

Housing Policy

Good Neighbourhood Management Policy

This policy affects:

Tenants and leaseholders, including TMO and PF11 tenants and leaseholders.

Related policies / procedures:

- [Domestic Surveillance and CCTV Procedure](#),
- Housing Strategy – [A Home For All](#),
- [Fairer Together](#) commitment, [Conditions of Tenancy](#)
- Fair, Inclusive and Accessible Services Commitment (Vulnerability Policy)– currently draft ASB Policy – currently draft

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Islington Council manage approximately 25,000 tenanted properties and 10,000 leasehold properties.
- 1.2 This policy sets out our approach to setting expectations and managing neighbour relationships in our estates, blocks and street properties across the borough.

2.0 Legal Framework and Context

- 2.1 Under the Neighbourhood and Community Standard, The Regulator of Social Housing requires all registered providers to publish a policy setting out, how in consultation with their tenants, they will maintain and improve the neighbourhood associated with their homes.
- 2.2 The social housing white paper, published in 2020, set out proposals the Government would take 'to ensure residents in social housing are safe, listened to, live in good quality homes, and have access to redress when things go wrong'. It was made law on 21st July 2023, the act gives social housing tenants greater powers to hold their landlord to account, with measures introduced to ensure complaints are dealt with more quickly and enhanced the role of the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH). This includes complaints relating to the disrepair or decency of a home, such as the presence of damp and mould. This will impact the regulatory framework for social housing and introduces a new proactive, consumer regulation regime focussed on meeting the needs of tenants. One aim of the legislation and regime is to ensure that providers of social housing, such as the Council, keep its properties and estates safe and clean.

- 2.3 These new standards are there to ensure people feel safe and secure in their homes, can get problems fixed before they spiral out of control, and see exactly how good their landlord is performing, giving tenants a stronger voice. Of the seven chapters within the White Paper, several are particularly relevant to the aims of this policy:
- To be safe in your home
 - To know how your landlord is performing.
 - To have your complaints dealt with promptly and fairly.
 - To have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in
- 2.4 As part of the new consumer regulation regime, from April 2023, the Social Housing Regulator has introduced a series of 22 mandatory Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) creating a new system for assessing how well social housing landlords in England are doing at providing good quality homes and services. These measures include those applicable directly to building safety as well as those based on tenant perception surveys setting out tenant's views on our performance which will include responsible neighbourhood management. The TSM measures under responsible neighbourhood management include:
- TP10: Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained.
 - TP11: Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods.
- 2.5 TP12: Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB). The tenancy agreement between the council and tenants and the lease with leaseholders set out responsibilities and expectations of all parties. Tenancy agreements can be updated, following consultation, to reflect changes in the law or expectations of the parties. When these are changed tenants are informed to ensure they are aware of any changes to their responsibilities. Information about tenancy conditions and responsibilities can be found at [Tenancy conditions | Islington Council](#). New tenants are provided with the NewTenant Pack when they sign up for their tenancy and their tenancy advisor will go through this with them. If residents have particular communications needs to ensure they understand their responsibilities, these will be catered for during the sign-up process, to ensure they have a full understanding of their responsibilities.

3.0 Policy Aims

- 3.1 This policy aims to ensure that tenants have quiet enjoyment of their homes, and have a safe, clean and secure environment that they can take pride in.
- 3.2 Residents are aware of and understand their responsibilities under their tenancy or lease conditions, both in relation to their property and neighbourhood.

4.0 Ensuring fair access to our service

- 4.1 Islington Council are committed to delivering equitable services to residents. We seek to make our standard services suitable for a wide range of our residents. We recognise that fair access requires services that can flex to individual needs, when our standard service offer do not align with the particular needs of a resident or their household, because of their particular circumstances, mental or physical health conditions or communications needs. Our 'Fair and Equitable Services Commitment' sets out our approach to adapting our services to meet specific needs of our residents and their households and will influence the way this policy is delivered, where residents have particular needs or

experience specific barriers. There will be constraints to our ability to adapt our services, related to available resources, such as financial resource, availability of alternative or temporary accommodation and support services for vulnerable people, as local government and the voluntary sector work within a constrained financial environment.

