

## Town hall celebration for our earliest tenants

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Islington mayor Cllr Jason Jackson hands a bouquet to 95-year-old Ivy Finch, who has been one of our tenants for over 50 years

A lively group of our most long-standing tenants joined Islington mayor Cllr Jason Jackson in the town hall for sandwiches and a trip down Memory Lane, N1, in March

All 15 were among those who in the early 1970s moved into our newly completed homes in Barnsbury Street, Milner Square and (last in line) Barnsbury Mews.

### 1970s veterans

What they hadn't expected was a message from David Baker, first board chair and the only survivor of the team that planned, fund-raised and built their new homes.

David's message was read out by current chair Richard Hill, starting with an apology for not turning up from his home in Germany as he had hoped. 'At 95,' he said, 'travel is not always easy.'

He added: 'I take 50 years as a very great compliment, that you have found living in what we built agreeable enough to stay so long.'

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# Town hall celebration for our earliest tenants

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'We shared the view that people are much more likely to be happy living in something more like a typical London street, in a decent modern home,' David said.

'Looking back, we may have pioneered a trend away from high rise housing, not only in Britain but on the continent too.'

Mayor Cllr Jason Jackson picked up the theme, saying: 'Some of your community are now beyond friends and more seen as extended family.'



## Down memory lane

A trip down memory lane began with Janice Walsh recalling twice finding herself both neighbour and teacher to a very young Rachel Adelson-Kettle, whose mum Julie was also our first housing manager.

June Bartlett had heads nodding as she talked of 'Fred the Bread', whose corner shop 'sold everything'. Fred, she added, also got a BHA home after they found his basement home in Barnsbury Street had no bathroom. 'He had to pop over to his shop to wash.'



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From top left: Margaret and James Cryne with mayor Cllr Jason Jackson ► Zena Mann helps former caretaker Ron Lord and wife Jacqui identify children in a photo from our archives ► Janice Walsh takes us back to 1970s Barnsbury ► Noreen Walker greets Pam Dorrington, whose family were the Mews's first football champs ► Ron Lord chats with board chair Richard Hill and coordinators Colette and Nicky ► And a bouquet for Barrie Grant to take home to his wife.



# January repairs blitz gets the new year off to a sound start



Forty-three repairs completed by our new **building contractors Twin Peaks**, 16 trickier problems logged, inspected and materials ordered, and two garages packed to the rafters with your unwanted bulky goods

Day one of the repairs blitz came to a fitting end with rapid footsteps, the sound of something large being dragged over cobbles and a slightly out-of-breath tenant who had dashed home from work in time to beat our 8pm shutdown.

## Bring and barter

Day two began with Marius opening a second garage as more of you jumped at the chance to get your now unloved furniture taken away for free.

'The garages turned into a mini-swapshop,' said contracts and compliance head Rikki Burt. 'For every item one person no longer wanted there were plenty of neighbours happy to recycle it!'

The idea for a repairs blitz, he said, was inspired by reports from some of you in the autumn Acuity survey about lack of progress on repairs reported long ago.

'We found no trace of the repairs on our records,' Rikki said, 'so this was a chance to get the service off to a fresh start.'



Twin Peaks worked solidly over both days, supported by nine of us working 8am to 8pm, including chief executive Susan French and operations director Cheryl Whittle.

'The shifts were really worth it for those of you at work during the day,' said Cheryl. 'We also picked up plenty of problems you hadn't yet reported to us.'

'We had great feedback,' said operations head Asif Mahmood. 'You really appreciated the free clear out and asked if we'd make this a regular thing.'



Quick fix, left: peace of mind for one of you after Twin Peaks co-director Stephen Ryan sorted out the broken lock on your garage door.

Top: with this garage filled to the rafters with unwanted items on day one, Marius had to open a second for day two.

## IS YOUR REPAIR A JOB FOR US OR IS IT ONE FOR YOU TO SORT OUT?

Before you report a repair to us please check that it is our responsibility and not yours.

You should all have a copy of *Taking good care of your BHA home*, which tells you which repairs we do and those we expect you to get done.

If you have lost your copy you can download it at <https://tinyurl.com/3szxy4cx>

If you ask us to do a repair that is your responsibility we will explain this to you politely but we will not do the repair.




