing into your Universal Credit account. If you receive housing benefit this has been automatically updated to take account of the rent charges.

If you're struggling to afford the essentials or need support, please don't suffer in silence – help is available, visit: **www.enfield.gov.uk/helpingyou** 

# **HELP IS AVAILABLE**

# to those in financial need

#### Risk of illegal money lending

We want to do all we can to help protect people from the risk of approaching exploitative loan sharks. There are a number of options available for tenants facing financial difficulties; details of all these schemes can be found on the Council's website at: www.enfield.gov.uk/ financialhardship

#### **Discretionary Housing Payments**

If you do get help to pay your rent through Housing Benefit or

Universal Credit,

and still have problems paying rent, you may also qualify for further support through a Discretionary Housing Payment: www.enfield.gov.uk/ services/benefits-and-money-advice/ discretionary-housing-payment



#### **Council Tax Support Hardship** payments

If you do get help to pay Council Tax through Council Tax Support, and

still have problems paying Council Tax, you may also qualify for further support through a Council Tax Support Hardship payment. For details on

how to apply, visit: www.enfield.gov.uk/ services/benefits-and-money-advice/ council-tax-hardship-scheme



#### Help with bills

Thames Water offer low income families a discount on their water bills – check your eligibility at:

www.thameswater.co.uk/ help/account-and-billing/ financial-support/waterhelp

If you are struggling to pay your rent or are in arrears, contact our Rent Income Team by emailing rent.council.housing@enfield.gov.uk



#### Stay on top of your rent

If you would like up-to-date information about your rent balance, you can view this online by registering



for an Enfield Connected account by visiting the Council website at: www.enfield.gov.uk.

# MEET YOUR CUSTOMER VOICE

CUSTOMER VOICE IS THE MAIN
REPRESENTATIVE BODY FOR TENANTS AND
LEASEHOLDERS IN ENFIELD. THE CENTRAL
AIM OF CUSTOMER VOICE IS TO ENSURE
THAT CUSTOMERS' VIEWS, ASPIRATIONS,
AND PRIORITIES ARE AT THE HEART OF THE
HOUSING SERVICE.

The Customer Voice meets monthly, through online and face-to-face meetings with managers, heads of departments and other Council officers. The meetings are to talk about current performance, policies and anything that may be coming soon that could affect your housing service.

The Customer Voice have recently been involved in a wide range of issues that impact the housing service, these include:

- Data analysis and findings of surveys implemented including satisfaction surveys and scrutiny
- Supporting the Annual Housing Services Business Delivery Plan
- Playing an active role in supporting residents' conferences and events
- Approving Customer Voice Improvement Fund proposals (which members cannot vote on spends within their own estate)
- Monitoring of contractors.

Customer Voice also set an annual programme of resident led Sub-Groups, where members of the Customer Voice and residents are invited to attend and feedback on areas for improvement.



There are currently eleven group members, comprising of eight tenants and three leaseholders.

- Ryan Hebbs Chair of Customer Voice
- Barbara Fry
- Barbara Laverack
- Fay Isler
- Iwona Zamojska
- Linda Baker
- Marcia Russell
- Maxine Clark
- Melissa Lloyd
- Nicola Anne Espeut
- Vinod Mehra.

If you would like to hear more about what Customer Voice does for you and if you are interested in getting involved with Customer Voice, contact the Resident Engagement Team by email at:

#### engagement@enfield.gov.uk

To find out upcoming meeting dates, visit:

#### www.enfield.gov.uk/getinvolved

There are a variety of ways you can get involved and make your local area a better place to live, such as joining a Tenants and Residents Association or 'Friends of' Groups or attending an estate walkabout. For more information visit: www.enfield.gov.uk/getinvolved

# **CUSTOMER VOICE UPDATE**

Customer Voice continues to meet monthly with Council officers who report to residents on a regular basis with work plan, projects, and events including the Tenants' and Leaseholders' conferences. For more information on these events, see the back page.

Since the last edition of Housing News we have discussed the following topics including updates on:

- Serious Violence Duty Consultation
- Building Safety Case Report Programme, including Building Safety Acts
- Repairs Services/Performance Updates
- Housing Revenue Account Rent increase
- Review of Resident Engagement
- Council Housing Service Plan 2024-2025.

The next scheduled meetings will be held on the following Wednesdays at 6.45pm:

- 17 April 2024
- 19 June 2024
- 15 May 2024
- 17 July 2024

If you require any further information, email the Resident Engagement Team at:

engagement@enfield.gov.uk



# LEASEHOLDERS' FORUM UPDATE

The Leaseholders' Forum is an independent group acting as a consultative body between the housing department and its leaseholders in Enfield Council properties paying service charges to Enfield. Our forums are an opportunity to discuss service delivery, costs and improved performance.

The Leaseholder Forum meetings are held throughout the year. We welcome all leaseholders to attend as and when they can. We meet online via Microsoft Teams where leaseholders can express their views on the services which affect them. Officers do a presentation on different services and there is an opportunity to ask general questions. We invite leaseholders to share their concerns with us prior to the meeting and these are sent to the appropriate services.

