

---

## What's inside?

- 2 Rent and service charges
- 3 Struggling to pay your rent?
- 4 Tenancy Audit: what you need to know
- 5 Problems with damp and mould?
- 6 You said, we did!
- 7 Complaints performance
- 8 Join our Resident Panel
- 8 Booking visits to our office
- 9 Get your home ready for winter
- 10 Celebrating at Acton Carnival
- 11 Victoria Line Challenge
- 12 Keeping you informed

---

## Domestic Abuse Services

For over 40 years, Housing for Women has been supporting women and children in London escaping domestic violence and abuse.



---

## We are leaving X

Housing for Women is leaving the social media channel X (formerly Twitter). We are making this change due to concerns about safety and negative interactions on X. The platform has become increasingly harmful, and we want our communications to remain safe and positive.

**Our X account will close on Friday, 27th September.** However, you can still follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn for updates and important information about our organisation. If you have any questions or require assistance with following us on these channels, please do not hesitate to contact us. We believe that focusing on these social media platforms will help us provide a better and safer environment for everyone.



# Rent and service charges

By now, you should have received a letter from us regarding your service charge increase for next year. If you have not received it, please let us know as soon as possible, and a member of our team will arrange for a copy to be sent to you. Any changes to your rent and service charges will take effect from 1st October.

## Check our FAQs

If you are unsure why you have been charged and would like more information, please read our list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) and answers that explain the costs. **Scan the QR code below to read our FAQs.**



## How to challenge your service charge

If you are unhappy with the service charge amount, we provide information on how to dispute it. **Scan the QR code below to find out how you can do this.**



If you wish to dispute, please contact us, and we will acknowledge your query within two working days. An officer will review your case, and you will receive a full written response within 20 days. If we need more time, we will let you know.

## Need more help?

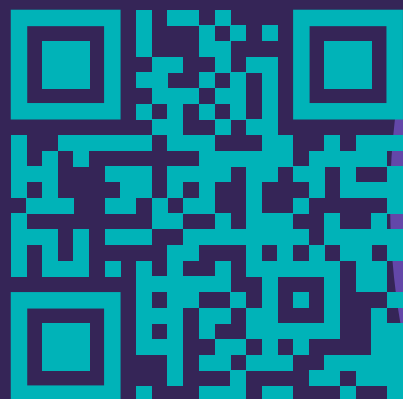
If our FAQs do not answer your question, please call our Customer Service Team on **0207 501 6120** or email us at **customerservice@h4w.co.uk**. We will assist you with your query.



# Struggling to pay your rent?

It is crucial that you pay your rent and service charge on time. Failure to do so may result in legal action, which could lead to you losing your home and incurring additional costs.

Paying by direct debit is the easiest option, but there are several other methods available, such as standing order, online banking, and PayPoint. Further details on how to pay your rent are available on our website; please click scan the QR code below.



## Getting Help

We appreciate that you may be concerned about managing your finances due to any changes to our rents and service charges. We understand that our tenants' circumstances vary, and some of you may experience financial difficulties that could prevent you from paying your rent.

If you are struggling to pay your rent or have fallen into arrears, please contact a member of the Income Team at Touchstone on **01225 259274** or **020 7501 6120** (select option 4), or via email at **h4w@touchstoneresi.co.uk**. The team can agree on a repayment plan to prevent further legal action and offer guidance on how to maximise your income. They can also refer you to other agencies that can support you in managing any other debts you may have.

If you are having difficulty meeting the cost of your rent and other household bills, the following organisations can help:

- + **Citizens Advice:** There is a network of Citizens Advice offices across London providing walk-in advice and assistance. The Citizens Advice website is also a great source of information.
- + **Turn2us:** Provides a free helpline for those needing internet access or help going online. Their number is **0808 802 2000**, available 9am–5pm on weekdays.



# Tenancy Audit: what you need to know

We will be conducting tenancy audits to better understand and serve our residents. A tenancy audit involves your Neighbourhood Officer visiting your home to complete a short survey about you and your household.



## What will happen during the visit?

- + Our Neighbourhood Officer will ask you some questions and record details about your household.
- + They will also inspect your home to ensure it is in good condition and being maintained in accordance with your Tenancy Agreement.

## Why are we doing tenancy audits?

- + To plan services that better meet your needs.
- + To understand your housing requirements.
- + To update our contact information.
- + To identify any issues with the condition of your home, such as dampness or mould.

