



**TOGETHER WE
MAKE THIS A GOOD
NEIGHBOURHOOD**

GOOD NEIGHBOURHOODS

We want all of you able to enjoy your home and feel proud of your neighbourhood. This won't happen without you. What you and your neighbours do and think matters as much as what we do, sometimes more so. This booklet explains what we do to make your neighbourhood a good place to live in and how you and your neighbours can help.



TELL US WHAT YOU THINK WORKS AND WHAT DOESN'T

This policy goes hand in hand with our new resident engagement strategy.

Our resident engagement strategy offers you a menu of different ways to get involved in local matters, depending on how little or large your appetite is for (in this case) a good neighbourhood.

So for example, if you haven't much spare time or energy, or aren't especially hungry, you could maybe read this booklet and tell us if you think we've missed a point or you have some better ideas. Or you could pick a more filling role, maybe including occasional talks with some of your neighbours and with us.

IS IT NORMAL LIFE OR ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR?

Good Neighbourhoods is not us trying to gloss over antisocial behaviour. We will carry on treating antisocial behaviour as the very serious matter it is.

There is however a big difference between antisocial behaviour and the sort of activities that are part and parcel of living in Britain's most densely populated city.

To give two examples, we have had complaints this year of 'noise nuisance' where the noise in one case was a crying baby, the other a toilet being flushed.

All neighbourhoods have different household set ups, lifestyles and schedules. Some will clash but many are matters where you and a neighbour could find a solution as the responsible adults you are.

We appreciate that some of you do suffer from activities that aren't antisocial but which, if happening regularly, may be distressing. We hope this policy offers solutions.

You may even find something you are doing is upsetting a neighbour, quite unintentionally. After going through a list of the sort of complaints we get regularly, on page four we have given some examples, and remedies.

Call us or go to our website for a copy of our leaflet telling you what we class as antisocial behaviour, how to report it and what we will do to stop it and support you at barnsbury.org/resident-information/reporting-antisocial-behaviour/



Situations where we will step in

There will always be some situations where we will need to step in. For example some people with medical or support needs may need help to understand why something they are doing has upset - or is upsetting - other people. Changing their behaviour or stopping the activity might be a challenge. Please tell your housing officer. They will try to find a way to resolve the problem. You and the other person will both get regular reports on what is being done to reach a position both of you find reasonable and helpful.

WHAT MAKES FOR A GOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD

What you like about it	Who keeps it this way?
The area looks nice and well cared for	This is a joint effort between you and us.
Everything is clean and tidy	Again, partly down to us but also you.
The private gardens, balconies and window boxes are well cared for	This one is all down to you - and thank you to all of you who do it so well.
It's a peaceful place, give or take a bit of normal noise	This one is on you too. If it gets out of hand please let us know.
Your neighbours seem friendly and helpful	Mainly you but we try to do our bit by organising events we hope you'll enjoy.
People respect the rules for bins, parking, cleaning up after themselves, etc	We do our best to make the rules clear and expect you to follow them, and to let us know if others do not.
BHA staff and contractors are regularly spotted out and about	This is our job - no question.
Dogs are looked after, only let out with a responsible person and mess is quickly cleaned up	All of you who have a dog or any other pet have a duty to keep them under control at all times and to clean up promptly any mess they create.
Some people have parties or lots of friends over but not too many and it's hardly ever too long or too loud	Think of your neighbours before you start any noisy activity. Some may be ill, have a baby or toddlers or might work night shifts. Ask first and try to keep both volume and vibrations down.
Children have safe places to play and their parents seem to keep an eye out for them	We keep shared play areas safe and in good repair. If you have children please make sure you know where they are.
Everyone has their differences but we don't cause others any trouble.	All thanks to all of you.
You and your neighbour aren't sure where the boundary between your homes is but have come to an agreement that suits you both.	We can give some advice but a friendly chat with your neighbour is the best way to agree who looks after what and what should stay 'on your side'.



TWO-SIDES TO EVERY STORY: HOW DO OUR OWN DAILY ACTIVITIES UNKNOWINGLY AFFECT OTHER PEOPLE?

Every week we get reports about relatively minor activities causing genuine distress to someone living very close by, usually underneath.

Almost always the 'guilty' party has no idea they are upsetting anyone. Do any of these ring a bell? If so, might even a small change to your usual routine or a word with others visiting or living with you make a difference to a neighbour's quality of life?

If someone raises a concern about your activities, please give them a fair hearing and try not to fly off the handle. It takes courage to tell someone they're upsetting you and not everyone manages to do it with tact. We are human after all.



AND THE SOLUTION COULD BE...

If you have to use your washing machine late at night or very early in the mornings an appliance mat should dull the noise and vibrations

Tell your neighbours if you are planning a one-off event like a party or celebration. They will very likely appreciate it.

We ask you not to take up the carpets in your home if people live below you. Even walking on a floor with vinyl coverings or bare boards will be extremely loud to anyone underneath. If your floor isn't carpeted we strongly recommend you get carpet fitted. It should dull the noise and any vibrations.

