OUR SERVICE STANDARDS

BARNSBURY
HOUSING ASSOCIATION

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OUR SERVICE STANDARDS

ABOUT OUR SERVICE STANDARDS

BARNSBURY HOUSING ASSOCIATION

THE BASICS: WE WILL ALWAYS

serve you **promptly, efficiently** and **fairly**

be **polite** and **respectful**

use our **common sense**

deliver what we promise

give **good value** for money

be **easy to contact** in working hours and **quick to respond**

be **realistic** about what we can and cannot do

be **consistent**: you will get the same correct answer from all our staff

apologise if our standards fall short and put matters right

learn from our mistakes.

ASKING FOR YOUR VIEWS: WE USE

our **two-yearly survey** of your views, carried out for us by an independent survey team

calls to our customer team which we record for feedback, monitoring and training

our **annual visit to each one of you at your home**. Our *Staying Connected* visits give you a way to tell us one-to-one your views on our service and standards

one-off or regular surveys to get feedback on particular services online, by phone or in writing

notes of **what you tell us in person** or in **group meetings**

feedback we ask from you if we have helped you with a serious matter relating to your home, tenancy or neighbourhood

your **complaints and compliments**, to identify where we fall short or make the grade

inspections of completed repairs to check our required standards are being upheld.

continued on page 2

MEASURING YOUR SATISFACTION WITH OUR SERVICES

To find out how you view us we ask you questions based on the **tenant satisfaction measures** drawn up by the Regulator of Social Housing. Researchers Acuity used these for our last two-yearly tenants survey in autumn 2023.

The results let you, us and our regulator see how we compare with similar housing services in England and Wales.

We also have to show to our board hard evidence that we are meeting the regulator's **consumer standards** for:

- safety and quality
- transparency, influence and accountability
- neighbourhood and community
- tenancy.

GET IN TOUCH WITH US

- call in at our estate office at **49 Lofting Road,** Islington N1 1ES
- phone **020 7704 2324**
- email **info@barnsbury.org**
- website **barnsbury.org**

REPORTING PERFORMANCE: WE DO THIS

formally every two months to your **resident panel**

in our **newsletters** to you, both printed and emailed

on our **website**

in our **annual report and calendar**, which we publish at the end of each year

in our **published returns to the social housing regulator**, giving all information relevant to both its tenant satisfaction measures and its consumer standards

in **reports to our board members**, all volunteers with skills and experience directly relevant to our housing services.

WE USE PERFORMANCE STATISTICS:

when we consult the **resident panel** and your **tenants and residents associations** over new ideas or proposals

in talks with tenant groups set up to advise us on **local** or very **specific services**

when **reviewing and auditing tenancies** to check we are doing what we said we would

to assess how our **services, policies and strategies** might impact on each of you individually

to detect and respond to unusual trends or patterns in, for example, rent payments or complaints

at our leadership team's **monthly reviews of active caseloads** on matters from housing disrepair to antisocial behaviour

to check we are honouring **promised timescales**

to identify **staff training** needs

to discuss and agree ways to **improve how we handle cases** of antisocial behaviour, domestic violence and hate crime and other unwelcome activity

to **compare** how well we compare with other similar housing providers.

TREATING YOU FAIRLY AND SENSIBLY

We do our best to treat all of you **fairly**, to **respect** and **be sensitive to your personal needs** and to **avoid** causing you **discrimination or disadvantage**.

We follow the accepted **good practice** for our sector and we comply fully with the **Equality Act 2010**. This law makes it illegal to discriminate against or intentionally harass anyone because of their:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage or civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

continued on page 3

DO YOU NEED HELP TO READ OR UNDERSTAND SPOKEN ENGLISH?

If English is not your first language we can get some documents **translated** and/or can use a **translator** when we need to talk with you.

HELPING WITH HEARING, SIGHT AND MOBILITY

If you have **limited hearing** we can use specialist hearing aids, like a **loop**, and some of our staff are **trained signers**.

If you have **partial** or **declining sight** we can provide written material on **audio-tape**, in **large print** or may be able to get documents printed in **braille**.

Some of you have a home adapted for a **health condition** or you may over time **need adaptations**.

We can do minor works like fitting **grab rails** in your home or can arrange for it to be assessed by an **occupational therapist**. We also have a very small number of ground-floor homes designed for people with **limited mobility** or who **use a wheelchair**.

For us to usefully understand why and how any of these **'protected characteristics'** applies to you we ask you to tell us when you first sign up to your tenancy with us and on our *Staying Connected* visits.

We use what you tell us to better understand the potential impact on you of our rules, policies and day-to-day actions.

Confidentiality: *we never share your personal information unless we have to do so for specific legal reasons.*

If you think we are not meeting our service standards please tell us.