4.2 Examples of circumstances where we may flex our service delivery model to support a resident with particular needs include:

- Supporting a resident with significant mental health needs to access support with engaging with their neighbour about a dispute, if they are not able to do this directly or offering specialist mediation services.
- Supporting a resident to bid for an alternative home, where they would find this difficult to do for themselves, if they decide this solution is best for them in resolving a long term dispute with their neighbour.
- Supporting a resident access an essential estate service, where they have a temporary incapacity.
- Support residents who have children with special needs with communicating this to their neighbours, to help manage neighbour disputes.

5.0 Housing Services provided by the council:

More information is available on the website: www.islington.gov.uk, where you will find contact details for the service areas listed below, as well as ways to report various issues.

5.1 Access Hubs

5.1.1 Our Access Islington Hubs offer a range of support and can be accessed within local communities currently within the South and Central localities of the borough. The Hubs will co-ordinate a combination of drop in advice and support surgeries as well as pre-booked advice and guidance sessions. We will work with relevant services to provide residents with the support they need.

5.3 Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and Neighbourhood Disputes

5.3.1 ASB can have a significant impact on the lives of residents and our communities and Islington Council is committed to delivering a non-judgemental, balanced service.

5.3.2 For more information on how Islington Council tackles ASB, please view the [website](#).

5.3.3 Where Islington Council believes the behaviour does not constitute ASB, you will be told why your report does not classify as a report of ASB and advice will be given to enable self-resolution.

5.3.4 We expect a level of tolerance among neighbours and we will assess reports of antisocial behaviour (ASB) firmly and fairly. It is crucial for sustainable, resilient communities that Islington Council tenants and residents acknowledge and accept the diverse lifestyles, work schedules, family dynamics, and habits of households within our community housing. Residents are responsible for living considerately and addressing concerns through proactive communication and good neighbourly conduct. Seeking to resolve concerns through good neighbourly behaviour and positive communication with others, is expected of Islington tenants and residents within situations where safety is not

compromised. Guidance on this matter will be readily accessible to all residents.

5.3.5 Therefore, we may be able to provide advice, but we will not investigate the following concerns:

- A tenant going about their daily activities in their home – for example, playing with children, loud footfall, moving of furniture, babies/children crying, television noise, occasional loud music, toilets being flushed and the use of household appliances (this is not an exhaustive list)
- Noise occurring at different times due to different working patterns or one-off parties
- Concerns which do not breach the tenancy agreement, for example, people staring, smoking or cooking odours, or clashes due to lifestyle or cultural differences
- Concerns which involve residents not being pleasant to each other, but are not serious enough to justify our involvement
- Boundary disputes
- Inconsiderate parking

5.3.6 It is crucial within Islington's community to be tolerant of other people's lifestyles and to be understanding of these possible differences. Behaviour that results from different lifestyles, or which would not be considered unreasonable by most people is not ASB. Examples of this might include (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Lifestyle clashes
- Children playing or youths innocently congregating
- Ball games
- Parking disputes
- One-off or occasional parties
- Reasonable living noise such as lawn mowing, household DIY, hoovering, toilets flushing, doors banging, noise from household appliances or moving around in top floor apartments

5.3.7 Ways in which residents may be able to help prevent low level complaints being made against them may include:

- Informing your neighbours if you are going to be having a one-off event, such as a party or celebration
- Not removing carpets from upper floor flats, so that noise transfers to lower down properties is minimised
- Consider the use of appliance mats if you are running washing machines etc. overnight or early in the morning
- Telling your neighbours if your shift patterns have changed, so they can be understanding of your needs
- Be considerate of your neighbours
- Do not carry out repairs or other works late at night or at other unsociable hours
- Do not play music, TV or instruments too loudly
- Keep dogs and other pets under control
- Be aware of where your children are playing, who is supervising them and what they are doing

5.3.8 Islington Council recognises that some residents, who have particular support or medical

needs, may find it more challenging to manage neighbour disputes because of these issue. Where this is the case, our Tenancy Team will consider whether addition support with manage a neighbour dispute may be needed, whether they need to help the resident in understanding how their behaviour may need to be adapted to help resolve the situation and will consider whether a referral to support, mediation at an earlier stage, or another action would help support the individual to resolve their issues with their neighbour.

