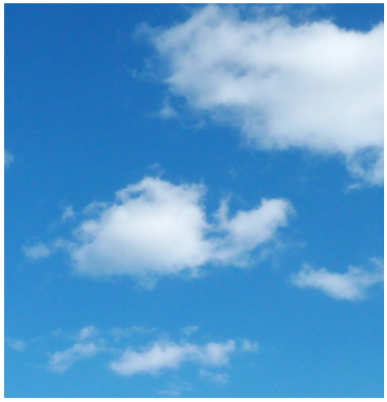
Residents' handbook

Intermediate Rent



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Welcome from the Chief Executive

Dear Resident,

On behalf of everyone at Newlon Housing Trust, I am delighted to welcome you to your new home.

This pack is designed to provide information that you may need during the course of your tenancy. As well as offering a guide to our services and outlining your rights and responsibilities as a Newlon resident, it also contains practical advice about your home, which we hope you will find useful.

Newlon is not just about bricks and mortar – we work closely with community groups and local authorities to build strong neighbourhoods. We also encourage our residents to get involved in the way we are run. If you are interested in finding out more about this, please contact our Resident Involvement team on **020 7613 8084** or email **getinvolved@newlon.org.uk**.

If you have any questions or would like something explained in more detail, please contact our Service Centre on **020 7613 8080** and we will be happy to help.

I wish you all the best and hope that you will be happy in your new home.

Yours sincerely

Ruth Davison Group Chief Executive

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Your tenancy – Intermediate Rent

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What is Intermediate Rent?

Intermediate Rent is a a type of low-cost housing where homes are let at rents which are set in between social housing rents and rents in the private sector. The rents are usually set at 70% of market rents in the local area.

What do I get with my home and what other costs are there?

The flat will be partially furnished and you will have a cooker, a fridge freezer and a washing machine. The property will have floor coverings but you will have to supply any other furniture yourself.

You will have to pay any utility bills including Council Tax.

For some properties there will be a separate Water Charge payable to Newlon.

Type of tenancy

If you became an Intermediate Rent tenant with Newlon before January 2016 you will have an Assured Shorthold Tenancy agreement, which would have been offered for a minimum of six months. After this period the tenancy runs on. We can only end the tenancy if we give you two months' notice in writing. This notice is called a Notice of Requiring Possession (Section 21). After this, we have to apply to the Court for possession. Unlike Assured Tenancies, the Court cannot use its discretion and refuse our request.

All Intermediate Rent homes are offered as three year Fixed Term Tenancies. At the end of three years we review the tenancy and if you still meet the Intermediate Rent criteria and there have been no breaches of tenancy we would normally offer a further three year Fixed Term Tenancy. Please note that in this instance a new three year tenancy will be created. Your original deposit will be held against the next tenancy as long as you stay in the same property. Your rent will then be reassessed, usually against 70% and no more than 80% of prevailing private rents. Therefore your rent could increase or change when the new tenancy starts.

How often does the rent go up?

Newlon may increase your rent at any time by giving you no less than four weeks' notice in writing of the increase.

Deposit

You will have to pay a deposit which is normally equivalent to one month's rent. This is registered with the Deposit Protection Scheme and is independent from Newlon. At the end of your tenancy we will return your deposit minus any rent arrears or costs we incur for putting right any damage to the property or white goods while you have been living there or for the clearance of rubbish.

What you can expect from Newlon

As an Intermediate Rent tenant you can expect a written tenancy agreement setting out your legal rights and responsibilities as a tenant and ours as landlord.

What about repairs?

Your tenancy agreement will tell you which parts of your home we will repair, and which repairs you are responsible for. Our 'Repairs' leaflet provides information about what type of repairs we do and how long it takes for different types of repairs to be carried out. You can find this at **www.newlon.org.uk/publications**.

Will I be able to buy my home?

Intermediate Rent tenants cannot buy their home. If you are interested in owning your own home, Newlon provides Shared Ownership housing which can be purchased on a part buy, part rent basis subject to a range of eligibility criteria. Please visit **www.newlon.org.uk/finding-a-home/shared-ownership** for more information.

Your right to consultation

We will consult you about any changes in the management or maintenance of your homes that will have a significant impact on you.

Each year we will give you information about how we have performed as a landlord.

Personal Information and Data Protection

Newlon is committed to managing residents' personal data securely in line with the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018. Information about how we manage and store your data, details of our Data Protection Officer and your rights in relation to any personal data we hold can be found in our privacy notice for residents at **www.newlon.org.uk/data-protection**. You can email **dataprotection@newlon.org.uk** if you have any queries.

Illegal sub-letting

You cannot move out and rent out the whole of your home. If you do, we will take action to repossess the property and neither you nor the person occupying will be able to live there.

What if I want to go away temporarily?

If you are going to be away temporarily, please let us know. If you have to be away for work or to look after a dependant please let us know as in exceptional circumstances someone can temporarily live in the property with our permission and look after it on your behalf. You will still be liable for the rent and any other tenancy obligations.

If the rent is not paid, or if the person you leave in the property causes nuisance, you could end up losing your home. If the person refuses to move out when you return, you will be responsible and may have to pay court costs to make them leave.

If you sublet your home without telling us, we may have no option but to end your tenancy.

Sole and joint tenancies

Sole tenancy

If you are the only named person on the tenancy agreement you are a sole tenant, even if there are other people living with you.

Joint tenancy

If two people are named on the agreement then both are named as joint tenants. This means you are both responsible for tenancy conditions. If one joint tenant does not pay the rent, the other will still have to pay the whole amount.

Changing a sole tenancy to a joint tenancy

There is no legal right to a joint tenancy. If you want to add a person onto your tenancy, we will have to end your sole tenancy and grant a new one. These are granted at our discretion.

For a person to be added as a joint tenant they will need to meet the criteria for Intermediate Rent and demonstrate that they have a Right to Rent.

Contact our Service Centre in the first instance if you are interested in adding a joint tenant to your tenancy.

Ending joint tenancies

The law regarding property rights when people split up is complicated. If you want to end a joint tenancy please contact our Service Centre in the first instance. In this event we also recommend that you seek independent legal advice from a solicitor or law centre.

If joint tenants no longer want to live together, Newlon has no right in law to decide which of you should have the tenancy. Only the courts can make this decision as part of divorce or separation proceedings. Unless you have a court order the joint tenancy will continue and you both remain liable for the rent and any other tenancy conditions, even if there is only one of you still living in the property. If you have a joint tenancy and one person has left, we cannot simply take their name off the tenancy.

Please note that even if you agree to end a joint tenancy we are not obliged to grant a new sole tenancy.

Finding an Intermediate Rent home to move to

If you want to move from your existing home to another, you will need to go to the Intermediate Rent website at **www.newlonlettings.org.uk**, to check which Newlon Intermediate Rent properties are vacant.

If you see a property that you are interested in, you will need to register your interest online. Please ensure you state that you are a Newlon resident when you do so. The properties will be updated to reflect whether viewings can be arranged or are under offer.

