

# Pioneer Press

The newsletter for residents of  
Women's Pioneer Housing



Women's  
Pioneer Housing  
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Welcome to the Autumn Edition of our Resident Newsletter, Pioneer Press! We're pleased to bring you the latest updates, news, and events happening at Women's Pioneer. Inside, you'll find important announcements regarding our services, upcoming activities, helpful reminders, and a few highlights from around the community.

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## Getting to know the new Chair of RESP

The Resident Engagement and Scrutiny Panel (RESP) is a group led by Women's Pioneer Housing (WPH) residents. RESP meets bimonthly and works together to make positive changes within WPH by reviewing key service areas, providing input into policy development and update, and evaluating our performance.

The new Chair of RESP was elected in August, and we are pleased to welcome Susie Achieng into the role. We wanted to get to know Susie a bit more, so our Resident Engagement and Resolutions Officer, Nikole Farler, recently sat with Susie to discuss her journey to RESP, priorities for her Chairship, and of course delicious food recommendations!

**RERO:** Susie, thank you so much for sitting down with me for this interview. We thought it would be a great opportunity to do a little "get to know the Chair" article for Autumn's Pioneer Press and officially usher you into your RESP Chairship. I wanted to start by asking you about your journey to joining RESP and ultimately becoming Chair.

**SA:** Thanks Nikole.

My journey to RESP started a few years ago. I attended a resident engagement event at the old WPH office on Wood Lane where we were split up into groups and asked to provide feedback on WPH's services. At some point in the middle of the event I was approached by a staff member who said, "I think you would be a good fit for RESP".

I took it in stride and mulled it over for the rest of the event, then before leaving I was approached by another staff member who said the same thing and again invited me to join RESP. After a second invitation I gave in and said "ok, I'll join". Now here I am a little over 3 years later. My path to Chair was quite similar, I received lots of encouragement from a few different directions that I should put my name in.

**RERO:** (laughs) It sounds like you were persuaded into it! What has made you stay on RESP for so many years?

**SA:** (laughs) Yes! I've stayed for a few reasons. RESP has not only been a way to meet other residents, but it's a great way to have your voice heard while also holding the



*RESP Meeting: RESP Members including Chair, Susie Achieng, second from the left.*

the organisation accountable. Not to mention, being on RESP is probably the best way to get an in-depth understanding of what's happening day-to-day at WPH from an operational standpoint.

**RERO:** That makes sense, especially since the RESP meetings take place every other month and there's at least two staff members attending, sometimes more depending on what's on the agenda. Moving to our next question, what's one lesson you've learned that you always carry with you?

**SA:** Hmm, I would say either: "Make the most of the good relationships you have and let them know you care." Or "Be clear about things when people make requests; make sure they know where they stand."

## Getting to know the new Chair of RESP Continued...



*RESP Meeting: RESP Members including Chair, Susie Achieng, and WPH RERO, Nikole Farler*

**RERO:** Those are really good lessons to hold close; I can see them applying well in both the personal and work aspects of life. Do you see them being relevant to WPH's work? And if so, how do you think the organisation can act on these lessons?

**SA:** Absolutely. Applying these lessons relies on strong communication with your residents. For example, following through when someone says they are going to do something; or making residents aware when there is a new person in post like a Housing Officer. I think the relationship between staff and residents needs to be strengthened and the first step is better communication – it's one of the things I want to focus on as Chair.

**RERO:** I agree; communication is instrumental for any success. This is also something that we're aware of as an organisation and are constantly striving to improve. We look forward to working with you and RESP members on it further during your Chairship.

Alright, I have two more questions and I'm especially interested in this next one. We've spoken before that you are a big Foodie, so I want to ask what your go-to comfort food is and where in London to get it?

**SA:** Oh gosh, that's hard. Trying to think of just one.

**RERO:** We can change it to top three is that's easier?

**SA:** Ok, ok. For brownies, cheesecake or pumpkin pie, Outsider Tart @The Lyric in Hammer-smith. For any french cakes when I'm feeling very fancy Cedric Grolet at The Berkley. And for vegan food, Club Mexicana at Kingly Court.

**RERO:** (laughs) The pumpkin pie at Outsider Tart really is so good and it's nearly that time of year!

Ok, final question, what advice would you give to any residents who may be on-the-fence about joining RESP or getting more involved?

**SA:** I would say, similar to what I mentioned earlier, that it's a real opportunity to learn about WPH and gain inside knowledge about how the organisation works. You get to share your views about how WPH's services can be improved, knowing you're being heard and making a difference. It's also meeting other residents and realising that you're not alone in some of the challenges you may be experiencing.

**RERO:** That's great. Thank you so much again Susie for taking the time to chat with me for this article. We also still have a few seats available on RESP so I'm hoping that your words of encouragement might inspire some RESP applications to trickle in!

**SA:** Thank you Nikole. And yes, fingers crossed!

If you are interested in RESP or wider resident engagement opportunities, visit <https://womenspioneer.co.uk/resident-engagement/> to find out more.

**Please contact us if you would like an informal discussion about joining RESP or engaging with us further!**

# Your Feedback, Our Action

At Women's Pioneer Housing, we are committed to listening to residents and acting on the feedback you share with us. Since June, you've told us what matters most, from knowing who your Housing Officer is, to how we handle anti-social behaviour, to ensuring contractors meet the standards you deserve. Here's a look at what you said in your feedback, and what we've done.

