



Photo: Ståle Erikson

# A House for Artists *Open Call*

Apply to live in affordable, long-term subsidised housing for artists.

**Deadline: 20 February**

**Barking &  
Dagenham**

**APPARATA**



SUPPORTED BY  
**MAYOR OF LONDON** **CREATE**

## What is A House for Artists?

*A House for Artists* is a new, affordable block of 12 apartments in Barking Town Centre, delivered in partnership with the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham's **Be First**, with support from the Mayor of London. It houses 12 artists and their families, provides studio workspaces, a shared courtyard, and is home to a community hall on the ground floor. The community hall is programmed and staffed by the resident artists as part of a new kind of active tenancy designed specifically for the building.

The building was launched in December 2021, sparking interest and receiving [positive coverage](#) from national and international media. We are now looking for resident artists to fill the remaining units and to become part of a journey to set new standards for how artists collectively can contribute to a thriving local community. We are soon welcoming nine artists and their families into the purpose-built units, and are now seeking the last artists to complete the cohort.

*A House for Artists* aims to help strengthen local arts facilities, embedding long-term platforms for arts engagement and learning within the local community. The scheme has been designed by the London-based architectural studio **Apparata** (Astrid Smitham and Nicholas Lobo Brennan) and is the first residential project by arts organisation **Create London**.

Nestled within a diverse residential quarter, and minutes from tube and train links, the apartments are offered to practising artists at 65% of local market rent in perpetuity. The 12 flats are rented on a long-term basis, with capped annual rent rises, providing secure housing for artists wanting to put down roots. As part of the scheme's affordable rent tenure agreement, resident artists will contribute to forming the community programme, providing regular informal arts and learning activities with and for local people. As residents move in, governance structures and methods of exchange, in line with the subsidised offer, will be determined collectively. The forming of these activities and operational model will be supported by Create London for the first two years.

## The building

Apparata's housing model provides adaptability, robustness, and generous floor to ceiling heights in the tradition of open industrial units. Resident artists can add and move walls to meet their needs and choose to share apartments with their neighbours through double doors in party walls: a flexible and optional form of co-housing. The design of the building aims to support the forming of communities both within the building and with the local area, through shared entrance patios, co-housing, and the ground floor space at the street front. We hope the project will act as a template for other affordable housing schemes tied to delivering public good in the future, replicable not just for artists but for those working in other industries. The residents will be key in shaping its own future and potential models.

*A House for Artists* introduces the concept of an 'active tenancy' which links affordability to the tenant's role in providing vital social infrastructure and space for community. This model of active tenancy can be extended to include joint maintenance agreements between tenants, shared childcare and social care. In this way, *A House for Artists* could become an important example of a new kind of tenancy through which the intersection of housing, and in this case arts practice, fulfil new kinds of civic roles.

We encourage applications from family units and alternative long-term co-living arrangements such as multiple artists. One floor is adaptable from three 2-bed apartments into a shared floor with the flexibility of 6 bedrooms. All apartments are designed to be accessible and adaptable, with one 1-bed unit for a wheelchair user. Three apartments are prioritized for those who live/have lived, work/have worked or study/have studied in Barking & Dagenham.

As well as a community hall, the ground floor also comprises a shared kitchen and four work rooms where artists can share studio and desk space.

*"A wake up call to the industry": the artist homes blazing a trail for affordable UK housing* - Oliver Wainwright, [The Guardian](#)



Interior view. Image courtesy of Apparata (image is indicative)

## How to Apply

Applications should be made as a household unit. If you are applying as a professional artist with a family, please state the number of family members with you and their names, ages and relationship to you as the artist tenant.

If you are applying as multiple artists please fill in a single application form with both of your details (i.e. two 1-page CVs, collated into one PDF, two individual artist statements, collated into one PDF, etc). If you are applying as a solo artist, please state the amount of space/ room(s) you require: i.e. whether you are happy to share, or if you require a private studio above and beyond the four shared studios on the ground floor of A House for Artists, in which case we may consider you for a 2- bed flat.

The floor plans enclosed show 1 and 2-beds, with the possibility of a flexible collective living floor that can be arranged into four, five or six bedrooms. If you are interested in applying for this arrangement, please submit a group application.