## What will the officer need from you?

- + Proof of identity.
- + Information about your household, such as age, gender, and ethnicity.
- + Details about everyone living in your home.
- + Up-to-date contact information.
- + Information about your household income, including benefits such as Universal Credit.
- + Proof of residence, such as two recent documents with your name and address from an official agency (e.g., a council tax bill or utility bill).

## Why is this important?

All of our properties are undergoing these audits to improve our services and build better relationships with you, our tenants. The audit is quick and simple, taking approximately 30 minutes. Remember, the audit must take place at your home. There is nothing to worry about – it is just part of our effort to support and serve you better.

One of our Neighbourhood Officers will be in touch with you soon to arrange an appointment.

# Tenant Satisfaction Survey

At Housing for Women, we want to ensure we are meeting your needs. That is why we have teamed up with Acuity, an independent research company, to conduct a Tenant Satisfaction Survey for us.

This is our fourth survey in the past year; the last one was conducted in the spring. We have been paying attention to your feedback from the previous surveys and want to see if the changes we have made since then have made a difference in how we serve you.

## Here is your chance to let us know:

- + How we are doing as your landlord.
- + Your thoughts on your neighbourhood.
- + How you are feeling about your health and wellbeing.
- + How you are managing financially.
- + Any suggestions for improvement.
- + What you would like to see from us in the future.

Do not worry; your responses are confidential. Acuity will send us the results without revealing your identity unless you give permission.

As a thank you for participating, your name will be entered into a draw to win a prize, generously provided by our partners and contractors.

## What happens next?

Over the next few weeks, Acuity will reach out to you to complete the survey over the phone or by mailing a survey to your home. Alternatively, you can complete it online once we send you the link.

We will share the survey results on our website. Thank you in advance for taking the time to complete this important survey. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to reach out to Acuity at **020 3769 7794**.



# Problems with damp and mould?

We are committed to providing a safe home for you and your family. That is why we take reports of damp and mould very seriously. If you notice any signs of damp or mould in your home, please contact us immediately.

For more information about reporting damp and mould, as well as guidance on what to do if you encounter these issues, please visit our website by scanning the QR code.



# You said, we did!

At Housing for Women, we take your feedback very seriously. Here is how we have acted on it.

## You told us

## Our action

- |   |   |
|---|---|
|  That it was hard to reach the right person when you called us, which caused delays and frustration.  |  We ended our contract with the outsourced call centre and set up a new in-house Customer Service Team. Now, when you call us, you can speak directly to our staff, who can help you more quickly.                               |
|  That our service charge breakdowns were confusing, making it hard to understand what you were being charged for.   |  We reviewed our service charge information and created easy-to-read fact sheets. We also made the descriptions clearer, so you can better understand the services and charges.  |
|  That there wasn't a clear way to raise concerns about service charges, leaving you unsure of what to do.   |  We set up a formal process for raising service charge disputes. Now, you can easily raise a concern, and it will be looked into by the right person.  |
|  That the car park and bike storage at our Atrium House property needed fixing, and you were worried about flooding from old water cylinders.             |  We installed a new fence around the car park and added a new bike canopy. We also started replacing the old water cylinders with new slimline ones to stop the flooding. The work should be finished by the end of September. |
|  That the paving slabs in the communal garden at our Philbeach property were uneven and unsafe.   |  We replaced all the paving slabs to remove the trip hazards.  |
|  That the area around our Sion House property needed to be tidier, and there were concerns about antisocial behaviour (ASB) in the unused space.          |  We installed new bin sheds to keep the area tidy and to address ASB.  |
|  That damaged paving slabs and cars parking on the pavement at our Ladbrook Close property were causing safety problems and damaging the gas meter boxes. |  We replaced the damaged paving slabs and installed bollards to prevent cars from parking on the pavement.   |

If you want to give us feedback or let us know what we are doing well, please call our Customer Service Team on **020 7501 6120**. You can also email us at **[customer.service@h4w.co.uk](mailto:customer.service@h4w.co.uk)**.



## Gas boiler inspections

Keeping you safe is our top priority. To ensure your home is secure, we regularly check your gas boiler. These inspections are crucial for meeting safety standards and maintaining your property in good condition.

We need your help to carry out these checks. By allowing us into your home, you're not just meeting a legal requirement – you're also helping to keep yourself and your neighbours safe. These inspections help us catch any problems early so we can fix them quickly and avoid bigger issues later on.