## You said...

## We did...

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>"We've had a few new housing officers. It would be nice if we were introduced to them."</p>                      | <p>We know that having a clear and trusted point of contact is important. To make sure you always know who is supporting you, we have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sent letters to all residents introducing their current Housing Officer.</li> <li>• Ensured you have up-to-date contact details so you know how to reach them.</li> <li>• Put systems in place to keep you informed whenever staff changes happen in future.</li> </ul> <p>This means no more guessing who to call when you need help, you'll always know your Housing Officer.</p>   |
| <p>"Communication could be quicker around anti-social problems."</p> <p>"It's hard to provide evidence of ASB."</p> | <p>We've taken significant steps to improve how we handle ASB, because we know it directly affects your safety, comfort, and peace of mind. Here's how we've acted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expert input: We engaged external consultants to review and redesign our ASB processes. This will help us resolve cases more quickly and consistently.</li> <li>• Community partnerships: We've strengthened our links with local Community Policing teams so that residents get faster, more joined-up support.</li> <li>• Clearer information: New posters and guides have been created to explain:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» What counts as anti-social behaviour.</li> <li>» How to report it to both Women's Pioneer Housing and the police.</li> <li>» What you can expect from us after making a report.</li> <li>» Better support: We are committed to keeping you informed throughout the process, so you never feel left in the dark about what's happening with your case.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The goal is simple: quicker resolutions, clearer communication, and stronger support when you need it most.</p> |

# Your Feedback, Our Action, Continued...



Resident Engagement Event: February 2025, Driving Engagement, Delivering Excellence

## You said...

“Listen to issues about contractors when they don't perform well.”

We know that reliable, respectful, and high-quality contractor work is essential for your home. To raise standards, we have:

- Introduced regular meetings with contractors where we directly raise resident feedback and concerns.
- Put in place new monitoring systems to track how contractors are performing on an ongoing basis.
- Strengthened accountability by taking action when contractors don't meet our agreed standards.

Our aim is to ensure that every repair or service carried out on our behalf reflects the high standards we expect, and that you deserve.

## We did...

Your feedback is powerful. By telling us what's working, and what isn't, you're helping us improve services for everyone at Women's Pioneer Housing. Over the coming months we will:

- Keep updating you on progress in key areas like ASB, contractor performance, and resident communication.
- Continue to invite your views, whether through surveys, events, or direct conversations.
- Build on our approach to make sure your voice remains at the heart of everything we do.

Together, we can create stronger, safer, and more supportive communities.

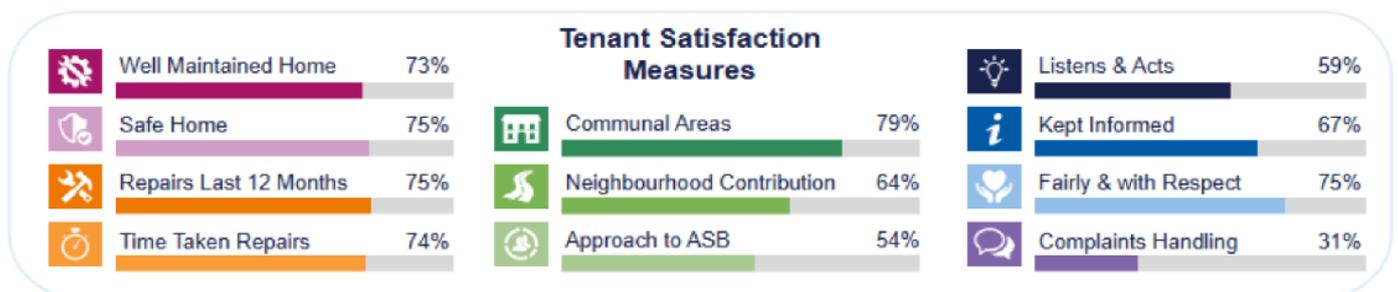
# Tenant Satisfaction Measures

In 2024, the Regulator of Social Housing introduced Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs). These are standardised questions that all housing associations must ask, helping to assess how well we provide quality homes and services.

At Women's Pioneer we carry out two waves of resident satisfaction surveys each year, reaching 150 residents in each round.

Our first wave of 2025 survey results was collected in June. We're pleased to report that overall resident satisfaction has risen to 70%, which is an increase from 62% reported from the second wave of 2024. This is also above the London average of around 60%.

Our performance across all categories is shown below.



Your feedback shows us where we're doing well and where we need to do better. While you told us we are doing well in many areas there are some that will be a focus for improvement for the rest of this year:

### Complaints Handling – 31%

We know this is an area where we must do better. We have seen a rise in the number of complaints being made which allows us to tackle issues head-on. Staff across the organisation are now involved in responding to complaints to ensure quicker action and greater accountability.

### Approach to Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) – 54%.

We partnered with Resolve ASB consultants earlier this year who have reviewed our processes and have provided staff with additional training

to support in the resolution of issues more effectively.

### Listens & Acts – 59%

We are strengthening resident engagement and will be sharing more updates to show how your feedback shapes our decisions.

### Kept Informed – 67%

We're introducing clearer communication channels, so you know what's happening and when.

We are committed to listening to residents and improving our services. Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the survey. Your feedback is essential in shaping the way we work and ensuring your needs are met.

# Unlock Financial Support with Lightning Reach

Struggling with rising bills, rent pressure, or winter costs? Lightning Reach is a secure, free, and easy-to-use online portal which supports you in applying for grants tailored to your needs. Sign up once, and you're matched with support from hundreds of trusted partners all in one place.

## Why Tenants Should Sign Up

Lightning Reach connects you with over 2,500 financial support schemes, including help with energy bills, fuel vouchers, home upgrades, and essential living costs in addition to other services to support your wellbeing.

The portal is designed with ease in mind.

- Sign up and fill in your profile: just once.
- The system matches you with tailored support options.
- You apply directly through the portal with ease.



