

HFI backs its commitment with money

Homes for Islington's commitment to reducing antisocial behaviour (ASB) has got some serious cash behind it. The money will go towards a wide range of projects and initiatives designed to discourage and tackle antisocial behaviour and its effects on residents and their estates.

What's being done?

Homes for Islington has put £850,000 of new funds into the following initiatives:

- Creating an out-of-hours ASB response team.
- Continued funding of the mediation scheme.
- Additional funds for victim and witness support (see our article 'New scheme to help witnesses' on page 14).
- Sustainability initiative for repairs in communal areas.
- Professional witness programme.

And that's not all...

There will also be funding for schemes that discourage antisocial behaviour.

- £815,000 for new door entries and CCTV.
- £330,000 for lighting and paving.
- £400,000 for entry phone upgrades.
- £50,000 to upgrade disused garages. These will then be relet to help prevent them from becoming a focus for antisocial behaviour.
- Following successful pilot schemes in Upper Street and Boleyn Road, the rapid response removal of bulk waste will be extended throughout the borough at the end of the summer.
- Mechanised road cleaning on estates - This, along with the mobile response team that was set up a while ago to clean stairwells and graffiti, will make estates more pleasant for residents by clearing up the messes created by antisocial behaviour.

Proposals are being looked at for schemes to divert young people from antisocial activities and the acquisition of new equipment, for example for noise recording to help get the evidence needed to deal with antisocial behaviour.

This issue carries more on tackling antisocial behaviour on page 2 along with 'Help for witnesses in antisocial behaviour and domestic violence cases' on page 10 and 'Police pedal power' on page 8.



Responding to antisocial behaviour

Different cases call for different solutions

Antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) are an important tool, but they are not the only option and not always the best. In each case we need to look at what will have the best outcome for the person experiencing the problem: how best to stop the problem quickly, how to ensure there is no repetition of the problem and also to seek a change in behaviour wherever possible. This is important as it prevents the problem simply being moved from one area of the borough to another.

Intervention in the early stages before a problem escalates is also important. This may involve the use of a trained mediator to help residents resolve their differences. At other times an injunction to stop the problem escalating may be more appropriate.

Deal with the problem early

Research shows that those involved in antisocial behaviour are more likely to get involved in criminal behaviour later in life. Initiatives like our acceptable behaviour contracts (ABCs) help children get back on track, particularly when our parental support worker is also involved and giving much needed support to parents.

Together we can be more effective

We also have multi agency geographic panels in Islington (MAGPIs) which are problem solving panels involving different agencies and, in the near future, community champions. These panels allow the agencies to work in partnership with each other to coordinate their response to antisocial behaviour.

FEEDBACK

We hope that the news and information provided in this newsletter will be useful and of interest to you. Please feel free to contact any member of the editorial team with your comments or suggestions for future issues.

To contact any member of the editorial team, write to:

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or email your comments and suggestions to
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This newsletter and the accompanying supplement and all back issues are available on the Homes for Islington website. Click the blue 'Publications' tab at the top of the web page and then click the green 'Newsletters' tab on the left.

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Evictions for antisocial behaviour



A tenant at Henson Court in the Boleyn Road area was evicted for assaulting operatives from a gas contractor working on site and being abusive to his neighbours. The eviction order was secured with the help of the tenant management organisation. The evicted tenant is now living in temporary accommodation in another part of the borough and social services are working with him. He may be placed in supportive housing as they feel he needs to be 'supervised'.

Thanks to the joint efforts of Homes for Islington, the legal department and tenants at Benwell Road, Isledon Road Area Housing Office has been able to crackdown on another tenant acting antisocially. The tenant had been making the lives of tenants in and around the street a living nightmare with drunken behaviour, verbal abuse and threatening behaviour. Offers of support from Social Services, Housing Support and other services were turned down while the spate of antisocial activity continued. Consequently, a 'Notice Seeking Possession' was served on the antisocial tenant and a full possession order obtained which led to eviction on 11th April 2005.

Sometimes we have to get tough



Unfortunately there are times when the only way we can deal with residents committing antisocial behaviour is through serious enforcement measures. When we have exhausted all other options, Homes for Islington and the Police are not afraid to push for harsh punishment. During 2004/05 the following were obtained in Islington. • 89 Notices of Seeking Possession • 42 ABCs • 13 Drug closure orders • 3 Dispersal orders • 8 ASBOs • 5 Kerb crawlers subject to disqualification from driving • Over 60 referrals to mediation.

Antisocial behaviour: How to report incidents



Residents who become victims of antisocial behaviour may need to contact the police, depending on the nature of the incident. In emergencies telephone 999.

Homes for Islington also encourages residents to report all incidents occurring on HFI estates to their area housing office. Ask to speak to your tenant management adviser.

All offices also have antisocial behaviour message lines, which you can call at any hour of the day or night and leave a message. Messages are checked on every working day. Use the message lines if you want to report something out of hours or if you wish to report something anonymously. Reporting antisocial behaviour makes a vital contribution to reducing the problem.

- **Boleyn Road 020 7527 8346** • **Central Street 020 7527 6247**
- **Holland Walk 020 7527 7477** • **Isledon Road 020 7527 6505**
- **Lyon Street 020 7527 6853** • **Upper Street 020 7527 5346**

DOWN OUR WAY: THE BOLEYN ROAD AREA

Islington has a rich and fascinating history and over future issues of Homes for Islington News, we will explore some of the people and places from the past, starting in this issue with the Boleyn Road area and, in particular, Newington Green.

Newington Green started as a clearing in the middle of the great Middlesex Forest and was first mentioned by name in 1480. It became a popular base for hunting for the aristocracy and King Henry VIII is thought to have owned a hunting lodge there. The present King Henry's Walk was originally a footpath winding from the south side of the Green to Balls Pond Road.

52-55 Newington Green is thought to be the oldest surviving terrace of houses in England, having been dated to 1658 by a panel in the main façade. The combination of location, luck and excellent quality of building probably led to the survival of the terrace which is now a rare example of planned housing from the beginnings of suburban development. The terrace is grade 1 listed in recognition of its unique status.