For more information about our Gas Safety Checks or to book an inspection, please contact our Customer Service Team at 0207 5016120 or email [customerservice@h4w.co.uk](mailto:customerservice@h4w.co.uk)



## Complaints performance

Your feedback guides our efforts to provide homes that women can be proud of and services they can trust. From March to June this year, we closely monitored and responded to our residents' feedback.

**Here's a summary of our complaints performance:**

### 81%

of complaints were closed within the target time

### 81%

of complaints were completed on time

### 65

complaints were received in total

### 65

complaints were related to general needs

### 98

complaints were received in total

### 34

complaints were related to repairs

## Join our Resident Panel

### We need your help to make a real difference in our community!

**If you are passionate about making a positive impact and want to learn more about housing and community work, we have a great opportunity for you. Housing for Women is setting up a new Resident Panel, and we are looking for 10 residents to join us.**

The Resident Panel will work closely with us to help improve our services and enhance our neighbourhoods. We are seeking enthusiastic individuals who are committed to helping us make the best decisions for our residents. You do not need any previous experience to join, and we welcome applicants from all backgrounds.

The panel will meet approximately six times a year, with options for both face-to-face and online meetings. While this is a volunteer role, we will provide you with full training and support to help you get involved.

**If you are interested in joining the Resident Panel or want more information, please contact our Customer Service Team by 30th September. You can reach us at 0207 501 6120 or email [customerservice@h4w.co.uk](mailto:customerservice@h4w.co.uk)**

## Booking visits to our office

As part of our Customer First Strategy, we focus on your needs to build a better relationship with you.

If you would like to speak to a specific member of our team in person at our office in Brixton, please call our Customer Service team to book a visit. We encourage you not to come to the office without arranging this first, as the person you need to speak to may be unavailable. For more information, **please call us on 020 7501 6120 or email us at [customerservice@h4w.co.uk](mailto:customerservice@h4w.co.uk)**





---

# Get your home ready for winter

With autumn here and winter on the way, it is important to prepare your home for the colder months. Here are some simple tips to help you stay warm and safe this winter.

---

## Check your heating

Make sure your heating system is working properly. Test your radiators and boiler now so you can fix any problems before it gets too cold. Bleed your radiators if they are not heating up fully. If you are not sure how, ask for help.

---

## Stop drafts

Check windows and doors for drafts. You can use draft excluders, available from most DIY shops, to keep the cold air out and the warm air in. Even simple things like using old towels can help stop drafts.

---

## Stay warm

Keep blankets and warm clothes handy. Layering up is an easy and effective way to stay warm. Use thicker curtains to help keep the heat inside your home.

---

## Be safe

Check your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms to make sure they are working. These are very important in winter when we use heating more. Test them regularly and replace the batteries if needed.

---

## Look after your pipes

Prevent pipes from freezing by keeping your home warm, even when you are out. If you are going away, ask someone to check your home or leave the heating on low.

---

## Stock up

Keep basic supplies in case of bad weather. Make sure you have enough food, water, and any medicines you need. A torch and spare batteries are also good to have.

By taking these simple steps, you can ensure your home is ready for winter. Stay warm, stay safe, and enjoy the cosy season ahead! If you have any questions or need assistance, especially with damp and mould, **please contact us immediately.**



# Celebrating at Acton Carnival

In July, our team from the Ealing Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) Service had a fantastic time participating in the Acton Carnival Procession.

The procession kicked off at Crown Street and ended in Acton Park, creating a lively and vibrant atmosphere for everyone involved.

The event was a wonderful opportunity for us to come together and celebrate the rich culture and strong sense of community in the area. Our staff enjoyed meeting new people and spreading the word about the services we offer to support those experiencing domestic violence and abuse.

We were thrilled to be part of such a joyful day and look forward to making more local connections and raising awareness about our services in the future.



## Volunteers needed

We're always striving to improve our services to better meet the needs of our tenants. To achieve this, we're creating a focus group to help us with our Customer Engagement Strategy, and we need your help.

If you're passionate about improving the experience for you and your fellow residents, we invite you to volunteer for this exciting opportunity. By joining the focus group, you'll have the chance to share your ideas, insights, and suggestions directly with us.

Your input will be invaluable in shaping how we engage with our customers, ensuring that our services are tailored to meet your needs effectively. Whether you have thoughts on how we communicate with our residents, our repairs service, or any other aspect of our engagement strategy, we want to hear from you.