## How to Get Started

- Visit Lightning reach website and create a free account. (Scan the QR code below or visit <https://www.lightningreach.org/application-portal?referral=WPH-websitereferral>) You'll need an email address to create an account.
- Complete your profile: you'll be asked questions about your circumstances, be honest in your responses as this helps find the best match. You'll only need to answer these questions once.
- Let the portal match you with available grants and schemes based on your responses.
- Apply with ease and receive support, some assistance arrives in just a few days.



To date, more than 80 residents have signed up to Lightning Reach to access financial support. Through the platform, approximately £1.2k has already been distributed to matched tenants, streamlining access to much needed grants. You can apply for support whether you are in or out of work.

Scan the QR code to the left to begin your application and access financial support, grant funding, support, and more. Contact our Customer Services Team if you have any further questions!

# Improving Your Services

## Driving Engagement, Delivering Excellence

In Spring we told you about an action plan created by residents attending the CEOs meeting with residents (in January) , and the February Engaging for Excellence event. In June a number of residents joined the CEO again to hear about progress with the action plan, and offer some feedback.

The action plan continues to be progressed, with some success in some of our areas, but more to do in others. We are moving forward on areas of our work that concern you, as well as meeting the changes required across social housing.

### Since April, we have:

- Introduced more (financial) support for residents through Lightning Reach
- Established a permanent post to help develop and deliver a consistent approach for any safeguarding concerns.
- Started contacting you if you have an urgent repair that remains outstanding after 10 working days. Our main contractors are now providing us with weekly updates so we can see if any repairs are outstanding and contact you to see if the repair is still required.
- Issued satisfaction slips for any repairs carried out so we can check how well our contractors are performing. Thank you to residents that have returned these.
- Provided leaflet guides on topics that you frequently contact us about.
- Continued to meet contractors to discuss their performance and taken action against contractors who were performing poorly. They have been removed from our contractor's list.
- Introduced quality auditing of your calls to ensure we are responding appropriately and learn more about the reasons you contact us
- Set up misuse of common parts as a low-level ASB category
- Provided a case number for residents to track all actions associated with that case number
- Continue to develop our Resident's Portal. We would like to work with more residents to develop this. **If you are interested in this, please contact [customerservices@womens-pioneer.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@womens-pioneer.co.uk) or phone 0208 749 7112**



Womens Pioneer Housing Staff Training

## Improving Your Services, Continued...

We know these areas are not always consistently implemented. We are working hard to ensure new staff are quickly trained and our existing staff receive feedback to help them improve their performance.

**We also are clear that there is more work to do.**

**This includes:**

- Providing an opportunity for residents to attend a contractor's performance meeting, annually.
- Giving you regular updates about a case we are working on. We have implemented this

for many cases, providing updates every 14 – 28 days.

- Resolving more queries through our customer services team, where possible. We're doing this through improved IT systems that provide better information so our customer services team can answer your queries based on this information, removing the need to wait for another officer to contact you.

A huge personal thank you to all residents who replied to my invitation and joined me in August and/or January to develop this action plan.

## Engaging for Excellence

### Managing Repairs: Operational Action Plan

| Actions  | Timescale  |
|--|--|
| You told us you want us to organise quicker Appointments so our action plan set out that we would:   |  |
| Book emergency appointments: Health and safety and other emergency appointments should be booked by WPH and residents contacted that day to confirm the time the repair will take place  | Completed  |
| Contractor to contact for urgent repairs within 2 days: When residents contact for a repair that needs to be completed within 7 days, they should be told, and the contractor should contact within 2 days to make the appointment.                      | In Place and Monitoring  |
| Contractor to contact for routine repairs within 5 days: When residents contact for a routine repair that will be completed within 28 days, they should be told, and the contractor should contact within 5 days to make the appointment.                | In Place and Monitoring  |
| You told us you want us to make check repairs are complete so our action plan set out that we would:   |  |
| Invite you to ring back if repair is not completed: Residents should know when their repair should be completed and encouraged to let WPH know if it has not been or invited to ask for a 'ring-back' or email the day after it was due to be completed. | In place – please let us know if you do not hear from a contractor |
| Check 60 calls per month: Managers should be more aware of the calls and whether more training is needed so that standard and frequent queries are resolved at the time, or frequently asked questions factsheets provided for residents.                | Calls are being reviewed, but less than 60 per month               |
| Re- issue satisfaction Forms: WPH should return to issuing satisfaction forms to give residents an opportunity to provide feedback on repairs.   | Completed  |

# Engaging for Excellence, Continued...

## Managing Repairs: Operational Action Plan

| Actions  | Timescale  |
|--|--|
| Introduce Tenant Portals: Residents should be able to access their rent statements and other information e.g. any repairs we are carrying out or any cases we are dealing with.  | Outstanding, expected completion by end of 2025    |
| Close jobs once they have been completed and for any jobs still 2 weeks after they were due, to check with tenant if they are still required: We should know if there are any outstanding repairs and contact residents to see if they are still required. | Partly in place – only currently for urgent jobs   |
| Hold quarterly Contractor Meetings: Contractors need to be held more to account and advised about any complaints and how they are performing.  | Completed  |
| Inspect 10% Repairs: We should be inspecting repairs to make sure they have been done correctly; they are good value for money and residents are happy.  | In progress – not currently meeting this objective |
| Invite you to ring back if repair is not completed: Residents should know when their repair should be completed and encouraged to let WPH know if it has not been or invited to ask for a 'ring-back' or email the day after it was due to be completed.   | In place, needs to be consistent                   |
| Review poor performing contractors: We need to get better at either ensuring our contractors are good at their work or remove poor performing contractors from our approved list   | Completed and Ongoing                              |