## Eligibility Criteria

- Are you a practising artist?
- Are you living in the UK?
- You are not a home-owner?
- Can you contribute time each month to running public activities or other forms of engagement?

If yes, apply to [ahouseforartists@createlondon.org](mailto:ahouseforartists@createlondon.org) by **midnight 20 February** with the subject line A House for Artists Application: Surname(s) and the following attachments as PDFs:

- 1) CV (max. 2 pages A4)
- 2) Portfolio (3 to 5 projects, max. 5 pages A4, max. 5MB)
- 3) Proposal covering (max 800 words):

- How your career will be supported by living and working in A House for Artists
- Your thoughts on communal living and collaborative working; what community means to you
- What your monthly engagement may look like in the ground floor community arts hall (Ideas are indicative, the programme will be developed with input from tenant artists, Create and the local community)
- Your relationship to Barking and Dagenham (if any)
- The relationship between your practice and community activity. (This could be running courses but also potential avenues that aren't strictly arts activities such as coffee mornings, alt forms of exchange)
- Any information about your background or personal experiences that support your application and benefit to you as an artist. You could include obstacles you are facing e.g. financial, housing, cultural exclusions, family/work commitments etc.

### Deadline and key dates

Applications close at **midnight on Sunday 20 February 2022** and interviews will take place on **Monday 28th February** remotely or in person (subject to change). Successful applicants will be notified by 1 March, and able to move in by the end of March, possibly earlier subject to availability.

Selected artists will be required to work collaboratively to develop the public programme for the community hall. This will take place through workshops and testing over the spring and summer of 2022. The public programme will officially commence in September 2022.

The project is funded by the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (LBBD), supported by Be First (working on behalf of LBBD) and the Mayor of London.



Balcony view. Image courtesy of Apparata (image is indicative)

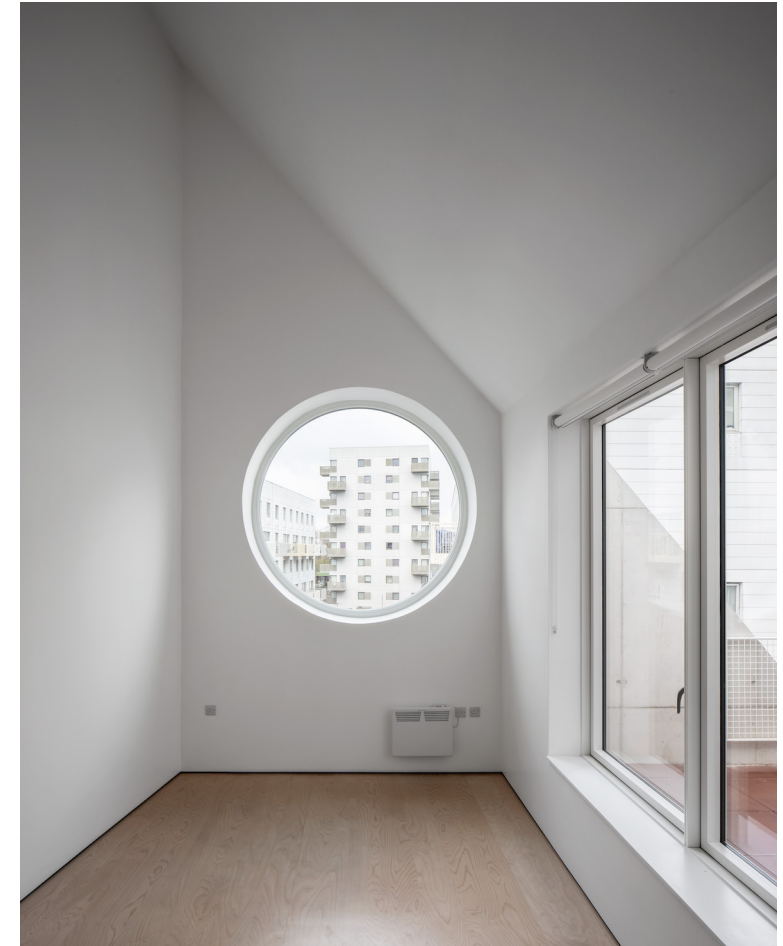


Photo: Johan Dehlin

*“It’s a perky and punchy building, at once big and small and grand and intimate.”*

