

INDUSTRIAL DWELLINGS SOCIETY

EST 1885

Wishing you all happy healthy holidays and Season's Greetings

Being A Good Neighbour In Troubled Times

Winter has always been the time when isolation and loneliness has affected many, not least the most vulnerable members of our community. This year has been particularly difficult, with Covid lockdowns and social distancing worsening the situation for many, both young and old. I am writing to ask you to help us reduce the risk of your neighbours suffering silently and alone without help. Whilst it's still not possible to meet up in many of the usual

ways, please consider reaching out to those you think may be experiencing isolation or need help. You can do this in really simple ways – for example, checking in by dropping a postcard through their door. If you are worried about someone's wellbeing, please get in touch with us at IDS and we will do the rest.

Way back in 1885, IDS's founders set the blueprint for encouraging strong communities, building not just homes but encouraging neighbourliness. They did this in a practical way: by building not just homes but also play spaces and other community facilities. Today, in the wake of the Covid pandemic, we are

looking for new ways in which we can encourage stronger community bonds and so have joined the Connection Coalition, a non-political organisation set up by the Jo Cox Foundation. The Coalition works with great partners such as Mind and Age UK to reduce isolation build connections for the future. You can find some great ideas on their website about how you can play a part – for example, by joining 'The Great Get Together' (www.greatgettogether.org).

As 2020 draws to a close, the IDS team would like to wish you, your family and friends a happy and healthy 2021.

Suzanne Wolfe, Chief Executive

Listening & Learning From Complaints & Feedback

The IDS team worked hard this year to make sure essential services continued uninterrupted and to listen to our tenants' views. Whilst it's been impossible to talk face to face or hold popular 'Chips & Chat' and other local events we ran last year, the work of our Tenants Champion, Fran, switched to remote working and carried on. We were disappointed to learn from the results of the STAR survey of tenants completed last year that only half of our tenants knew about our complaints process and not everyone who used it was happy with the outcome. We want to put this right. Very importantly, if something isn't right, please tell us. We will do our best to resolve the matter if

it is possible to do so. Please also tell us if something has gone really well – thank you to those who have taken the trouble to do so.

In the 12 months ending March 2020 we received 44 formal complaints. The vast majority of these were resolved at the first stage of the Complaints Policy. In 6 out of 10 cases the complaint was upheld. Just four cases went on to the second stage. To help us learn from these complaints, we've reviewed the outcomes to learn lessons and see what can be done better in future.

It's important to us to get the basics, like thorough and consistent cleaning and repairs, right. Satisfaction with estates service is very high but the survey results show room for improvement with the repairs service. We are tackling this in two ways. Firstly, through increased scrutiny of satisfaction (especially when a problem with a repair has been brought to our

attention) by our Tenants Champion and her team and secondly by reviewing how the repairs service itself is arranged, focusing on getting the right results first time and increasing satisfaction with the service. The team has spent more time this year improving communal gardens, cleaning windows and working with partners on community initiatives for young people and others – in other words, doing more of the things that add value to our services.

The IDS Complaints Policy has been reviewed to bring it in line with the Housing Ombudsman's new Complaint Handling Code. You can find the policy on line at www.ids.org.uk/tenants/policies/ or request a copy by phoning our main office number below.

So, in a nutshell: please do tell us when things aren't going well – by doing so, you can help us make sure we get it right first time, more of the time, in future.



Arsenal Legend Makes Their Day

Some lucky IDS tenants were recently delighted to receive a surprise telephone call from Arsenal legend, Pat Rice.

IDS Resident Services Coordinators nominated tenants they believed would benefit from a boost in these difficult times by being called by Pat, who made over 500 appearances for Arsenal and went on to serve as their assistant manager. One tenant commented they had enjoyed discussing who was the best footballer of all time with him. IDS has worked in partnership with Arsenal in the Community for some years and would like to thank them – and in particular, Pat – for making this possible.



Abney Park's civilian war memorial restored ahead of 80th anniversary.

In 1940, some 160 people lost their lives when a bomb ripped through a block of flats in Coronation Avenue.

The incident was one of the most profound civilian tragedies in London during World War Two.