## Managing Anti-social behaviour (ASB) : Operational Action Plan

| Actions  | Timescale  |
|--|--|
| We agreed that when we are managing a case of ASB, we should:  |  |
| Provide information on what to expect throughout the investigation: We should have a clear guide for residents setting out what to expect when ASB is reported, and what to do if we do not follow our process       | Completed - Tenant Information Guide   |
| Offer more support for vulnerable residents: Some residents need more support. WPH should find ways of working with other agencies to help provide this support or let residents know how to access support agencies | Complete – Lightning Reach for Financial Support. Continuing to source other agencies. |
| Issue formal warnings and hold office meeting: WPH should be more formal with residents that are causing ASB   | Completed  |
| Record misuse of communal spaces as ASB: Residents who misuse their communal spaces and put others at risk should be managed through ASB processes   | Completed  |
| Record misuse of our homes as ASB: Residents who misuse their homes and put other properties at risk should be managed through ASB processes   | Completed  |

# Engaging for Excellence, Continued...

## Communicating Effectively: Operational Action Plan

| Actions  | Timescale                                |
|--|--|
| To improve how we communicate, we should:  |  |
| Provide a named contact for casework: Residents should know who is dealing with their case and be able to engage directly with them.   | Partially in place                       |
| Provide a case number: Any more detailed case should be assigned a reference number to make it easier for residents to track   | Completed                                |
| Provide key information about our services: WPH to provide more information about our services and what residents can expect   | Completed - will continue to add to this |
| Provide information / update on current case: Residents should be given updates about their case/. The case officer should agree when they will next provide an update, and ensure this timeframe is kept.   | In Place, Needs to be Consistent         |
| Provide an action plan for more complex cases: For more difficult cases, with several officers involved, a clear action plan should be created and shared with residents. This should be kept updated and residents know when the updates should be provided.  | In Place, Needs to be Consistent         |
| Explain who to contact if you are dissatisfied / officer does not carry out their promises: All residents should be advised how to raise a concern about a case if they are dissatisfied with the way it is being handled. Whilst this will usually be via our complaints, residents sometimes wanted someone to talk to about a case rather than wait for the complaints process. | Outstanding                              |
| Respect, Listen, Care, Act   | Staff Training Complete - Progressing    |
| WPH to improve how we listen, show professional care, act on our promises and demonstrate respect for resident's views. To be evidenced through testing satisfaction.  | Further work to be done                  |



Resident Engagement and Scrutiny Panel (RESP) Meeting



Housing Team Meeting

# Awaab's Law - What it Means For You

From Sunday 27th October 2025, a new law will come into effect called **Awaab's Law**. This law ensures social landlords, such as WPH, investigate and repair serious damp and mould issues within set timeframes.

If you report damp and mould issues, we must investigate and act quickly and efficiently. The law also introduces strict time limits for when damp and mould repair works must be completed.

## Types of Damp and Mould:

- **Rising Damp:** Moisture enters through the ground or water seeping up through walls, often causing damage to the lower part of walls
- **Penetrating Damp:** Water seeps through external walls, roofs, or windows, often due to cracks or leaks
- **Condensation:** Moisture from warm air condenses on cold surfaces, leading to damp patches and potential mould growth
- **Mould:** Mould can develop in damp environments, often in areas with high humidity or condensation. It can develop on walls, ceilings, windows, or furniture.

Understanding these types is crucial for effective treatment and prevention of damp and mould issues in homes.

Mould and damp are caused by excess moisture within a property. This can be caused by leaking pipes, rainwater ingress through the roof or walls, rising damp where the damp proof course or membrane have failed, or condensation caused by warm moist air coming into contact with cold surfaces such as windows.

Dampness and mould can cause health issues, including respiratory problems, and can damage property. As of 2023, 6.5 million households in England are affected by dampness and mould, highlighting the widespread issue.

Addressing these issues is crucial. It is important that we abide by the legislative changes and we address any reports of damp and mould in homes with care and urgency.

We have always been committed to responding to reports of damp and mould and the introduction of Awaab's Law ensures you can hold us accountable for ensuring your home is safe, healthy, and well maintained. We aim to treat any reports of damp and mould in your home urgently and efficiently.



**If you identify mould or dampness in your home, please report it to our Customer Services Team by emailing [customerservices@womenspioneer.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@womenspioneer.co.uk) or phoning 0208 749 7112.** We will respond appropriately and within the set timeframes introduced by Awaab's Law. We will investigate the issue, cause, and treat any mould where needed.

We have recently introduced a new tenant information guide on Damp and Mould with further information about preventing condensation, damp, and mould in your home. You can access this guide here <https://womenspioneer.co.uk/tenant-information/>

# Keeping Your Home Warm and Dry in Colder Months

Winter can feel like a time when most of us are not at our best and sometimes this feeling can extend to the condition of our homes.

Ensuring your home is ready for the colder months is vital to preserve energy, prevent damp, and improve air quality. We have some tips below to best keep your home ready for Winter. If you have identified an issue or repair in your home, let us know and we will come and investigate.

## Autumn and Winter Tips:

If you've got trickle/fan vents on your windows, keep them open all year round. Trickle vents improve indoor air quality, removes stale air, and reduces issues like condensation, damp, and mould.

If your windows don't have trickle/fan vents, simply open your windows and lock them in the vent position and it'll do the same job. Make sure that the window restrictors are always in position.

It is recommended you keep your home heated to between 18c and 21c. Don't let the temperature drop below 16c for long periods to keep your home healthy. If you are struggling to afford heating bills, use our Lightning Reach Service (Page 7) or contact us for more details.

Let your walls breathe by leaving a few inches between your furniture and the walls.

If you're drying laundry indoors, try and put the laundry in a room with a running extractor fan and keep windows open to reduce moisture in the air.