MANAGING YOUR HOME

IN RETURN WE ASK THAT YOU

make sure you **understand your tenancy agreement**

be **respectful and polite** to staff

make sure your **rent is paid on time**, in advance, every week

pay back your arrears if you fall behind with your rent

tell us if your **contact** or **personal details change**

tell us of **any significant change to your household**, including anyone moving in or out

tell us if you **need help** or **support**, and use it

do not swap home without our consent, in writing.

LOOKING AFTER YOUR HOME

make sure you **understand your repair responsibilities** and ours

report any repairs that are our responsibility to us **promptly**

let our staff and/or contractors into your home when we ask

check with us before you start any improvement works to your home. You may need our written permission. Small repairs and minor changes like shelves or hooks are fine.

report damp and mould to us without delay

keep **tidy** and **well looked after** any space you have **outdoors**

GOOD NEIGHBOURS

be considerate and polite to your neighbours

do not store anything in **parts** of the building **you share**

use your **rubbish and recycling facilities** responsibly

if you have a **pet**, **always clean up after it** and keep it under good control

make sure visitors treat your home and neighbourhood with respect.

PLAIN ENGLISH & CLEAR DESIGN

We do our best to keep our **language plain** and direct. We also try to keep the **design** of our written material **simple and clear** - and we have plans to improve our website.

Please tell us if and how you think we could improve the writing and design of any of our online or printed material.

RECRUITING STAFF

We try by following good recruitment practices to make sure our staff profile broadly reflects the communities we serve.

HOW TO COMPLAIN OR MAKE A SERVICE REQUEST

We sometimes get things wrong or make a mistake. If you let us know we can put things right, apologise, and try to avoid it happening again, to you or to anyone else.

To make a complaint about a service, about anyone working for us, or to request a one-off service from us:

- **tell any of our staff**
- call us on **020 7704 2324**
- email **info@barnsbury.org**
- write to **4-6 Colebrooke Place, London N1 8HZ**
- online at **barnsbury.org**

OUR SERVICE STANDARDS

CUSTOMER SERVICE

BARNSBURY HOUSING ASSOCIATION

CONTACTING US: WE WILL ALWAYS

aim to **answer a query** the **first time** you contact us

get back to you within **two working days** if we are **not able to deal with it at once**

give you a **full reply** within **10 working days** if not sooner

tell you **within 10 working days** when you will get our full response **if your question is complex** making it impossible for us to meet this deadline

see you **within five minutes** of turning up at our estate office and **have an appointment**, if we are not dealing with another pressing matter

see you **within 30 minutes** or sooner if you **do not have an appointment**, unless we are dealing with another matter.

YOUR QUERIES: WE WILL ALWAYS

deal with any question or request you put to us. If the person you first speak to is not best placed to deal with your query they will tell you who they will be passing it onto.

if needed, **check that we have understood** your query correctly

ask if our reply is **clear and covers all relevant points**

keep you **regularly updated** if there are or may be any delays, also telling you why and the likely new timescale.

continued on page 2

In return we ask that you be **polite and helpful towards our staff and contractors**. Our staff have a right to take action if they are **abused or threatened**, and they will get our full support. If appropriate and necessary we may involve outside agencies.

WE WILL ALWAYS

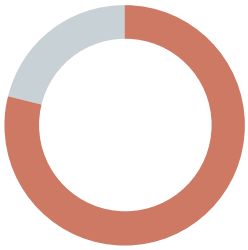
- serve you **promptly, efficiently** and **fairly**

You will get a service from us, not just an acknowledgement.

- be **polite** and **respectful**
- **deliver what we promise**
- give **good value for money**
- be **easy to contact** during working hours and **quick to respond**
- be **realistic** about what we can and cannot do and **explain it clearly**
- be **consistent**: you will get the same correct answer from all our staff
- **apologise if our standards fall short** and quickly **put matters right**
- **learn from our mistakes**.

You say you find us easy to deal with

79%



2023 ACUITY SURVEY

VISITING YOU: WE WILL ALWAYS

wear **photo ID**. Whoever knocks on your door, whether staff or a contractor, they will wear or carry photo ID and be happy to show it to you.

for all **planned meetings** try to make an **appointment** before turning up

contact you promptly if we have to **break** the appointment or **will be late**.

If you **smoke**, please **do not** do so while our staff are with you.

If you have **pets**, please put them in **another safe enclosed space** during our visit.

TREATING YOU FAIRLY: WE WILL ALWAYS

treat you **fairly** and with **respect**

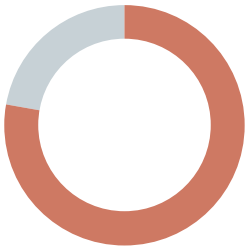
recognise that some of you are more likely to experience **discrimination** or **disadvantage** than others in some situations

keep an **up-to-date record** of your **personal data** including, with your consent, anything that might make you vulnerable to unfair discrimination, disadvantage or harassment

use this information to help us design or improve services and policies to make sure they are **fair**, **sensitive to different needs**, **sensible** and **flexible**.