- Rowan Moore, [The Guardian](#)

## A House for Artists: FAQs

### **What is the selection process?**

We will assess all written applications sent to us before the deadline of 20 February. The criteria we will assess applicants against will include artist practice, ideas/approaches for the community programme and housing need. We will invite shortlisted applicants to an interview on 28th February. We are keen to allocate some of the remaining spaces to people who live/have lived, work/have worked or study/have studied in the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham, and that are also in need of housing. When faced with two applicants of equal merit we will always give priority to local artists. In addition to the selected artists, a further selection will be added to a reserve list for future vacancies.

### **I'm not a visual artist, can I still apply?**

Yes, we are interested in applicants from a wide range of creative practices including, but not limited to, musicians, writers, cultural producers and facilitators, curators, graphic designers, 3D designers, filmmakers, architects and choreographers. If you consider yourself a practising artist, we welcome your application.

### **How do you define a practising artist?**

We are interested in applicants with a wide range of practices, both established and emerging. We are using no strict guidelines or definitions. Please describe your practice, using examples of your work, which may include images of projects and/or events if you're a producer or curator, as well as an up-to-date CV.

### **What if I make my money from something else?**

That's fine. We understand how difficult it can be to develop a practice that you make a living from. Please tell us in your proposal how you see this working when you move in.

### **How much is the rent?**

Rent will be 65% of local market rent, which is £826 and £988 for 1-bed, 2-bed apartments respectively. Rent rises will be capped and pegged to inflation; currently Reside have capped rent rises at CPI+1% (subject to change).

### **How can diversity be encouraged when selecting artists?**

We encourage applications from members of groups who are under-represented in the arts and especially welcome creative practitioners with Black, Asian and other racialised heritage, those who are facing barriers due to socio-economic situations and those who identify as LGBTQI or are disabled people. Please make this clear when applying.

### **How will you decide what activity is valuable to the community?**

We're interested in knowing what a public programme with community value looks like to you. A programme which takes into consideration what already exists in the borough and what you consider to be a meaningful contribution.

Create London has worked in the borough for over 7 years and has already started conversations with the local community of artists and the neighbouring residents' associations and we will spend the next year working closely with you and the associations to refine what the public programme will be. For more information and examples of responsive public programming please see The White House, Rabbits Road Institute and Open School East.

### **How much experience working with communities/the public would an artist need if any?**

We have no strict criteria. If you have little experience but feel like you would be able to contribute to the local community in a meaningful way we would like to hear from you.

### **Will there be opportunities to work with schools?**

Yes, we would welcome applications which include ideas for primary and/or secondary school projects. We hope part of the engagement work may involve engaging local schools and forming partnerships with them.

### **Could the space be used for non-art related activities for local people?**

Yes, community need and interest should be integral. For example, in the school holiday a meals club or DIY session might be more relevant than a drawing session.

### **I am a teacher as well as an artist. Can I still apply?**

Yes, if you can commit the necessary hours to the House, as well as to your art practice, we welcome your application. We would not advise you to apply

if you would have to continue to work full time as you may struggle to commit to the public programme and other communal activities (such as internal meetings). Where teaching, or another contract job, is part of your practice, please state this in your application (we will not exclude practising artists with unrelated PT jobs).

#### **Will training for running a public space be provided for artists?**

Yes, all relevant and required training will be provided in response to running a public programme, including safeguarding, first aid and a DBS will also be carried out with each selected artist. Other training requests will also be considered.

#### **What level of programme management is provided?**

For the initial two years after the artists move in, Create will support the organisation and management of the public programme. In the first year we will provide curatorial support, with an aim of the resident artists running the public programme themselves by the end of the first or second year.

#### **Can the artists contribute towards the ethos of the house for artists?**

We've left space for the artists to be involved in shaping the way in which the building functions, and its relationship to the local community. We want to work collaboratively with the artists and with local people to refine the ethos of the building.

#### **Will there be a tenancy trial period?**

Yes, the tenancy trial period will be one year.