During the 18th century, many influential thinkers came to live and work in Newington Green, including the poet Samuel Rogers, the women's rights campaigner Mary Woolstonecroft and Daniel Defoe, author of Robinson Crusoe and A Journal of the Plague Years.



52-55 Newington Green, England's oldest surviving terrace.

These are just a few highlights of the history of the area but if you are interested in finding out more about your local history, why not visit the Local History Centre at Finsbury Library, 245 St. John Street, London EC1V 4NB. Appointments are necessary, so please telephone in advance to arrange your visit on 020 7527 7988, or email to: local.history@islington.gov.uk.

In the next issue we will be featuring the Central Street area, so if you have any suggestions about places, people or historical events in your area we'd love to hear from you (contact details on page two).

For a chance to win a book about Islington history, answer the question below and send your answers with your name and address to: Local history competition, Homes for Islington News, 5 Highbury House, London N5 1RN

Q Newington Green is home to the oldest terrace of houses in England. In what year are the houses thought to have been built?

New Horizons library reading programme: a library on your doorstep!

Now you can pick up a copy of your favourite book or a new best seller on some of the borough's largest estates. Islington Council's 'New Horizons' project is bringing mini libraries to your doorstep. During a 4-hour per week session, you can have a cup of tea or coffee while choosing a book or having a quick chat with your neighbours.

If you want to read a particular book or magazine, just ask a member of staff and they will get it for you as soon as they can. Up to 90% of books on offer are determined by what you want to read. And, for readers whose first language is not English there is

'English for Speakers of Other Languages' (ESOL) material, dual language and mother tongue reading material.

Most people who have registered continue to use the library regularly and many local residents have introduced friends and relatives. "Going to the library is the highlight of my week. It's on the

doorstep and we enjoy talking to the staff and look forward to choosing a new book," says an older lady who goes to the Packington Library. The scheme has just been named runner-up at this year's 2005 CILIP/LiS 'Libraries Change Lives' Award.

As well as normal opening times in local community centres, the libraries also attend evening and weekend events such as bingo, line dancing and youth clubs. So whether you want to read for enjoyment, research or as an essential life skill, why not drop in to one of the community libraries near you?

Library opening times:

Andover Community Library
Open Every Monday 10am - 2pm
Bemerton Community Library
Open Every Friday 10am - 2pm
Hanley Crouch Community Library
Open Every Wednesday 10am - 2pm



Low water pressure problems in Islington

Many residents around the Borough have been experiencing low water pressure in recent years. A major cause of this problem is that Thames Water are planning to stabilise and, on average, substantially reduce water pressure in a series of zonal programmes across the capital to well below historic water pressure levels in London and will eventually be delivering a service that is unable to supply water to any blocks that are three stories and above.

Since the end of 2003, the Association of London Government (ALG) has been working closely with London councils to assess the extent of existing problems with water supply pressure and to anticipate the impact of Thames Water's plans to reduce pressures. The ALG has been campaigning to get Thames Water to take full financial responsibility for any costs that Boroughs may incur as a result of reductions in supply pressure and in a recent press article, Thames Water agreed to pay a "significant proportion" of the costs.

Homes for Islington currently have 43 boosted water sites and this number will increase over the coming years, as affected homes are identified in experiencing lack of water pressure. HFI currently have a capital spend each year of £100k on boosted water sets, both on upgrades and new installations and have installed 18 new sets in the past four years.

Cost to leaseholders - There are no hard and fast rules on the costs to leaseholders and they will be consulted prior to any commencement of works.

What should you do if this problem happens on your estate?

Most likely to be affected are people living in high rise buildings. When water pressure is too low, pumps may not be able to operate properly. In some cases heating or hot water may be affected. If you experience any of these problems, you should contact HFI Direct on freephone 0800 694 3344.

If you suspect a problem of water supply or waste water may be due to Thames Water or be their responsibility, you can contact them on 0845 9200 800 or use their minicom service on 0845 7200 898. If you see a leak from a pipe in the road or footpath, you can call the Thames Water LEAKLINE on 0800 714 614.

To improve services to residents, Homes for Islington now has technical staff on call out of hours from 6pm till midnight Mondays through Fridays and from 8am to 8pm on Saturdays and Sundays. They coordinate with Thames Water, Caxton Islington and any other contractors who may need to be involved, thus ensuring that the time required to restore things to normal is kept to a minimum.

They will make sure that residents on an affected estate are kept informed with flyers. These will be sent in advance of planned works likely to affect water and within a few hours of an unexpected failure of pressure. If updates are required, further information will be supplied. Staff at HFI Direct and the area offices will also be kept informed so that residents questions can be answered. If necessary they will organise deliveries of drinking water.



New equipment like this water booster may need to be installed in some locations.

INVEST AND IMPROVE - Homes for Islington Business Plan

Homes for Islington's business plan for 2005-10 has now been published. Setting out the organisation's key objectives for 2005/6 longer-term objectives to 2010, the plan was developed in consultation with staff, HFI board, residents, partners and other stakeholders and incorporates Islington Council's One Islington themes. A short summary is enclosed and if you wish to read the full version you can access this via HFI's web site at www.homesforislington.org.uk.



Major works consultation – Getting it right...

The recent confirmation that Homes for Islington (HFI) has achieved a two star rating means that residents will benefit from a £500million programme of repairs and improvements between now and 2010 in order to meet Decent Homes standards and to also implement the higher 'Homes for Islington' standard.

Consultation with residents

HFI intends to consult with residents in a clear and accessible way about the delivery of the Decent Homes programme and create genuine opportunities for residents to be involved in decisions about the works.

New ways of working with our partner constructors offer new opportunities for consultation. Whilst the scope of the works will be decided before we enter into individual contracts with constructors, the detail of the work will be decided upon in the period leading up to the agreement of the maximum price for the works with the constructors. Residents will be encouraged to contribute to that process.