**You asked for more like this and we've agreed. From now on you'll get two of these each year, with a second to be held this summer. We may also use the 'blitz' approach for other local issues where it feels likely to get results.**

## KEEPING YOUR HOMES SAFE

# Fresh look for shared areas and more protection from fire

Pugin Court wrapped in scaffolding, a freshen up for Milner Square and staff extractor fan shame...



Above: an extractor fan in dire need of a clean

Left: Pugin Court works should all be completed by later in spring

### Freshen up for Milner Square

Milner Square's shared areas have had a lick of paint for the walls and new floor coverings. Residents were given a vote on the colours and finishes.

### Fire safety measures

Pugin Court flats that were not part of the retrofit works are getting extra fire safety works done. These will give greater protection from flames and smoke if a fire breaks out.

### Loft storage warning

If you had a new loft hatch fitted during the retrofit works they are solely to let us do vital maintenance. **Please do not use lofts to store goods.** They are not designed to hold the extra

weight. Boarding spreads but also adds weight, squashes the insulation and can create cold spots, causing damp and mould.

### Checks on 1970s balustrades

Safety checks are being done on horizontal 1970s-style timber balustrades. If you have them and we've missed you out let us know. Balustrades are the supports that hold up handrails so have to be sturdy and safe. If yours are faulty, please tell us.

### Please clean extractor fans!

Finally an anonymous staffer has sent this shameful snap (*above*) of their extractor fan. If not given a twice a year clean fans become inefficient, can cause mould and damp, and can even catch fire.

## VIEWS OF YOUNGER FOLK WANTED ON NEW VILLAGE HALL AT BARNSBURY MEWS

Gareth, Chandni and Will from Islington-based Jan Kattein Architects have been consulting younger residents and neighbours on new plans including a village hall, for what most of you have long called the 'topsite'.

### Thinking caps on

'We're hoping to get lots of ideas from younger residents about what they'd like to see here,' Chandni said. 'We also want to know what types of sport and games they'll want to play here.'

Youngsters are being invited to do their own drawings or make models of their ideas for making this a bug and bird-friendly place, suited to fun, games and sports - and to happier neighbours.



'This will help us design an ambitious garden, sports court and play space as part of the village hall 'package', making it useful for residents of all ages and local community groups too,' Chandni said.

**The Jan Kattein Architects team will be back with some ideas from 3pm on Friday 17 April. They will display different ways the children's ideas and suggestions could be used and are hoping this will spark more ideas from all of you for a transformed topsite.**

## KEEPING YOUR FIRE DOOR AND FRAME FIT FOR PURPOSE

### PLEASE DO NOT

- attach a door bell, numbers or any decorations)
- take off or try to adapt the door closer
- change the colour with paint, ink, stains or other coating
- put up any kind of door plaque
- use a drill or hammer on them.

### PLEASE DO

- report any fault with your fire door or frame to us promptly
- use the solid the wall *next to* the door if you want to fit a door bell, numbers etc.

**The five-step fire door check**  
<https://tinyurl.com/mvr9ah3r>

# Home sweet home: how you can help those least able to protect themselves

For too many people home is sadly the one place where they are most in danger. This is something we cannot change on our own. Every community plays a vital role.

In February we carried out our regular review of what we call 'safeguarding'. This means **looking out for people least able to protect themselves from abuse at home:** children and vulnerable adults.

Our policy sets out our priorities and the plan of action we follow if we suspect someone is being abused in one of our homes or you alert us to your own concerns.

## Worries about child safety

By law no child can consent to being abused. A child is defined as any young person up to age 18, unless classed as 'looked after', in which case they are still legally a child until they turn 25.

## Grown-ups at risk

Vulnerable adult broadly means any grown up less able to protect themselves against abuse or neglect by another person.

This will include more obvious cases like someone in frail health but there are many other reasons why an adult might be vulnerable to abuse by another person.

## Eyes and ears on the ground

Your home should be the place where you feel safe and secure.

Our staff and contractors keep an eye out but you too should tell us if you sense something is 'not right'. You can report concerns to us and we will act with speed. Or you can go straight to the council's safeguarding team or, in an emergency, call the police. **See below for who to contact if you suspect abuse.**

## Just a hunch?

You don't need to wait to get evidence. If you or we think abuse may be happening it should be reported and investigated by professionally trained experts.