Bedding, cushions and carpets should be frequently cleaned or hoovered, and mattresses flipped to help remove mites. Dust mites love damp conditions.

Do not use Calor gas or paraffin heaters These are not allowed inside your home, and they produce a lot of moisture.

Make sure the door is closed to let your extractor fan do its thing when enjoying a hot shower or a bath or cooking something with steam in the kitchen.



# Moving to Universal Credit?

If you are claiming a legacy benefit such as Housing Benefit, Income Support, Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit, etc, you will not be automatically moved onto Universal Credit and you will need to take action to continue receiving your payments. This applies to everyone and you will not have a choice on whether you are migrated to Universal Credit.

## What is Universal Credit?

Universal Credit is a payment to help with your living costs. It's paid monthly and you may be able to get it if you're on a low income, out of work or you cannot work.

Universal Credit will replace the following legacy benefits: Housing Benefit, Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit, and Income Support.

## How do I Move to Universal Credit?

Firstly, do not apply for Universal Credit before you receive your migration notice if you are currently claiming a legacy benefit such as Housing Benefit. If you apply before you receive your migration notice you will lose your transitional protection.

Transitional protection helps with your move to Universal Credit and means you can get a transitional protection payment added to your Universal Credit entitlement if you currently receive more from your previous tax credits or legacy benefits. It should stop you from being 'worse off' on Universal Credit.

Once you receive your migration notice letter, you can begin your claim for Universal Credit. You will be provided a deadline for making a claim, which will be at least 3 months away from the day the notice was issued. To apply for Universal Credit, visit <https://www.universal-credit.service.gov.uk/start>

If you do not apply for Universal Credit before your deadline, your legacy benefit payments will stop and you will lose your transitional protection.

### Universal Credit Migration Notice Helpline:

Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm  
Phone: 0800 169 0328 (free from mobiles / landlines)

You can also contact our Financial Inclusion Officer through our Customer Services Team for more information.

Please contact [customerservices@womenspioneer.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@womenspioneer.co.uk) or phone 0208 749 7112

Scan the QR Code to learn more



# Paying Your Rent Over Christmas

## Why It's Vital to Stay on Track

As the festive season approaches, it's easy to get caught up in the excitement of Christmas, gifts, decorations, family gatherings, and celebrations. Christmas can bring extra costs, and many people find this time of year financially challenging. However, rent and household bills don't take a holiday, and falling behind over the winter months can cause serious problems in the New Year.

As your landlord, we want to support you in maintaining your tenancy so you have a secure and comfortable home throughout the festive season. Here's why staying up to date with rent and bills is so important.

### 1. Preventing Debt from Building Up

Missing rent payments in December will lead to arrears in January. Once behind, it can be harder to catch up especially after the added expense of Christmas. Keeping on top of rent now helps avoid long-term financial stress.

### 2. Protecting Your Home

Paying your rent is a top financial priority. Missed payments can lead to serious consequences putting your tenancy at risk and is why rent is considered a priority. We are here to support you and explore options to avoid risking your tenancy if you are struggling financially.

### 3. Essential Services Continue Over Winter

Utilities like heating, electricity, and water are vital especially in colder months and are also priority bills as your supplier can force you to use a pre-payment meter or cut off your supply if you fall into significant debt. Ensuring your household bills are paid means you and your family can stay warm and well during winter.

### 4. Peace of Mind Over the Holidays

There's enough to think about at Christmas without worrying about rent arrears. Staying on top of your payments means one less thing to stress about, and allows you to enjoy the season. Planning around your spending is useful. There may be changes to your routine that add to your usual costs. You may be spending more time indoors so your energy costs may be higher.



## Need Help or Advice?

If you're struggling to make ends meet or worried about paying your rent over Christmas, don't wait for us to contact you, contact us as early as possible. We are here to help.

We can:

- Refer you to support services and benefits advice.
- Provide guidance on managing household budgets.

### Tips for Managing Finances Over Christmas

- Plan ahead: Create a budget for gifts, food, and celebrations and stick to it.
- Prioritise essentials: Rent and bills should come first in your budgeting.
- Avoid high interest borrowing: Be cautious with payday loans and credit cards.
- Seek support early: If you think you might struggle, don't leave it too late to ask for help.

# A Christmas Fete is coming to WPH!

Mark your calendars for Friday, 12th December to join WPH and fellow residents at Mary Smith Court from 2:00pm – 4:00pm for a holiday market!

**When:** Friday, 12 December from 2:00pm – 4:00pm

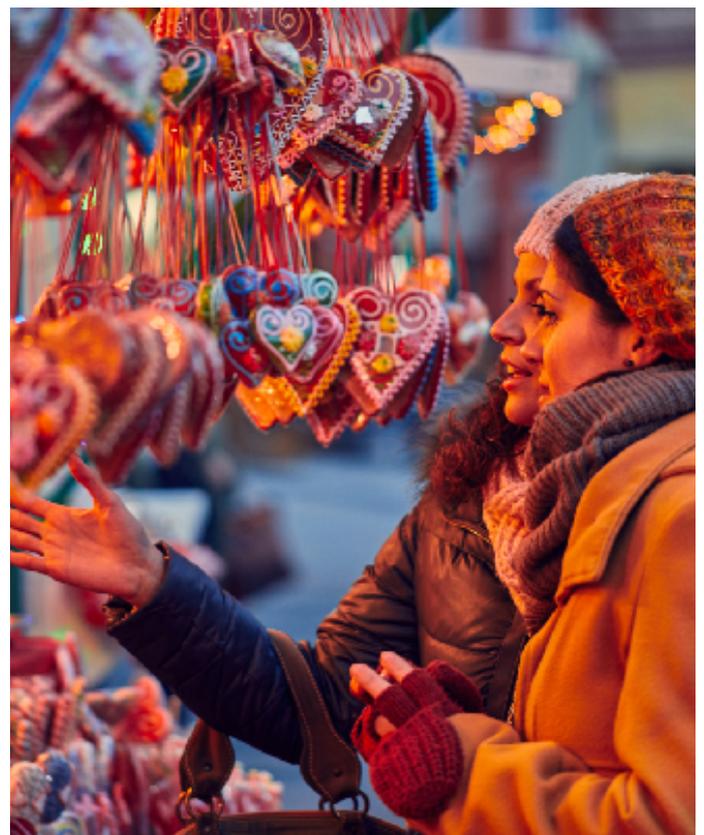
**Where:** Mary Smith Court, 17 – 21 Trebovir Road, SW5 9NF