If you think we are not meeting our service standards please tell us.

You say we treat you fairly and with respect



78%

2023 ACUITY SURVEY

OUR SERVICE STANDARDS

TENANCY MANAGEMENT

BARNSBURY HOUSING ASSOCIATION

PROFESSIONAL AND FAIR: WE WILL

always do our best to **help** you

be **friendly, professional and focused** at all times

deal with your tenancy queries using our **expert knowledge** and **professional training**

explain any complex matters for you simply and clearly

aim to sort out any **tenancy issues** openly and fairly

take a **flexible approach** to problem solving

be visible, with our estate-based housing team regularly out and about in our neighbourhoods

YOUR TENANCY EXPLAINED: WE WILL

explain your **tenancy terms** clearly before you sign it

tell you your **rights and responsibilities** before you move in to your new home

tell you what **we are responsible for** doing to help you keep to your tenancy and to keep your home secure and in a good condition

give you a copy of your **tenancy agreement**

tell you in writing if a rule, policy or practice that affects your **tenancy is changed or updated**

provide on our website and in printed documents information setting out in plain language **what we expect of you as a tenant** and **what you can expect from us**

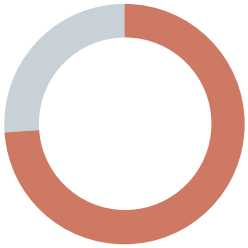
tell you **how you can take on an active role** in improving services and deciding our future.

continued on page 2

ABOUT THIS SERVICE

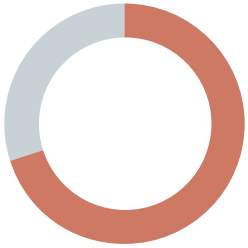
Our **housing and communities team** is responsible for keeping your homes and neighbourhoods well managed and your rents paid on time. From first sign up to handing back the keys we make sure all of you stick to your tenancy terms, offering support and advice if and when you need it.

You say we contribute positively to the neighbour-hood



74%

You say we deal with antisocial behaviour



63%

2023 ACUITY SURVEY

THE FIRST YEAR: WE WILL

if your tenancy is new, make sure you fully **understand your responsibilities**, checking this at first sign up and at the three- and nine-monthly reviews of your starter tenancy

investigate **any problems** you might have and work with you to address them so you are able, after one year on a starter tenancy, to move onto an assured tenancy

if you need **support** managing your tenancy make sure you get this from another suitable specialist service.

NEIGHBOURHOOD CONCERNS: WE WILL

work hard to protect your right to enjoy the **peace and privacy** of your home

let you know within five working days if you report to us a **breach of our tenancy** terms by another tenant

visit you at home to discuss your report, normally within 10 working days but a lot sooner **if the problem is severe**

take all action needed to **put right** any reported breach of our tenancy terms

investigate any report that a home has been **abandoned** or the tenant **does not live there**

set out to prevent **tenancy fraud** by regularly visiting our homes, as part of our *Staying Connected* calls or following up valid concerns.

MOVING ON: WE WILL

let you know we have your request within five working days if you ask us if you can **swap home** (mutual exchange) or **move to another property**

let you know we have your **completed application** within five working days

decide **whether or not we will agree** to you doing a mutual exchange within 42 working days of our getting your completed application form

let you know when and if any suitable homes come up if you **ask to move** home

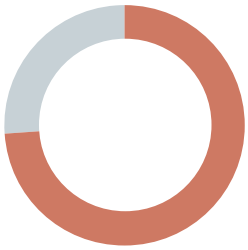
Give you clear advice and, within 10 days of being asked, decide whether or not you have a right to let your partner or a close relative (child or grandchild) **take over your tenancy**.

NB They must have lived with you for at least 12 months and have documents that prove it.

If you think we are not meeting our service standards please tell us.

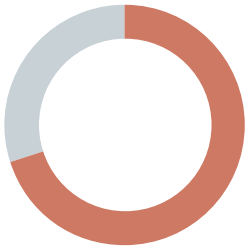
You agree we listen to you and act

67%



You say we keep you informed

77%



2023 ACUITY SURVEY

OUR SERVICE STANDARDS

INDEPENDENT LIVING

BARNSBURY HOUSING ASSOCIATION

SHELTERED HOUSING SERVICE: WE WILL

provide a home that gives you **security, privacy** and a good degree of **independence**

as needed, make you aware of **useful specialist services and local resources** that may help you stay living independently

make sure you get all **welfare benefits** you are entitled to

make sure you feel confident your home is **safe and secure**

check on your welfare weekly

once a year **visit you at home** for our *Staying Connected* visit

provide **welcoming and inviting shared spaces** where you are able to meet other residents

provide fitted and/or mobile equipment so you can call the community alarm service if you have an **emergency**

advise and encourage you to take part in or jointly organise with neighbours **social events** and **health-boosting activities**

work with agencies best placed to help us **safeguard** those of you now vulnerable

advise you on your **housing options** if you are no longer up to living independently

if asked be happy to **help you read and reply** to any correspondence.