#### **Will there be annual reviews?**

Yes, Create will carry these out in order to ensure that the basic criteria of the tenants are being met but also, to use it as an opportunity to reflect and support each artist. After the first year we hope to establish a sustainable system for moving forward in measuring engagement, commitment and impact.

#### **Under what circumstances would a tenant be asked to leave?**

If terms of tenancy are not met. We will use the Reside tenancy agreement adjusted to reflect the additional eligibility criteria set out in the application form.

#### **How involved will the residents be in making decisions about new tenants?**

It's inevitable that people will leave and that residents will change over time. In replacing artists, Create will establish ways of involving the artists with this decision making process.

#### **Do you require a deposit and what is the notice period if someone wants to leave?**

We will require one month's rent in advance as a deposit. If someone wants to terminate their contract, the notice period is one month.

#### **If I give more time than expected of me do I get more money taken off my rent?**

No, but we hope to build flexibility into the programme. The artists could set up, for example, a time banking system (see question below for more details) which would support more flexible working patterns.

#### **What happens if someone goes away for an extended period of time?**

We understand that artists sometimes go away on residencies, or for projects, for an extended period of time as part of their practice. As a guide we would support absences on the basis that the artist collaborates with other resident artists to cover their duties. A time banking system would have to be agreed and put into place in this instance.

This system may also be applied to facilitate holidays whilst ensuring the community programme continues to function regularly. For periods over 4 weeks, a plan would have to be agreed for covering your public programme and we would consider another artist to cover your activities as part of this. This would be considered on an individual case by case basis and would have to be negotiated with the other artists and Create.

#### **What happens if someone gets sick and can't run a programme for a long period of time?**

No one will be made homeless due to ill health. In accordance with government guidelines on sick pay, the appropriate documents will have to be produced if an artist is absent from the community programme for an extended period of time due to illness. For example, written evidence from their doctor. Returning to the programme will be planned carefully with the programme manager so it is manageable for the artist. Further details on this, as well as information on other procedures, will be included in the artist tenants' handbook.

**What happens if an artist becomes pregnant and needs time off?**

If an artist becomes pregnant, they will be relieved from their duties to coincide with their entitled statutory maternity leave. Returning to the programme after maternity leave will be planned carefully with the programme manager so it is manageable for the artist.

**Will artists self-manage the two shared studios?**

Yes, we imagine two wet and two dry studios where the equipment, maintenance and shared materials in these spaces will be agreed in the year before artists move in.

**Are the flats fully accessible?**

Yes.

**Is there a garden?**

No, however, residents will have access to a shared courtyard garden with the users of the Barking Enterprise Centre (BEC). There is also a separate bike storage unit and a shed.

**Is there parking for AHFA residents?**

No, there is no resident parking. There is an accessible parking bay on street at Linton Road.

**Who is the management company and who manages artists' tenancies?**

Reside is the management company, while Create will nominate artists for the tenancies and annually review the eligibility criteria to support Reside.

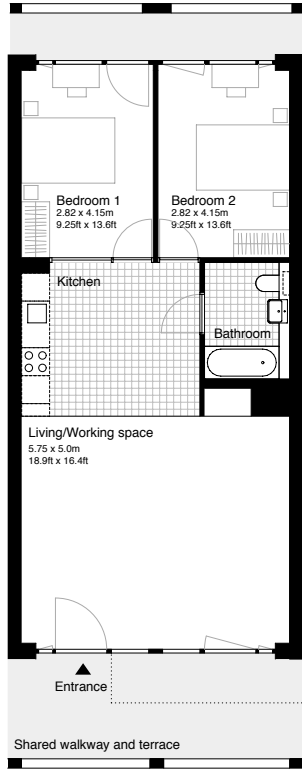
**Are the flats unfurnished? Do they contain white goods?**

The flats will be unfurnished and contain no white goods.