Existing tenants who are overcrowded by more than two people, who meet the Intermediate Rent lettings criteria, will be treated as a high priority. The eligibility criteria can be found at **www.newlonlettings.org.uk**. If you do fit this criteria, please contact the Lettings Team to ensure that they are aware of this.

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Repairs

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Please note that this leaflet is aimed at residents who rent from us. If you are a homeowner (Shared Owner or Leaseholder) please refer to our Leaseholders' Handbook, which you can find at **www.newlon.org.uk/publications**.

How do I report a repair?

You can report a repair in any of the following ways:

- Call our Service Centre on **020 7613 8080** or freephone **0800 072 4611**, 8am – 5pm Monday to Friday. Outside these hours a recorded message will provide details of the contractors providing cover.
- Email **repairs@newlon.org.uk**.
- Through our online reporting tool at **www.newlon.org.uk/repairs**.

What information will we need when you contact us?

To deal with a repair as effectively as possible we will need to ask some detailed questions so we can we get the correct contractor to attend with the right parts. This is to try and ensure the repair is completed first time. The information we will need includes:

- Your personal details.
- A full explanation of the problem.
- The specific times you can provide access and whether there is anyone in your home with a disability or support needs.

Please make sure you have any crime reference number where damage has been reported to the police.

What are Newlon's repair standards?

- To get every repair right first time or keep you informed about what is happening if it takes longer.
- To arrange suitable repair appointments.
- When there are more than two visits, to arrange flexible appointments suitable for you.
- To complete 100% of emergency repairs within 24 hours and 100% of routine repairs within 20 days.

What happens when we are closed?

If you need an emergency repair out of hours call us on **020 7613 8080**. An answerphone message will direct you to our emergency repairs service. Our contractors will attend all serious emergencies or give you advice if the repair can safely wait until our office reopens.

Which repairs are Newlon responsible for?

In a rented property (either Intermediate or Social Rent) we are responsible for most of the repairs to your home, except minor day-to-day repairs such as changing fuses. Your tenancy agreement will outline the repairs we are responsible for. These include:

- Gutters and outside pipes.
- The roof.
- Outside walls, doors, window frames, sills and sash cords.
- Inside walls, floors, major cracks to ceilings and back/front doors.
- Chimneys, chimney stacks and flues.
- Pathways and steps at the front of your home which give access to your property.
- Major plasterwork.
- Integral garages and stores.
- Boundary walls and fences where it is clear that they are owned by Newlon.
- Treating infestations of pests classified by Environmental Health as a statutory nuisance, including mice, rats, cockroaches and pharaoh ants. We will also treat bed bugs but will not carry out proofing works against this kind of pest as they are introduced on clothing and possessions. If the contractor recommends it, we may carry out proofing works where there is damage to the property which is allowing pests to gain access. Photographs must be provided which clearly show the holes/access points for any proofing works.

  Please note that we will not treat pest infestations if you live in a house.

We are responsible for any installations we provide, for example heating and hot water and the supply of water, gas and electricity including:

- Basins, sinks, baths, toilets, flushing systems and waste pipes. Please note that we will repair mechanical sink/bath plugs but not plastic plugs.
- Electric wiring including sockets and switches.
- Gas pipes and water pipes.
- Water heaters, fireplaces, fitted fires and central heating installations.

You are responsible for reporting these repairs to us. If your home is managed by an agency on behalf of Newlon, some repairs may be carried out by the agency. Your tenancy agreement should provide details of this.

Which repairs am I responsible for?

You are expected to carry out minor day to day repairs including those listed below. Please note this is not an exhaustive list. If you are unsure whether a repair is your responsibility please contact us on **020 7613 8080**.

- Decorating the inside of your home.
- Taking down/hanging curtains or putting up curtain rails.
- Moving furniture or carpets/laminated flooring so repairs can be done.
- Replacing lost or stolen keys and repairing damage done as a result of locking yourself out.
- Unblocking sinks, toilets and baths.
- Repairing loose kitchen or bathroom tiles, cracked or chipped baths, sinks and toilets.
- Replacing toilet seats, shower heads, hoses and riser bars.
- Fixing television aerials (unless you pay a service charge for a shared aerial).
- Putting up shelves and repairing anything you have fitted yourself (e.g. your own light fittings) or connections for your own washing machine or cooker.
- Replacing fuses, light bulbs (except in shared hallways), kitchen strip lights and broken light fittings. We will only attend to these where you have confirmed that you have already changed the bulb and the starter motor (if applicable). If we attend and find that it was just the bulb that needed replacing we may subsequently recharge you for the work done.
- Fixing broken windows (unless as a result of a crime reported to the police).
- Repairing kitchen units, including drawers.

- Installing or maintaining extra locks or other security on windows and doors (we will maintain night latches).
- Repairing holes in internal walls and cracks to ceilings.
- Adjusting internal doors or repairing internal door latches, catches, locks or handles.
- Blocking of minor holes around pipework or gaps between floorboards.
- Fixing or replacing external door furniture on individual doors, including doorbells, knockers and letter boxes.
- Maintaining internal smoke alarms, unless you can confirm that the batteries have been changed in the unit. If we do attend and find out that the batteries have not been changed we will recharge you for the call out.
- Dealing with infestations of wasps, bees, bed bugs, garden ants, moths or foxes if you live in a house or a flat. However **if you live in a house you are also responsible for treating infestations of mice, rats, cockroaches and pharaoh ants**. (For more information, please read the section on treating infestations of pests and proofing works on page 4.)
- Fixing dripping or running taps (this would generally require the replacement of the tap washer).
- Repairing damaged items that are not due to normal wear and tear. If you cannot provide an acceptable reason for the item becoming damaged we will not carry out the repair and you will be expected to repair it yourself.
- Maintaining your garden, including pruning trees, replacing garden sheds and gates, other out-buildings, detached garages, paths, concreted areas and patios.
- Cleaning and changing filters in ventilation systems.

Who is responsible for damage caused by leaks?

If there is any damage to floors or walls due to a leak we will repair this. However, please note that we will not pay for damage to your possessions or carpets caused by leaks. You should arrange for your own contents insurance to cover this. Our Service Centre can advise you about this. Where there is damage to decorations we will paint the affected areas.

Blocked main drains

If you live in a street property and have a blocked drain you should contact Thames Water in the first instance, as they maintain shared main drains. If you live in a flat within a block you should contact our Service Centre.

Can I get any help from Newlon with repairs that are my responsibility?

We may able to assist you in certain circumstances. For example, if your home is damaged due to vandalism, burglary or harassment (e.g. broken windows or graffiti), we will do the repairs providing you have reported it to the police and have a crime reference number.

We have a small amount of money in our Tenant Welfare Fund to help in cases of extreme financial hardship.

Our target times for repairs

We set targets for completing repairs and these are listed below.

Emergency repairs

We will visit within 24 hours for any situation that is either dangerous or likely to become so, or a serious health risk. In some instances we will carry out initial works to make the situation safe and complete the works on subsequent visits.