## TELL TALE SIGNS

- \* unexplained injuries
- \* a sudden or out of character change in behaviour or wellbeing
- \* seeming fearful, unusually timid or withdrawn
- \* having no or hardly any control over their finances
- \* unusually quiet or unwilling to chat to others
- \* (an adult) not being allowed out on their own.

## Behind closed doors

Too often the worst offenders pull the wool over other people's eyes. The safeguarding approach was designed with them in mind.

Below we have listed some common tactics. If any of these are happening to you, please ask for help and support now.

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**Abuse can be physical or spoken, sexual or emotional. It can involve playing with the mind, controlling who you see or talk to or tricking you into thinking you, or your mental health, is the real problem.**

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Abuse can be **failing to act when help or support** is clearly needed.

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It might be **forcing or 'grooming' someone into sexual acts.**

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**Cuckooing** describes someone (or a group) **taking over a vulnerable person's home.** It is often linked to crime or antisocial acts like storing or selling illegal, stolen or dangerous goods or materials.

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Abuse can be **stealing**, such as taking over someone's savings or benefit payments.

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**Domestic abuse** by a partner, ex or relative is rarely reported until it is extreme, if then. The victim is often cruelly made to feel they deserved or 'caused' the abuse.

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## DO NOT DO THIS...

Do not start investigating yourself. It could make things worse or tip off the abuser, giving them time to cover their tracks. **This is one for the professionals.** Islington Council has **properly trained safeguarding experts** who will investigate your concerns promptly, fairly and sensitively. They know how to ask the right questions and can do proper background checks.

## HOW TO REPORT IT

**Is someone in danger now?  
If yes, Call ☎ 999**

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**Otherwise call the Islington Council safeguarding team:**

- if it is about an adult ☎ 020 7527 2299
  - if it is about a child or children ☎ 020 7527 7400
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**Please tell us too so we can help find a remedy. Call us on ☎ 020 7704 2324 or email [info@barnsbury.org](mailto:info@barnsbury.org)**



## HOME HELPERS



### NEW CLEANER FOR DOVES

Pictured here is **Manjeep Kaur**, the new cleaner for **Doves** who

you may see out and about near you. In mid-March Manjeep did her first shift for us at Rolands Road and Highbury Terrace. She has taken over from Milana, who left Doves in March.



### KITCHEN, BATHROOM AND BOILER REPLACEMENTS

We are stepping up the number of new kitchens, bathrooms and boilers we fit each year. If your home is on this year's list we will write to you well ahead so you can agree style, colours and finishes with our contractor and make best use of their expertise in space-saving design.

### DROP-IN SESSIONS FOR HELP WITH YOUR RENT, TENANCY AND HOME REPAIRS

Drop in on a **Wednesday or Friday morning** from **10am to 12 noon** at 60 Morland Mews to get advice or support with a rent or tenancy matter, a household bill or the cost of essentials, or to report or follow up a repair. If we can't sort your query then and there we will arrange a follow-up appointment.

**Drop in at 60 Morland Mews, 1HN or contact Colette if you live at Highbury View or Ronalds Road. Call ☎ 020 7704 2324 or email [info@barnsbury.org](mailto:info@barnsbury.org)**

# Your new rent and service charge for the year ahead: who do you need to tell?

You will all have had a letter from us telling you the new rent and service charge for the 12 months from 1 April to 31 March 2027.

**Please make sure we are now being paid the right amount for your full housing costs so your account does not go into arrears.**

### PAYING BY STANDING ORDER

Don't forget to change your standing order if you pay by direct debit so it pays the right amount.

### GETTING UNIVERSAL CREDIT OR HOUSING BENEFIT

Make sure you update your journal or tell the housing benefit team about your new rent charge from 1 April to 31 March 2027.

### Worried about costs?

If you have any worries about paying your rent we can help.

### Who to contact

Contact **housing coordinator Nicky Anderson** or, if you live at Highbury View or Ronalds Road, **independent living coordinator Colette Lyons**.

