

Islington Council's Private Rented Sector Charter

Private Rented Sector – vision

We believe that everyone deserves to have a home that is safe, well maintained and well managed. Islington's Private Rented Sector will provide a high quality, low carbon, affordable and sustainable offer so that Islington's residents have a good choice of quality homes in clean, safe, and vibrant neighbourhoods and landlords meet their obligations to their tenants.

Objective 1: Improve property and management standards

Target and focus intervention and proactive enforcement on the very worst properties, landlords and agents and improvement of neighbourhoods. Work collaboratively across the council and with partners to improve standards.

Objective 2: Increase opportunities within the sector for low-income households

Narrow the quality gap between the lower end and that of the middle and higher end of the market so that people on lower incomes have greater access and more choice.

Objective 3: Improve communication across the sector

Raising awareness of landlord, agent, and tenant responsibilities; sharing good practice and an enhanced role for the relevant professional bodies will help ensure standards continue to be met at all levels of the market.

Islington Council wishes to promote the following principles as part of this Charter:

1. Homes for people and not profit

Islington Council will promote the following framework:

- Work within the planning system to promote all new residential developments deliver the maximum possible amount of social housing (particularly on council land), including the maximum amount of genuinely affordable homes at social rents that are possible, and publish breakdowns of the different kinds of housing being built
- Purchase as much of Islington's former council homes (on the market) as possible to urgently meet housing need
- Commit to an ambitious and sustainable programme of council house building
- Publish breakdowns on the types of housing being built (social versus other kinds of affordable homes), and share them with all residents and partners
- Improve the quality, accessibility, and safety of temporary accommodation, and work only with temporary accommodation providers that provide decent, habitable, and warm homes. Work with all partners and residents to develop an action plan for improving temporary accommodation standards, including how to resource the plan
- Ensure people with disabilities can stay in temporary accommodation until all adaptations are finished on their new home
- Continue to support the Mayor of London's call for the introduction of rent controls, to keep rents as affordable as possible
- Work towards ending automatic evictions for rent arrears and abolish no-fault evictions
- Empower and work in partnership with Private Rented Sector tenants

2. Hold landlords accountable

Islington Council will promote the following framework:

- Extend the landlord licensing scheme as much as possible to ensure local people can enjoy safe, decent, secure homes, whoever their landlord is, and continue to lobby Central Government to allow the Council to extend further
- Publish data to demonstrate how the council is acting against landlords on issues such as disrepair and minimum energy efficiency standards
- Have an enforcement policy which sets out that inspections and fines will be used as a deterrent against landlords who do not provide safe and decent accommodation

3. Work with, and support, renters

Islington Council will promote the following framework:

- Regularly meet with the National Residential Landlords Association (NRLA), the London Renters Union (LRU), Renters' Rights London, Acorn, and other tenant groups and private rented sector landlords as appropriate and commit to an ongoing culture of transparency and accessibility
- Work in partnership with the NRLA, the LRU, Renters' Rights London, Acorn, private landlords and private sector tenants to expand public awareness of renters' rights
- Ensure Islington Council's housing advice, assistance and support is clear and easy to access. Translate and work with Black, Asian and minority ethnic charities to reach as many people as possible
- Promote independent advice and assistance through Shelter, Islington Law Centre, and community-based advice agencies
- Support will be provided via in person interviews, Teams and Zoom meetings, email, telephone and online advice, assistance, and support
- Promote the right for private rented sector tenants to have pets, to make reasonable alterations to a property, and introduce a four month notice period for landlords
- Work to create a national register of landlords, a legally binding decent homes standard, and examine schemes to make tenancy deposits more portable
- The council will work with private rented sector tenants to introduce this new renters' charter and a new decent homes standard across Islington
- Work in partnership with private renters and private rented sector landlords across Islington to actively reduce the incidence of Anti-Social Behaviour in our neighbourhoods, in order to improve the quality of life for all residents

4. No borders in housing

Islington Council will promote the following framework:

- Pledge that there will be no collaboration between their work enforcing housing standards and the Home Office or Border Force