TENANT NEWSLETTER

ODU·DUA Housing Association

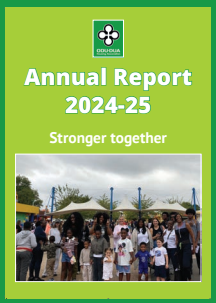
December 2025

Wishing you peace and joy and a Happy New Year

The staff teams at Odu-Dua and Shian Housing Associations wish you all the best for the holidays and for 2026.

Annual Report for 2024-25

With this issue, we are also sending out our Annual Report for 2024-25.



We have again produced our report in the form of a calendar you can use throughout the year.

The theme for this year's report is that, far from being an 'island of strangers', we are stronger together. We share the stories of some of the great Londoners we are proud to house – all working to bring communities together. 'Stronger together' also describes our own work over the past year.

Christmas office opening hours

Our staff will take their Christmas break from 12 noon on Wednesday 24 December 2025 and will return to normal working hours on Monday 5 January 2026.

If you have a genuine repairs or other emergency during the Christmas period, please call our 24-hour phone line on 020 7625 1799, to be redirected to our out-of-hours service.

Festive fire safety

During the holiday period, make sure you keep everyone safe, with these simple fire safety tips.

- Keep candles away from Christmas trees, curtains or anything else that could catch fire and don't leave them burning unattended.
- Check your tree lights meet safety standards and always switch them off before going to bed.
- Don't attach decorations to lights or heaters – they can overheat and catch fire.
- Make sure you have a fire escape plan and share it with household members and guests.
- Don't leave cooking unattended. It is safer to take pans off the heat and turn off the hob, oven or grill.
- Make sure new electrical appliances have a British or European safety mark when you buy them.
- Don't overload plug sockets.
- Check on elderly or vulnerable relatives and neighbours and make sure they are safe.
- Test your smoke alarms and make sure they are working. Fit a heat alarm in the kitchen – this will detect an increase in temperature caused by fire, but not be set off by cooking fumes.
- If you smoke, make sure you don't get distracted and make sure you put out cigarettes properly.

For further tips and a home fire safety checker, go to: https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/safety/the-home/home-fire-safety/home-fire-safety-checker-hfsc/

Paying rent at Christmas

Christmas can be the busiest and most expensive time of year, with the cost of buying presents and extra food.

Although the holidays are meant to be about relaxing and spending time with family, we know some of you may be worried about how much it is all costing.

Don't let the costs of celebrating the holiday season come first in your priorities. Missing December's rent payment would mean starting 2026 in arrears.

Good ideas

If you can afford to, you could pay a little extra rent all year, or in the run up to Christmas.

Broadcaster Martin Lewis, from MoneySavingExpert, also offered a great tip on a recent TV show. He suggested limiting gifts to close family only. He pointed out that far from being mean, you would actually be letting people not buy for you either – letting them save money at an expensive time too.

Energy vouchers from the HACT Fuel Fund

Shian Housing Association has been registered with the HACT Fuel Fund for over a year now and is now ready to refer Odu-Dua residents too.

The HACT Fuel Fund offers housing association residents in fuel poverty vouchers worth up to £294. In the past year, 15 Shian residents have benefited.

To be eligible, you must:

- have a pre-payment meter (we will need a recent photo), and
- be in difficulty and facing disconnection.

We will have to check your financial circumstances, so that Shian can pass on details to the scheme.

Since October, the scheme has expanded to offer Post Office as well as PayPoint vouchers. The change means that British Gas customers are no longer being excluded.

To find out more about being referred, call the team on 020 7625 1799.

Odu-Dua's Community Support Fund

If you are facing unexpected financial problems, you can apply for a grant from our Community Support Fund.

Call us on 020 7625 1799, or email housing@odu-dua.org to find out more. Your application will be carefully reviewed by our Tenants' Panel.

New rules on damp and mould

Awaab's Law came into effect in October 2025 – setting new standards for social housing landlords around damp, mould and emergency hazards.

The law is named after two-year-old Awaab Ishak, whose tragic death in 2020 was caused by untreated mould in his Rochdale home. It is designed to make sure that landlords take damp and mould seriously, to prevent further tragedies.

Our new approach

If you have damp or mould in your home, contact us as soon as possible.

We will:

- inspect your property within 10 working days
- send you a summary report within three working days of carrying out the inspection
- fix any damp and mould that could harm your health or safety, within five working days of the inspection
- within 12 weeks, do any work needed to stop this happening again, and
- complete all repair works within a reasonable time period.