5.3.9 If residents are not able to resolve their differences themselves they should contact Islington Council where a Housing officer may be able to offer mediation or other solutions in order to resolve the dispute. In this instance you will be kept informed of the progress of your dispute and what actions have been agreed to mitigate a repeat of the incident.

Islington expects its residents and tenants to uphold a standard of respect, cooperation, and accountability within our community. We prioritize a safe and inclusive environment where harassment of staff and officers is met with zero tolerance. We encourage all individuals to engage in constructive dialogue, treat each other with dignity, and work collaboratively towards the betterment of our shared spaces. Together, we aim to foster a culture of mutual respect and understanding, where everyone feels valued and supported, to ensure we can provide the best possible service.

Safer Neighbourhoods

Neighborhood Watch groups play a crucial role in preventing crime and anti-social behavior, fostering safer communities through close collaboration with local police. The Safer Neighborhood Board, established by Islington Council and the police in 2014, empower local residents and victims to influence policing priorities and enhance community consultation. Responsibilities include setting local crime priorities, monitoring performance, promoting community involvement in crime prevention, and allocating project funding. Board membership comprises diverse community representatives, with a unique co-chairing arrangement by a young person to ensure youth perspectives are heard.

Meetings are currently being held for community members to engage through the local Neighborhood Policing Teams or Safer Neighborhood Panels. For involvement opportunities or inquiries, please see our [Community Safety](#), or [Neighbourhood watch and safer neighbourhood board](#) webpage, or alternatively seek your local neighborhood policing team.

Community Trigger

The Community Trigger provides a mechanism for individuals experiencing persistent anti-social behavior (ASB) to request a multi-agency review of their case if they feel no action has been taken. Upon meeting the conditions, which include reporting three separate ASB incidents within six months and submitting the trigger within a month of the last incident, agencies will initiate a case review to assess previous actions and determine further measures to reduce ASB. Collaboration among agencies is integral, ensuring information sharing and concerted efforts toward finding a solution. ASB, defined as behavior causing harassment, alarm, or distress, is evaluated in terms of its cumulative impact and potential harm, rather than each individual incident meeting a specific threshold. For those ineligible for the trigger, alternative reporting methods are available through the ASB homepage or by contacting 020 7527 7272. Utilizing the trigger involves completing the online [Community Trigger form](#).

Community Safety

At focus of our community safety efforts involves the close collaboration with partners and other council services. We ensure that all relevant stakeholders are engaged and aligned in responding to anti-social behavior (ASB) and crime issues. Through coordinated partnership actions, including multiagency site visits and environmental visual audits, we address hotspots and work towards crime reduction and enhancing quality-of-life issues.

Our proactive approach includes producing a weekly intelligence product that pinpoints locations experiencing rising reports to the police and ASB reporting lines, informing targeted resource allocation. Furthermore, we convene weekly hotspot tasking meetings, bringing together Emergency Planning, Community Safety, ASB teams, police, Targeted Youth Support, and street population teams, employing a problem-solving approach. Leveraging the Early Intervention Scheme, we provide timely support to deter negative behaviors and escalate interventions as needed, ensuring a comprehensive approach to community safety.

5.3.10 Swapping Homes

- Islington Council support residents who may decide that they would like to move. The quickest way to move is often by finding another tenant who would like to swap homes. This is called a 'mutual exchange'. There are several ways to find a mutual exchange partner to swap homes with: Smart Move, HomeSwapper and word of mouth.
- More information on swapping homes including mutual exchanges and the application form can be found on our [website](#).