In many cases HFI has to make decisions regarding the scope of works – the 'what work needs to be done' decision. This is to make sure we meet the decent homes standard by 2010 and ensure that your homes are safe and warm. We have, however, taken on board what our residents have said about their priorities and we are, therefore, investing more in window renewal work as well as security. Residents will have genuine choices about how the work is delivered and about the design of new kitchens and bathrooms. Wherever there are alternatives or choices to be made, HFI will consult with residents on their preferences.



Information in the newsletter and on the HFI website

HFI will make programme information available to residents describing how and when works will be delivered in newsletters and on our website.

The 2005/6 programme has been approved by the end of May. We are

still working on the detail of the 2006/7 programme but intend to have it published by the end of July 2005. Details will appear in the autumn issue of this newsletter in September. The programme up to and including 2010 will be published by March 2006 and we hope to have the information in time for the spring 2006 issue.

We will be making much more use of the HFI website to keep you up to date about the progress of works. The site will be regularly updated.

Information on video

We are currently in the process of producing a film that will show how the huge programme of works will be delivered and how it will affect residents. The film will be widely available in DVD or videotape format for use at consultation meetings and by those residents who find it difficult to attend meetings.

The "Getting it right" booklet

Those of you who have had major works undertaken recently will be familiar with the HFI 'Getting it right' booklet. This informs residents about what happens before works start, while works are in progress and when works are finished. It also has essential information for leaseholders. We will be continuing to send this booklet out in advance of works, but it will be constantly under review so we can make it even more informative.

When you receive a copy of 'Getting it right' from us, you can be sure that major works that will affect you are imminent. In the booklet you will find a questionnaire. Please complete the questionnaire as it gives HFI the information it needs to ensure that we shape the consultation process to meet your needs.

How to get involved

HFI is setting up a focus group to help us develop our consultation procedures. If you are interested in contributing to the work of the focus group please contact either Derek Hayes on 020 7527 6219 or email to derek.hayes@homesforislington.org.uk or Jason Hapgood on 020 7527 2421 or email to jason.hapgood@homesforislington.org.uk.

Redecoration programme for elderly or disabled tenants

Homes for Islington has put aside some money from its repair and maintenance budget for decorating the inside of homes for a limited number of elderly and disabled tenants. The money available allows for the redecoration of one, and in some cases two, rooms inside your house. Homes for Islington will try to include as many eligible applicants as possible up to the limit of the available funding for this year. If you meet the criteria listed below, you are encouraged to apply by contacting your area housing office.

You are aged 70 or over.

Or You are in receipt of a recognised disability allowance (this includes

attendance allowance, mobility allowance, disability living allowance, war disablement benefits and pensions, disabled persons tax credit industrial disablement benefit).

You do not live with any able bodied people under the age of 60.

The inside of your home has not been decorated by Islington Council or Homes for Islington during the past seven years.

You are a tenant. Leaseholders and freeholders are not eligible.

SCHOOL'S OUT! WHAT AM I GOING TO DO?



With so much going on in Islington for young people, "I'm bored" are two words you won't be hearing this year.

The summer holidays will soon be with us and some readers may be worried that they haven't got much to do while school's out. Homes for Islington News has contacted Young People's Services and the Children's Information Services at Islington Council and has found out that there is LOADS going on! Whether you just want a pitch to kick a ball around, a holiday scheme or use this as a chance to get involved in something more long term, it's all available in Islington!

There isn't enough room in this newsletter to give all the information necessary so unless it says to just turn up on the day, please contact the scheme you are interested in first.

Summer holiday sports events – for free!

The following events are all free. Just turn up wearing suitable clothing. All the events are for young people up to the age of 16 unless stated otherwise. For further information contact the Greenspace and Leisure Division at Islington Council on 020 7527 3515.

28 July 05 – Highbury Fields 11am-4pm Bungee Runs - Come and try!

Contestants on the bungee run put on the padded belt, which is attached to a strong bungee cord. They then run as fast as they can, carrying a velcro baton. Quickly stick it to the central barrier before the cord snatches you back! The further you run the higher you score - there will be a prize for the furthest.

Also on this day will be 'old Skool' giant games, Connect 4, Jenga, Croquet and many more.

1st August - Kwik Cricket – Asteys Row 12pm - (UNDER 10s)

This will be following music in the park which starts at Asteys Row at 10.30am. Kwik Cricket is a fun, fast and active new way of playing cricket.

Do you think you have what it takes to be the new Freddie Flintoff or Brian Lara? Come and show off your skills. There will be small games with prizes to be won.

1st August –5th August - Brazilian Soccer School – Archway Park. 12-1pm - (UNDER 12s)

This is the all-week Brazilian Soccer School that is run around the country and has worked with such stars as Ronaldo, Ronaldinho, and Pelé and is one of the national games in Brazil. Brazilian football is a game played with a smaller ball, which improves skill. This is one of the quickest growing games in the country and is here in Archway Park for free! Have a look at the website on www.icfds.com

8th August - Kwik Cricket – Asteys Row 12pm - (UNDER 10s)

This will be following music in the park which starts at Asteys Row at 10.30. Kwik Cricket is a fun, fast and active new way of playing cricket. Do you think you have what it takes to be the new Freddie Flintoff or Brian Lara? Come and show off your skills. There will be small games with prizes to be won.

9th August - Football session at Milner square 1pm - (UNDER 14s)

This football session will include skills, small games and finish off with a match. Come and show off your silky skills and see if you can cut it.

10th August - Ultimate Frisbee at Caledonian Park at 2pm

Ultimate Frisbee is the new craze to be sweeping the country. Come along, play a game and learn the skills. People have been playing this game for years and now it has reached London. Be one of the first in London to try it. Free frisbee for everyone that turns up!

11th August - Come and try tennis at Tufnell Park 10-1pm

Come and try tennis – with Wimbledon just gone and Britain still looking for a champion could you be the one the British hopes are pinned on? Come to Tufnell Park N7 and show what you are made of!