The Christmas Fete will be a festive opportunity to connect, socialise, and showcase your talents. Residents are invited to host stalls and sell hand-made crafts, baked goods, or other items you've created.

If you're interested in hosting a stall please let us know by either using the QR code to submit a "Stall Expression of Interest" form or visiting <https://forms.office.com/e/YGec2tFdBA> You can also contact WPH by emailing Customer Services at [customerservices@womenspioneer.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@womenspioneer.co.uk) or calling 020 8749 7112.

We kindly ask that any expressions of interest to host a stall be submitted no later than **Friday, 24 October 2025**.

Scan To Host a Stall!



## Accessing Your Home

At Women's Pioneer, we understand that your home is a private space, and that we will only request access when it is absolutely necessary, we always aim to do so with care, professionalism, and sensitivity.

Our aim is to keep you safe and to meet our legal obligations as your landlord and as such we must carry out essential surveys and safety checks, of which include the following:

- Gas safety inspections
- Electrical safety inspections
- Asbestos surveys and monitoring
- Fire safety assessments
- General condition surveys (Stock Condition) to help plan future repairs and improvements.
- Energy efficiency surveys

These surveys are crucial to ensuring that your home remains safe, secure, and in good condition—not only for you, but for everyone in our homes.

We will always try to arrange access at a time that suits you, and our staff and contractors are expected to act with the highest standards of respect and professionalism when arranging these surveys.



However, where access is not granted despite repeated attempts, we are left with no option but to pursue **legal action via court proceedings** to gain entry. Please be aware that any **legal and court-related costs will be passed on to the residents of who have deliberately not provided access.**

We are currently in the process of taking legal action against our residents who have directly refused access for any of these surveys. They will be contacted shortly as part of this legal process.

We would also like to remind all residents that the financial implications of these court proceedings divert funding away from critical areas such as property reinvestment programmes and welfare support funds, which are in place to help and support residents across our properties.

Remember: if we cannot access your home to make it safe, your home may be putting you, your neighbours, your visitors and our staff and contractors at risk. If you have any questions about inspections or surveys being carried out in your home, please contact our customer services team at 0208 749 7112 or email [customerservices@womenspioneer.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@womenspioneer.co.uk)

# Life at Women's Pioneer Housing

In this edition, we're excited to share an interview with a resident living at Mary Smith Court, offering a personal glimpse into what it means to be a resident at WPH. From the value of community to the importance of having a safe, secure, and affordable place to call home, our conversation highlights the real impact of safe housing.

## Your Experience at WPH

**Q:** Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and how you came to live at Women's Pioneer Housing?

**A:** I was referred from the council, I have been a tenant with WPH for 10 years!

**Q:** What are some of the things you love most about living in your property?

**A:** I love the garden that we have behind the property. I feel that is it important to have outdoor space to be able to use. It is always clean and tidy and I love being able to sit outside in summer with friends and family.

**Q:** Are there any features or aspects of your home that make it feel especially safe, comfortable, or empowering?

**A:** One of the things that makes my home feel especially safe is knowing there is always support available if I need it. The secure entry system gives me peace of mind, and the regular presence of staff means I never feel alone in dealing with any concerns. The layout of my flat is also very practical and accessible, which makes everyday living easier and more comfortable.

What really makes it feel empowering, though, is the balance between independence and support. I have my own private space where I can live freely and make my own choices, but I also know that help is nearby if I ever require it. This combination of security, comfort, and independence makes my home feel like the right place for me.

**Q:** What has your experience been like with the Women's Pioneer Housing team/ Scheme manager?

**A:** My experience with the Women's Pioneer Housing team and the Scheme Manager has been very positive. They are approachable, supportive, and always ready to listen. If I have any concerns or need help, I feel confident that they will respond quickly and take my situation seriously.

The Scheme Manager, in particular, has made a big difference by being visible and available on site. They create a friendly atmosphere, check in with residents, and make sure that we feel safe and comfortable. It's reassuring to know there is someone who understands our needs and is committed to making the accommodation a supportive place to live.



*Residents at one of our Schemes*

## Life at Women's Pioneer Housing Continued...

**Q:** Do you feel like Women's Pioneer Housing supports women's independence? If so, in what ways?

**A:** Yes, I do feel that Women's Pioneer Housing supports women's independence. Having my own home gives me the freedom to make decisions for myself while still feeling safe and supported. The secure and affordable housing allows me to focus on my wellbeing without worrying constantly about stability.

**Q:** How would you describe Women's Pioneer Housing to someone who's never heard of it?

**A:** I would describe Women's Pioneer Housing as an organisation that provides safe, secure, and affordable homes specifically for women. It's more than just housing; it's a supportive community where women are encouraged to live independently while knowing help is available if needed.



*Games at a WPH Housing Scheme*

## Successful Installation of Platform Lifts!

We recently announced the successful installation of two platform lifts at our schemes, marking a major milestone in our ongoing efforts to provide safe, good-quality, and affordable homes, accessible to all. The lifts will provide essential support to residents in accessing their homes.