**To volunteer, call 0207 501 6120 or email us at [customerservice@h4w.co.uk](mailto:customerservice@h4w.co.uk). Your help will play a crucial role in shaping the future of Housing for Women and your homes.**

## Our domestic abuse services

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic abuse, Housing for Women is here to help. Our Ealing and Greenwich Domestic Violence and Abuse Services offer safe accommodation and support for women and men in London.

For more information, call our Ealing Referral and Advice line on 020 4513 9678 or email [referrals\\_edva@h4w.co.uk](mailto:referrals_edva@h4w.co.uk).

You can also contact our Greenwich team on 020 8317 8273 or email [info\\_gdva@h4w.co.uk](mailto:info_gdva@h4w.co.uk).

Visit our websites at [www.ealingdva.org.uk](http://www.ealingdva.org.uk) or [www.gdva.org.uk](http://www.gdva.org.uk) for more details.

**Remember, always dial 999 in an emergency or if someone's life is at risk.**



# Victoria Line Challenge

Our corporate partner, Building Relations PR, completed the Victoria Line Challenge on Friday 2 August in aid of Housing for Women. The team walked the 15-mile route of the London Underground's Victoria Line, from Walthamstow Central to Brixton, raising more than £1,500!

A team of 11 from Building Relations' London and Surrey offices completed the challenge, as well as our own Head of Fundraising and her partner,

stopping at each of the 16 stations on the Victoria Line and finishing in Brixton, near our head office.

It was a hot and sweaty day, but the team remained in good spirits throughout, motivating each other to keep going, mile after mile. It was great to have some supporters cheer us on through Highbury & Islington and over the "finish" at Brixton station.

**Kathryn Reucroft, Managing Director at Building Relations PR**, said: "When Building Relations partnered with Housing for Women at the beginning of the year, we knew we wanted to support the charity in every way we could. We'd like to say a big thank you to all who donated, and most importantly, to Housing for Women for joining us on the walk and supporting us throughout. It was

a momentous challenge for such a worthy cause, and the team looks forward to continuing our support throughout this year."

The agency already has another three fundraising events lined up for the rest of the year, including a book swap, bake sale, and Premier League sweepstake.

**Tallulah Lawson-Cresswell, Head of Fundraising at Housing for Women**, said: "Joining the Building Relations team on this was a no-brainer for me – their motivation and passion for our work was inspiring! Taking on a challenge like this is a great way to bring people together for a common purpose, and to have raised over £1,500 for our work supporting women in London is fantastic."



# KEEPING YOU INFORMED

We always want to ensure we deliver great homes and services for you; in fact, it is one of our key goals. An important way we do this is how we communicate with you. This includes giving you essential information and keeping you up to date.

## Newsletter

Each quarter, we publish our Residents Newsletter, 'Connect'. A link to the digital newsletter will be posted on social media. It will also be emailed to you. We no longer print the newsletter because we want to be more environmentally friendly. If you want a printed copy, please get in touch with our Communications Team at [communications@h4w.co.uk](mailto:communications@h4w.co.uk) or call our Customer Services Team on 0207 501 6120.

## Annual Review

We publish our Annual Review every year, setting out what we have achieved in the previous twelve months.

We'll look at some of the highlights from the past year, share experiences from some of our tenants and service users, and publish figures showing our impact while delivering value for money for our customers. The next edition is due March 2025. We will let you know when it's published.



## Our website

Our website has a lot of helpful information about what it is like to live with us. It's also a great resource, from getting involved with your housing association and neighbourhoods to accessing your housing services on our Customer Portal to the latest news.

## Social media

You can stay updated with community information, Housing for Women updates, and news from the housing sector on our social media pages. We're on Instagram and Facebook. To better understand how you use social media and how we can reach you, we will be conducting a survey in 2025. Stay tuned for more information.

## What is 'Connect'?

'Connect' is designed for you, and so if you have anything you would like us to cover in future issues or you have a comment to make, please do let us know by writing to: Connect Editor, Housing for Women, Sixth Floor, Blue Star House, 234 Stockwell Road, London SW9 9SP or emailing [customerservice@h4w.co.uk](mailto:customerservice@h4w.co.uk).

## Head Office and Registered Office

Housing for Women  
Sixth Floor, Blue Star House  
234-244 Stockwell Road,  
London, SW9 9SP

**Tel.** 020 7501 6120

**Email.** [customerservice@h4w.co.uk](mailto:customerservice@h4w.co.uk)

[www.hfw.org.uk](http://www.hfw.org.uk)



Housing4Women

Registered Charity No. 211351