12th August - Football at Elthorne Park 2-4pm - (UNDER 14s)

Football skills and team games followed by a match on the Elthorne pitch – have you got the skills to compete? Come and show off your talents.

15th August - Kwik Cricket – Asteys Row 12pm - (UNDER 10s)

This will be following music in the park which starts at Asteys Row at 10.30. Kwik Cricket is a fun, fast and active new way of playing cricket. Do you think you have what it takes to be the new Freddie Flintoff or Brian Lara? Come and show off your skills. There will be small games with prizes.

16th August - Climbing Wall / Bouncy Boxing and football at Elthorne 3pm-7pm - Nearest tube: Archway

This is one major day with a 24ft climbing wall and a bouncy boxing ring, as well as football skills and other games. Come along and challenge your mates or the staff to see if you can get to the top of the wall. Box your way against your pals and see who stays on their feet longest - 'Know what I mean 'arry?'

17th August - Ultimate Frisbee at Caledonian Park 2pm Nearest tube: Caledonian Road

Ultimate Frisbee is the new craze to be sweeping the country come along and play a game and learn the skills. People have been playing this game



for years and now it has reached London. Be one of the first in London to try it. Free Frizbee for everyone that turns up! Second and last chance of the year.

18th August - Come and try tennis at Highbury Fields 10am-1pm
Nearest tube: Highbury and Islington

Come and try tennis – with Wimbledon just gone and British hopes still looking for a champion could you be the one the British hopes are pinned on? Come to Highbury Fields and show what you are made of!

19th August Football at Archway Park (UNDER 14's)
Nearest tube: Archway

Come and show off your talents at this showcase event at Archway park with skills drills and a game. Archway park is on Archway Road and St Johns Way.

22nd August - Football @ Grimaldi Square (UNDER 14's)
Nearest tube: Kings Cross / Angel

Skills, Drills and Games - can you cut it and become king of the cage? Show off your skills and see if you have the Brazilian touch!

23rd August - Crazy Golf at Islington Green 11am-4pm
Nearest Tube: Angel

Fun for all the family. Come and try crazy golf in the middle of Upper Street - see if you can beat the targets or have the talent to become the new Tiger Woods

25th August - Come and try tennis at Rosemary Gardens 10am-1pm

Rosemary Gardens – Southgate Rd N1- Nearest Tube – Old Street / Essex Road. Come and try tennis – with Wimbledon just gone and British hopes still looking for a champion could you be the one the British hopes are pinned on. Come to Highbury Fields and show what you are made of!

26th August - Human Table Football at Highbury Fields 11am-4pm
Nearest tube: Highbury and Islington

The last event of the year so let's make it a big one! Come to Highbury Fields and let's get it on with a human table football battle! Thought you were good with a football? See how good you are on the human table!

If you have any questions about these events, please feel free to call Noel Headon on 07903 350497

There are also an athletics track, basketball courts and football pitches available across the borough for free by local residents. These are unsupervised. For information about your nearest facility contact 020 7527 5959

While sport's a great way to have fun and exercise at the same time, some people want to spend their time doing other activities as well. The following gives some brief information about the many summer schemes operating in Islington and some of arts and leisure activities that are available.

Summer schemes

There are holiday schemes running in all areas of Islington. The age ranges are different for each scheme, as are the costs, which vary from free to around £50 per week. Please contact the Children's Information Service on 020 7527 5959 to find out where your nearest scheme is.

Arts and leisure activities

Islington Arts Factory

2 Parkhurst Road N7 0SF Tel: 020 7607 0561
Art, music and many more activities for all ages.

Queensland Multimedia Arts Centre

26-38 Queensland Road N7 7AJ
Tel: 020 7619 0459
Computers and arts. For ages 10+

Zoomaround

46 Milton Grove, Stoke Newington
N16 8QY Tel: 020 7254 2220
Multi-level fully padded play frame with loads of things to discover inside. Play with your child or enjoy the café which also does home-cooked food. Parties can be arranged too! £3 for children 3 and under, £4 for children 4 years and over. Two Hour session. Height restriction about 150cm. Open every day, 10am-6.15pm.

Castle Climbing Centre

Green Lanes N4 Tel: 020 8211 7000. Manor House tube, exit 3
Fantastic high climbing walls where qualified instructors teach 8-16s and adults to climb with safety equipment. Charges may seem quite high, but compare them with the price of a climbing holiday, or give a lesson as a present. Monday – Friday 2pm – 10pm, Saturday & Sunday 10am – 7pm.

Summer University

A wide range of almost free activities are available for 10-19 year olds - from Shakespeare for Kidz to Pop Videos and French and Spanish to Hip Hop and Multi Sports. It runs through August. Registration costs £5. For information about 2005's Summer University ring 020 7527 5558.




FREE FUN DAY
Now in its fifth fantastic year!

Sunday 3rd July 11am - 4pm
Brewery Road
(between Caledonian Road and York Way)

Homes for Islington and Caxton Islington in association with FITA present a community street party for Islington Council tenants and residents

Fun-packed Open Day for the Whole Family

Free Barbeque, Strawberries and Cream and other Refreshments.

LIVE BANDS • SUMO WRESTLING
CHILDREN'S COLOURING COMPETITION
SPINNING GYROSCOPE • AMAZING MAZE
GIANT SLIDES • MASSIVE SOFT PLAY CARAVAN
FREE FACE PAINTING AND HAIR BRAIDING

www.kier.co.uk

Homes for Islington
improving housing through partnership
www.homesforislington.org.uk

Did you know...? GAS SAFETY CHECKS ARE REQUIRED BY LAW

Homes for Islington is required by law to carry out a gas safety check on tenants' gas appliances at least once a year.

It's in your tenancy agreement: You are required to cooperate with the safety programme by giving access to your home for these important gas safety checks.

Don't end up in court: Failure to give access could lead to a court case. In recent cases tenants were ordered to pay over £650 in court costs for failing to give access.