**phone 020 7704 2324**

**email [info@barnsbury.org](mailto:info@barnsbury.org)**

**You can also drop in to an advice session on a Wednesday or Friday morning at 60 Morland Mews, London N1 1HN (the bungalow for Colette) or make an appointment to see Nicky or Colette in their private office or at your home.**

## WHY HAVE A STAYING CONNECTED VISIT?

Those of you who took part in last autumn's survey may recall being asked about our **Staying Connected** visits.

Of those of you who have had one of these visits, 69% said you found it useful, with comments like: 'It's always easier dealing with someone on the phone if you've met them in person.'

### Mutual benefits

It works two ways: we get to know those of you who never or rarely contact us. We might also spot ways we could help with problems in your home or neighbourhood you haven't told us about or thought it wasn't your place to do so.

We also do what we call a 'tenancy audit', going through

a list of questions, from how you like us to contact you (by email or letter, for example) to checking your home is not overcrowded.

Last year we found three homes where our tenant had moved out and was subletting. This is illegal and often also causes problems for neighbours. We acted swiftly.

Please bear in mind that, as your landlord, we have a legal right to enter your home if we have sound reasons and give you fair warning in advance.

**If you are on our list for a Staying Connected visit we will first get in touch to agree the time and day with you.**



## GETTING IT FIXED

### REPORTING DAMP AND/OR MOULD IN YOUR HOME

Please let us know if your home has a problem with damp or mould. We will act speedily, first visiting your home to get a clear idea of the scale of the problem and possible causes.

**If we have concerns about the health of anyone in your home we will treat it as an urgent case.**



Find out more on our website or download *Keeping your home and neighbourhood safe* on <https://tinyurl.com/yxwecmve>

### BEFORE YOU CALL, IS THIS A JOB FOR YOUR WATER, GAS OR ELECTRICITY SUPPLIER - OR EVEN CLOSER TO HOME?

Before you call us to report a **loss of power, gas or water** a few checks could save you a lot of frustrating time and effort.

**No water?** Find out if there's a problem in or near your home at [thameswater.co.uk](http://thameswater.co.uk)

**Power gone out?** Check your **fuse box** in case a fault in your home (an appliance or lightbulb maybe) has switched the supply off.

If your neighbours have also lost power contact your **supplier** or [www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk](http://www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk)

If you have **no gas** or **no electricity** and your supply comes through a **meter**, check that first. **Step two is to contact your supplier.**

**FIND OUT MORE | [barnsbury.org](http://barnsbury.org)**

## Ordering a repair

### TO ORDER A REPAIR

You can report a repair to any of our coordinators. They will pass on details of the problem to our repairs coordinator, who will organise the repair and all your appointments.

✉ [repairs@barnsbury.org](mailto:repairs@barnsbury.org)

☎ 020 7704 2324

Please do not ask any of our contractors to do a repair for you. All repairs have to be ordered through our system so they won't be able to help you.

### EMERGENCY REPAIRS (ONLY) WHEN OUR OFFICE IS CLOSED

Out-of-hours emergency repairs *only* should be reported to our emergency service run by ISHA on ☎ 0300 131 7300.



Don't forget to tell us:

- your name and address
- your phone number and/or email address so that we can get in touch with you
- as much as you can about the problem you are reporting
- if we will need to get into your home, when you (or another responsible adult) will be at home to let us in
- if you have a disability or are frail or vulnerable due to your age or ill health.

### IMPROVING OR ALTERING YOUR HOME: ASK FIRST!

We're sorry to report yet more damage caused by tenants doing works to their home without first getting our permission.

These tenants will be billed for the cost to us of repairing the damage done by their works.

#### Ask first to avoid a bill

Please don't let this happen to you. Tell us first if you want to change anything in your home, over and above putting up a curtain rail or wall hooks.

It is very unlikely we will refuse permission but we may need to do basic checks on your plans.

For some works we may also need to be sure you will be using skilled and properly qualified labour or specialist materials.

### SUSPECT A GAS LEAK?

**THIS IS AN EMERGENCY!**

Call the National Gas Emergency Service **NOW** on ☎ 0800 111 999.

If the service thinks the situation warrants an urgent investigation they will quickly send out a Cadent engineer.