If you think we are not meeting our service standards please let us know.

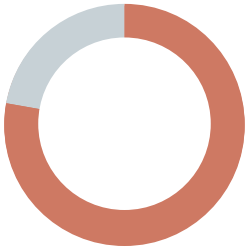
ABOUT THIS SERVICE

At Highbury View we provide sheltered housing for older people, with our independent living officer on call during the working day for advice or guidance. Each tenant has a self-contained flat with shared use of a large private garden. A bungalow in the garden has meeting space to meet and sleepover facilities for visitors.

Highbury View tenants say:

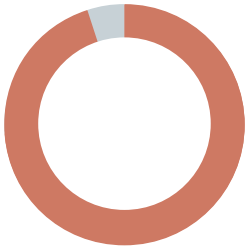
we treat you fairly and with respect

95%



your home feels safe and secure

95%



2023 ACUITY SURVEY

OUR SERVICE STANDARDS

ESTATE SERVICES

BARNSBURY HOUSING ASSOCIATION

MAINTAINING STANDARDS: WE WILL

carry out **regular planned inspections** to all our properties to identify faults, problems and things that could be improved in the parts of our property you share with other tenants

on **any visit to a building or estate** keep an eye out for anything we need to repair, improve or update

respond promptly to your reports of anything you have noticed that needs to be improved, removed or repaired

make a new note on our IT system of all action needed on our system, alert colleagues responsible for the work needed and monitor the progress of follow up action

draw up clear briefs for all work done for us by outside agencies or companies and **monitor their work** to make sure it is done to a consistently high standard

consult you on standards of all services you pay for.

SHARED GARDENS AND GREENERY: WE WILL

with the professional services of our contractors make sure:

shared **grassed areas are regularly cut and maintained**

shrubs in shared areas are **pruned** at least twice a year

trees get any **minor pruning** as and when needed

hedges are pruned as needed

flower beds, hedges, other planted areas and paved paths and terraces are **kept free of weeds**

litter and rubbish in shared areas is **cleared away**

tree surgeons are brought in to carry out more **extensive pruning** and **safety inspections** as needed for health and safety regulations and tree preservation guidelines

you are told **the timetable for these services** so know when to expect work like the pruning and mowing to be done.

Most of these arrangements do not apply to those of you who have agreed with us and your neighbours that you will look after the green spaces around your homes.

ABOUT THIS SERVICE

Staff from our housing and communities and our asset management teams work closely together to keep shared areas inside and outside your homes safe, clean and welcoming.
Our aim is to make this a place you are proud to call your home.

WHAT IT COVERS

- **cleaning** in shared areas
- all **repairs** needed to shared areas
- looking after **shared gardens, shrubs, trees and hedges**
- cleaning **windows** in shared parts of buildings
- removing **litter and bulky waste**, as agreed with those of you living at each address
- dealing with **graffiti** and **abandoned vehicles**
- making sure **rubbish and recycling bins** are used as intended
- checking **fire safety** equipment is in good order and fire safety rules followed in each building.

CLEANING SHARED SPACES: WE WILL

inspect our buildings, with **block champions** if they are available, to check cleaning in entrance halls, lifts, landings and stairs is done to a high standard

make sure all **windows in shared areas** are cleaned if the cleaners can reach them safely (following health and safety guidelines)

display information in your building so you **know when the cleaning will be done**. Cleaners will sign and date this when they have finished a cleaning shift

respond within 24 hours* if you report to us any concerns about **cleaning standards** in your building (* longer if you report this when our office is closed for the weekend or public holidays).