Abney Park's civilian war memorial has been given a professional clean ahead of the 80th anniversary of the Coronation Avenue bombing by the Abney Park Trust - which commissioned the work on the Grade II-listed memorial through donations from educational charity TimeLine

The memorial, which can be seen in the Stoke Newington cemetery, pays tribute to local victims of the Blitz, and includes those of the Coronation Avenue bombing and the blasts in Green Lanes and Lidfield Road.



Carbon Neutral Organisation

IDS Gets Green Accreditation of Carbon Neutral+

IDS is getting greener! We have been successful in being accredited as a 'Carbon Neutral Plus' organisation. To qualify, a review of all greenhouse carbon emissions resulting from our work was done; we then signed up to 'offsetting' twice the amount produced each year to repair some of the damage done to our planet by supporting various environmental projects around the world and by planting some extra trees on our own estates.

To reduce future emissions, we have:

- Moved to electric vehicles for our Estates Team
- Looking to use electricity produced only from renewable sources
- Reducing unnecessary travel and encouraging use of public transport

Looking ahead, IDS will encourage contractors to do likewise – and work closely with our tenants to encourage you to go greener with us.

Balconies & Patios – Simple Rules to Keep You Safe From Fire

The Government has issued new guidance dealing with reducing the risk of fires caused by flammable materials stored outside. These highlight the fact that storing materials, careless disposal of cigarette ends or other smoking materials and barbecues have been responsible for a significant number of fires in homes. Because of this, IDS

have set out the following ground rules for our tenants:

Materials that can be set alight must not be stored on balconies or patios. This includes:

- Furniture or mattresses
- Paint or solvents
- Clothing
- Liquid gas, petroleum or paraffin
- Wood or plastic, including fencing material
- Paper or cardboard

It is strictly forbidden to run cables to any electrical equipment placed outside your home. This includes fridges, freezers, washing machines or tumble driers.

Barbeques must never be used on balconies or patios. Please stick to these rules and keep patios and balconies clear, clean and tidy – and help us keep you and your families safe and healthy.'



Managing Condensation and Mould

Condensation and mould are problems which may crop up in the home during colder months.

Several things can cause this, for example:

- Lots of things making moisture, such as drying wet washing
- Lack of ventilation resulting from closed or blocked vents
- Not heating the home enough.

If you find small areas of mould in your home, it is easy to wipe these out using appropriate cleaning products available from supermarkets. If it's a bigger problem, please let us know so we can investigate further and take steps to help you solve it.



Looking after your garden

Many residents take great care to maintain their gardens and are often a magnificent contribution to the local environment. Unfortunately, many do not and, along with front and back patio areas, some gardens have fallen into disrepair. This has a negative effect on the surrounding area and contributes to an air of neglect.

Please be reminded that if you have a garden your obligations regarding upkeep are set out in your tenancy agreement. This says::

Under the section 'The Tenants Obligations' IDS tenancy agreements state that it is the tenant's responsibility:

"To maintain any garden area the tenant has sole use of in a good and tidy state and not to keep or allow refuse to accumulate."