Examples of emergency repairs include:

- Total loss of water supply, where the problem is not with the supplier.
- Total loss of electricity, where the problem is not with the supplier.
- Total loss of heating and hot water where household members are disabled, elderly or vulnerable (October to May only).
- Where electrics are damaged by water leaks.
- Major plumbing leaks and taps which cannot be turned off and where damage is being caused.
- Gas leaks – Cadent (formerly National Grid) should be advised in the first instance on **0800 111 999**).

- Dangerous structural issues, such as a risk of ceiling collapse.
- If you can't use your toilet and it is the only toilet in the home.
- Blocked main drains causing back-surge of sewage.
- Resident is locked out due to defective locks or broken keys (not lost keys).

Routine repairs

We aim to complete all routine repairs within 20 working days and an average of 10. We will prioritise repairs such as partial loss of water or gas supply, electrical and plumbing works and structural repairs. For these types of repairs we would aim to visit initially to stop further damage and carry out a full repair on subsequent visits.

Long-term repairs

Some repairs are more complex and may require specialist contractors or take more time to complete. We will aim to complete these repairs within three months or as part of programmed maintenance. These include roof replacements, treatment for rising damp, repairs to internal joinery, window frames, kitchen worktop and cupboards, bathroom replacement and fences.

How are communal repairs handled?

We are responsible for all repairs and decorating, as well as lighting, in entrances, halls, stairways, lifts, passageways or other common parts shared with other residents.

We aim to complete emergency repairs, such as broken lighting in a communal stairwell, within 24 hours.

For routine repairs, our aim is to complete them within 20 working days, with an average of 10, prioritising urgent repairs such as where there is a health and safety or security concern.

In some shared homes we supply electrical goods such as washing machines and cookers. Specific repair arrangements exist for these. Please contact the Service Centre on **020 7613 8080** for more details.

Do you recharge for repairs?

You may be recharged for the cost of carrying out repairs. The most common reason is if you call the out of hours emergency service and they attend for something that is not an emergency. You will also be recharged for the cost of repairs if it is an issue which is not our responsibility.

If it is necessary to recharge you we will send an invoice. In order to prevent being recharged please familiarise yourself with your responsibilities and what is classed as an emergency repair, as listed on pages 6 and 7 of this leaflet.

What happens if our service fails?

If you believe our service has been inadequate or a repair has not been completed properly you can do the following:

- Contact our Service Centre on **020 7613 8080** so we can resolve the repair as soon as possible.
- Make a complaint by calling **020 7613 8080**, emailing **serviceresolution@newlon.org.uk** or filling in the online complaints form at **www.newlon.org.uk/residents/making-a-complaint**.

Can I claim compensation for delays?

We aim to complete all repairs within our target times. If you believe you have suffered an unreasonable delay then you may be entitled to compensation. Read our complaints leaflet to learn more, which you can find at **www.newlon.org.uk/publications**.

How do we monitor our service?

- By working closely with our contractors to ensure they provide a good quality of service and value for money.
- By surveying our residents to gather their opinions about our service.
- Through discussions about repairs at residents' meetings.
- Via our Scrutiny Panel, made up of residents, who assess our contractors' performance and meet them to look for ways to improve.
- By displaying information about our repairs performance in our reception areas, online and in publications such as the annual report.

Can I make improvements to my home?

You can make improvements, alterations or additions to your home as long as we have agreed in writing before you start work. This includes external decorations and work to installations, fixtures and fittings. If we agree to certain improvements you may be given a payment to cover your costs when you end your tenancy.

If you undertake an improvement without our permission we may take action for breaking your tenancy agreement. For example you may have to remove the improvement and return the property to its original condition.

If you want to make improvements to your home please call us on **020 7613 8080**, email **customerservice@newlon.org.uk**, or write to us at **Newlon Housing Trust, Newlon House, 4 Daneland Walk, London, N17 9FE**.

What are defects and how are they handled?

If you have moved into a new-build home a range of repairs are covered by the contractor who built the property for a period of one year from the time they hand over the home to Newlon (not the time that you move into your home). This is known as the defects period. We tell you when you move in how much time is left until the defects period ends.

This includes some repairs which will become your responsibility after the defects period has elapsed.

You can report defects to us on **020 7613 8080** or by emailing **repairs@newlon.org.uk**.

What if I am classed as vulnerable?

For vulnerable residents such as the elderly, those with disabilities, or residents with a young baby, we will take individual circumstances into consideration when dealing with repairs. For example we may respond to heating repairs within 24 hours rather than seven days (from October to May).

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Paying your rent

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This leaflet provides useful information about paying your rent including:

- Advice on different ways to pay.
- Advice on what to do if you experience problems paying.
- How to contact us about your rent payments.

Starting your tenancy

When you first become a Newlon resident we will tell you how much rent you need to pay and about any service charges for services such as lifts or cleaning and lighting of communal areas.

If you are eligible for Housing Benefit or Universal Credit we will help you make a claim and we would normally ask you to arrange for your Housing Benefit to be paid directly to us. Please remember that it is your benefit claim and although we may assist you, you are responsible for providing all the information that is needed. The Housing Benefit department or Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) will write directly to you to let you know how much benefit they will pay you.

How to pay your rent

We have made it possible for you to pay your rent in many different ways so that you can choose the method that is easiest for you.

Please note that for registration for many of the payment methods below you will need your **rent payment card**. If you do not have one please contact our Service Centre by calling **020 7613 8080** or emailing **customerservice@newlon.org.uk**.

Monthly Direct Debit

This is probably the simplest and most convenient way of paying your rent. You do not have to go to a bank or post office to make payments as the money goes directly from your bank account to Newlon. You can pay monthly on any day of the month, or weekly or fortnightly if you prefer. If your rent changes, we will notify you and automatically change the amount collected from your bank account so you don't have to.

To use this service all you need to do is fill out a Direct Debit form or call **020 7613 8080** or freephone **0800 316 7989** to set up a direct debit over the phone. You can find the Direct Debit form on our website: **www.newlon.org.uk/residents/paying-your-rent**

My Newlon, online self-service portal

You can now pay your rent and download statements anytime, 24/7 through My Newlon, our online self-service portal. Register at **my.newlon.org.uk/signin** using your 7 digit agreement number which can be found on any rent statement or correspondence from Newlon.

Online via the allpay website

You can save time with this convenient online option. You will need an allpay payment card as you will have to provide the reference number on the card when you register to pay. To pay your rent online using your allpay payment card visit **www.allpayments.net**.

On your smart phone or tablet with the allpay app

You can pay your rent directly from your mobile device through the **allpay app**. If you have an Android device you can download the app from **Google Play**. If you have an Apple device you can download it from the **App Store**. Search for '**allpay**'.

Once the allpay app is installed on your device, register by entering your email address, your rent payment card number and your bank card details for payment. Then you can enter the rent amount and confirm the payment.

Text

You can also pay your rent using allpay's secure SMS text message bill payment option. This means you can pay your rent to us anytime, anywhere, day or night. All you need to do is register with allpay at **www.allpayments.net/textpay**. Please note that even if you are registered with allpay you will need to do so one more time to access this service. To register you will need a UK registered mobile phone, your credit or debit card and your allpay payment card.