KEEPING YOU SAFE AND SECURE: WE WILL

carry out **monthly health and safety inspections** in all shared areas inside and outside all buildings except for our **independent living service** which gets **weekly inspections**

regularly check and test **fire alarms** in shared areas

assess fire risks in each building once every three years

report and/or arrange **repairs** needed to shared areas as soon as we know about them

carry out **repairs in shared areas** in line with our response times for the type of work needed

work with partner services to **promote fire safety awareness** at our funday, local road shows or other neighbourhood campaigns

offer **personalised support** with **home fire safety** to any of you at risk because of your age, a disability or a health condition

offer appropriate **support and help** if you or a neighbour is struggling to keep a **garden tidy** or **clear away household and recycling waste**, as required by your tenancy agreement

remove all **graffiti** within 28 days of it being reported, or within 24 hours if it is offensive

remove **abandoned cars** within five working days of our being told about a car in line, with our abandoned car procedure

make sure you know the best ways to lawfully get taken away **unwanted furniture or electrical goods** like a washing machine

remove and investigate any **illegally-dumped furniture or white goods** within five working days of being told about it

publish on noticeboards and on our website dates for **our six-monthly walkabout** of your building

work with the owner of any **dog causing problems** for others to help get it under control, in keeping with your tenancy agreement

help any of you **individually or as part of a community group** wanting to **tackle community issues** such as street cleaning, crime and road safety.

If you think we are not meeting these standards please tell us.

WE ASK YOU TO

tell us if you want to **brighten up your area**, **take part in community activities** like litter picking, a clean-up or planting or **be a block champion**

help by **putting your litter and rubbish in the bins** and **cleaning up after your dog** if you have one

follow our **fire safety guidance** to keep you and your neighbours safe

keep shared entrances, hallways, stairs and stairwells **clean, tidy and completely clear** of any of your possessions including bikes and pushchairs.

CHECKING STANDARDS

- We log all feedback and complaints from tenants.
- Shared areas are regularly inspected by our staff.
- Once a year we do a survey asking your views on our estate services.
- We do an exit survey when any tenant moves out of one of our homes.
- We do our best to state clearly what you get for your service charges.
- We discuss these findings with tenants to agree how best to improve your estate services.

OUR SERVICE STANDARDS

OUR RENT SERVICE

BARNSBURY HOUSING ASSOCIATION

RENT AND SERVICE CHARGES: WE WILL

send you a **rent statement** four times a year - and inbetween as well if you contact us asking for one - so you can check our information is correct

write to you **at least 28 days before your payments for the next 12 months change** showing how much you will need to pay in rent and service charges, broken down so you can see each charge clearly

consult you before changing the list of services we charge you for unless we have to add any services to this list for your own health and safety

make sure you know who on our team is **your contact** for any queries about paying your rent

contact you promptly if you **do not pay your rent on time**. We will need to talk to you so will offer to visit you at home if you cannot visit our office. Or we could discuss it over the phone or by email.

alert you if there is an **issue with your rent account**, again letting you know how to get support if you are having problems

work with our colleagues to make sure all your rent and/or service charge queries get a **clear, correct answer**

offer you a **variety of ways to pay** your rent, including AllPay, standing order, bank transfer over the phone and over the internet.

IF YOUR RENT FALLS BEHIND: WE WILL

agree with you a plan to pay back your arrears that you feel you can afford

always deal with the problem of arrears **quickly, sympathetically and efficiently**, respecting your right to keep your personal matters confidential

help make sure you get all the **income that should be coming your way** including housing-related benefits

refer you to an appropriate **support service** if you are struggling with finances.

If you think we are not meeting our service standards please tell us.

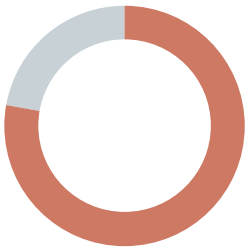
ABOUT THIS SERVICE

Our housing and communities team checks that your rent and service charges are paid on time. We will advise you if you need help with payments using our expert knowledge of welfare and one-off grants. If your payments fall behind we will check you are getting all the financial support you qualify for and agree with you a plan to pay off your arrears.

Moving out if you still owe us rent

If after your tenancy ends you **still owe us rent** we will contact you to arrange for you to pay it back. If you break this arrangement our efforts will continue, **involving the courts** if we have to.

You say we treat you fairly and with respect



78%

2023 ACUITY SURVEY

OUR SERVICE STANDARDS

REPAIRS SERVICE

BARNSBURY HOUSING ASSOCIATION

REPORTING A REPAIR TO US: WE WILL

complete repairs within the following **timescales**:

- **emergency** repairs (made safe) within 24 hours
- **urgent** repairs within five days
- **routine** repairs within 20 days

provide a **24-hour service for emergency repairs** year-round

if you have a routine repair that we need to inspect before organising the repair we will **get the problem inspected** within 10 working days

tell you promptly if it is **not possible to start or finish** your repair when expected and why

give regular **updates** until a repair is complete where appropriate

whenever possible offer you an **appointment**

tell you the contractor's **company name and contact details**

send you a **works order** with the contractor's details

let you know if your repair is going to be **late** or we **need to change the appointment**

leave a **calling card** if you are out when we or our contractor calls.

AFTER THE REPAIR IS FINISHED: WE WILL

leave your home **clean and tidy**

check with you to make sure the repair was completed to your **satisfaction**

respond to **any queries** you raise about the job

use your **feedback** to improve our service

inspect a percentage of completed repairs

If you think we are not meeting our service standards please tell us.