Failure to have a gas safety check could endanger the lives of you, your family and neighbours.

A gas safety check could save you money on your fuel bills.

What do you need to do?

If you live in the Lyon Street, Boleyn Road or Holland Walk housing areas.

HFI have already requested that you provide access, so if you have not made an appointment, it is very important that you contact us immediately on the telephone number given below to avoid a breach in your tenancy agreement and a possible court action.

If you live in the Central Street or Isledon Road housing area.

Your gas safety check must be carried out on the following dates:

Central Street Area: 20 June - 10 July 2005

Isledon Road Area: 4 - 24 July 2005

Contact HFI Direct for your free gas safety check. Freephone 0800 694 3344

8am-8pm Mondays-Fridays and

8am-noon Saturdays

Keep your appointment!

Why a new schedule?

The new schedule will mean a better gas repairs service to you. The new gas safety check schedule makes use of the warmer months to leave more gas operatives available to respond to your gas repair calls in the colder months - when you need this assistance the most.

It is essential that everyone has their 2005 gas safety check done during the dates given in this leaflet.

Please note that even if you have had a gas safety check less than 12 months ago, you will still need to comply with the new schedule.

Gas safety for leaseholders

As a leaseholder you are responsible for keeping in substantial repair and maintenance the boiler and other apparatus installed for gas/electricity that is exclusive to your flat or maisonette. Remember you have a duty under law to ensure that you do not cause harm or injury to others due to faulty appliances. Points to remember are:

- Homes for Islington is not responsible for servicing/maintaining your boiler.
- As a leaseholder you must service your boiler every year.
- All works in relation to gas appliances must be undertaken by a CORGI registered person.



Police pedal power

Thanks to members of the Isledon Road Area Housing Panel, the newly formed Community Safety Police Team responsible for the Finsbury Park ward is now fully mobilised. In true partnership working the panel approved funding from its tenants compact budget for the purchase of 10 mountain bikes for use by the specialist team.

The team headed up by Sergeant Chris Walsh, based at Holloway Police Station, will be tackling issues such as antisocial behaviour, drug abuse, street crime on our estates and within the local area as identified via community forums, area panels and Police liaison meetings.



Thinking of terminating your tenancy? – What you need to do



Make sure that you:

- Give the area housing office at least four weeks written notice.
- Pay all rent and charges up to the tenancy end date.
- Notify all your utility suppliers (e.g. gas/electricity/cable etc) to terminate your supplies and end your responsibility for them.
- Leave the property in a clean condition.
- Remove all your belongings, except fitted curtains and blinds.
- Clear the property and garden of all rubbish.
- Leave the council's original fixtures and fittings in a good state of repair.
- Return all keys (including communal/windows/balcony) to the housing office by 12 noon on the Monday after the tenancy ends.
- Anyone returning the keys, whether the tenant, a friend or relative, must also complete a "notice of termination."

Things you may be charged for – HFI's recharge policy

HFI's new recharge policy is to recover the costs of rectifying unauthorised/non-standard works carried out by outgoing tenants or their agents. If you give up your tenancy, you need to be aware that recharges will be made if we need to, for example, replace non-standard fittings or electrical installations, disconnect cookers, remove carpets or other flooring left in the property, remove aerials or satellite dishes, make good structural damage, broken toilet seats and change locks because of lost or non returned keys. To find out more, contact the Voids Team at your area housing office.



You could be charged for leaving unauthorised or non standard fittings in your property

One hundred and counting: Homes for Islington delivers new kitchens and bathrooms for council tenants

Homes for Islington has installed its 100th new kitchen and bathroom at the home of Pauline Byrne, of Amias House, Wenlake Estate. The major refurbishment programme is part of the first round of



modernisation works to meet the Decent Homes Standard in these rooms in council homes across the borough.

The £2m modernisation programme includes installing upgraded fuse boards and in some homes, new boilers. For their kitchens, residents have a choice of door fronts, worktops, drawer and door handles and taps. Bathrooms can be fitted with new bath, toilet and sink, as well as taps, including spray attachments. Both rooms get new flooring, and the walls are painted. In addition, all residents are given energy-saving light bulbs.

Pauline Byrne says she first learned of the programme by reading the Homes for Islington newsletter. *"I saw it, but I never thought it would be for me. The work has transformed my home. I'm enticed to do more cooking now and I never have to feel embarrassed for people to be in my kitchen any more. It's great. But the best part of the scheme is that we can choose what we want."*

Help for witnesses in antisocial behaviour and domestic violence cases



A court can seem an intimidating place to anyone who has had no experience of one, especially people who are victims of antisocial behaviour (ASB) or domestic violence. They often feel vulnerable as a result of what has happened to them, so it is not surprising that

they may be reluctant to come forward to report incidents, fearing that they will risk being further victimised, especially if they have to be witnesses in court.

Victims may be forgiven for feeling that substantial resources go to helping and supporting perpetrators while very little is done to help victims and witnesses through what may be a very traumatic experience.

New support for Homes for Islington residents

Homes for Islington has been working with the Witness Service, based at Highbury Corner Magistrates' Court to devise a new support scheme for Homes for Islington residents who experience antisocial behaviour and domestic violence on our estates and who may need to become witnesses in court. The scheme, which was started in May as a pilot in the Upper Street housing area, aims to help witnesses to feel more confident and less vulnerable. It is hoped this support will encourage residents to come forward to report incidents, which is important if we are to reduce the problem.

The new pilot will involve extensive training for 16 volunteers who will then take on cases and visit victims and witnesses at home. This scheme is a new approach to dealing with antisocial behaviour and domestic violence on estate. If successful, it will be rolled out across all the HFI housing areas.

The Witness Service is an independent organisation with charitable status. It is also solely dedicated to the work of supporting victims and witnesses. Some people may prefer to speak to such a service. In some cases victims may wish to be referred to Victim Support, which helps people to cope after an incident.