**What about cleaning and maintenance?**

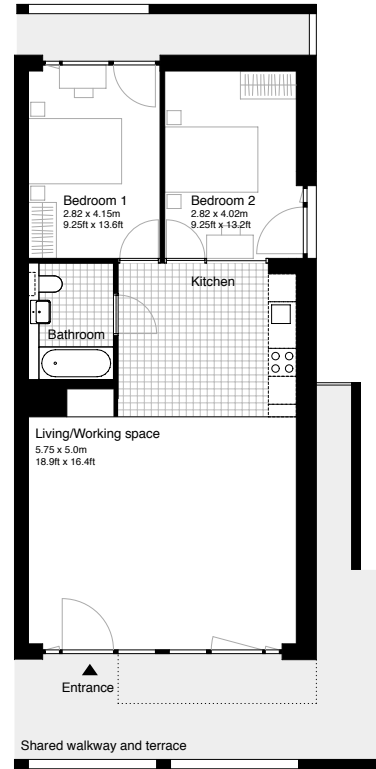
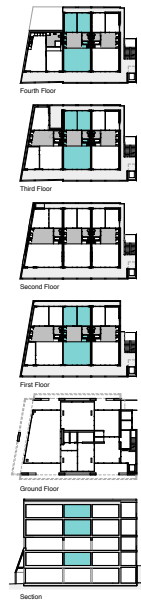
The exterior spaces, corridors and community hall, will be maintained by Reside. The flats, studios and courtyard will be maintained by the artists.

CREATE



**Apartment type 2**  
**2 bed**  
**Area: 72 m<sup>2</sup> / 775 sqft**

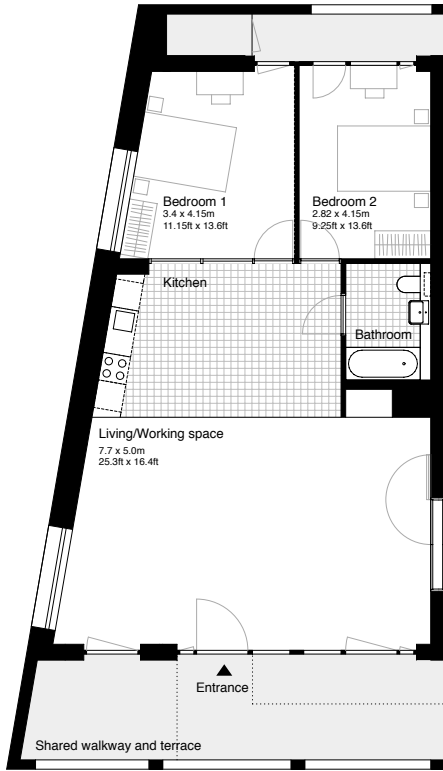
Exact layout of storage and bathroom may vary  
 Indicative Kitchen Arrangement  
 Overall area correct to within 5%



**Apartment type 3**  
**2 bed**  
**Area: 72 m<sup>2</sup> / 775 sqft**

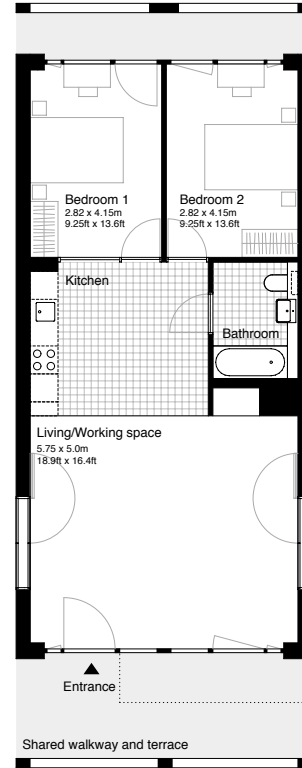
Exact layout of storage and bathroom may vary  
 Indicative Kitchen Arrangement  
 Overall area correct to within 5%





**Apartment type 4**  
**2 bed**  
**Area: 87.9 m<sup>2</sup> / 916 sqft**

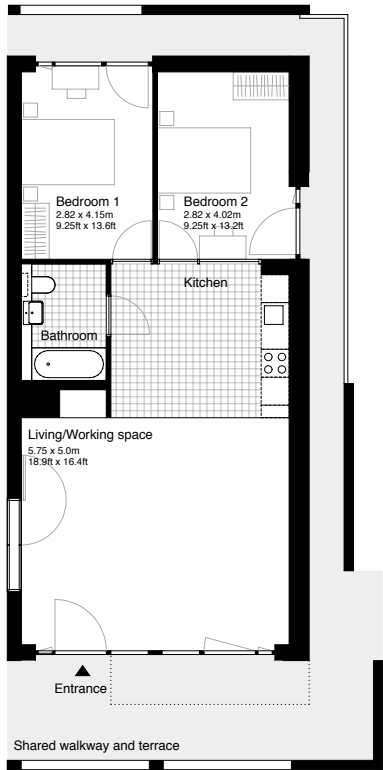
Exact layout of storage and bathroom may vary  
 Indicative Kitchen Arrangement  
 Overall area correct to within 5%