Phone

You can use a debit or credit card to pay your rent over the telephone by calling us on **020 7613 8080** or freephone **0800 316 7989**. You should allow three working days for the payment to reach your rent account.

Post Office

You can use your rent payment card to make payments at any Post Office. You should allow five working days for the payment to appear on your rent account.

Online banking

You can set up a standing order with your bank or make a payment online. Always remember to quote a reference with your standing orders or bank payments, such as your surname and your 5 digit payment reference. Please contact us if you are unsure about which reference number to use.

For Newlon residents use this bank account:

Barclays Bishopsgate
Account no: 20937177
Sort code: 20-77-67

For Access Homes residents use this bank account:

Barclays Bishopsgate
Account no: 40782157
Sort code: 20-77-67

PayPoint

Using your rent card you can make payments at any shop that displays the PayPoint sign.

Post

You can send a cheque to our Head Office at **Newlon Housing Trust, Newlon House, 4 Daneland Walk, Hale Village, London N17 9FE**. Cheques should be made payable to Newlon Housing Trust. Be sure to write your name, address and your 5 digit payment reference on the back of the cheque.

Please allow adequate time for the cheque to arrive at our Head Office before your rent is due.

What if I can't pay my rent?

If you are finding it difficult to pay your rent or you are in arrears, please contact us as soon as possible so we can work with you to come to an arrangement to pay your arrears gradually. Newlon has a strict policy on rent and service charge arrears and you could be at risk of losing your home if you fail to pay your rent and do not contact us.

To notify us that you are having problems paying, please contact us on **020 7613 8080** or **0800 316 7989**. You can also email **income@newlon.org.uk**.

Our experience shows that we can help you if you are struggling to pay your rent and accruing rent arrears, by setting up a payment plan with you. Don't feel its too late to contact us to discuss the situation.

Can I get independent help with my debts?

We may be able to assist you in getting independent financial advice. You can contact them directly by emailing **financialinclusion@newlon.org.uk**. Alternatively you could ask us to make a referral.

Can I get advice about the welfare benefits?

We can also provide free advice about benefits such as the bedroom tax, the benefit cap and Universal Credit and arrange for you to speak to an experienced welfare benefits adviser.

For more information email **financialinclusion@newlon.org.uk**.

Contacting us

If you have any further questions about paying your rent, we will be happy to help. Please contact us in any of the following ways.

Call us on: **020 7613 8080**

Email: **income@newlon.org.uk**.

Write to us at:

Newlon Housing Trust,
Newlon House
4 Daneland Walk
Hale Village
London
N17 9FE

If you would like to visit us in person to discuss an issue with your rent please email **income@newlon.org.uk** first so that we can arrange an appointment.

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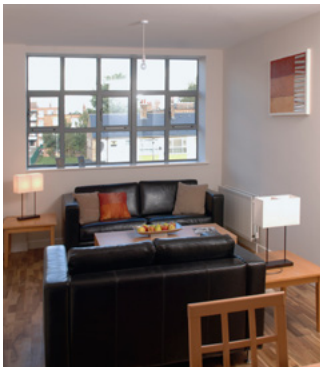
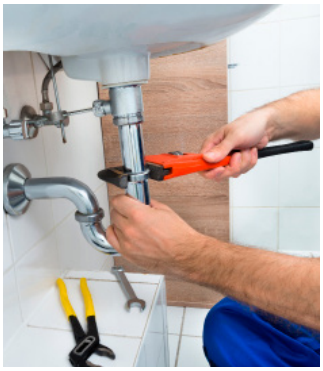
Our service standards





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Our promises to you

We want to provide a high standard of service, whether you are moving into a Newlon home for the first time, requesting a repair, seeking advice about rent or making a complaint.

We are committed to providing a responsive and high quality service to all our residents, which provides good Value for Money.

These Standards tell you what you can expect from us in terms of the services we provide and the deadlines we work to.

2-ten

If you contact us about any service by phone or by using one of our email addresses listed below we will:

- Always respond within two working days.
- Always give you a full reply within 10 working days.
- Always aim to respond to you within these timescales and the majority of enquiries will be dealt with more quickly.
- Always aim to answer your call quickly and deal with your query at the first point of contact. Where we cannot respond to your call quickly we will provide you with the option of Qbuster whereby we will phone you back when staff become available.
- If you come into our offices, we will see you within five minutes if you have made an appointment, and 30 minutes where you have not.

There may be some complex queries which we cannot deal with within these timescales. In these cases we will let you know within 10 days when we will be able to respond to you in full.

To contact Newlon by phone please call us on **020 7613 8080** (or **020 7449 4300** if you live in our Royal Free Hospital accommodation).

To contact Newlon by e-mail please use the following e-mail addresses:

repairs@newlon.org.uk – to report or enquire about a repair.

customerservice@newlon.org.uk – for any tenancy, service charges, housing or general enquiries.

income@newlon.org.uk – to discuss anything to do with your rent.

stir@newlon.org.uk – if you live at the Royal Free Hospital.

serviceresolution@newlon.org.uk – if you want to make a complaint about our services.

asb@newlon.org.uk – to report Anti-Social Behaviour.

Our approach to customer service

Our staff follow the principles of:

- Always dealing with the query.
- Being clear.
- Checking we got it right.

Our Objectives are:

- **Reliability**

  To deliver what we promise and let people know if we have to change it.

- **Consistency**

  To give the same correct response irrespective of which member of staff you speak to.

- **Speed**

  Doing things as quickly as possible, delivering a service not just an acknowledgement.

- **Awareness**

  We know when we have made mistakes and we learn from them.

Our key standards

- **Involvement** – We will provide a range of options for getting involved so you can decide how and when to work with us to improve our services. We will measure this by letting you know what we have changed as a result of your involvement and feedback.
- **Rent** – We will notify you of any arrears within two weeks and we will work with organisations that can provide advice and support with debts.
- **Repairs** – We will carry out repairs in line with our repairs standards and aim to get things fixed first time. (However this is not always possible with more complex repairs). We will keep you informed about what is happening with the repair.

  In order to ensure we fully understand what the issue is, we may ask for photos or for you to check whether your neighbours are also experiencing these issues. We hope that this will reduce the number of visits required to remedy the issue.

  You can find our repairs standards in our Repairs leaflet, which you can find at **www.newlon.org.uk/publications/leaflets-brochures/**.
- **Making appointments** – When you call to report a repair we will always give you an appointment for when the work will be done.
- **Missed appointments** - Where we fail to keep an appointment we will pay £10 per failed appointment and also arrange another appointment to meet your needs, which could be outside our normal office hours.
- **Anti-Social Behaviour and Noise Nuisance** – We will respond to all reports of Anti-Social Behaviour and provide you with a plan of how we intend to manage this. We will keep you regularly updated on how we are tackling the problem.
- **Complaints** – We will respond to all Stage 1 Complaints within 10 working days, aiming to do all we can to resolve it to your satisfaction and, where we get things wrong, put them right.

- **Communal repairs** – We aim to carry out routine routine repairs to communal areas as part of a scheduled handyperson visit. This means we can do the work as cost effectively as possible to keep costs to residents down. These should always be completed within 20 working days. and usually sooner.