We will keep records of our work to fix damp and mould, and note down anything that stops us from completing the work within these timescales.

If it's an emergency

Damp and mould are considered an emergency if they cover a significant area of your home and are affecting your health.

If our inspection finds that the damp or mould is an emergency, we will carry out repairs within 24 hours.

If your home is unsafe to live in while we do the work, we will offer you temporary accommodation until it is safe to return.

Other emergencies

If your home is affected by other emergency hazards, we will investigate and make safe within 24 hours – in line with our existing emergency repairs targets.

No win and not free

Housing disrepair claims – beware of unregulated companies

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) is warning that unregulated companies are falsely claiming that they can help tenants with complaints and housing disrepair.

If you use one of these companies, they often promise successful claims – but they charge you fees, or take a cut of your compensation. In some cases, their whole operation is a scam.

You can check out any company using the FCA Firm Checker at: https://www.fca.org.uk/consumers/fca-firm-checker and report an unregulated company to the FCA by phoning them on 0800 111 67.

Remember: if you have a problem with disrepair, you do not need to use a law firm. If you aren't happy with the way your complaint is handled, you have the option of taking it to the Independent Housing Ombudsman. You will not get less compensation if we are found to be at fault. But you will save money for our frontline repairs service, because we won't also have to pay your lawyer's costs.

There are more details about the Ombudsman on the 'Making a complaint' page of our website at: https://odu-dua.org/making-a-complaint/

Tenant satisfaction survey:

What you told us

Thank you to everyone who completed our Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) survey during the summer.

Complaints update

From April to October 2025, we received five complaints. We reported on three of these in our August issue.

Two complaints were made in September. One was about the cleaning of the bin area and a rodent infestation – but it was later withdrawn.

The other was about the length of time it had taken to resolve repairs problems with a patio door. We responded with an apology and compensation.

In all, we heard from 66 residents, who responded online (45%), by phone (38%) or by post (17%).

We were pleased to see overall satisfaction with our work rise by 15% to **76%**.

Other key figures include:

- **82%** satisfaction with our overall repairs service and the time it takes to do repairs
- **79%** satisfaction with your last repair in the past year
- **77%** satisfaction that we treat you fairly and with respect, and are easy to deal with
- **72%** agreement that your home is safe and well maintained, and we keep you informed
- **64%** agree that we listen and act.

We scored lower on our handling of antisocial behaviour (52%) and complaints (38%) – pointing to the areas we most need to focus on. We are also taking steps to respond to issues individual residents told us about. This has included: making temporary repairs to windows, while we wait for planning permission for replacements; stronger monitoring of estate contractors; and strengthening our approach to addressing problems with damp and mould.

Overall satisfaction **76%** A 15% rise

Overall, the results suggest that we are moving in the right direction, but we know we still have work to do.

We're listening and learning

As well as running our major surveys Acuity also contacts residents who have used our services, to check your ongoing satisfaction throughout the year. Here are the results from April to September 2025. Thank you for taking these calls.

Acuity: Customer contact survey	April-Sept 2025
Overall satisfaction	65%
Ease of gaining contact	81%
Felt fully informed	68%
Query handled satisfactorily	65%
Query resolved on first contact	54%
Easy to deal with	73%
Number of interviews	74

Acuity: Repairs survey	April-Sept 2025
Overall satisfaction	80%
Ease of reporting repair	69%
Worker's attitude, tidying up	94%
Quality of work	81%
Kept informed	73%
Right first time	81%
Easy to deal with	69%
Number of interviews	16

Key performance indicators:

April to October 2025

Rent	Target 2025-26	Performance Apr-Oct 25
Rent arrears	3.25%	4.6%
Rent collected	100.5%	100.83%

Repairs	How many	Target 2025-26	Achieved Apr-Oct 2025
Emergency call outs	7	1 day	100%
Emergency repairs	41	1 week	100%
Urgent repairs	139	5 weeks	93.53%
Routine repairs	134	20 weeks	95.52%
TOTAL	321		

Christmas rubbish

Please make sure you dispose of your Christmas rubbish safely and responsibly.

- Bag your non-recyclables and food waste securely, to avoid attracting vermin.
- Put recycling and rubbish bags out only on collection day, inside the right bins, with the lids closed.
- Double check your recycling. If you put in the wrong item, the refuse collectors may not empty the bins.
- Check with your council for collection day changes during the festive season – and find out when to leave out your Christmas tree for collection.

