



Help us Keep our Homes Clear and Safe

Recently a pram was left in the lobby of a communal stairwell and it was set on fire causing a huge amount of damage to the whole communal area. Fortunately no one was injured but for residents this was a terrifying experience and will not be forgotten easily.

The fire took place in the early hours of the morning and people had to remain within their flats while the fire brigade attended. Many residents were unable to attend work, school or college the following day as they had been up most of the night.

The damage caused cost approximately £15,000 to rectify. If you have any information about this incident or saw anything suspicious in relation to this fire, please contact the police in confidence.

No items should be left outside of flats, in communal doorways or on the communal stairs.

We will remove any items left because they are a fire risk. If a possession of yours is removed, contact the estate office. We will not store items left for long and can accept no responsibility for objects removed. Help us keep your estate safe and keep the communal areas clear.



Fire Safety

Following the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower, we wrote to all residents to reassure them and offer fire safety advice. IDS does not own any buildings over six floors or any with cladding. We carry out regular fire checks and ensure that any recommendations are followed. There's lots of useful advice at <http://www.london-fire.gov.uk/SafetyAtHome.asp>

If a fire is within your home:

- Get everyone out – move a safe distance away from the building
- Close the door behind you
- Warn neighbours if you are able
- Do not use lifts, use the stairs
- Ring 999 from outside

If the fire is in another flat in the same block:

- It is generally safer to stay inside your own flat where the structure should protect you unless heat and smoke are affecting you.
- If you have any doubts then leave your flat if it is safe and you are able to do so and if the escape route is clear. Follow the instructions above.

If your home is affected but you are unable to leave the building:

- Call for help from a window
- Use towels and sheets around the edges of doors to prevent smoke from getting in.
- If affected by smoke, stay as low as possible, even if it means crawling on hands and knees.

Interest Free Loans Available & Debt Advice

You may be eligible for an interest-free budgeting loan to help repay other loans or hire purchase or pay for household items such as a washing machine or fridge, clothes or footwear, costs linked to moving house or getting a new job, maternity or funeral costs.

To be eligible, you will need to have received any of the following benefits for 6 months: income support/ income-based jobseeker's allowance/income-related employment and support allowance/pension credit/universal credit. The loan (minimum of £100) will be taken off your benefits each week, interest free. The amount awarded will depend on your circumstances. More details available from www.gov.uk

Cheap loans are also available from your local Credit Union – details available from your Council website. An excellent debt advice service is **StepChange** 0800 138 1111 www.stepchange.org

Tenancy Fraud & Unauthorised Occupation

We are pleased to report that recently two flats sublet to unauthorised occupants have been returned to IDS and will be made available again to those genuinely in housing need. In both cases, the previous tenants had left the UK and allowed someone else to 'look after' their flat. Our tenancy agreements clearly state that the genuine tenant must occupy the property as their sole and principal home. The Court agreed that our actions were entirely justified.

If you suspect that a flat is being sublet or a neighbour has abandoned their property, please speak to your Estate Manager or contact Michaela Clare, Housing Manager at head office. You can make your report in confidence. We will then investigate and take appropriate action. You can help us tackle tenancy fraud on our estates.



Sing along day at Navarino Mansions

Stock Condition Survey

We are arranging a stock condition survey to make sure our property records are up-to-date. FFT Consultants will be carrying out the surveys on our behalf. They will inspect a sample of homes across all our estates to estimate the lifespan of major components, so we can plan when they need to be replaced. FFT staff will all have ID cards but if you have any doubts or concerns about providing access, please contact your estate manager or IDS head office for confirmation. We appreciate your helping us to have this important work carried out.

Sheltered Lettings

Sheltered lettings accounted for 27% of all lettings, a reduction from 32% last year. The year before the figure was also 27%, so the proportion of lettings at our sheltered schemes was in line with the expected level.

Over the last three years there has been a steady reduction in the void turnaround period for vacancies within our sheltered schemes. In 2013-2014 it took on average 64 days to let sheltered properties. This fell to 59 days in 2014-2015 and 49 days in 2015-2016, a reduction of 17%. 82% of the new tenants completed the lettings satisfaction questionnaire this year. 100% of the respondents were either very, or fairly satisfied with the accommodation.



Hilary Dennis Court party

Insurance

Please note that IDS does not insure your furniture, belongings and other personal items within your home against theft, fire, vandalism, burst pipes and other household risks. The My Home scheme can offer tenants and residents the chance to insure the contents of their homes in an easy and affordable way.

My Home contents insurance is a special scheme provided by the National Housing Federation in conjunction with Thistle Tenant Risks and Allianz Insurance plc and is available for all tenants and residents living in social and affordable housing.

This insurance will cover most of your household goods and contents such as furniture, TV, clothing, carpets, electrical items and general household goods whilst in your home. The insurance also covers replacement of external locks if your keys are lost or stolen and the contents of your freezer. There is also cover for personal liability and also your decorations which you may be responsible for under your tenancy agreement.

More information at www.thistlemyhome.co.uk or call 0345 450 7288



How To Avoid Blocked Pipes

Most blockages are avoidable. You can help us avoid blocked pipes in your kitchen by not disposing of cooking fat, oil or grease down your sink. Remember to remove all fat and grease from pans and dishes with kitchen paper before doing the washing up. As shown, the grease hardens even if put down sinks with hot water or soap.

To avoid your toilet getting blocked please do not ever flush cooking fat, oil or grease, waste food or garden waste, nappies and nappy liners, sanitary products, plastic bags, wrappers, needles, syringes, old clothing or rags, plaster or cement, condoms, paper tissues, multi-purpose wipes, cat litter, cotton wool, cotton pads and buds, paint and paint thinners.