How will you know if we are keeping our promises?

- We will report our performance to residents through our Residents' Forum, on our website and in our annual Residents' Review.
- We will do surveys to ask for your opinions on our services and then provide you with the results.
- We will ensure our Residents' Forum review standards annually to check performance and ensure that our service offer is in line with residents' priorities.
- We will monitor performance reliability and quality through complaints monitoring, satisfaction surveys and through internal Quality Audits.
- We monitor our main contractors' performance and follow up on outstanding works orders.

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Complaints

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Making a complaint

At Newlon we aim to provide all our residents with a high standard of service and to always respond to enquiries quickly and effectively.

If something goes wrong we will try to resolve it before you need to make a complaint, but if we do not manage to do so this leaflet explains our formal complaints process.

We will deal with all complaints impartially, objectively and in a professional manner.

We will always ensure that your personal details are kept confidential.

We welcome complaints as they help us to improve our services.

Who can complain?

- Any Newlon resident.
- Anyone who has applied to be housed by Newlon.
- Anyone who pays a service charge.
- A group of residents who wish to complain about common issues. Explicit consent should be obtained by named residents who are part of the complaint group. Newlon will write to one named point of contact whose role it will be to communicate with the other residents.
- A person acting on behalf of a resident. A third party can make a complaint on behalf of a resident but unless the resident has given express written permission for Newlon to liaise with them as an advocate, all communication around the complaint will be with the resident.
- An ex-occupier who had a legal relationship with Newlon at the time the matter complained about arose.

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What can you make a complaint about?

A complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by Newlon, our staff, or those acting on our behalf and affecting an individual resident or group of residents. These could include:

- A delay in something we have done, such as not meeting published timescales.
- Missed appointments.
- Where we have failed or refused to do something.
- Where we have provided a poor quality service or made a mistake.
- A policy which has been unfairly implemented, should not have been applied or is simply wrong.

What exceptions are there?

Some issues cannot be dealt with through our complaints procedure. These include:

- Complaints about the level of service charges charged by Newlon or any increase in service charges.
- Complaints about transfer cases, except where an applicant believes the policy has not been applied correctly, or there have been delays or poor customer service in the handling of a case.
- Complaints about the level of rent and rent increases.
- Complaints about services provided by a Managing Agent.
- A claim for damages that should be handled via insurers or issues that are now subject to active legal proceedings.

- Concerns about anti-social behaviour (which should instead be reported to our ASB team at **asb@newlon.org.uk**).
- Dissatisfaction with the handling of personal data.
- Complaints made about anything that occurred more than twelve months ago.
- Previously complained about issues.

Please call our Service Centre on **020 7613 8080** if you need to contact us about any of these issues.

Our complaints procedure

If you want to make a formal complaint we will manage it as follows:

Stage 1

When you contact us to make a complaint it will be logged as a Stage 1 complaint. Our Service Resolution Team will deal with your enquiry and give you a full response within 10 working days. Where this deadline cannot be met, for example due to the complexity of the case, you will be advised when you will get a response.

Stage 2

If you are unhappy with the response you receive at Stage 1, you should appeal within 30 working days. Please state why you are unhappy with the Stage 1 response, what issues remain outstanding and what you would like Newlon to do to resolve the matter.

Stage 2 complaints will be reviewed by our Service Resolution Team, with input from the director of the service being complained about where appropriate and responded to within 20 working days.

Stage 1 and 2 complaints are always reviewed by different staff members.

The Housing Ombudsman Service

If you are still not happy with our response after Stage 2 you can contact the independent Housing Ombudsman Service.

The Ombudsman has the power to look into complaints from our residents, but will only help once our complaints procedure has been followed.

You can contact them in any of the following ways:

Write to: Housing Ombudsman Service
PO Box 1484
Unit D
Preston
PR2 OET

Call: **0300 111 3000** (lines are open Monday to Friday from 9.15 am to 5.15 pm)

Email: **info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk**

The Ombudsman will only deal with appeals received within one year of the conclusion of Newlon's complaints process.

How to complain

To make a complaint you can contact us in any of the following ways:

- Email us at: **serviceresolution@newlon.org.uk**.
- Fill in the online complaints form on our website: **newlon.org.uk/residents/making-a-complaint**.
- Call us on: **020 7613 8080**.
- Write to us at: Newlon Housing Trust, Newlon House, 4 Daneland Walk, London, N17 9FE.
- In person. Please contact us to make an appointment first.

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Find out more

You can read our full complaints policy and procedure on our website at **newlon.org.uk/residents/making-a-complaint**.

If you would like this information in large print, audio, Braille, or an alternative format, please ask a member of staff, email us at **customerservice@newlon.org.uk**, or call our Service Centre on **020 7613 8080**.

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Health and safety in your home

This leaflet contains important information. Please read it.

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Carbon monoxide guidance

Every year about 30 people die from carbon monoxide poisoning caused by gas appliances and flues which have not been properly installed or maintained. Many others also suffer ill health. When gas does not burn properly, as with other fuels such as coal, wood or oil, excess carbon monoxide is produced, which is poisonous.

You can't see it, you can't taste and you can't smell it – but carbon monoxide can kill without warning in just a matter of hours.

You are particularly at risk when you are asleep because you cannot recognise the early symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning. These include tiredness, drowsiness, headache, nausea, pains in the chest and stomach pains. These symptoms can mimic many common ailments and may easily be confused with flu or ordinary tiredness.

You are at risk of carbon monoxide poisoning if:

- A gas appliance was poorly installed.
- A gas appliance is not working properly.
- A gas appliance has not had a recent safety check or been regularly maintained.
- There is not enough fresh air in the room.
- Your chimney or flue gets blocked up.
- You allow non-Gas Safe engineers to install or maintain your appliances.

If you believe you have been exposed to carbon monoxide then seek urgent medical advice. A doctor will need to test a blood or breath sample. Carbon monoxide quickly leaves the blood and tests can be inaccurate if taken more than four hours after exposure has ended, so the faster you act the better.

Protect yourself with a carbon monoxide detector

Most Newlon homes with gas appliances now have hardwired carbon monoxide detectors installed which will sound an alert in the presence of carbon monoxide. If you believe your home has not got a carbon monoxide detector or the one you have is faulty, please call the Service Centre on **020 7613 8080** or email **customerservice@newlon.org.uk**.

Gas safety guidance

Follow these simple steps to minimise the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning or a gas escape:

- Never use a gas appliance if you think it is not working properly. Signs to look out for include yellow or orange flames (except for fuel-effect fires which sometimes display this colour flame), soot or stains around the appliance or pilot lights that frequently blow out.
- Never cover an appliance or block the convection air vents.
- Never block or obstruct any fixed ventilation grilles or air bricks.
- Never block or cover outside flues.
- Whenever draught excluders, ceiling or extraction fans, double glazing or conservatory extensions are fitted to a room containing a gas appliance, you should have a safety check.

If you smell gas, or suspect there is a gas escape, immediately open all doors and windows and shut off the gas supply tap. This is usually located next to the gas meter, but you should check to make sure you know where it is.

