



It takes all of us

A guide to getting involved



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

Foreword

The Council believes that the success of our borough is closely linked to the large number of residents willing to get involved and give their time and energy for the benefit of others. This long tradition of volunteering and community participation is something that I want to see continue and thrive.

That is why the Council of the Royal Borough has launched 'It Takes All of Us', a campaign encouraging even more residents to get involved in their local areas. It is my view that we all have a responsibility to invest some of our time, skill and energy in the world outside our homes and workplaces. You might give blood, join a residents' association or even sing in an opera. 'It Takes All of Us' is full of ways for you to play a part in the life of the borough and help make Kensington and Chelsea an even better place to live.

Participating in local life can offer people a way back into work, training and education, the chance to break out of isolation and meet new people or simply give the satisfaction of knowing you have made a difference to someone's day. We also believe that people who participate in their communities are more likely to get involved in the work of the Council and vote in elections and that is good for our democracy too.

We all live in the Royal Borough and it is my hope that we will all help to make it the best place to live in London.

Cllr Merrick Cockell

Leader of Kensington and Chelsea Council





Using this booklet

This booklet contains a small sample of the hundreds of groups and organisations working within the Royal Borough. Each entry contains a short description of the organisation, the opportunities on offer and its contact details.

Many of the groups can be contacted directly via the details provided and you can often get more information by visiting their websites.

Others are represented by the Volunteer Centre Kensington and Chelsea, the Royal Borough's dedicated volunteer agency (see pages 6-7 for more details). The entries for these organisations are labelled with the Volunteer Centre's name and contact details:

 020 8960 3722 **Volunteer Centre**

The Volunteer Centre can also help you find a suitable opportunity in one of the many organisations not featured in this booklet and offer advice and support about becoming a volunteer.

Visit the 'It Takes All of Us' website for more about volunteering in the Royal Borough. You can download an electronic copy of this booklet and look for more organisations in the Council's searchable A-Z directory.

 www.rbkc.gov.uk/allofus

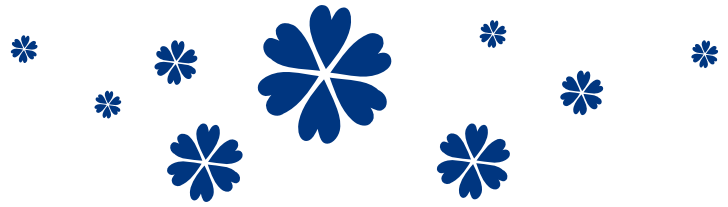


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The Volunteer Centre Kensington and Chelsea



When you volunteer your time and effort you are supporting organisations that do important work in our communities. You are giving some of your time and energy to those who need it. What is sometimes less obvious is that as a volunteer you get the sense of satisfaction that comes with making a difference to someone's day. You have the opportunity to gain confidence and develop skills that enhance your CV. One of the key messages of the Kensington and Chelsea Volunteer Centre is that everyone involved in volunteering benefits.

The Kensington and Chelsea Volunteer Centre traces its roots to 1969 when Lady Goodman set up the Volunteer Bureau. Her aim was to bring together volunteers and organisations in need of volunteers. The Bureau became the Volunteer Centre in 2005 but its central purpose has not changed.

The key role of the Volunteer Centre is to act as a matchmaker between residents keen to volunteer and the organisations who need their help. They offer opportunities that vary from helping at one-off events to long-term roles that utilise a variety of your skills. The only requirements are enthusiasm and commitment.

The strength of the Volunteer Centre lies in its wide-ranging experience with and contacts across the voluntary sector. Knowledgeable staff will help you find the role that suits you best and provide support and advice while you work.

If you want to become a volunteer in Kensington and Chelsea your first step will be to contact the Volunteer Centre.

Contact the Volunteer Centre:

 020 8960 3722 / 020 8960 3750

 enquiries@voluntarywork.org.uk

 www.voluntarywork.org.uk

Or visit their offices at:

Canalside House
383 Ladbroke Grove
London W10 5AA

You can call in from Monday to Friday between 10am and 5pm.

The Volunteer Centre also works with the Royal Borough's voluntary organisations to ensure that they are able to meet legal requirements, as well as providing more general guidance. If you are a member of a voluntary organisation the Volunteer Centre is ideally equipped to offer advice and help about your own volunteers.