Who you can contact

If you want more information about the service or may need to be a witness in court as a result of an incident of antisocial behaviour or domestic violence, you can contact William McGarvie, Co-ordinator of the Witness Service. William is also a board director of Homes for Islington and a tenant. Contact 020 7506 3166 or email: william.hcmc@islingtonvictimssupport.co.uk.

Victim Support can be contacted on 020 7272 0784 or email: info@ivss.demon.co.uk

Homes for Islington encourages residents to report information to the area housing offices. See Antisocial behaviour: How to report incidents on page two.



*William McGarvie,
Witness Service
Co-ordinator*



New HFI Equality and Diversity Strategy

Homes for Islington has produced a new Equality and Diversity Strategy, which sets out what we want to achieve in relation to equality and diversity and eliminating discrimination and how we will deliver on our commitments. The new strategy provides a clear framework for what Homes for Islington is trying to achieve and how we will measure our progress. It will enable us to identify any barriers to accessing our services and employment and, through active and ongoing involvement of our stakeholders, enable us to introduce new and improved ways of providing our services.

The key aims of the Equality and Diversity Strategy are to:

- Remove any barriers preventing our customers from accessing our services or participating in decision-making structures
- Consult and involve all our customers in our work to promote equality and diversity
- Work with our contractors and those we buy services from to ensure they do not operate discriminatory practices in respect of employment or service delivery and that they adhere to good

equalities practice in the employment of their staff and delivery of their services in respect to sex, ethnicity, colour, nationality, language, disability, age, religion or belief or sexuality

- Develop and promote policies giving our staff equal access to employment and career development opportunities
- Develop a workforce representative of our community at all levels and grades throughout our organization
- Promote a community in which all residents can live freely of prejudice and discrimination and in harmony with each other.

Over the next two months Homes for Islington will be seeking feedback from our residents and staff on the new strategy. A full copy of the strategy can be obtained from the HFI Equality and Diversity Adviser, Janice Markey. Call 020 7527 4079 or email janice.markey@homesforislington.org.uk. Please send any comments you have on strategy directly to her.

Following feedback, the strategy will be implemented and published widely in September 2005.

Safety and security during major works

Now that Homes for Islington has received two stars from the government's Audit Commission, funds are available to do works towards meeting the Decent Homes standard. This means that substantial works will be taking place on estates over the next few years.

With the Considerate Constructors Scheme and arrangements made between Homes for Islington and its constructors, a great deal of care has been taken to minimise hazards.

Residents also need to take precautions by following some basic guidelines.

Children

Construction sites, with all the equipment, scaffolding, materials and skips can seem tempting to children.

- Keep your children away from work areas inside and outside your home. Never let children climb scaffolding or play under it.
- If they could access scaffolding from inside your home, keep doors and windows that would allow this access locked. Make sure that they do not access scaffolding from outside either.
- Don't let children play with builders' tools, or climb on builders' vehicles or play with new materials, rubbish or skips.
- When builders are working in your home, don't leave children under 16 unsupervised. Remind children how important it is to stick to these rules.



Adults need to be careful as well. Make sure that your family and any guests do not access the scaffolding and warn them away from other hazards as well.

Pets

Pets can also be at risk. Keep your pets away from builders' tools and equipment and keep them secure while the work is being carried out.

Health

If you find the building work on your estate is affecting your health, please let your residents' liaison officer know.

Security

- Only allow builders with the right identity cards into your home. **ALWAYS ASK FOR IDENTIFICATION.** If in doubt, don't let them in. You can always telephone the residents' liaison officer to check.
- Don't lend anyone your door keys.
- Keep doors and windows closed and locked whenever possible, particularly at night if scaffolding is outside.

Getting it right...

- You can help prevent accidents and make your home more secure by following the simple guidelines in the *Getting it right...* booklet which you will be given before works start on your estate.
- Complete the questionnaire in the pocket at the back of the booklet. You should report any special problems, such as disabilities, in your response to the last question.
- You will also be given the names of people you can contact to report any special problems you may have.

BULBS ACROSS THE BOROUGH



Residents of Homes for Islington estates have been among the many residents of Islington to enjoy the sight of a new crop of spring bulbs this year, thanks to the 'Bulbs Across the Borough' scheme.

Among the locations to benefit is the Brecknock Estate where almost 3,000

bulbs were planted in March. The bulbs had been provided by the 'Bulbs Across the Borough' scheme and the day was organised by the tenants and resident association (TRA). People of all ages took part in the planting. Refreshments were provided and everyone enjoyed working together and mixing with their neighbours.

As a result Brecknock residents decided to continue this good work by setting up a gardening club.



HERE'S WHAT YOU SAID ...Results of the Readership Survey

The editorial team of Homes for Islington News includes residents who provide the editorial team with ideas about what we should include in the newsletter and a residents point of view about what is relevant and likely to be of interest to readers.

The Readership Survey widens resident feedback. We value your comments, which will influence the content of the newsletter. HFI will continue the policy of including residents in the editorial team and getting feedback through resident surveys.

There were only approximately 300 responses to this first survey and the editors will look at further incentives to encourage more of you to respond to next year's survey. Nevertheless, the feedback is interesting and here it is in summary:

How much of the newsletter do you normally read?

49% of responses received said they usually read all of the newsletter.

23% said more than half.

16% said less than half.

4% said none.

Do you find the content relevant and informative?

91% said yes and **9%** said no.

Is the newsletter helpful in giving you information about HFI and its services?

90% said yes and **10%** said no.

Where do you have access to the Internet?

The results show that those of you who have access to the Internet often have access at more than one location.

25% have access at home; **13%** at work and **15%** at "other" places. **58%** said they had no access and **42%** had some sort of access. This result is similar to the results from the 2004 tenant satisfaction survey.

The newsletter comes out only four times a year, but HFI updates the website daily, so there is an advantage in going to the HFI website for the latest information. We are told that the adult education received a good number of enquiries from residents about free computer courses, so let's hope more of you will have access by next year.

If you were to get in touch with the editorial team of this newsletter, how would you prefer to contact them?

61% said by email; **48%** by letter; **41%** by telephone.