Bulky items

If you have bulky items to get rid of, book a council collection online at:

- **Barnet:** https://www.barnet.gov.uk/recycling-and-waste/bulky-and-special-waste-collections/bulky-household-waste-collections-residents
- **Brent:** https://www.brent.gov.uk/bins-rubbish-and-recycling/bulky-waste-collection
- **Camden:** https://www.camden.gov.uk/bulky-waste-collection

Be aware that you may be charged.

Stay warm and well this winter

Here are some simple tips.

Stay warm

Heat your home to a comfortable temperature. The rooms you use most, such as your living room and bedroom, should be at least 18°C.

Wearing several layers of clothing will keep you warmer than one thick layer.

If you are struggling to heat your home, visit local warm spaces, such as your local library or community centre.

Stay healthy

Spend less time sitting down. It doesn't matter what you do, as long as it's something you enjoy and keeps you moving.

Eating a healthy balanced diet can help you feel your best and keep your energy levels up.

Wear shoes with good grip when you go outside, to avoid slips and falls on slippery or icy surfaces.

Let us know if your home has damp or mould. This is particularly bad for your health if you have breathing problems.

See our article on page 3 about our new approach to helping you manage damp and mould.

Stay connected

Keep in touch with your friends, neighbours and family, and look out for vulnerable neighbours.

Speak to someone if you're feeling unwell. Don't be afraid to ask others if you need help.

Check your medicines

Stock up early on prescription medicines, as your pharmacy or GP surgery may close for the holidays.

Check your meds aren't past their use-by date.

Stock up on painkillers and meds for coughs, colds and sore throats.

Become an estate champion

We're looking for residents willing to volunteer as an estate champion.

As an estate champion, your role would be to keep us up to date with what is happening locally – and to do this even-handedly. You would:

- tell us how well our cleaning and gardening contractors are performing
- report repairs to communal areas
- let us know about developing problems in your neighbourhood – such as anti-social behaviour or fly tipping
- share the views of you and your neighbours
- help us to be more accessible and accountable to our residents.

At larger schemes, we would be happy to have more than one estate champion.

We may be able to reward you for your time with tokens to use at different supermarkets.

Tips about your fire doors

Your front door is a fire door if it opens into a communal area.

Fire doors should be self-closing, withstand fire for at least 30 minutes and be fitted with strips and seals that would block toxic smoke.

Fire door do's and don'ts

- DO let your door fully close, every time you use it – and tell us if it doesn't close by itself.
- DO tell us if any part of your door's set up gets damaged or comes loose.
- DO tell us if any fire doors in the corridors of your block are faulty.
- DON'T tamper with smoke seals, brushes or the self-closing device.

- DON'T alter any fire door in a way that could reduce its fire resistance
- DON'T drill it to fit door furniture.
- DON'T prop or wedge open any fire door.

Be alert to scams

Scam texts are on the rise, with many claiming to be from government departments like the DWP.

To keep yourself safe, don't click on any links or share personal information – whether you are being approached by text message email, letter or phone.

In September, a resident received a scam phone call about 'renewing' a Thames Water plumbing and water leak policy – that they never had in the first place. The caller knew their name and address.

Never agree to any new contract that you did not find for yourself. Be ready to block the number.

E-bikes and scooters

The London Fire Brigade says that e-bikes and e-scooters are the capital's fastest growing fire risk.

There were 155 e-bike and 28 e-scooter fires recorded last year – including some in social housing properties. Three people died and around 60 people were hurt.

Most e-bikes and e-scooters are powered by lithium-ion batteries, which can be charged in the home. It is essential to charge, store and dispose of them safely, because if they fail, they can explode and/or cause a rapidly developing fire.

For these reasons, you must not store any of these vehicles in communal areas, or we will remove them.

To stay safe:

- only buy vehicles and accessories from reputable dealers – many fires have involved fake goods
- register with the manufacturer to be told about product recalls
- never charge the batteries while you are out or asleep
- keep batteries uncovered while charging and don't overload sockets
- don't dispose of batteries in your household waste or recycling – check your council's website, and
- if a fire starts, do not attempt to put it out. Get out, stay out, call 999.

ODU·DUA Housing Association

Phone:
020 7625 1799

Email:
repairs@odu-dua.org
housing@odu-dua.org

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

Website: www.odu-dua.org

Type of repair	Who to contact
All non-gas repairs during normal office hours	Email repairs@odu-dua.org, 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)	Contact Sureserve Compliance South direct on 020 8269 4500 and select option 1.
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