[case study]

"I work with a team of volunteers and have witnessed lots of people use the Centre to find voluntary work. And I must say, it's a really satisfying job. All kinds of people use our service; students come in looking for practical experience to help them get their first job; mothers, who have been out of work raising a family, find voluntary roles that fit in with their busy family lives, people with English as a second language find roles that help them improve their English. Sometimes people find the right placement right away and sometimes it takes a couple of attempts, but volunteers are happy when they find one that suits them.

Most of the team at the Volunteer Centre are also volunteers, they volunteer to update their IT and customer service skills. It's great to see how they progress once they get the hang of all the systems, they become more confident of their skills and they often find jobs as a result of their volunteering."

Eli Wislocka

Volunteer Services Officer

Kensington and Chelsea Volunteer Centre

Keeping your community safe



Keeping our neighbourhoods safe is vitally important and the Metropolitan Police work hard to keep our local areas free of crime and the fear of crime. The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea is a safe place to live but there is always more we can do. Working together as a community is a powerful way of decreasing crime. Here are some of the ways that you can take part.

Special Constables

Special Constables are volunteer police officers. They are everyday people who choose to do something positive for themselves and their community in their spare time.

Specials are given the same powers as regular police officers and undergo intensive police training before going out on patrol. You would volunteer for eight hours duty every fortnight or a minimum of 200 hours per year. As a Special Constable you will take part in a wide range of duties and make a real difference to policing within the community.


 08457 272212

 www.metpolicecareers.co.uk/specials

Neighbourhood Watch

Neighbourhood Watch is one of the biggest and most successful crime prevention initiatives ever. Behind it lies the simple idea that the best way to take action against crime is to work together as a neighbourhood.

Neighbourhood Watch groups encourage the reporting of suspicious incidents to the police, put into practice crime prevention measures, such as property marking and security devices and keep an eye on vulnerable households.

 020 8246 0822

 commsafe@rbkc.gov.uk

 www.neighbourhoodwatch.uk.com





Met Volunteers

The Met Volunteer Programme gives volunteers the opportunity to support the Metropolitan Police throughout London in a variety of roles in customer service, administration, media and communications and community engagement.

The volunteers also increase contact between local communities and the police, and significantly improve the service given to the public.

 020 8960 3722 **Volunteer Centre**

 www.metpolicecareers.co.uk/met_volunteer.html

Magistrates

Magistrates are local volunteers who deal with all legal cases in England and Wales, deciding 95 per cent of them. Even murder and rape trials start in the magistrates' courts.

You do not need formal qualifications or legal training to become a magistrate but are expected to have personal integrity and the respect and trust of others. Being a magistrate demands significant commitment, requiring you to sit for at least 26 half-days over the year, but the system is so stretched that many do well over 50.

 020 7210 8993

 www.direct.gov.uk/magistrates

Appropriate Adult

Police regulations demand that young people and vulnerable adults must have an 'Appropriate Adult' with them when they are interviewed. The adult can be a family member or friend but organised groups of trained volunteers increasingly carry out this important role.

As an 'Appropriate Adult' you ensure that the vulnerable person's interests are represented and give them general support, for instance, making sure he or she has eaten. You would usually stay until the person is released or charged.

 020 8960 3722 **Volunteer Centre**

 www.appropriateadult.org.uk

Victim Support

Victim Support has been supporting residents in Kensington and Chelsea since 1980. They are always looking for local people to join their team of volunteers to offer emotional and practical help to people affected by crime.

Volunteers provide reassurance and emotional support to anyone who asks for help, they offer practical assistance with applying for Criminal Injuries Compensation and discuss information about police and court procedures.

 020 8960 3722 **Volunteer Centre**


 www.victimsupport.org.uk



Your Safer Neighbourhood Teams

The officers on your Safer Neighbourhoods team spend much of their time out on patrol in your neighbourhood, meeting the community and identifying and dealing with the things that cause you most concern.

They work in partnership with the community and the relevant council departments but most significantly the Safer Neighbourhood Teams rely on contact with local people. You can help the teams by making sure they are kept aware of the issues in your area.

 020 7230 1212


 www.met.police.uk/saferneighbourhoods



Independent Custody Visitors

Independent Custody Visitors are volunteers who make unannounced visits to local police stations to check on the treatment of people detained by the police. They observe and report on conditions in police cells.