Do you think the area supplements provide you with enough information on local issues?

79% said yes and **21%** said no.

What recommendations did you make for future content?

In response to this, Homes for Islington News will respond to what was the most numerous request, which was for more articles for

older residents. The next issue will have a special feature for older residents and we would welcome your feedback on any specific things you would like us to include. Contact information is on page two.

There were also quite a few requests for more articles for young people and residents from minority groups. We will be addressing these and the many other suggestions made.

Your other comments

Besides responding to the readership survey, a number of respondents also included questions relating to housing issues. We have passed these on to the appropriate HFI staff.

Winner of the prize draw

Congratulations to Miss N. Soodin from the Holland Walk housing area who has won a £50 voucher. Thank you to all of you who responded.

Please continue to provide feedback throughout the year. Contact information is on page two.

MORE NEWS FOR LEASEHOLDERS

Leaseholders, who now make up a substantial portion of residents, currently receive their news through both Homes for Islington News and the Islington Home Owner newsletter. This summer Homes for Islington will be consulting with leaseholders to plan how we can best deliver relevant leaseholder news in the future.

PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT WORKS

You may wish to carry out alterations or improvements to your property. This may consist of altering the structure and layout of the original plans. Unless the works that you need to carry out are internal and non-structural, you will need to request from Homes for Islington a licence of alterations and Planning/ Building Control approval. Plans of your property may need to be redrawn and your deeds varied to encompass the work carried out. You must never carry out structural works without permission. Here are some examples where you need permission

- **Replacing windows**
- **Fitting a new kitchen or bathroom**
- **Knocking down internal walls**
- **Putting in boiler flues or drilling into the structure for extraction fans**
- **Extending the property or converting loft space**

These are just a few of the many types of alterations you may be thinking of doing. If any works that require permission are carried out without our consent, you will have problems selling your property in the future. For more details contact homeowner@homesforislington.org.uk or telephone 020 7527 7715/7720.

Laminate flooring

Consent is not required for laminate flooring, as it is not a structural alteration under the terms of your lease. However, the lease does provide that:

- **You must not cause a noise disturbance/nuisance.**
- **Floors, passages, stairs and landings should be substantially covered to reasonably minimise noise transmission to other flats.**

Changes to the Right to Buy

A number of changes to the Right to Buy were introduced under the Housing Act 2004. The changes that 'will clamp down on companies and individuals exploiting the rules and profiting at the expense of those in need of affordable housing by extending the qualification period for purchase from two to five years and ensure councils have first offer from any future resulting sale.'

Social landlords welcome this news. If you have applied to purchase your property after the 18th of January 2005 you will fall into this category. This means that you will need to have been a "tenant" for over five years to qualify for the Right to Buy scheme. When you sell the property, the council will have the first offer to purchase your property.

You can read about the changes on the Homes for Islington website. Look under Leaseholders (Blue tab at the top of the web page), then Buying Your Home (green tab on the left). There you will find links that give details of the legislation and the Explanatory Notes to the Housing Act 2004. The Right to Buy changes are in Part 6 of the Act.



SUBLETTING

As a leaseholder, you have the right to sublet your property. As a condition of your lease, you must let us know about this before the subletting begins. Any subsequent lettings will also need to be sent to the Home Ownership Team, 2-4 Tufnell Park Road, London, N7 0DL. You need to send the following information:

- A certified copy of the tenancy agreement
- Your new correspondence address
- The names of your tenants and a contact number
- Registration fee of £70 made payable to 'London Borough of Islington'

Remember that you are responsible for ensuring that your tenants follow the same conditions under the lease agreement. It is your responsibility for ensuring the tenancy agreement covers all obligations under the terms of the lease. You will always be held responsible for any breaches that occur at the property.

IT'S ON THE WEB



The Homes for Islington website is regularly updated and so can provide you with the latest information about your housing services.

DON'T MISS - the new *Getting it right...* ONLINE pages

In a few weeks time Homes for Islington will begin posting up to date news about the major works that we are carrying out throughout the borough in order to meet the government's Decent Homes standard. This information will keep you up to date on what the programme of works consists of in each area. Once works have been scheduled for your estate or building, you will be able to find details of all the contacts you need, what is happening, who the contractors are and the relevant dates. As works progress, information will be updated to give you the latest progress reports, including pictures. There will also be a helpful set of answers to frequently asked questions and pictures and information about the choices you will have if you are scheduled to have works inside your home.

Because this information will be regularly updated, it will be worthwhile getting onto the website frequently to see how things are going. Any changes in dates or other details will be posted as soon as available.

We are calling these pages *Getting it right...* ONLINE. You can find them by clicking the blue tab labelled Repairs & Improvements at the top of every page on the Homes for Islington website. Then look for the *Getting it right...* ONLINE green tab on the left. To make it easy to find the pages, we will also place a special *Getting it right...* ONLINE button in a number of locations around the website.

It will have the yellow tick mark that you see at the top of this article. There will also be a number of keywords added to the A-Z to make it easy to find the pages.

It's easy to find

Homes for Islington's website has an A-Z to help you find what you are looking for. The web team are continually working to make the site easier to navigate.

HFI meetings

Information about Homes for Islington Board meetings and other meetings open to the public are published regularly on the website along with relevant papers and minutes. Click the blue Meetings tab at the top of the web pages or use the A-Z to find the meeting information you are looking for.

Recent survey says more of you are on broadband

A recent survey carried out at Aubert Court, King Square and Stafford Cripps found that, out of 513 residences in those properties that have a landline, 137 have Broadband. That's nearly 27%. Other residents may have access to the internet via dial up systems or using computers outside their homes. The number of these was not surveyed, but we are getting a picture that more and more residents are going to be able to benefit from information and accessing services on the HFI website. The website is a cost effective way of providing frequently updated information and services you can access conveniently from your computer.

Homes for Islington recognises that not all residents have access to the internet, so we will continue to provide information and services by more traditional means.