5.4 Vandalism and Graffiti

5.4.1 Our definition of graffiti is any informal or illegal marks, drawings, or paintings that have been deliberately made by a person or persons on any physical element forming the outdoor or external environment.

5.4.2 Graffiti is against the law. The police or any officers authorised by the council can issue a fixed penalty notice of £80 for graffiti offences. It is termed as criminal damage which carries a maximum custodial sentence of ten years.

5.4.3 Graffiti is not just a criminal offence, it can also have a negative impact on the lives of those whose neighbourhoods, parks, and property are affected by it and every year we have to spend thousands of pounds of taxpayers' money removing it.

5.4.4 The Council will ensure that:

- Any racist, sexist, or otherwise offensive graffiti will be removed within 24 hours of it being reported or being found by a member of staff.
- All other graffiti should be removed or covered within the same working week
- In some instances, graffiti can be painted over or washed/scrubbed off by the caretaker. In other instances, the Pressure Washer Crew may be needed to remove it using pressure-washing equipment

5.4.5 Residents can also help us to tackle the issue by reporting it through:

- the [Clean Islington app](#).
- [My eAccount](#)

5.5 Litter and Fly Tipping

5.5.1 Fly-tipping is 'the illegal/unlawful deposit of any waste onto land with no licence to accept waste'. It includes anything from general household waste to fridges, sofas, mattresses, garden waste, rubble and tyres. It is also deemed as fly-tipping if large items, builders' waste, cardboard/boxes of waste, and multiple bags (including recycling bags) are left alongside street recycling points. We will issue a fine if a resident is caught fly-tipping. It is also an offence to permit fly tipping on private land.

5.5.2 On being made aware of fly tipping, we will:

- Inspect and assess the scale of the problem, taking photographs as evidence and record the issue
- Arrange for specialist clearance and collection if suspected hazardous or biological chemical waste is involved
- Check on the position hourly to ensure its cleared the same day

5.5.3 We aim to reduce the level of littering by providing litter education and by raising awareness across the borough of the consequences of unlawful littering.

5.5.4 If one of our authorised officers has witnessed someone dropping litter in a public area, a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) will be issued. This includes small items like cigarette ends and chewing gum, as well as larger items of waste.

5.6 Tree management, grass and shrub maintenance and private gardens

5.6.1 All shared gardens, trees, shrubs and grassed areas on estates are cut and pruned by the council's Grounds Maintenance Service. Estate Services staff will check this work to make sure that landscaped areas on estates are kept to a good standard.

5.6.2 Islington Council have a rolling maintenance plan to reduce avoidable risks relating to trees on land owned by the Council. Works to trees outside the works programme will only be undertaken when there has been an identified risk or hazard, such as it is:

- Unsafe;
- The health of the tree or surrounding trees is affected;
- Obstructing public footpaths or roads or;
- Proven to be damaging property.

5.6.3 We will not prune trees because of:

- A tree obscuring light to a window;
- Mess being caused by insects or birds;
- Interference with satellite dish reception;
- Excessive leaf fall or
- Problems associated with pollen

5.6.4 Where residents have a private garden, it is a condition of tenancy or their lease that they look after it and keep it tidy and free from rubbish. If the resident is elderly or has a disability, they should contact housing services to see if support is available.

5.7 Cleaning and Communal Inspections To ensure that council managed properties and estates are kept clean and in good condition, inspections are carried out at least every two months to assess cleaning, caretaker standards and repairs. These inspections will

help ensure that our estates are well maintained, tidy and free from graffiti. Inspections are carried out by Estate Services Coordinators (ESC's) and consider all areas within a block or within a specified inspection area. The grading system uses four grades, A, B, C and D. The grade awarded reflects the overall experience of the block. Inspections carried out by ESC's are a snapshot look at caretaking standards based on a set of criteria taken from the caretakers' task-frequency list.

5.7.2 Caretakers are responsible for ensuring that all communal areas on council managed estates are maintained and cleaned to an acceptable standard. There is a list of the different tasks caretakers are expected to complete at their intended frequencies in our [Quality Assurance Manual](#). Caretakers are also expected to report other problems and estate-based issues, such as repairs, graffiti, ASB, abandoned cars, fly-tipping and other breaches of tenancy, to their ESC.