You should then call the National Grid emergency line on **0800 111 999**.

Annual gas safety checks

If you rent your home from us we will undertake a gas safety check every year. We will arrange for our gas contractors to make an appointment with you to carry one out. We are required to do this by law, and it is a condition of your tenancy that you allow these contractors access to your home.

If our contractor cannot gain access then we will contact you to arrange an alternative appointment. If they still cannot get access this may result in a solicitor's letter being sent to you and ultimately legal proceedings. If you persistently refuse us access you could be at risk of losing your home.

All our contractors carry identification, so please ask to see it. If you want further confirmation contact us on **020 7613 8080**.

If you are a leaseholder or Shared Owner it is your responsibility to make sure your gas central heating system is checked and serviced every year. You must use a Gas Safe registered engineer. We recommend you purchase a British Gas 3 star service agreement or equivalent.

Remember that if you smell gas, turn off the gas supply and call **Cadent** on **0800 111 999**.

Fire safety guidance

To prevent the risk of fire it is important that you do the following:

- Ensure your smoke and heat alarms are working by testing them weekly, and never paint them.
- If you rent your home and your smoke detector is not working please contact our Service Centre on **020 7613 8080**.
- If you are a leaseholder or Shared Owner you are responsible for repairing or replacing your own smoke detector. Information about the brand and supplier as well as any warranties should be in your welcome pack. Smoke detectors we supply in our housing generally have a 10 year warranty.
- Keep fire doors closed at all times.
- Ensure escape routes (hallways, balconies, stairs and communal areas) are kept clear of obstructions.
- Check the communal noticeboard to familiarise yourself with fire exits and plan your escape route.
- Remember to switch off and unplug all electrical equipment that is not in use.
- Do not store aerosols on window sills or near heat sources.
- Never leave food cooking on hobs unattended.
- Keep your cooker clean.
- Put cigarettes out properly and dispose of them correctly. Under no circumstances should you drop cigarette butts from a balcony.
- Make sure candles and incense sticks are secured in a proper holder in an open area and kept away from materials that might catch fire, such as curtains.
- During power failures use battery operated torches and not candles.
- Don't tackle fires yourself. Always dial **999**.

More detailed advice and guidance on fire safety at home can be found online at: **www.london-fire.gov.uk/safety/the-home**.

Asbestos guidance

What is asbestos?

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral that is very resistant to heat. It was commonly used between the 1940s and 1980s in a range of building materials. It is no longer used as it can be harmful to health. If your home was built before 2002 then it may contain asbestos.

Why is it dangerous?

Asbestos can cause serious health problems including hardening of the lungs, lung cancer and cancer of the chest cavity. Asbestos is not a problem if it is not damaged and is left alone. However, it can be dangerous if it is damaged or disturbed, such as when doing DIY.

If asbestos is not disturbed, it is not dangerous. So please do not be alarmed if you suspect there is asbestos in your home, or if we find it.

What does Newlon do about asbestos?

We have carried out an asbestos survey for all of our properties and maintain a register of the location, type and risk of materials containing asbestos. Our policy is to monitor asbestos in residents' homes as this is safer than removing it, which can be a dangerous process.

Where might I find asbestos in my home?

Asbestos may be found in many older homes. The following are some of the most common places where asbestos containing materials have been found:

- Textured or decorative ceiling and wall coatings.
- Floor and ceiling tiles.
- Duct panels around pipe works.
- The underside of stairs.

What should I do if I have asbestos in my home?

Asbestos is only a risk when it is damaged or moved without being first made safe. Please do not drill, sand, scrape or cut into a wall or surface you think may contain asbestos without speaking to us first.

Most importantly do not touch any damaged asbestos.

Contact us if:

- You think you have found asbestos in your home.
- You are planning on doing any DIY.
- You want to report any damage to an asbestos containing material.

Water safety guidance

You can find general information on our approach to managing water hygiene in your home on our website at **www.newlon.org.uk/residents/health-and-safety**. There is also a leaflet about health and safety in your home which can be found in our online publications section at **www.newlon.org.uk/publications**.

In addition our health and safety team recommend that you take the following steps:

- Do not drink water from bathroom taps. You should only drink water from the kitchen cold water tap.
- Ensure all water outlets are used at least weekly. If you have been away from home for more than a week we advise you to run water outlets for two minutes before use.

  Outside taps should also be flushed through before use when not used on a regular basis.
- Regularly clean and de-scale your taps to prevent the build-up of limescale, which bacteria can grow on.
- Clean and de-scale shower heads on a quarterly basis or when you notice a visible build-up of lime scale.
- Clean hoses thoroughly every two or three months by removing the head and cleaning in hot water.
- Water from storage butts should not be used for spraying or as a supply for jet washers.

We carry out a risk assessment on all properties with a communal water supply every two years. Where any risks are identified we will take appropriate action.. Most of our properties, particularly homes with water direct from the mains to combination boilers, will be very low risk. However we may want to check water temperatures or take water samples for testing.

Depending on these results we may need to clean your water system or change your piping layout to reduce risk.

If your boiler needs replacing it may be changed to a combination boiler to avoid the need to store water, as this reduces water safety risks.

Important notice for residents on dialysis

If you are receiving dialysis please make sure you let us know so we can make our water safety technicians aware. In housing with communal tanks some of the chemicals used to make your water supply safe can be present in trace amounts even when the system has been completely flushed through. These are entirely harmless to most people but can potentially be harmful to people on dialysis.

Please contact us if you are receiving dialysis as we cannot know about this unless you make us aware.

Please call us on **020 7613 8080** or email **customerservice@newlon.org.uk**.

Electrical safety guidance

We check the electrical systems in all our rented properties every five years, to ensure they are safe and make any necessary repairs. You will be contacted by our contractors to arrange any appointments needed. It is a condition of your tenancy that you allow these contractors access to your home.

As part of this programme we will inspect and upgrade the smoke alarms and any carbon monoxide alarms within the property.

If you are a leaseholder or Shared Owner you are responsible for carrying out your own electrical safety checks and we advise you to do so regularly.

Further information on electrical safety can be found at: **www.nhmf.co.uk/bestpractice/compliance/electrical**.

Alterations and improvements

Please remember that you should contact us to let us know if you are planning any improvements to your home. This will allow us to consider any safety aspects of the changes you are thinking about making.

Contacting us

If you have any further questions about health and safety in your home please call our Service Centre on **020 7613 8080**. There is also information for residents online at **www.newlon.org.uk**.

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Anti-Social Behaviour

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We believe that everyone has the right to enjoy their home free from excessive nuisance or anti-social behaviour (ASB). We aim to:

- Actively discourage ASB.
- Reduce problems associated with ASB.
- Take positive action against, or on behalf of residents, when ASB occurs.

We are committed to investigating and taking action on ASB using a range of powers.

Our tenancy agreements have strict, explicit clauses to manage and prevent ASB.

As well as tackling problems that have already occurred, we also have preventative and early intervention measures to try and reduce ASB.

What is ASB?

ASB includes a variety of behaviour covering a wide range of unacceptable behaviour.