During the last meetings we have discussed various topics including:

- Enfield Council Housing Service updates
- Repairs Services updates
- Caretaking Services updates
- HouseMark app
- Resident Involvement Strategy
- Service Charges
- Building Safety
- Lease Extensions and Section 20 processes.

#### **Future Meetings**

- 2I October 2024, 6pm-7.30pm
- 17 February 2025, 6pm-7.30pm

We also organise an annual Leaseholders Conference, a one-day event to help landlords achieve meaningful engagement that improves services, lives and communities. This year's conference will be held on **6 July**, see the back page for details and how to book. If you require any further information, email the Resident Engagement Team at: **engagement@enfield.gov.uk** 

# Customer Voice IMPROVEMENT FUND

THE CUSTOMER VOICE IMPROVEMENT FUND (CVIF) IS AN ANNUAL INVESTMENT FUND THAT HELPS RESIDENTS WORK WITH THE COUNCIL TO CHOOSE AND DELIVER THE CHANGES THEY WANT TO SEE ON THEIR ESTATE.

The fund can be spent on one-off, physical changes to improve outdoor and communal areas on estates, whether it is to enhance what is in place already or creating brand new facilities. This could include anything from providing new play equipment and seating to creating planting and growing areas or introducing security improvements. All proposals are shared with the Customer Voice, who review and evaluate each proposal for financial approval.

Since October 2023, we received eight proposals and four were approved (see list on the right) following resident consultation. The remaining proposals received are currently being reviewed by Customer Voice.

Share your idea(s) to improve your estate that could do with some minor works to improve the look or address a health and safety issue, by emailing the CVIF team at: **cvif.projectshousing@enfield.gov.uk** with your proposals.

#### DOVER HOUSE, NI8 IHR

Installation of bin area

#### FARNDALE AVENUE, NI3 5AI

✓ Modification of two bin areas to stop fly-tipping

#### ST. MARY'S ROAD, N9 8NN

✓ Install gallows gates on entrance to parking areas

#### WEST CLOSE, N9 90R

Provision of gates to secure bin area and reduce antisocial behaviour

# FREE EASTER EVENTS

# JOIN IN THE FUN, WE ARE HOLDING FOUR FREE EASTER EVENTS.

Come along and make Easter hats. There will also be arts and crafts, bouncy castle, and light refreshments.

For more information, email us on: engagement@enfield.gov.uk

#### Wednesday 3 April, Ilam-2pm Scott House Estate

Angel Community Centre 48 Raynham Road Edmonton NI8 2|F

#### Thursday 4 April, Ilam-2pm Lytchet Way Estate

Lytchet Way Enfield EN3 5XU (Outside Green Space)



#### Monday 8 April, Ilam-2pm

#### Klinger Estate

Klinger Large Community Hall 4I Copperfield Mews Edmonton NI8 IPF (off Dickens Lane, off Tanners End Lane)

#### Wednesday IO April, Ilam-2pm

#### Whitefield's Estate

Flamstead End Hall Albermarle Avenue Cheshunt EN8 OEY (Outside Green Space)





IF YOU ARE DISSATISFIED WITH ANY ASPECT OF OUR SERVICE, WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO REACH OUT TO THE COUNCIL. YOU CAN CONTACT YOUR RESIDENT RELATIONSHIP OFFICER OR BY REPORTING A REPAIR USING OUR WEBFORM AT WWW.ENFIELD.GOV.UK/REPAIRS

We value your feedback and will do our best to address your concerns. If you have already contacted the council and wish to report an issue with our service, we will carry out a thorough investigation as part of our complaints process. Based on our findings, we will determine if your complaint is upheld (meaning we accept full responsibility) or partially upheld (meaning we accept partial responsibility). If the Council are found to be at fault, we will take immediate action to rectify the situation.

The easiest way to make a complaint is online at: **www.enfield.gov.uk/tellus** 

You can also write to us at:

Complaints and Information Team Enfield Council Civic Centre Silver Street Enfield ENI 3XY

Or call us on **020 8379 1000** between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday.

#### Stage one

We will acknowledge your complaint within five working days. An officer from the relevant service will then be allocated the case to investigate where we aim to respond within IO working days.

#### **Final stage**

If you are not satisfied with the initial response, you may request a further review of your complaint. This will be conducted by a senior member of the service. We aim to respond within 20 working days.

At both stages you will be provided with the expected response time and a unique reference number.

If you are still unhappy after your complaint has been considered under the Council's complaints procedure you can then escalate this to the Housing Ombudsman to review.

The Housing Ombudsman will investigate your complaint fairly and impartially, for more information visit the government website below.



# Social housing issue?





# Housing conferences

for council tenants and leaseholders



To book a place at either conference please email: myhome@enfield.gov.uk or call 020 8132 0799

For more details visit: www.enfield.gov.uk/councilhousing