5.7.3 Estates and blocks of flats have regular recycling and rubbish collections from communal bins. If you live on an estate or in a block of flats, all recycling, food waste (if this service is provided), garden waste and rubbish is collected at least weekly from communal bins.

5.7.4 Some estates have a chute for household recycling and rubbish. If residents have a chute, we ask that refuse is placed in bin liners before putting it in the correct chute and only use the chute between 8am and 8pm so neighbours are not disturbed.

5.7.5 In addition to the inspections, we are also responsible for:

- Ensuring contractor compliance, for example, that waste management is being delivered as agreed.
- Ensuring that all problems reported by the caretaker and other sources are managed and dealt with effectively and appropriately.
- Working in conjunction with Housing's Property Services to make communal improvements

5.7.6 Fire safety inspections on communal areas:

5.7.7 We will check communal areas regularly and conduct fire safety inspections. Residents will be informed of any items which are considered to be a hazard and will have seven days to move them. If items are not removed within this period, we will remove them and they may be disposed of.

5.7.8 If our team are really concerned, we will remove hazardous items straight away to keep everyone safe.

5.8 Fire Safety Islington council have a two tier approach to managing communal areas, depending on the layout of the corridor: Enclosed or substantially enclosed corridors – There is a zero-tolerance approach to corridors of this design.

- No items can be left in communal areas of blocks with this design, with the exception of one purpose made doormat (measuring no bigger than 85cm by 45cm).
- Blocks with open corridor design – Generally no belongings should be stored anywhere on corridors, but the following is allowed with the permission of Housing Services (excluding on stairways):
 - One wall-mounted ceramic, clay or metal plant pot fixed on one side of the front door, securely fixed to the wall with hooks (no artificial plants allowed)
 - Ceramic, clay or metal plant pots placed on the ground, provided that they:
 - do not pose an obstruction to either the resident or their neighbours

- are kept close to a resident's front door
 - do not hold artificial plants
 - have a plant saucer underneath to retain water
 - do not create a slip hazard when watered
- Plant pots are permitted provided there isn't an accumulation where they may cause an obstruction within a communal area. This will be at the discretion of our staff and considered by factoring the safety of residents. Too many plant pots can also make it difficult for caretakers to clean shared areas (where applicable).
 - One purpose made doormat. The doormat should be in good condition, non-slip and not be made from offcuts of carpet or similar material. The council reserves the right to withdraw permissions for doormats if they are deemed inappropriate through an FRA.
 - One wall-mounted picture or mirror displayed in a Perspex fronted metal frame. The frame should take up no more than 45cm of wall space and be positioned a minimum of one meter from any wall edge or corner

5.8.1 Islington council will assess these limited items on a case by case basis and if we feel that items are unacceptable, residents will be asked to remove them.

5.8.2 The council has an on-going Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) programme for all of its properties. The FRA is a detailed examination of the common parts of the building, considering the use, occupancy type and the activities taking place. The main purpose of the FRA is to ensure that fire safety measures are in good working order, the means of escape are obvious or identified and free of obstructions and to assess the level of structural fire resistance. Where we find defects or ways to improve safety, we repair them or make them part of our cyclical improvement programme (CIP) depending on the risk level. The FRA inspection will also determine the fire safety strategy for the building. There are two general strategies in the event of fire, commonly referred to as 'stay-put' and 'simultaneous evacuation'.

5.8.3 More information about fire safety in communal areas can be found on our [website](#).

5.9 Infestation of Pests and Vermin

5.9.1 Having unwanted pests in your home or place of work can be alarming and upsetting. Islington Council's Pest Control provides fast, effective treatments for all rodent and insects pests found in homes and businesses. We can offer advice alongside competitive one-off treatments or bespoke pest control contracts providing regular visits

to you that will protect your property from pests. The easiest and quickest way to request a pest control appointment or service is [online](#).