ABOUT THIS SERVICE

Your booklet *Repairs and maintenance: taking good care of your BHA home* explains what **you should do** to care for your home and which repairs we will do.

Please report any repairs that are our responsibility to us promptly. You can do this by phone, in writing, in person or over the internet.

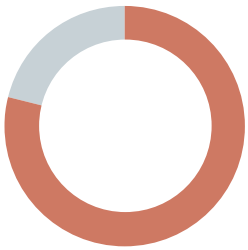
OUR CONTRACTORS

Our contractors and anyone working for them:

- will keep to our **code of conduct**
- carry ID at all times and be happy to show it
- **introduce themselves** before entering your home.

You were happy with the time taken to finish the last repair

79%



2023 ACUITY SURVEY

OUR SERVICE STANDARDS

DAMP & MOULD FIXED

BARNSBURY HOUSING ASSOCIATION

SPOTTING THE PROBLEM: WE WILL

regularly put **information about damp, mould and condensation** in your newsletters, on your noticeboard and on our website

encourage you to **check for damp and mould** and report any you find to us

make **reporting damp and mould** clear, straightforward and easy.

TACKLING THE PROBLEM: WE WILL

get an **initial inspection done within 48 hours** of your report

quickly **assess how severe the problem is** including any likely **risks to your health**

get a **more in-depth inspection** carried out as soon as possible by our asset manager:

- using tools including a moisture meter, hygrometer and thermal imaging camera
- taking a photographic record of all affected areas

log new cases on our **damp and mould register** or update any case **already on the register**

repair the **underlying cause**

remove the **mould**.

AFTER THE REPAIR WORKS: WE WILL

if needed, give you a **dehumidifier** and make sure the extra cost to you of running the dehumidifier is paid back

after putting the problem right **repair any damage** to your interior finishes

carry out a further inspection to **check the issue is fixed** and the damp and mould has not reappeared

investigate further **if damp and mould reappears** and start the process again

monitor each case over the **following 12 months**

contact you to **make sure you are satisfied** with what we have done and are happy for us to close the case.

continued on page 2

ABOUT THIS SERVICE

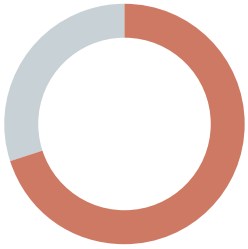
Any damp or mould that builds up in your home is a **health risk** so **must be reported** to our repairs team. We will need to investigate it so we can find a solution.

PREVENTING DAMP AND MOULD

If the **cost of heating your home** adequately is a problem for you we will check you are claiming all benefits you qualify for and any grants that might help cover your heating costs.

You agree your home is well-maintained

70%



2023 ACUITY SURVEY

PREVENTING DAMP & MOULD: WE ASK YOU

to make sure your home is **kept warm** and **well ventilated**

to **open the bathroom window** after showering

to **cover cooking pans**

to **switch on extractor fans** in the bathroom or kitchen when you are showering or cooking

if you use a **tumble dryer** to have it properly vented so the hot moist air it generates goes outside the building

to **use a dehumidifier** if and when needed

if you have a **mechanical ventilation system** to keep it switched on

to wipe down **condensation** from windows and cills

to **report damp and mould to us without delay**

to **let us into your home** to inspect any damp and mould and identify the causes.

If you think we are not meeting our service standards please tell us.

OUR SERVICE STANDARDS

HOW WE DEAL WITH **ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR** AND **HATE CRIME**

BARNSBURY HOUSING ASSOCIATION

GENERAL PRINCIPLES: WE WILL

first **decide if it is right for us to step in** or if there is a more constructive or appropriate way to deal with this problem

if your report meets our criteria, swiftly assess possible risks to the **health and safety** of you and your neighbours but also to the person whose behaviour has triggered your complaint

use this **risk assessment** to decide **how quickly** we will respond to your report

create a **new case report** to record each step we take to deal with the matter reported including what we do to investigate, to support you and the final outcome

if you or another person at risk is **vulnerable** we will make your case a **priority**

be **discreet**, so in our dealings with the person/s reported we will not say who complained without getting your permission

be **tactful**, investigating and gathering evidence carefully to avoid making an awkward situation worse

use our **professional knowledge** and **judgment** to put in place measures we hope will stop the offending behaviour

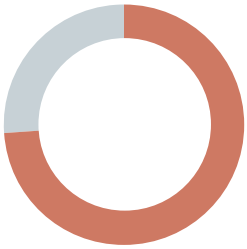
take care to observe and respect any **protected characteristics** as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and in hate crime legislation

make sure any **personal data** recorded in our case reports and elsewhere on our systems complies with the general data protection regulations set out in the Data Protection Act 2018.

continued on page 2

In England the vast majority of hate crimes are motivated by race, at 70%.

