

# Welcome to Odu-Dua

**We're delighted to welcome three lovely families to our newly acquired flats at the heart of Camden.**

The three flats in Delancey Street each have two bedrooms and are part of a newly built hotel complex.

Providing families with affordable housing is central to our mission and we are pleased to be expanding our presence in the London Borough of Camden.

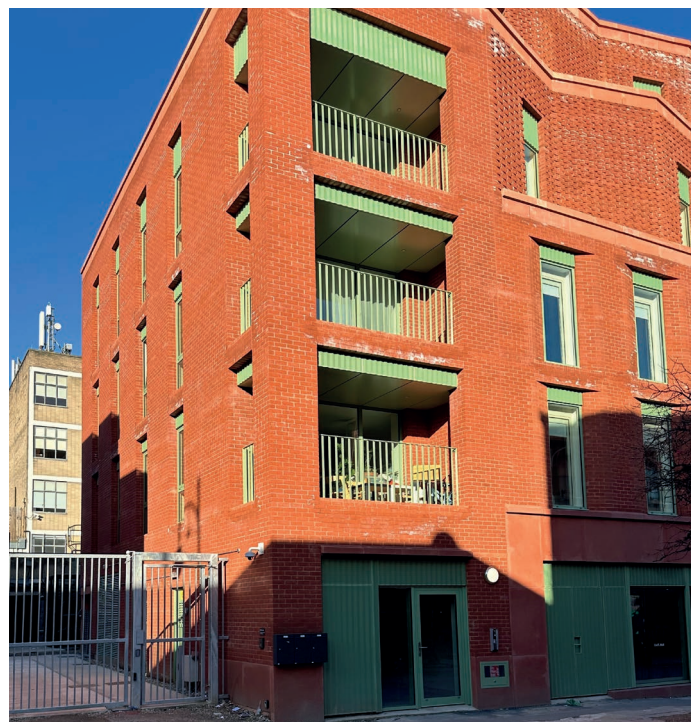
**One of our new tenants told us:**

“Prior to moving into Delancey street, I had been bidding on the Home Connections site for nearly three years. Unfortunately, like many, I had a change in circumstances during the pandemic which resulted in myself and my two children becoming homeless. Luckily, I was able to move in with family.

“I was delighted when I was shortlisted for a viewing at Delancey Street.... I felt that the viewing process used by Odu-Dua was very straightforward and organised.

“The selection process was very fast. I was notified of an offer within a couple of days. The sign-up process was structured well too. I was invited to the office where I met my Housing officer, Andrian. What I really liked about this process was that Andrian took her time in explaining everything in great detail.

“There are obviously pros and cons about moving into a new build, but the team at Odu-Dua have been very



responsive .... I am grateful to be able to live in the same area that I have grown up in, work in, and where my children go to school.”

## Update: Community Support Fund



**In our October 2023 newsletter, we introduced our new Community Support Fund.**

You can apply to the fund if you need to buy essential items of furniture or household appliances for your home. Or if you need a helping hand, but have been unable to get funding elsewhere.

The maximum we can give to one

person is £200, because our funds are limited.

For full details about our fund please contact the office.

**Recruits for our resident panel**

We are still looking for tenants to join the panel to consider applications we receive from tenants.

As a panel member, we will ask you to prioritise applications from vulnerable, elderly, unemployed, or young residents.



## Discretionary Housing Payments

**If you are struggling to pay your rent, you may be able to get a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) rent top up from your Council.**

Councils will consider your application if you are in financial hardship, or if your income is affected by the bedroom tax or the benefit cap.

To apply in Barnet, go to: [www.barnet.gov.uk/benefits-grants-and-financial-advice/housing-benefit/apply-discretionary-housing-payment](http://www.barnet.gov.uk/benefits-grants-and-financial-advice/housing-benefit/apply-discretionary-housing-payment)

To apply in Brent, go to: [customerportal.brent.gov.uk/discretionary-housing-payment](http://customerportal.brent.gov.uk/discretionary-housing-payment)

To apply in Camden, go to: [www.camden.gov.uk/discretionary-housing-payments](http://www.camden.gov.uk/discretionary-housing-payments)

If you need help to apply, call the office on 020 7625 1799.