5.10 Garages, Sheds, cycle storage, estate parking

5.10.1 Residents can apply for an estate parking space, a garage or shed on an Islington Council housing estate.

5.10.2 We have secure garages for rent across the borough for parking or storage. Anyone can apply to rent a garage, but we prioritise:

- people living on the estate
- Blue Badge holders.

5.10.3 More information on estate parking and renting a garage including an application form can be found on our [website](#).

5.10.4 Residents must comply with Islington Council's parking conditions.

5.10.5 Without the council's written permission, tenants must not:

- park a vehicle, trailer, caravan or similar object on any part of the estate;
- keep a vehicle, trailer, caravan or similar object in or on any land or property that the council owns or;
- allow any member of the household, sub-tenants or visitors to do so.

5.10.6 More information on parking conditions can be found [on the website](#).

5.10.7 Cycle storage facilities are available to residents. If residents require a space in an existing cycle storage facility, or wish to suggest a location for a new cycle storage facility, further information and an online form can be found on our [website](#).

5.11 Keys

5.11.1 All tenants and leaseholders are responsible for changing locks due to loss of keys. Council tenants can now order replacement fob keys online through completion of an online form. Upon request, fob keys can be re-programmed. For more information, please see the [website](#).

5.12 Permissions

5.12.1 The tenancy conditions state that tenants need to get Islington Council's written permission if they want to make alterations or put up a satellite dish and they must also ask for permission to keep a dog.

5.12.2 Council tenants and leaseholders only need to request permission from Islington Council before installing domestic surveillance such as CCTV or doorbell cameras if the device will be fitted to the fabric of the building using screws, nails or hooks or where fixed wire installation is required.

5.12.3 Residents can request permission through an alterations form by e-mailing or telephoning housing services. More information on domestic surveillance can be found on the [website](#).

5.13 Complaints and Feedback

5.13.1 We try to get things right the first time and when we do, we would love you to let us know. It's great for us to receive positive comments or feedback, so if you wish to complement our staff for doing a great job, we would love to hear from you. If things do go wrong the council is committed to:

- Dealing with complaints and comments quickly and effectively; and
- Using complaints, comments and compliments to review and improve our services.

5.13.2 Where a tenant considers that the Council has given a poor service or has got something wrong, they may tell a member of staff in the first instance. This does not need to be treated as a formal complaint (unless the complainant asks us to do so) and may be resolved 'there and then' by way of an apology and plan of action. Any comments provided will be used to take appropriate action, or give information. If a tenant does not want to do this or is unhappy with the response, they may make a formal complaint, stage 1, which can be escalated to stage 2 if they are still not satisfied with the response. If having been through stages 1 and 2 they are still not satisfied, the tenant may contact the Housing Ombudsman Service.

5.13.3 Complaints in relation to service provided covering policy will take into consideration the responsibilities of both the council and our residents in achieving good neighbourly relationships and sustainable communities. Where residents have particularly needs or are vulnerable, this will be taken into account also in making this assessment.

Managing Expectations

Islington is committed to effectively managing expectations from residents, prioritizing transparency, accountability, trust, and credibility. We strive to achieve this by clearly communicating what can and cannot be delivered, including timelines, resources, and limitations, to ensure mutual understanding. Our goal is to establish realistic expectations by setting achievable goals tailored to each individual case, considering available resources and constraints. By avoiding overpromising and underdelivering, we aim to foster positive relationships and minimize disappointment and frustration.

While we strive to provide an excellent service to all our service users, we also recognize the importance of fostering a culture of patience and understanding from residents and tenants. We understand that situations may arise where issues may occur beyond our control. In such instances, we greatly appreciate the patience and understanding of our service users as we work diligently to address their needs and concerns to the best of our abilities.

5.14 Resident Engagement

5.14.1 Consultation with residents has been carried out to help form this policy. However, resident consultation is an ongoing process and feedback on this policy is welcome at any time. If you have any feedback, please send it service.development@islington.gov.uk