**Apartment type 5**  
**2 bed**  
**Area: 72 m<sup>2</sup> / 775 sqft**

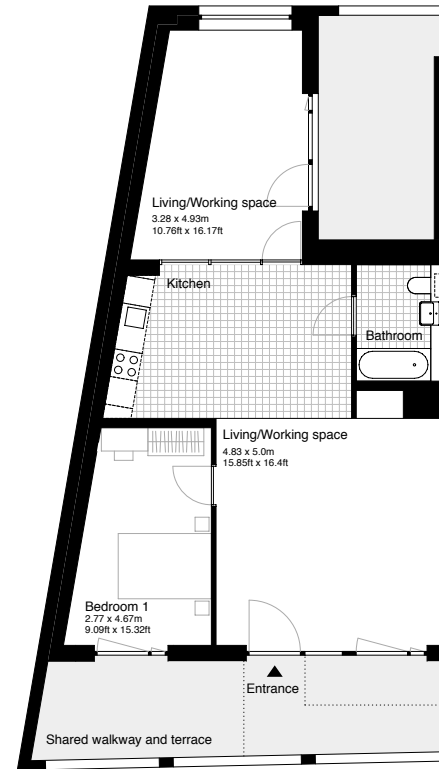
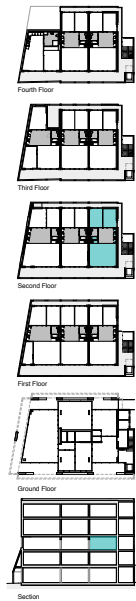
Exact layout of storage and bathroom may vary  
 Indicative Kitchen Arrangement  
 Overall area correct to within 5%





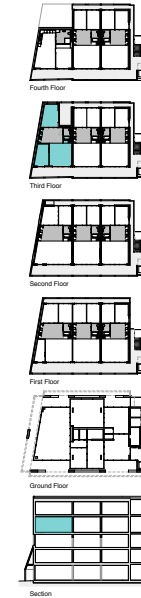
**Apartment type 6**  
**2 bed**  
**Area: 72 m<sup>2</sup> / 775 sqft**

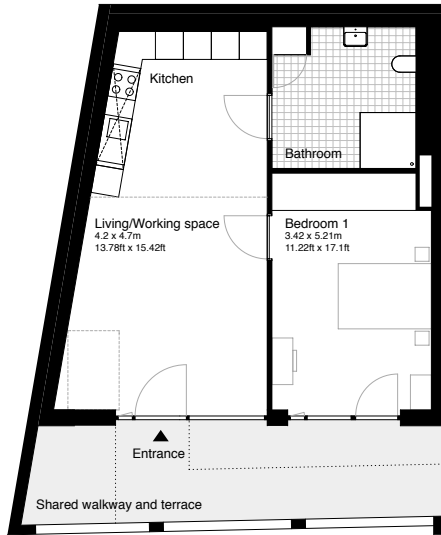
Exact layout of storage and bathroom may vary  
 Indicative Kitchen Arrangement  
 Overall area correct to within 5%