You say we contribute positively to your neighbourhood



74%

2023 ACUITY SURVEY

ABOUT THESE SERVICES

HIGH LEVEL REVIEW

All **active cases are reviewed regularly** by our housing and communities team to check we have our priorities right and the right steps are being taken to secure the **best outcome**.

TRAINING

All of our frontline and office staff get **training** to help them identify and respond to antisocial behaviour and hate crime. **New guidance** and **refresher training** are built into our staff training schedule.

DO YOU NEED HELP TO UNDERSTAND, READ OR HEAR ENGLISH?

We can use a **translator** if English is not your first language.

We can use hearing aids, like a **loop**, and some of our staff are **trained signers**.

We can provide written material on **audio-tape**, in **large print** and may be able to get it printed in **braille**.

ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

SUPPORTING YOU: WE WILL

listen to you so we **understand clearly** how your neighbour's behaviour has affected you

talk to you about **possible ongoing risks** to you and how best to manage these

ask what types of support, if any, you would find **helpful**

agree with you an **action plan** and give you a copy of it

let you know what progress is being made, with **updates about every 10 working days** unless we have agreed otherwise

discuss with you options that might help stop the problem, such as an **acceptable behaviour contract** (known as an ABC), **mediation** or **legal action.**

INVESTIGATING: WE WILL

identify and interview other people who **witnessed** the reported behaviour

use **incident diaries** kept by you and/or other witnesses or victims, from **CCTV systems**, **noise recordings** and **personal observations**

interview the person you reported unless you think our speaking directly to them will make it worse. If that is the case we can **send a letter to all residents** in the area.

ask for and share information with organisations such as the **police** and the **council (including social care)** and attend **multi-agency meetings**.

THE SOLUTION: WE WILL

first consider action involving the person's **tenancy agreement**

if appropriate try **informal talks** between affected residents and the person reported or **mediation**

in more challenging cases try to get the person reported to agree to an **acceptable behaviour contract** or **Good Neighbour agreement**

if the behaviour continues issue increasingly **sterner warnings**, such as extending a *starter tenancy* beyond the usual one-year term and/or legal action

use **legal sanctions** if other measures fail. This could include:

- taking out an **injunction**
- applying for a **suspended possession order**
- **ending** a **starter tenancy**
- **evicting** the tenant.

Before starting any legal proceedings we will take into full account anyone's **protected characteristics** as set out in the **Equality Act 2010**.

continued on page 3

ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

We will not usually treat as **antisocial behaviour** one-off incidents or things that may well be annoying but are part and parcel of living in a built up part of London.

We will step in where there is **seriously troubling activity** or a **pattern of repeated incidents**, such as:

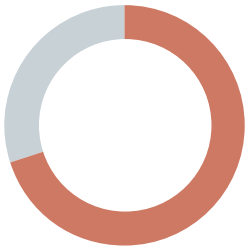
- extremely noisy parties for unusually high numbers
- drug or alcohol-related nuisance including fighting
- actual or threatened violence or physical abuse
- stalking or harassment
- littering and fly-tipping.

COMMUNITY TRIGGERS

If you have reported a problem of **persistent or repeated antisocial behaviour** either to us, to the council or to the police we or they can ask for a **community trigger** meeting. We will meet to jointly review your case so we can agree the most helpful course of action.

You agree we deal well with antisocial behaviour

63%



2023 ACUITY SURVEY

HATE CRIME

GENERAL PRINCIPLES: WE WILL

always treat hate crime as **a breach of tenancy**

not normally offer a tenancy to anyone who has a **history of hate crime**

take hate crime and hate incidents seriously, whether aimed at tenants, staff, contractors or visitors

in **all but exceptional cases** record the circumstances of the crime or incident, using common sense to decide how we respond

use our powers to **investigate** all reported incidents and **support** those affected

make sure our response and any follow-up action is **sensitive, thorough** and **proportionate**

work with the police and other local services to **identify local risks** and **potential hot spots**

respect **human rights, freedom of speech** and our duties under the **Equality Act 2010.**

SUPPORTING YOU: WE WILL

respond to your report within **one working day**

remove any **offensive graffiti** and make any **emergency repairs** needed within 24 hours of you reporting this

rate your report **high priority** unless our investigations later find this is not needed

where needed take practical steps to increase your **personal security**, including use of personal alarms and/or tighter home security

be sensitive to your vulnerabilities, bringing in **outside support from a qualified professional** where appropriate and helpful

take **appropriate and proportionate** action, supporting outside agencies like the police as needed.

If you think we are not meeting our service standards please tell us.