## Rent payments are due in advance

**When you signed up to your Odu-Dua home, you agreed to pay your weekly rent in advance, by the Monday of each week.**



If you have a monthly tenancy (just a few of our tenants have these) your rent is due in advance, on or before the 1st of each month.

Paying in advance applies to all of our tenants – even if you get full or partial Housing Benefit or Universal Credit towards your rent payments.

If you have not been paying in advance, you need to start paying an extra amount until you are a full week (or month) in advance

Please contact the office if you have questions about this.

## Gas safety checks

**We arrange for annual gas safety checks in your home because keeping residents safe is one of our top priorities.**

The checks are carried out for us by K&T Heating. They will write to you with a date and time at least six weeks before your current gas safety certificate runs out.



If you can't make this time, contact them as soon as possible for a new appointment. If you don't do this, or you fail to give access at a time you agreed, we may recharge you for a missed appointment.

If you make an appointment but the contractor fails to show up, please tell us immediately. We will chase them to find out why.

If your check shows that a repair is needed, we will order one. How quickly the repair is completed will depend on how urgent it is.

Call the office if you need further information about landlord gas safety checks.

## Nitrous oxide – no laughing matter

**Nitrous oxide – also known as laughing gas – is about to become a controlled Class C drug under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.**

Small metal cannisters are a familiar sight on our streets and on some of Odu-Dua's estates, because laughing gas is a popular drug. Young people also inhale much stronger doses of the drug from bottles.

The drug is dangerous because it leaves people disoriented and it can



cause death through lack of oxygen, or lead to paralysis. Long term it can cause heart problems, nerve damage, hallucinations, severe headaches and feelings of paranoia.

Under the Government's Anti-social Behaviour Action Plan, the drug will be banned. Repeated users will face up to two years in prison and dealers up to 14 years inside. Possession will also become a punishable offence – including prison for repeat offenders.

Please tell the police if you see groups taking the drug on our estates, in children's parks or anywhere else, so that we can keep young people safe and our estates clean and tidy.

## Keep us informed

**Please make sure you keep the contact details we hold for you up to date. We need to be able to contact you easily – especially in an emergency.**

Make sure we always have your current mobile number, a number for you at work and a contact number for your next of kin.

If someone vulnerable or elderly is living with you, or staying over as a visitor, please give us their emergency contact details as well.

Update your information by calling the office on 020 7625 1799, or by emailing [admin@odu-dua.org](mailto:admin@odu-dua.org)



## Social tariffs for your broadband and mobile phones

If you claim Universal Credit or other benefits, you can access discounted broadband and mobile deals.

On a 'social tariff', you simply pay less for a normal package. A large number of broadband providers now offer deals for as low as £15 a month – around half the average cost of broadband.

To find out more and for a list of providers, go to: [www.ofcom.org.uk/cheap-broadband](http://www.ofcom.org.uk/cheap-broadband)

# Social Housing Fraud – you could lose your home

You are likely to lose your tenancy and you could lose your right to social housing in the future, if you're caught committing housing fraud. In the most serious cases, you could be fined or sent to prison.



Housing fraud includes:

- not telling the truth when you apply for a property – for example, claiming falsely to have children
- sub-letting a property without permission, or
- living in a property after someone has died, without the right to do so.

We carry out regular checks and tenancy audits to make sure we house the right people. We may do this at any time during a tenancy, without giving any warning.

We check tenant housing records against other records – for example Housing Benefit or the Electoral Roll.

We make sure that the person living at the property is who they say they are. We may ask to see their tenancy agreement and passport.

Please make sure that you keep us – and your benefits office – up to date with any changes in your household. If you deliberately fail to do this, you could be breaking your tenancy agreement and/or be committing benefit fraud.