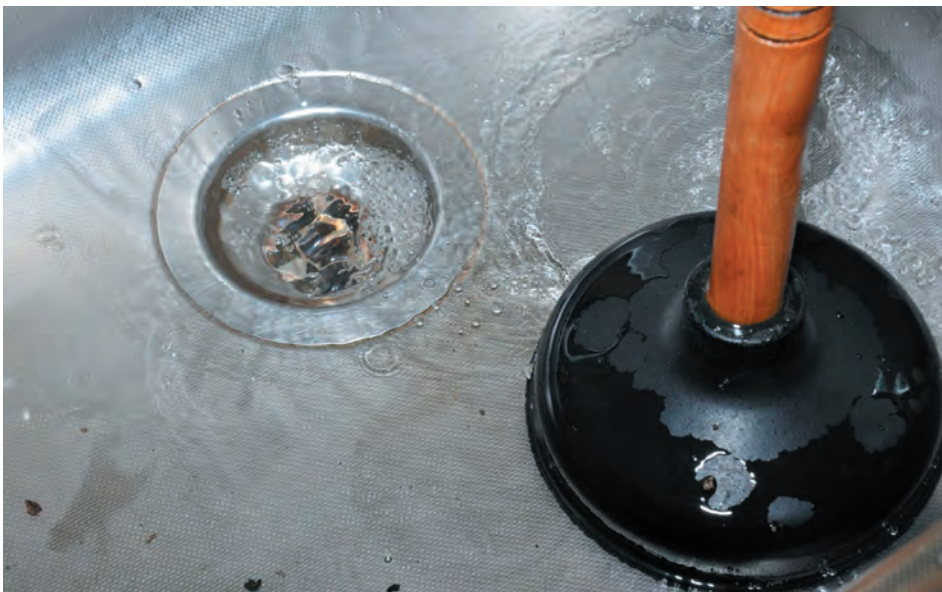
And

"To look after and to keep tidy any garden area that is let with the Premises."

For clarity, this includes the maintenance of any shrubs, trees or plant life.

We would like to see the environment of our estates improve and individual residents can help us by looking after their gardens.

If you have any concerns about the condition of your garden or patio please contact your Resident Services Coordinator to discuss how improvements can be achieved.



Help to Keep Drains Flowing Freely

Careless disposal of fat, oil and grease is the commonest cause of sinks and drains blocking. This is because they solidify and block waste pipes, eventually causing flooding and backsurgings.

Worse still, fats can bond with food scraps and wet wipes to form fat bergs. These can get big enough to block main drains, causing misery for everyone. Wet wipes of all kinds are not flushable and don't break down (not even the ones that say they do). This is a disaster for the environment as well as a nuisance for everyone affected by blockages. Please remember to put these in the general waste bin, not down the loo.

How to safely dispose of cooking oil and food fat

- Before washing pots and pans, wipe excess grease off with a paper towel to avoid pouring oil down the sink.
- Reuse cooking fats in the kitchen by pouring fat through a filter then putting it in the fridge overnight. The next day, the oil will have a jelly-like substance on top. Remove and dispose of the jelly and then you can use the hardened oil again in the pan.
- You can also reuse oil in cooking. If you've cooked meat, rather than refilling the pan with oil reuse it to cook your vegetables.
- If you've used fat, suet or lard in cooking, allow it to cool then combine it with nuts and seeds to make a ball, put the ball in your bird feeder or garden for local wildlife to enjoy.



If you've been affected by Coronavirus and are struggling to pay your rent, we're here to help. Please get in touch with us.

If your ability to make rent payments has been affected in anyway or you are experiencing financial difficulties due to Coronavirus (Covid-19), please get in touch with Rental Income Team on 0208 800 9606 and select option 2. We can offer advice including what benefits you could claim to try and ease any impact on your finances and make a plan with you to pay your rent. If in doubt, reach out.

Ways to pay your rent, We offer a choice of ways to pay:

Internet payments –You can make secure online payments at any time at www.allpayments.net using your Payment Reference Number (PRN) and your bank card. If you don't know what you PRN is, please contact the Rents Team on 020 8800 9606 and select option 2.

Telephone payments on 0844 557 8321. You will need your PRN and bank card again. Please note all calls to 0844 numbers will be charged at 7p per minute plus your phone company's access charge, which may vary depending on provider.

Mobile App – The AllPay App is available on both Apple and Android devices. This secure App can easily be set up with a bank card to make payments on a regular basis after a simple registration.

Text payments – even without a smartphone, tenants can make payments after registering online at www.allpayments.net/textpay. You can pay your rent anytime, any place, any where. You will need your phone and PRN to register. This service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



NEW YEAR, NEW LOOK: A thousand flowers bloom

We are spending the winter months working to gradually improve the gardens across our estates.

We are planting thousands of spring bulbs over the next few weeks ready to burst into bloom in the new year.

We are also progressively refreshing cultivated areas with new bushes, shrubs and trees and trees.

Keep your eyes open and let us know what you think.

Office Closure over Christmas 2020

All of our offices will be closed on the following days:

Friday 25 th December 2020	Christmas Day
Monday 28 th December 2020	Boxing Day (substitute Bank holiday)
Tuesday 29 th December 2020	Additional day
Friday 1 st January 2021	New Year's Day

For emergency repairs, please call our out of hours service:

Gilmartins 0800 849 9082, or MNM Property Services 020 8523 6689