Common examples of ASB include:

- Noise nuisance.
- Alcohol related issues, litter, fly-tipping, loitering, vandalism or damage to property.
- Domestic violence, drug misuse, drug dealing, hate-related verbal abuse, harassment, threatening behaviour, physical violence, prostitution and kerb crawling.

The most commonly reported form of ASB is noise nuisance and we have a separate advice leaflet about this which you can find in the publications section of our website - **www.newlon.org.uk/publications**. Information about how to report ASB can be found at the end of this leaflet.

Avoiding ASB

It is important to think about your neighbours and consider the impact you could have on them. Here are some simple tips for reducing ASB:

- Keep dogs and other pets under control.
- Dispose of rubbish and waste in an appropriate manner.
- Be aware that you are responsible for your household members and any guests visiting your home.

How can I report ASB?

You can report ASB by emailing **asb@newlon.org.uk** or calling our Service Centre on **020 7613 8080**.

If you are not a Newlon resident you can report ASB directly to us in the same way as our residents, or through your local authority's ASB team.

When reporting ASB to us, we will need to take down some basic details such as identifying the type of ASB and the time, frequency and duration for which it occurred.

When you initially report ASB, you can tell us the identity of the alleged perpetrator(s) if you know who they are. We will not reveal your identify to them without your permission but cannot guarantee assumptions will not be made. For example, if you live in a house split into two flats and complain about loud noise it will be difficult to attempt to resolve a problem without revealing your identity.

What will happen after I have reported an incident?

If you report an incident of ASB we will contact you within two working days. For some types of ASB, such as domestic violence.

Everything we talk to you about will be confidential. In some cases of serious ASB we will need to share information with third parties such as the police.

What happens next?

What happens next depends on the type of incident you have reported and your own wishes.

We can:

- Offer practical advice.
- In less serious cases, advise you to how to approach the alleged perpetrator to discuss the problem.
- Visit or write to the person you have reported as causing ASB.
- Contact other neighbours to ask for their views.
- Ask you and your neighbours to keep diary sheets of problems.
- Gather other evidence, where practical.
- Agree with you to monitor the situation over a set period.
- Involve other agencies, for example your local authority's Environmental Health team or the police.

In some cases we may be unable to take further action if there is not enough evidence or you do not want us to take any further steps at this stage.

What action can Newlon take as a landlord?

There are a number of steps we can take to deal with ASB, but what we do depends on how bad the ASB is and how much evidence we have.

We can use enforcement measures to stop or alter ASB. Examples of what we can do include:

- Consider legal remedies such as injunctions or tenancy action.
- In more serious cases, tackle problems jointly with our partner agencies such as local authorities or the police.

Other preventative and early intervention measures we can consider include:

- Using Starter Tenancies to ensure new tenants prove that they can act responsibly before an Assured Tenancy is given.
- Offering mediation services to help the various people involved come to an agreement.
- Giving the person carrying out the ASB a warning that they are breaking their tenancy agreement.

We take a strategic approach in tackling ASB including:

- Training frontline staff and managers in how to tackle ASB.
- Encouraging residents to uphold standards of behaviour, as outlined in the Scheme Rules.

What would be expected of me?

To help us build a case and deal with the ASB you have reported you will be expected to:

- Sign a statement which sets out the details of the incidents you have reported.
- Keep a diary record of further incidents. This is important if future legal action has to be taken as it may be essential evidence. If legal proceedings have to be taken, you may have to make a statement and in some circumstances go to the court hearing.

There is an ASB incident record sheet which you can download from our website: **www.newlon.org.uk/residents/anti-social-behaviour**.

In serious cases we will respect your wishes if you do not want to make a statement or attend a court hearing. Instead we will try to gather other evidence. If other evidence isn't found, it's likely we will be unable to pursue further action.

Soon after the case is resolved or closed, we will ask you to respond to a satisfaction survey. This is your chance to voice your opinion on how effectively we manage incidents of ASB. This helps us to continuously improve and tailor our service for the future.

What can I do if I am not happy with the way my problem has been handled?

If you are not confident that we are dealing with your problem adequately, you can make a complaint. You can do this in any of the following ways:

- Email: **serviceresolution@newlon.org.uk**
- Fill in the online complaints form on our website: **www.newlon.org.uk/residents/making-a-complaint**
- Call us on: **020 7613 8080**

Contacting us about ASB

To report ASB you can contact us in any of the following ways:

Email: **asb@newlon.org.uk**

Call our Service Centre on: **020 7613 8080**

Write to:

ASB Team
Newlon Housing Trust
Newlon House
4 Daneland Walk
Hale Village
London
N17 9FE

Other useful contacts

Victim support

If you are a victim of crime your local Victim Support office can give you, your family and friends support and information. If you are going to court their Witness Service can help before, during and after the trial.

Please visit **www.victimsupport.org.uk** for details of local contacts.

Your local council

Please check their websites for contact details for Environmental Health, the ASB and Noise Control/Pollution teams.

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HOUSING TRUST

Noise nuisance

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Noise from neighbours is a common source of disturbance and can be very upsetting, causing annoyance, lack of sleep, stress, and generally affecting quality of life. This booklet gives you guidance about what to do if you are being troubled by noise nuisance.

To report noise nuisance you can contact us any of the following ways:

- Call the Service Centre on: **020 7613 8080**
- Email: **asb@newlon.org.uk**
- Write to us at: Housing Services, Newlon Housing Trust, Newlon House, 4 Daneland Walk, Hale Village, London, N17 9FE

What is noise nuisance?

Everyone should expect a reasonable degree of noise from neighbours. If you are being disturbed by such noise, it could be that:

- Your neighbours may be behaving unreasonably, for example playing loud music day or night or allowing their dog to bark all day.
- Neighbours may have different lifestyles and shift patterns, for example there may be small children playing or the washing machine is vibrating, and the insulation in the floors or walls between you may not cut out the sounds.
- You have become over-sensitive to the noise, particularly if you do not get on with your neighbours. Some people 'tune into' the noise from next door and find it annoying, while others do not.

Tips for preventing noise

Have consideration for your neighbours. There are certain things you could do to minimise your noise such as:

- Have carpets and curtains as they absorb sound.
- Keep the volume down on TVs and stereos.
- Consider using headphones when listening to music.
- Arrange speakers away from partition walls and the floor. If you are putting them near the floor, make sure they go on stands or something that insulates the sound.

- Tell your neighbours if you are having a one-off party and give them some idea of when the party will end.
- Make sure noisy household appliances such as the washing machine and vacuum cleaner are used at reasonable times and never between 11 p.m. to 7 a.m.
- Avoid doing noisy DIY activities after 9 p.m. and before 9 a.m. If neighbours have young children they will go to bed earlier so try to be considerate.
- You may be able to change the flooring. However, please seek permission from us first.

What should I do if I am being disturbed by noise from my neighbours?

Firstly, provided you feel comfortable to, approach your neighbour and explain politely that you are troubled by the noise. If it's appropriate you could invite them into your home so they can hear the noise for themselves. Most neighbours will be glad to do what they can to reduce the noise.