If you, a carer, friend, or family member would like to learn how these platform lifts work to support you, please contact your Scheme Manager who will be able to help.



*Platform Lift at one of our Schemes*



*Platform Lift at one of our Schemes*

# What Changes to Social Housing Legislation Means for You and Your Home

The social housing sector is going through some big changes. New regulations are being introduced, with a stronger focus on things like tenant safety, transparency, and accountability. These changes are being made to make sure that all housing providers, including WPH deliver high-quality services and put residents at the heart of everything we do.

## How We're Responding...



Millie, Customer Services Advisor at WPH

To meet these new standards, we've been reviewing and updating how we work. This includes:

- Checking that our records are accurate and up to date
- Making sure the right people are living in our homes
- Improving how we communicate and respond to residents
- Creating safer and better managed homes for everyone

One key change is the introduction of tenancy audits. These checks help us confirm who's living in each home so we can make sure our services are reaching the right people and that we adapt our services to reflect residents needs. They also help us identify households that might need extra support and tackle tenancy issues. We've also made several other improvements in response to the wider sector changes; including new regulations introduced under the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023.

## What's New and What It Means for You

### 1. Tenancy Audits

We're carrying out tenancy checks to confirm who is living in our homes. This helps us keep homes for those who need them and ensures our support and services go to the right people.

### 2. Resident Satisfaction Monitoring

We now run regular Tenant Satisfaction Measures Surveys (TSMs) to gather your feedback on things like:

- The condition of your home
- The quality of repairs
- How we manage complaints
- How we handle ASB

This helps us understand where we're doing well and where we need to improve.

# What Changes to Social Housing Legislation Means for You and Your Home

## 3. Stronger Complaint Handling

We follow new rules from the Housing Ombudsman, which include clearer timescales and steps for dealing with complaints. Our goal is to make sure your concerns are heard, taken seriously, and resolved fairly.

## 4. Accurate Data and Records

We're improving how we collect and manage information about our homes and residents. This helps us respond faster and more effectively, especially in emergencies or when you need extra support.

## 5. Building Safety and Compliance

Following new safety laws (like the Building Safety Act), we're carrying out:

- More regular safety inspections
- Checks on fire doors, alarms, and communal areas
- Stronger record-keeping to prove compliance

Your safety is our top priority, and these changes help ensure your building is safe and secure.

## 6. Greater Transparency

We're required to be more open about how we work. That means sharing information like:

- Performance statistics
- Resident satisfaction scores
- How we handle complaints

You can find these updates on our website, in our annual reports, and in Pioneer Press.



Tom, Customer Services Advisor at WPH

## 7. Improved Resident Engagement

You should have more say in how your services are run; and we're making that happen.

Here's what we've done:

- Improved our Resident Engagement and Scrutiny Panel and made sure it includes a diverse group of residents
- Updated our Resident Engagement Strategy using feedback from the 2024 resident survey
- Put in place a Resident Engagement Action Plan to strengthen how we involve you in shaping our services

## Why This Matters

These changes are about more than just ticking boxes. They're about:

- Making your home safer
- Improving the services you receive
- Building trust and accountability
- Making sure your voice is heard

We're committed to keeping you updated as more changes roll out, and to working with you every step of the way. Your feedback is also reviewed by our managers, senior managers, the CEO and reported to Board to help ensure that we adapt our services and consistently improve.

**Got a Question?** If you'd like to know more about any of these updates or how they affect you, just get in touch. We're here to help. Contact our Customer Services Team for more information.

# Protecting Homes, Preventing Fraud

Tenancy Fraud is a criminal offence which can lead to a prison sentence. It can be committed in different ways, but the most common offences are:

- Subletting
- Not being truthful to get a tenancy/ providing false information
- Not living in the property

Tenancy Fraud is not a victimless crime, and as a result of it, there can be serious consequences to innocent people.



## You Said:

"I just want to be sure that the people living in WPH homes are the ones who are actually supposed to be there."

## We Did:

We have strengthened our tenancy audit process to make sure our records are accurate and that homes are occupied lawfully. Housing Officers now carry out regular checks and request ID during visits. This ensures we know who is living in each property and helps us identify suspected fraud more quickly.

We are also working closely with local councils and other housing partners to investigate cases and take appropriate legal action where fraud is confirmed.

As part of our ongoing checks, we've recently collaborated with Experian to support the review of certain cases within our homes that have been highlighted for further attention.

## Key statistics:

- More than 100,000 families are in temporary accommodation because of tenancy fraud
- 1 in 20 homes in London are linked to tenancy fraud
- Tenancy fraud is the biggest cost to the public purse at over £900m per year
- Each sublet home costs the tax payer £42,000

## What happens if you commit tenancy fraud?

Tenancy fraud is a serious breach of tenancy and can result in eviction. It may also impact your ability to access social housing in the future.

The penalties for a criminal conviction for Tenancy fraud include up to two years in prison, a fine of up to £50,000, and an unlawful profit order.

## How You Can Help

If you suspect someone is committing tenancy fraud, let us know. Even if you are not certain, your information could help us take action.

Reports are treated confidentially.

**Email:** [customerservices@womenspioneer.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@womenspioneer.co.uk)  
**Call:** 0208 749 7112

# Christmas Closure 2025

This autumn edition of Pioneer Press reminds us that we are approaching Christmas and the New Year. Our arrangements over the festive period differ to our standard service provision and are outlined below.