HATE CRIME

The government defines a hate crime as a **criminal offence** that, in the eyes of the victim or someone else, was **motivated by hostility to or prejudice** towards someone because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, transgender identity or disability.

If your safety is being threatened call the police at once on 999.

HATE INCIDENTS

There is a separate category of **hate 'incident'** where **no crime** has been committed but hostility or prejudice is believed to have been motivated by one of the protected characteristics listed above.

We might still keep a record but have to comply with data protection regulations and have very good reason to believe significant harm or a criminal offence might follow.

OUR SERVICE STANDARDS

HOW WE DEAL WITH **DOMESTIC ABUSE**

BARNSBURY HOUSING ASSOCIATION

SUPPORTING YOU: WE WILL

take you seriously if you come to us for help, making **your safety** and **welfare** our priority

offer **sensitive, nonjudgmental** and **confidential** guidance and support

respect your choice if you want to **deal with someone of the same sex** as you

work as a team with other organisations, including the police and specialist domestic abuse support services, to **support and protect you and your family**

arrange to meet you at a safe location to fill out a domestic abuse **risk assessment** form and review your **home security**.

YOUR IMMEDIATE SAFETY: WE WILL

assess the level of risk to you and your family, from high risk (unsafe or unable to go home) or medium risk (safe or wanting to go home)

respect your choices unless in our professional judgment we believe the **risk to you is too high**

always carry out a **thorough safety plan** including increasing your home security.

YOUR LONGER TERM SAFETY: WE WILL

after discussing this with you, and with your consent, refer your case for a **professional multi-agency support** plan (MARAC: multi-agency risk assessment conference)

if you have a joint tenancy with your alleged abuser then, after first discussing it with you, we may take **legal action**

keep you up-to-date with all activity and decisions relevant to **your safety** and **housing**.

SAFEST OPTION

If it is not safe for you to stay in your home we will help find you a **safe alternative** offering, if we can, temporary emergency housing. We do not have a lot of homes and all are in Islington so for your safety we will work closely with Islington Council's housing service.

If you think we are not meeting our service standards please tell us.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic abuse can take many forms including:

- a partner or other family member threatening to or being violent to you or others you care for
- making you frightened or afraid for your safety
- always belittling you
- controlling what you do, and when and where you go
- being unreasonably jealous or possessive including reading or monitoring your phone calls, email and social media activity.

DO YOU NEED HELP TO READ OR SPEAK ENGLISH?

We can use a **translator** if English is not your first language.

CLOSING CASES

We will send you a letter outlining the action taken to date, the support we have given you and what, to the best of our understanding, we can do for you now.

OUR SERVICE STANDARDS

TO MAKE A **COMPLAINT** OR A **COMPLIMENT**

BARNSBURY HOUSING ASSOCIATION

CORRECTING OUR MISTAKES: WE WILL

listen to you, **show empathy** and **act quickly**

welcome your complaints as a reminder that **you are the best judge** of our standards

make sure you all **know how** to make a complaint

check our complaints process is **clear** and **easy to follow**

where appropriate, try to **resolve problems** as a **service request** - it's less effort for you and you will usually get a faster result

acknowledge all complaints within **five working days**

follow our complaints policy as a general guide to **how quickly** we need to act on each complaint

involve the **people best placed to help** with your complaint, for example the relevant contractor or staff member

tell you when we will be in touch with you throughout the process and do just that

make sure we **do what we say** we will do

apologise when we have done wrong

learn lessons, using your complaints to see where and how we need to improve services

explain how you can make a complaint in your newsletter

regularly **update information** on complaints on our website.

If you think we are not meeting our service standards please tell us.

HELP FROM THE HOUSING OMBUDSMAN

You can go to the Housing Ombudsman Service for advice on your complaint at any stage, including before, during or after you make a complaint. You can also ask them to investigate if you are not happy with our final decision.

Housing Ombudsman

PO Box 1484, Preston P2 0ET

info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

0300 111 3000

housing-ombudsman.org.uk

RAISING STANDARDS

- We will **ask you** about your use of our complaints service during your yearly *Staying Connected* visit.
- We will **regularly review** complaints senior staff have handled.
- We will **discuss** complaints handling with tenants and staff and **use what you and they recommend we do** to improve our complaints service.

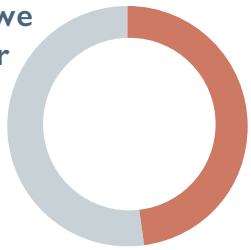
Who to complain to if our service falls short

If we get something wrong, let you down or make a mistake:

- **tell any of our staff**
- call us on **020 7704 2324**
- email **info@barnsbury.org**
- write to **4-6 Colebrooke Place, London N1 8HZ**
- online at **barnsbury.org**

You agree we handle your complaints well

48%



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