### Report suspected housing fraud

If you suspect that the wrong person is living at one of our addresses, you can report it to us directly. You don't have to give your name or address.

## Warm Home Discount Scheme

You could get £150 off your electricity bill this winter, under the Warm Home Discount Scheme.

To qualify for a payment, you need to:

- get the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit, or
- be on a low income with high energy costs (go to <https://www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme/low-income-England-Wales> for more details).

The money is paid as a one-off discount applied to your electricity bill between early October 2023 and 31 March 2024. You should get this automatically.

If you think you should qualify, but you didn't get a letter about this in January, call the scheme helpline before 29 February 2024 on 0800 030 9322.

If you get gas and electricity from the same supplier, you may be able to get the discount on your gas bill instead.

You can still qualify for the discount if you use a pre-pay or pay-as-you-go electricity meter. You may be sent a voucher to use to top up your meter. Ask your electricity supplier for more details.



## Stay Healthy this winter Book your vaccinations now



Catching flu or Covid-19 can be life threatening. You could be seriously ill, hospitalised or even die.

Vaccines offer vital protection and are free if you are:

- over 65
- living with a long-term condition
- in close contact with someone vulnerable
- a carer to someone who is older or disabled
- a health or social care worker
- living in a residential or nursing home.

Ask your GP or pharmacist for your free jabs today, or book by calling 119, or by using the QR code above.

Protect yourself  
and those around you



Registered charity number 1092198



## Key performance indicators: April to December 2023

Rent	Target 2023-24	April-June 2023	July-Sept 2023	Oct-Dec 2023
Rent arrears	3%	2.87%	3.61%	3.9%
Rent collected	100.5%	95.38%	93.24%	98.16%

## Reporting your repair – a simpler process

We have recently streamlined our process for reporting a repair.

When you want to report or follow up on a repair, you can opt to:

- send an email to: [repairs@odu-dua.org](mailto:repairs@odu-dua.org), or
- call the office on 020 7625 1799.

If you are phoning us about a non-gas repair during office hours, select option 2 from the menu to be directed to the team at Shian Housing Association. They will take down the details.

If you need to report a non-gas emergency outside office hours, select option 5 from the menu to be directed to Pinnacle, who will assist you further.

To report any gas repair or emergency, select option 3 from the menu to be directed to K&T Heating. You can also call K&T Heating directly on their own phone number.

**Please note:** Apart from K&T Heating, please DO NOT contact any of our other contractors directly.

## Some repairs are your responsibility

**Unless you meet our criteria for being vulnerable, you are responsible for carrying out minor repairs and replacements around your home.**

Your responsibilities include:

- providing and renewing light bulbs
- replacing batteries for smoke alarms
- replacing lost keys, gaining entry and subsequent lock changes, and
- replacing toilet seats.

We will be publishing a full list of landlord and tenant repair responsibilities as part of our new *Guidance on repairs* handbook, which will be available soon on our website. In the meantime, you can ask us to email a list.

Our *Guidance* document will also provide detailed information about all aspects of our repairs service.

If you need further information about ordering a repair, do call the office.



**Phone:**  
020 7625 1799

**Email:**  
[repairs@odu-dua.org](mailto:repairs@odu-dua.org)

**Office address:**  
84–88 Kingsgate Road  
West Hampstead  
London NW6 4LA

Type of repair	Who to contact
All non-gas repairs during normal office hours	Email <a href="mailto:repairs@odu-dua.org">repairs@odu-dua.org</a> , OR phone 020 7625 1799 (option 2) to be directed to the team at Shian HA
Non-gas emergency repairs outside office hours	Phone 020 7625 1799 (option 5) to be directed to Pinnacle
Gas boiler/gas central heating breakdown (including an out-of-hours emergency)	Phone 020 7625 1799 (option 3) to be directed to K&T Heating, OR 020 8269 4500 (direct line)
Gas leak/smell	Phone the National Gas Emergency Service on 0800 111 999
Total loss of gas/electricity	Call your energy provider
Total loss of water/external leak	Call Thames Water on 0800 316 9800