In most cases, IDS is not responsible for any damage caused to your possessions in the event of a blockage so we strongly recommend that you have household possession insurance. Also you can be re-charged for repairs due to blockages if we have evidence that the blockage was caused by an action of someone in your household. Flushing inappropriate items can also damage the environment causing blockages to the main public sewer, floods to roads and pavements and polluting rivers and streams.

Gas Safety Checks

We have a **legal obligation** and responsibility to conduct checks each year on every gas boiler. These checks are **essential to ensure the safety of your boiler and gas installation**. Keeping a boiler well maintained will also help minimize your fuel bills.

You must allow access for our engineers to carry out the gas safety check. We are now aiming to service every boiler every 10 months.

We will write to you before the expiry of your current safety check with an appointment. If not convenient, call us to rearrange but you must make an appointment before your gas safety check expires. If not, we take action against you for breach of your tenancy and we will **obtain a court order allowing forced entry to your property** so the required checks can be completed.

You will also be counter-charged for all legal and court costs. Please allow us access, keep your appointment and stay safe in your home!

What If I Smell Gas?

- Do not smoke
- Do not light matches or cigarette lighters
- Do not turn light switches or anything electrical on or off
- Extinguish any naked flames such as candles
- Turn off your gas supply at the meter
- Call **National Grid** on **0800 111 999**



Caretaker Training Session

Our caretakers have recently undertaken training in basic plumbing skills so we are able to respond rapidly to more repair requests.



We'd like to thank a happy tenant for this letter!

"I just wanted to express my thanks and appreciation for arranging for us tenants in properties that are 'older' than 30 years – to have all new double sockets fitted in every room, having replacement hanging pendants too, plus new light switches, a completely new fuse box and also a replacement bathroom light. I feel so well cared for as a tenant and I am delighted with the works carried out. James the electrician did such a neat job and worked so efficiently."

IDS Summer Activities August 2017

All activities meet at Evelyn Court community hall, Amhurst Road E8

	12pm–2pm	2pm–5pm
Mon 31-Jul	Boxercise	Arsenal @ Evelyn Court
Tue 01-Aug	Wing Chun Kung-Fu	Chess Club 4pm–6pm
Wed 02-Aug	Arts & Craft	Arsenal Boat Club Trip
Thu 03-Aug	Street Dance	
Fri 04-Aug	Music Studio	Arsenal Laser Tag
Mon 07-Aug	Boxercise	Arsenal @ Evelyn Court
Tue 08-Aug	Wing Chun Kung-Fu	Chess Club 4pm–6pm
Wed 09-Aug	Arts & Craft	Arsenal Paint Ball
Thu 10-Aug	Street Dance	
Fri 11-Aug	Music Studio	Arsenal Boat Club Trip
Mon 14-Aug	Boxercise	Arsenal @ Evelyn Court
Tue 15-Aug	Wing Chun certificate	Chess Club 4pm–6pm
Wed 16-Aug	Arts & Craft	Arsenal Boat Club Trip
Thu 17-Aug	Street Dance	
Fri 18-Aug	Music Studio	Arsenal Laser Tag
Mon 21-Aug	Boxercise	Arsenal @ Evelyn Court
Tue 22-Aug	Tie & Dye	Chess Club 4pm–6pm
Wed 23-Aug	Arts & Craft	Arsenal Football Golf
Thu 24-Aug	Facial & Nails	
Fri 25-Aug	Music Studio	Arsenal Boat Club Trip
Wed 30-Aug		Arsenal Boat Club Trip
Fri 31-Aug	Arsenal Trip to Stubbers Adventure Centre tbc	

Interested in finding out more about Arsenal in the Community activities? Come along to meet Jack from Arsenal on Wed 26 July at 4pm in the Evelyn Court community centre. You will be have the chance to register – young people will need a parent or guardian to sign a contact form in order to join.

You can also contact Ernest Lee, IDS Community Development Officer tel: 020 8809 8323 or 07977 277 014 email elee@ids.org.uk

This year's IDS family Fun Day will be on Saturday 2nd Sept at Evelyn Court estate 1–6pm. All welcome! Activities include bouncy castle, football competition, stalls, sandcastle making, face painting, competition and prizes, community music and food. If you can help with the day, please contact Ernest Lee as above. We need your help so please volunteer!



Projects Currently On Site Or Due This Year Include

Navarino Mansions – Decorations to the external and common parts of block H to Q, replacement kitchens and central heating upgrades.

Mocatta House – Decorations to the external and common parts, replacement windows to the side and rear of the building and restoration to the windows at the front.

Stoke Newington estate – Replacement of kitchens and bathrooms, damp-proofing to ground floor flats and central Heating upgrades.

Stepney Green Court – Rewires to flats, rewires to common parts including the provision of new lighting to external areas and common parts, central heating upgrades.

Evelyn Court – Central heating upgrades, redesign & refurbishment of under 11's playground.

Rebecca House – Phase 1 bathroom replacements.

Leslie Prince Court – Central heating upgrades.

Pennington Choices Survey

Earlier this year, IDS commissioned property specialists Pennington Choices to advise us on how best to arrange some aspects of our maintenance services. As part of this work, they will be carrying out some inspections. Although most of this will concentrate on communal areas, you may be asked to give access inside your home if this is needed. All Pennington Choices staff members carry and will produce identification.

If you have any queries, please contact the IDS office for advice.