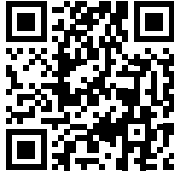
### SMOKE, HEAT AND CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTOR ALARMS

**Please test all alarms we have fitted in your home monthly, following the manufacturer's instructions. If one is faulty we will replace it. If you don't have ALL of these alarms tell us and we will fit any that are missing.**

**IF WE DID A REPAIR FOR YOU RECENTLY PLEASE TELL US HOW IT WENT**

Use our online survey to tell us what we did well and what we could have done better and you could win a £50 Love to Shop voucher in our prize draw.

To fill in the online survey go to <https://tinyurl.com/yc8ybhhs>



You can also send feedback about the repair to us direct by email at [repairs@barnsbury.org](mailto:repairs@barnsbury.org) or write to us at 4-6 Colebrooke Place, N1 8HZ. Or why not pop a note in a suggestion box telling us what you thought of your repair?

**DOMESTIC ABUSE IS A CRIMINAL ACT**



**SOLACE IN ISLINGTON**

☎ 0808 802 5565

[advocacy@solacewomensaid.org](mailto:advocacy@solacewomensaid.org)


If you need free, confidential support because of domestic abuse call Solace in Islington. Solace helps women and men. Monday to Friday, 10am to 4pm.

**IF YOU ARE IN DANGER RIGHT NOW CALL THE POLICE ON ☎ 999**

**DO YOU HAVE A STORY, PICTURE OR LETTER FOR US?**

If you have a story, letter or picture for *Barnsbury News* or have a suggestion for a news story or feature email [info@barnsbury.org](mailto:info@barnsbury.org) or call 020 7704 2324. We edit contributions to fit a tight space. We do not publish personal attacks.

**BARNSBURY HA HOMES ON OFFER FOR A SWAP**

Now on offer	Size/style of home	Tenant wants...
<b>Barnsbury Street</b>	five bed flat on the second floor with a shared courtyard behind this modern building	a two-bed home, ideally on the ground floor and with a garden
<b>Barnsbury Street</b>	three bed, two-storey flat with ground-level kitchen and living area and own street-level access	two bedrooms for a growing family
<b>Barnsbury Park</b>	two bed home with shared front courtyard and shared main entrance	3 bed home as now overcrowded
<b>Claringbull Court</b> 	two bedroom ground floor flat with a stairlift and wet room. Has own separate front entrance  two bedroom ground floor flat with spacious kitchen, living room and bedrooms, next to a primary school	one bedroom ground floor flat for health needs and to downsize  three bedrooms as household is now overcrowded
<b>Gissing Walk</b> 	two bed flat with own entrance (about 10 steps up on first level)  one bed studio flat with own entrance (about 10 steps up on first level)	three bed home as now overcrowded and for health reasons: <b>needed urgently</b>  one bedroom flat
<b>Highbury Terrace</b>	spacious studio flat in listed building. Nice views and use of shared garden. Separate bathroom and kitchen areas and hall. Shared main doors.	need a larger one bedroom flat
<b>Liverpool Road</b>	two bed second floor flat with spacious rooms. Shared main doors and a lift	three bed home needed as now overcrowded
<b>Lofting Road</b> all with shared main entrance to the building 	one bed, second floor flat  one bed, second floor flat  one bed, second floor flat  one bed, second floor flat	one bed on ground flr for health reasons  one bed flat  one bed ground floor for health reasons  two bed flat needed for growing family
<b>Milner Square</b>	two bedroom flat with use of shared gardens, off Liverpool Road	three bedrooms for growing family
<b>Morland Mews</b>	Second floor studio flat with shared courtyard behind the building. Shared main doors.	one bedroom flat needed for health reasons
<b>Ronalds Road</b> part of our independent living service for older people	One bedroom, first floor flat with a stair lift and shared use of large, walled garden	Looking to move to the Barnsbury Mews area

**IF YOU WANT TO MOVE...**

We keep a list of tenants wanting a home swap, with another of our tenants or someone living elsewhere in the UK who wants to move to inner London, so get in touch if you want a swap.

**If you want a smaller home we have an excellent package of incentives and ways to help you move and settle in.**

**For more about moving home or a home listed here contact Asif. Email: [info@barnsbury.org](mailto:info@barnsbury.org) Phone: 020 7704 2324.**