Tell your neighbours if you work late or changing shifts so they aren't alarmed by comings and goings at night. They should also appreciate your needing to catch up with sleep during the day.

Think of your neighbours before you start any activity that might generate noise, vibrations or other disturbance. Never do noisy DIY or carry out repairs late at night or during other unsociable hours like early in the morning.

Do not turn up the volume on your TV, computer or sound systems, not even for your favourite song. If you have to listen to it at top volume wear earphones.

CONSIDERATE PARKING

We have parking controls on estates where space for vehicles is limited, on the estate or nearby. Visitor parking rules also vary depending on where you live.

On our estates there are spaces where you can park but you must show us a valid MOT once a year and proof that your vehicle is insured. At some properties you can rent a parking space from us.

What you can do:

- always think of others when parking, making sure you do not block any pedestrian paths, fire exits or other vehicles.

PUTTING UP A SATELLITE DISH

You are not allowed to install a satellite dish on the side of the building you live in unless you first get our written permission.

We and you also need to keep to the rules enforced by Islington Council's planners. These are:

- satellite dishes are not allowed on any listed building
- there are very strict rules on where it can be installed if you live in a conservation area.

We will only say no if we have a very good reason.

DOING OUR BIT FOR YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

LITTER AND FLY-TIPPING

At some of our properties instead of getting rid of bulky rubbish responsibly people - sometimes outsiders - dump it on the ground or into or by the bins. It leaves no room for other people's waste and very often means the council fine us for misuse of the bins.

Fly-tipped items typically include large amounts of cardboard, multiple rubbish/recycling bags at from one household, or fridges, sofas, mattresses, garden waste or builder's or decorating waste.

Dumping this by or in the bin stores or at street recycling points does not make it okay. If you have too much rubbish or items that will leave no room for other people's waste you need to arrange a bulky waste collection.

What we will do:

If we get a tip-off or spot fly-tipping ourselves, we will:

- inspect and assess it, take photos and open a new record for it on our systems.
- check our CCTV footage
- ask the council to remove at unless it is hazardous or biological/chemical waste, in which case we will order a specialist removal
- do hourly checks to make sure it is removed that day
- if we can find out which household is responsible bill them for the cost we had to pay to get it removed
- if we cannot find out who did it, add the removal cost to the service charge paid by tenants of that property or estate.

What you can do to help:

- tell us promptly if you spot anyone flytipping or dumping bulky items or too much rubbish on 020 7704 2324.
- if you have bulky rubbish or unwanted furniture the council will take both for a small fee. Call 020 7527 4900 or go to www.islington.gov.uk/recycling-and-rubbish for details.

Litter blights neighbourhoods so our thanks to all of you who help us keep the areas around your homes tidy and clear of rubbish. We're very pleased to see recycling on the increase at our properties. Recycling gives waste material a new use instead of it going to landfill, which harms our air, land and waterways.

KEEPING ALL AREAS YOU SHARE TIDY AND PRESENTABLE

We inspect estates and all your shared areas every week to check they are being properly cleaned, are well kept, free of graffiti and the bins are neither overflowing or being misused. Any problems with cleaning are taken up with our contractor.

What you can do:

- tell us if there are any issues where you live by emailing keepingitclean@barnsbury.org or email the cleaners direct on info@dovescc.co.uk

LOOKING AFTER SHRUBS, FLOWERBEDS, TREES AND SHARED GREEN SPACES

Our grounds maintenance service tends and prunes all shared gardens, trees, shrubs, and grassed areas on our estates. Our staff check the work to make sure it is done to a good standard.



What you can do:

- if you have a private garden make sure any trees do not block other tenants' windows.
- keep any private space you have tidy and rubbish-free. If you are vulnerable or have a disability that makes this difficult for you ask our housing team for support.
- if you see a problem with a tree, shrub or green space in one of our shared areas you can email Groundscapes at robert.martin@scapes.co.uk

VANDALISM AND GRAFFITI

Graffiti includes anything drawn or painted on outdoor surfaces, including tags, words and drawings. In the eyes of the law it is criminal damage, with punishment ranging from a fine to 10 years in prison.

Of more concern to us it blights neighbourhoods, parks, and our property. Every year money we could use to improve your homes is instead spent on removing it.

And racist, sexist or other offensive graffiti we remove within 24 hours of it being reported or spotted by one of our staff. We aim to clean off or cover any other graffiti within one week.

What can you do to help:

- report any vandalism or graffiti to us promptly
- please try to make sure no one from your household or any visitors graffiti or tag our property or anything else on it.

KEEPING SHARED AREAS SAFE FROM FIRE

What we will do:

We regularly do fire safety inspections and check shared areas for fire hazards.

If you have left anything in a shared indoor space that could be a fire hazard we will take it away at once if we judge it a serious health and safety risk. If we think it lower risk we will give you seven days to move it. If we find it is still there after seven days we will get rid of it.

We have a rolling programme for assessing fire risk in your building. This includes checking fire safety equipment is in good working order and there is nothing likely to slow down or hinder your escape from fire or smoke.

We also check structural parts of your building like the fire doors to make sure they will, if a fire started, slow down or block the spread of smoke and flames.