Plans for the election of residents to the HFI board of directors

Resident Director elections

Homes for Islington (HFI) will hold elections for its resident directors for the first time in autumn this year.

HFI has seven resident directors on its board. For the purpose of their election, the borough will be split into two electoral areas. It has been agreed that there will be a rotational retirement of resident directors. Three resident directors will stand down this year and the other four will stand down in 2007. All residents in the chosen electoral area for 2005 (including those in tenant management organisations, co-operatives and Partners for Improvement in Islington, as well as those directly managed by HFI) will be eligible to vote. There will be one vote per household. The exact boundaries

of the two electoral areas are in the process of being finalised.

Keeping you informed

Once the decision on the two electoral areas has been made, there will be:

- publicity of this in the area housing offices and on the HFI website
 - information sent to residents in the area where the election is to be held
 - a further update report to consultative panels in July
- There will also be information on what people need to do if they wish to stand for election and on how the election process will work.

Are you a tenant or resident not properly represented by a recognised association?

Why not stand for membership of your area housing panel and help make sure that residents' views are listened to?

Homes for Islington on behalf of Islington Council is holding elections for area housing panels and is now urgently seeking representatives. You can find out if you are already represented by looking at the list of current tenants and residents associations, which is available at the reception desk of your local area housing office.

There will be a meeting in each of the six housing areas to elect representatives from the week beginning 11th July 2005. If you would like more information about what the position involves or about the meetings, contact the performance and partnership officer at your local area housing office. Lyon Street residents please contact the Resident Involvement Team (see below). Dates of your local scheduled area housing panel



meetings are listed in your area supplement delivered with this newsletter.

If you are a council tenant or leaseholder interested in standing, please contact The Resident Involvement Team at Homes for Islington on 020 7527 8630 or by e-mail at RIT@homesforislington.org.uk by 12 noon on Friday 1st July 2005 at the latest.

We would like to involve more black and ethnic minority, disabled and other underrepresented tenants in consultation arrangements. For this reason, we would particularly like to encourage people from these groups to stand for these positions.

Homes for Islington Sub-Board Meetings

Homes for Islington's Sub-Board meetings are open to the public. Agenda and papers for these meetings are available three days in advance of each meeting through Homes for Islington's website. A hard copy is available to view in area housing offices.

All meetings take place at 6.30pm at The Stephenson Hall at the NCH, 85 Highbury Park, London N5 1UD

You are welcome to attend meetings on the following dates:

Contracted Services Sub-Board April 2005 – March 2006

Tuesday 14 June 2005 • 16 August 2005 • 18 October 2005

• 13 December 2005 • 14 February 2006

A joint Sub-Board meeting will take place on Thursday 23 June

Managed Property Sub-Board April 2005 – March 2006

Wednesday 15 June 2005 • 17 August 2005 • 19 October 2005

• 14 December 2005 • 15 February 2006

For enquiries on meetings please contact the HFI Governance Team on 020 7527 5148

If you require any of the following please note:

- A signer requires two week's notice to the HFI Governance Team prior to the meeting.
- Translation of papers for Sub-Board Board meetings require 4-6 week's notice in the language required after the meeting takes place.
- Creche facilities require notice two weeks in advance of meetings to the HFI Governance Team.
- An induction loop is available at the venue.
- Contact us if you have any special requirements.

Please contact HFI Governance Team at Room 115, Highbury House, Highbury Crescent, London N5 1RN, telephone 020 7527 5148 or email mary.switzer@homesforislington.org.uk

Consultative panel meetings for 2005/06

Consultative Panels are the meetings of the six Area Housing Panels, Islington Leaseholder Forum, the TMO/TMC Review Group and Partners for Improvement in Islington Residents Forum. These are meetings of elected members from tenants and resident associations or other groups, which discuss local issues and allow HFI and the council to consult with residents. These meetings are open to the public.

Information for each housing area is included in your local area supplement which accompanies this newsletter. Information about all Homes for Islington meetings can also be found on the HFI website. Click the blue Public Meetings tab at the top of the web page.

Meetings of consultative panels

Meetings for local area housing panels are listed in this month's area supplements.

The following consultative meetings are relevant for TMOs and leaseholders in all six housing areas.

TMO/TMC Review Group

Town Hall, Upper Street N1 2UD (See notice board for room)
Refreshments provided

For further information please call 020 7527 8633

- Tues 19th July 05 • Thurs 15th Sept 05 • Tues 15th Nov 05
- Thurs 12th Jan 06 • Thurs 9th March 06

Islington Leaseholder Forum - 7pm

Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD (See notice board for room)
Refreshments provided

For further information please call 020 7527 8633

- Weds 13th July 05 • Weds 14th Sept 05 • Weds 9th Nov 05
- Weds 11th Jan 06 • Weds 8th March 06

Homes for Islington Board meetings

Homes for Islington's Board meetings are open to the public. Agenda and papers for this meeting are available three days in advance of the meeting through Homes for Islington's website at www.homesforislington.org.uk. A hard copy is available to view in area housing offices.

All meetings take place at 6.30pm at The Stephenson Hall at the NCH, 85 Highbury Park, London N5 1UD. Meetings have been scheduled.

You are welcome to attend meetings on the following dates:

- **Monday 11th July 2005 • Monday 22nd August 2005**
- **Monday 3rd October 2005 • Monday 14th November 2005**
- **Monday 19th December 2005 • Monday 5th February 2006**
- **Monday 20th March 2006**

For enquiries on meetings please, contact the HFI Governance Team on 020 7527 5148

If you require any of the following please note:

- A signer requires two week's notice to the HFI Governance Team prior to the meeting.
- Translation of papers for Board meetings require 4-6 week's notice in the language required after the meeting takes place.
- Creche facilities require notice two weeks in advance of meetings to the HFI Governance Team.
- An induction loop is available at the venue.

Please contact HFI Governance Team at Room 115, Highbury House, Highbury Crescent, London N5 1RN, telephone 020 7527 5148 or email mary.switzer@homesforislington.org.uk