**Apartment type 7**  
**1 bed with studio**  
**Area: 78.2 m<sup>2</sup> / 842 sqft**

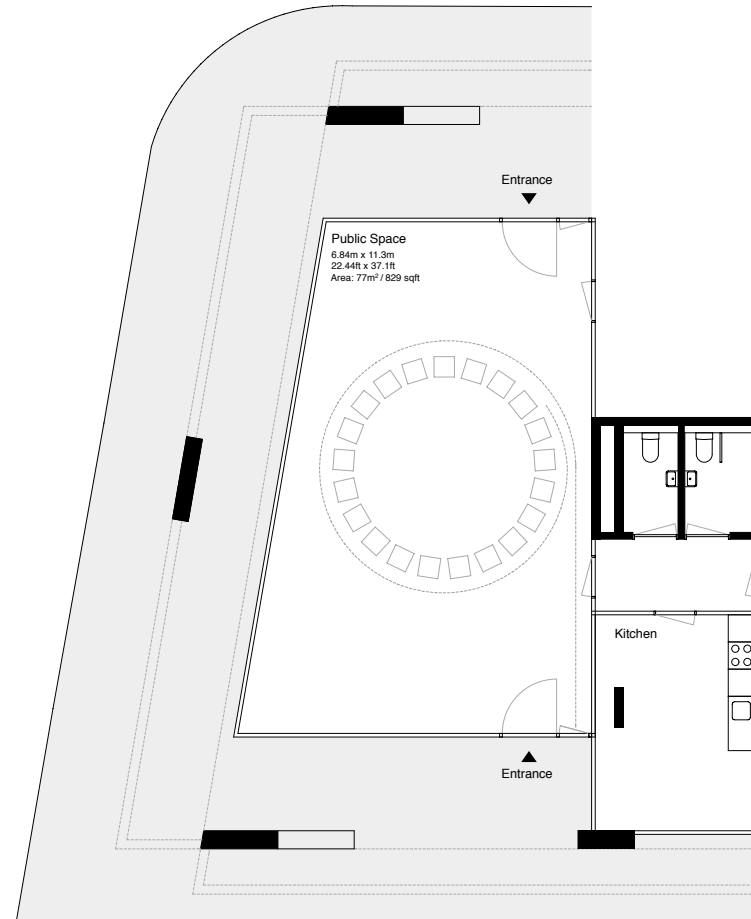
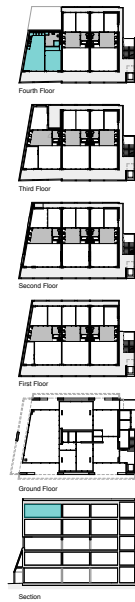
Exact layout of storage and bathroom may vary  
 Indicative Kitchen Arrangement  
 Overall area correct to within 5%





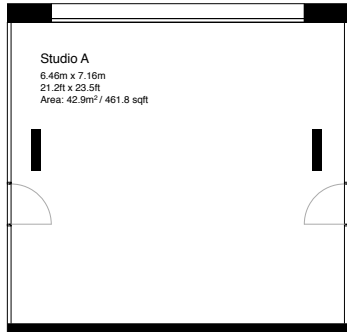
**Apartment type 8**  
**1 bed, Wheelchair User Apartment**  
**Area: 60 m<sup>2</sup> / 646 sqft**

Exact layout of storage and bathroom may vary  
 Indicative Kitchen Arrangement  
 Overall area correct to within 5%

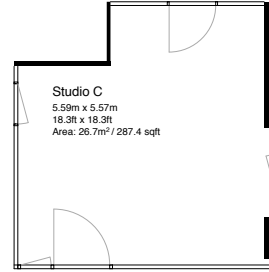
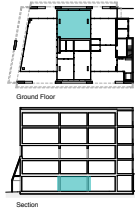


**Public Space**  
**Area: 77 m<sup>2</sup> / 829 sqft**  
 Exact layout and overall area may vary

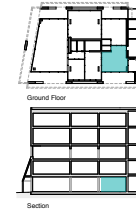




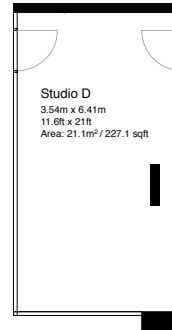
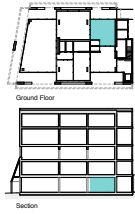
**Studio A**  
**Area: 42.9 m<sup>2</sup> / 461.8 sqft**  
 Exact layout and overall area may vary



**Studio C**  
**Area: 26.7 m<sup>2</sup> / 287.4 sqft**  
 Exact layout and overall area may vary



**Studio B**  
**Area: 27 m<sup>2</sup> / 290.6 sqft**  
 Exact layout and overall area may vary



**Studio D**  
**Area: 21.1 m<sup>2</sup> / 227.1 sqft**  
 Exact layout and overall area may vary