What you can do:

- do not leave anything of yours in any shared indoor area. This includes bikes, prams and bags of rubbish or recycling.
- tell us if you spot anything that might be a health or safety risk.
- make sure you and anyone sharing your home understands our fire safety instructions, what to do if a fire breaks out in your home or another part of the building
- never put or leave anything in the fire escape route
- don't wedge any doors open in shared parts of the building
- don't tampering with fire safety equipment
- if you suspect anyone is doing anything like the above, tell us.

See also our booklet *Keeping your home and neighbourhood safe at barnsbury.org/resident-information/safety-and-emergencies/*.

MOBILITY SCOOTERS AND ELECTRIC BICYCLES AND SCOOTERS

Electric bikes and scooters have become understandably popular, especially as prices drop. Many of you also value the freedom a mobility scooter brings if your body's natural mobility is limited.

There are however some serious problems and we don't have an easy answer to them, namely the risk of fire and where to store your bike or scooter.

We have a policy that tries to balance being fair with keeping you and your neighbours safe and treating everyone the same way.

Fire services across the UK have reported a very high number of domestic fires started by lithium-ion batteries. Because of this:

- you may not store or charge an electric bike/scooter or a mobility scooter in any shared hallway or stairwell
- if you store one of these vehicles in your home you must make sure it does not block or make unsafe a fire exit or escape route
- you can only use the charger supplied by the manufacturer

There are strict and very detailed rules about these vehicles so we strongly recommend you talk to us before buying one.

What you can do:

- read our policy on mobility scooters and eBikes/Scooters or talk to our housing team
- if you already have or need a mobility scooter and there is no practical way for you to meet our rules for their storage and charging talk to us. We will do our best to find a solution that works for you.

COCKROACHES, RATS, MICE AND OTHER PESTS

Pest control in your home is your responsibility unless the problem is rats or an infestation has spread to other homes as well.

We will take prompt action to deal with a rat problem or an infestation affecting more than one home.

Getting rid of mice, wasps/bees and cockroaches can be hard but we can give professional advice. The faster you act the easier it is to get the problem under control.

Bats and their habitat/roost are protected by law and are mostly harmless. There is no risk if you do not handle them.

What you can do:

- act fast and ask us for advice.
- tell us if you have a problem with rats or an infestation in your home is affecting not just you but other neighbours too.

HOME SECURITY: LOST KEYS

We do not hold a spare set of keys for any of your homes.

If you lose your keys you are responsible for getting the locks changed and new keys cut and you must foot the bill.

If you lose or damage a key to a door to the building shared by you and other neighbours you can buy a replacement key from us. We only charge you the cost to us of getting a new one cut.

What you can do:

- have a spare set cut and leave it with a very trusted friend or relative.
- if you live in our independent living scheme you will have a spare key stored safely in our key safe system.



CLOSED CIRCUIT TV (CCTV) CAMERAS WE HAVE INSTALLED FOR YOUR SAFETY

At some properties we have put up CCTV to help keep you and our staff safe from crime. The cameras are only in places where they give the most help.

How we use the cameras, and the footage we get from them, is strictly controlled by our data protection policy and the law.

This means only the police can ask to see any footage recorded and then only after an incident. We cannot share it with you or any other member of the public.

If you have any questions about CCTV you can read how we might use any footage on our website at barnsbury.org/about/privacy/.

KEEPING A PET

If you have a pet, or pets, you must make sure they do not cause nuisance or annoyance to any of our other tenants or you will be breaking your tenancy agreement.

You must always clean up promptly any mess your pet leaves in the neighbourhood or other shared areas.

We can withdraw any permission we have given you to keep a pet, if we believe your pet is causing a nuisance or is a danger to other people or you are failing to look after it responsibly.

We will also take steps if we have evidence that a pet is not being properly cared for.

You can read more about keeping a pet on our website at barnsbury.org/resident-information/keepingapet/.



CONSUMER STANDARD FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY

Our policy sets out to make sure you can enjoy your home in peace and in a safe, clean and secure environment you can take pride in.

This aspect of our work is covered by the consumer standard set by the Regulator of Social Housing for 'neighbourhood and community' but also by some of the 22 tenant satisfaction measures used to assess and compare how you rate our homes and services.

In summary, this means you get to judge how well we:

- keep our properties and estates safe and clean
- make sure you feel safe and secure in your homes, and
- fix any problems before they spiral out of control.

COMPLAINTS, COMPLIMENTS AND FEEDBACK

We try to get things right the first time and love to hear from you if you think we've done a good job. But if things go wrong please do get in touch to tell us how we can put things right this time and do a better job next time.

For compliments or complaints, go to barnsbury.org/resident-information/complaints-policy/cc/, call us on 020 7704 2324 or email us on info@barnsbury.org.



Barnsbury Housing Association

4-6 Colebrooke Place
London N1 8HZ

☎ 020 7704 2324

info@barnsbury.org

barnsbury.org

DO YOU NEED HELP TO READ OR SPEAK ENGLISH?



We can use a **translator** or can get this booklet translated if English is not your first language.