If the problem persists it is worth discussing the problem with our Service Centre. Most tenancy terms include a requirement that residents do not cause disturbance to neighbours. We can take action if serious disturbance is being caused.

Where it is not household noise, please phone the Noise Pollution Team (see the website for your local Council for details).

What initial action can Newlon take to tackle noise nuisance?

- We will ask you to complete an incident diary, a template for which is available on our website – **www.newlon.org.uk**. Please contact us if you do not have access to the internet. You should record incidents with are likely to be statutory nuisance rather than household noise.

  We will need to know the date and time of the incident, where it occurred, the source of the noise and details of any witnesses to the incident.

- If you feel it is difficult to try and resolve these problems, then mediation can help. You can be referred to professional mediators who can help you explore possible solutions to disputes. This service is free to residents.
- We can send a letter reminding the offending resident to abide by their tenancy or lease terms.
- Where appropriate, we will arrange to meet with you.

Statutory noise nuisance

There is legislation covering nuisance – including noise nuisance. Your local authority's Noise Control team deals with defined statutory noise nuisance. If noise nuisance persists, our Enforcement team will get together with the Noise Control team to examine the problem.

What constitutes a statutory noise nuisance?

This cannot be easily defined, but could be described as an unreasonable interference with the enjoyment of your property. It must occur regularly and continue for a period of time that makes it unreasonable.

The following are unlikely to be a statutory nuisance:

- A one-off party.
- Neighbours arguing.
- A lawn mower used during the day.
- A baby crying, children playing or dogs barking occasionally.

Action to tackle proven statutory noise nuisance

Depending on the seriousness and type of nuisance, the following types of formal action can be taken to stop the statutory nuisance:

- A formal warning letter can be sent to the resident causing the noise, saying that we will consider taking legal action if the noise does not stop.
- Under the Environmental Protection Act a local authority can serve an 'abatement notice' to the resident.
- Legal action – tenancy breach/injunction.
- Applying for an eviction order. If there is sufficient evidence to prove that a nuisance is being caused we can apply to the court

for a court order. Like other forms of legal action, we will have to prove the nuisance is taking place which will usually include residents who have been affected going to court as witnesses.

Will the perpetrator be told who reported the noise nuisance?

We will not reveal your identify to the alleged perpetrator without your permission but cannot guarantee assumptions will not be made. For example, if you live in a very small block of two flats and complain about loud noises it will be difficult to attempt to resolve a problem without revealing your identity.

What can I do if I am not happy with the way my problem has been handled?

If you are not confident that we are dealing with your problem adequately you can make a complaint in any of the following ways:

- Email: **serviceresolution@newlon.org.uk**
- Fill in the online complaints form on our website: **www.newlon.org.uk/residents/making-a-complaint**
- Call us on: **020 7613 8080**

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Getting involved

how you can play your part

@ getinvolved@newlon.org.uk

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The 1, 2, 3 of Resident Involvement

By getting involved you can play a part in helping us improve the services we provide and the area where you live.

There are three levels for engaging with us and providing your input:

1. Bigger picture

Joining strategic forums and panels or activities that are linked to Newlon's strategy and governance: a structured, regular commitment.

2. Local picture

Getting involved with community groups or projects, or inspecting your block or estate.

3. Lighter touch

Dipping in and out of taking part, or getting involved as and when you have time and energy. This could be filling in a survey, taking part in a focus group, giving an opinion over the phone to a Newlon staff member, accessing a training session or attending a conference, making use of our membership of sector organisations such as Tpas by joining as a tenant, or taking part in our Communications Panel.

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1. Bigger picture

- **Residents' Forum** – a friendly group of residents who get together with senior Newlon staff every few months to help shape and improve services.

- **Residents' Services Committee** – make the day-to-day decisions about how we look after our homes. It has five resident members.

- **Complaints reviewers** – for ombudsman cases only, they independently apply the principles of fairness, putting things right and helping us learn lessons.

- **Mystery shoppers** – we are calling for our residents to measure us, on how well we deliver our customer service through telephone calls and emails.

- **Interview Panel** – resident members or observers on panels for candidates interviewing for Newlon, be that for jobs, board membership or part of a tendering process.

- **The Board** – responsible for setting direction for Newlon and overseeing our governance. They think about the bigger picture, like what does Newlon want to achieve in the next ten years and how we make it happen. The Board currently has two resident members.

2. Local picture

There are many different ways for you to get involved where you live and the choice is up to you. We can help support you in getting started.

- **Residents' Association** – a formal residents' group with a strong collective voice to talk to us about important issues.
- **Residents' Group** – less formal, but still with a strong collective voice.
- **Project group** – a way to get something off the ground, such as organising a community event.
- **One-off meeting** – to bring up and discuss important issues but without the need to set up a group.
- **Digital involvement** – set up a Facebook group, or something similar, so that all residents can communicate with each other.
- **Resident Inspectors** – help our estate inspectors, by jointly checking the standard of cleaning, maintenance and gardening where you live.

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3. Lighter touch

- **Think Tank** – the Think Tank can be as little as a quick phone call for your opinion, or more if you have time and energy to commit. Let us know your skills, availability, what you're interested in and we'll match you to involvement opportunities as and when they're happening.

- **Communications Panel** – have you read our publications and thought they could be improved or made clearer and easier to understand? Want to be part of a focus group to gauge residents' opinions on aspects of Newlon's communication methods with a view to improving them? If so, the Communications Panel is for you.

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What are the benefits of getting involved with us?

Involved and engaged residents make a huge difference to the environment they live in by acting on behalf of themselves and other residents' to benefit everyone. Recently, Newlon residents have helped shape and personalise contracts to better reflect their requirements, made their opinions felt about their lived environment and what level of services they wanted, and voted 'yes' to a huge regeneration scheme.

You can also benefit from:

- Meeting other like-minded residents and making new friends.
- Developing new skills and gaining experience, or sharing yours with other people.
- Feeling part of something bigger than a single voice, that represents residents.
- Getting rewarded for some activities and paid out of pocket expenses.

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Why not set up a residents' group where you live?

If there are no residents' groups where you live, we can help you start one up. We can provide advice, help survey fellow residents, put you in touch with experienced resident's groups, provide funding and more. Get in touch to find out how we can help.

"We strive to give our group a voice concerning local issues. Since we created it, we have seen a real benefit in community relations. Our regular meetings and joint projects have really helped build relationships with others in the local community."

Jeannie Lowen, Norton Folgate Community Group.

"I want Newlon's services to be the best they can and bring real change. It's really satisfying to be part of a group that helps this happen."

Liz Folaranmi
Think Tank member

Want to get involved or find out more?

Email **getinvolved@newlon.org.uk**.

If you would like this information in large print, audio, Braille, or an alternative format, please ask a member of staff.

Newlon Housing Trust
Newlon House, 4 Daneland Walk,
Hale Village, London, N17 9FE.
Tel: 020 7613 8080
Phone calls may be recorded for training and quality purposes.

Newlon Housing Trust is a charitable housing association.

This leaflet was correct at the time of printing. Information does change over time. Please check our publications at **www.newlon.org.uk/publications/leaflets-brochures/** for the latest version.

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