**Our office closes at 1pm on Christmas Eve Wednesday 24 December until 9.30am on Friday 2 January 2026. Our staff team will not be available throughout this time. We will have alternative arrangements in place to respond to emergencies.**

At 1pm on Christmas Eve our offices will close, and our phone lines will divert to our emergency service provider who supports us outside of office hours. They will respond to any emergency repairs you report. Emergencies are repairs which are an immediate danger to health, safety, or property, and includes serious leaks, complete loss of electricity or water, or a security risk like a broken front door.

To report an emergency, call our main number 020 8749 7112 and hold, you will then be transferred to our Out of Hours Team.

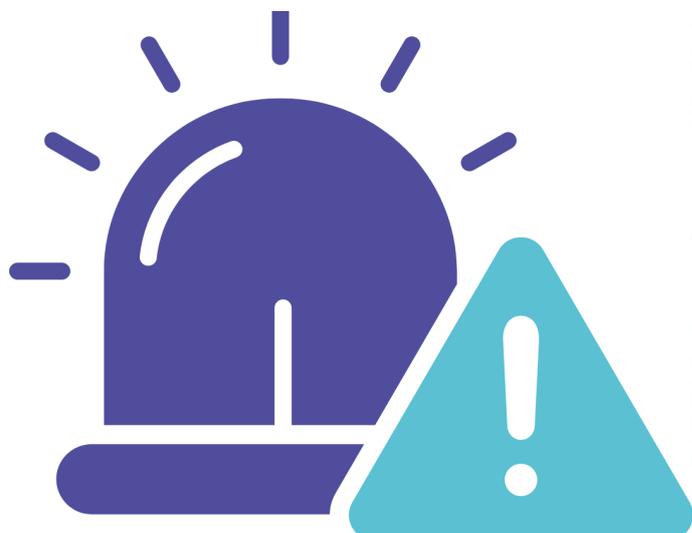
Out of Hours will not be able to provide general advice, so only call them for emergency repairs.

## For other emergencies dial 999 for :

- The police for example, if there is a crime in progress
- The fire brigade if there is a fire
- The ambulance service if there is a medical crisis or danger to life.

Call National Gas Emergency Service on 0800 111 999 if you smell gas or suspect a gas leak

If it is not an emergency but you need advice, dial 101 for the police and 111 for the NHS helpline.



If you email us during this closure period, we won't be able to respond to your query until we re-open in the New Year but will aim to respond within 5 working days after we re-open.

Although our staff team won't be on hand to respond to your general queries during the Christmas period, we've been busy updating our website adding new content and improving navigation. There are some helpful information guides and updated information on our services. Visit our website by following the link or scanning the QR code to the left.



## New Starters at WPH



### Rob Collingridge - Director of Property Services

Rob joined us in June with overall responsibility on building safety, ensuring compliance with all legal and regulatory requirements. Rob's background is extensive with 30 years in construction and asset management; he is dedicated to delivering exceptional customer experiences.



### Tia Nembhard - Housing Officer

Tia has a solid housing background having worked in local authorities and housing associations supporting clients in outreach work, in supported living and as a housing officer. We welcomed Tia in June, her experience both through paid positions and voluntary roles is part of her commitment to making a positive difference for residents.



### Iman Zakiyah - Housing Officer

Iman has a background in Resident Liaison, supporting tenants through housing projects and building positive relationships within the community. She is passionate about ensuring residents feel listened to and supported and is committed to making a difference in their everyday housing experience.



### Sharon McGhee - Property Team Administrator

Sharon was teacher, then worked as a Student Support and Housing Officer developing partnerships with reputable housing providers to meet program and student needs. Originally providing temporary support, Sharon is now permanently in role and remains committed to contributing to the future success and well-being of the organisation and its residents.



### Haider Ali - HR Officer

Haider supports our HR service providing first point of contact, practical support to our staff team. With a background at the NHS and in primary healthcare, Haider who joined us in September brings valuable experience working closely with others his key aims are achieving goals and creating achieving teams.

## Free Events in the Community



### Creative writing with AgeUK RBKC

- A creative writing session for all abilities, ages, and experiences!
- Every Monday from 2pm to 3pm
- Brompton Library, SW5 0BAS
- Visit <https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/events/creative-writing-ageuk-brompton-library>
- Book your place by visiting the site above! Free to attend.



### Hammersmith Winter Festival

- The Hammersmith Winter Festival is back and it promises to be another great day. All your favourites will be there, plus some new additions. Free to attend!
- 15 November 2025
- 10.00am to 4.00pm
- Hammersmith High Street, Lyric Square / King Street



### IT help sessions at Kensington Central Library

- Every Tuesday starting from 7th October
- 0am to 11:30am, no need to book.
- Gain support to improve your digital skills and answer any digital queries or questions. These sessions are delivered by trained volunteers and library staff in a group setting.
- Visit <https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/events/it-help-sessions-kensington-central-library>



### Online Zumba Classes

- A Latin-inspired dance-based fitness technique that combines elements of salsa, samba, and reggaeton.
- Every Friday from 10am to 11am
- Visit <https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/events/zumba-online-only>
- Book your place by visiting the site above! Free to attend for all ages and abilities.

## Contact Us

Our Office at Angel Walk is open for pre-arranged appointments only, we are happy to make these arrangements with you. Please only arrive if you have a scheduled appointment as we cannot guarantee the person you need to speak to will be available.

### General Enquiries - Monday to Friday between 9:30am and 5:30pm

Phone: 0208 749 7112

Email: [customerservices@womenspioneer.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@womenspioneer.co.uk)

### Feedback

We always welcome your feedback. Please email [feedback@womenspioneer.co.uk](mailto:feedback@womenspioneer.co.uk)

## Emergency Out of Hours Service



If you need to report an emergency repair when the office is closed, you can call the WPH office number: 0208 749 7112.

The call will automatically be diverted to TCL who will take the details of the repair and alert the relevant contractor.