If you could fulfil this vital role, are over eighteen, and live, work or study in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea please get in touch. This is a voluntary role but full training will be given and expenses paid.

 08081 001036

 icvrecruitment@mpa.gov.uk


 www.mpa.gov.uk/partnerships/icv

It is the policy of the Metropolitan Police to advise residents not to approach suspected criminals. In the event of witnessing a crime please call 999.

Territorial Army

The Territorial Army is a reserve force of civilians who complete soldier training and provide operational support on a spare time basis. They work with the Regular Army to add reinforcement whenever and wherever necessary.

Basic training is challenging and enjoyable. It will teach you everything you need to know to become an effective soldier and to fulfil your role within the TA, from military terminology, drill and how to wear your uniform to physical fitness, weapon handling, first aid, field craft, and map reading. The final two-week course ends with a series of tests and a passing out parade.

 08457 300111

 www.armyjobs.mod.uk/




Health and well-being

Becoming a blood donor

Only four per cent of the eligible population gives blood but the National Blood Service needs 7,000 donations of blood every day to supply the blood needed to treat patients. New donors are always welcomed.

The National Blood Service depends entirely on voluntary donations from the general public and encourages existing donors to give three times a year. To be eligible to give blood you must be between 17 and 70 years of age and in general good health.

 08457 711711

 www.blood.co.uk

Samaritans

Samaritans provides completely confidential emotional support 24 hours a day thanks to its 17,000 volunteers. Your local branch of Samaritans is always looking for people able to listen without passing judgement.

You don't need formal qualifications or previous experience, only a natural ability to listen and remain open-minded. If you have expertise in accountancy, administration, construction and maintenance, the law or psychiatry, you will also be able to help in other areas and some branches also have charity shops that need managers and shift workers.


 020 8960 3722 **Volunteer Centre**

 www.samaritans.org

RBKC LINK (Local Involvement Network for Health and Social Care)

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Local Involvement Network (LINK) is a network for individuals, organisations and groups that want to improve local health and social care services.

The LINK encourages and supports anyone who wants to get involved in influencing how local care services are planned and run. Working with RBKC LINK can help you to draw attention to neglected issues and talk to decision makers. It is a way for the community to speak with a stronger local voice

 020 8968 7049 / 07967 225015

 rbkclink@hestia.org

 www.rbkclink.org

Blenheim Community Drug Project

Blenheim Community Drug Project has a long and proud history of providing high quality services to communities affected by substance misuse. Volunteers have a key role in helping us continue to meet the high standards we set ourselves. You could become a volunteer in the Portobello Road Drop In Centre, offer counselling or play a part in one of the education and training sessions.

There is also the option to join "A Pathway to Drugs Work", a course accredited by the Open College Network London Region and useful as a stepping stone to becoming a drugs worker. The course is free if you are a volunteer at Blenheim CDP.

 020 8960 3722 **Volunteer Centre**

 www.blenheimcdp.org.uk





The Royal Borough's hospitals

The Royal Borough's hospitals have a community dedicated to supporting staff and patients. They raise money, provide services and campaign on behalf of the patients and visitors in Kensington and Chelsea's public health facilities.

Other organisations include

The Friends of the Chelsea & Westminster Hospital

 www.chelwest.nhs.uk/patients/helping_us.htm

Friends Of The Royal Marsden

 www.royalmarsden.org/campaign/support/howtohelp

Friends Of Royal Brompton Hospital

 www.rbht.nhs.uk/jobs/volunteers/friends

Royal Brompton Volunteers

 www.rbht.nhs.uk/jobs/volunteers

Imperial College

 www.imperial.nhs.uk/workwithus/volunteering

[case study]

Friends of Chelsea Children's Hospital School

Chelsea Children's Hospital School provides education and creative art therapies for 50 weeks a year. The school has facilities at St Mary's, Chelsea and Westminster, Royal Brompton and Collingham Child and Family Unit.

There are many active volunteers providing vital assistance to the everyday work, both raising money for the charity, helping take young people on outings and assisting in the classrooms.

 janettesteel@cchs.org.uk

 www.cchs.org.uk

Response Community Projects

Response Community Projects is a charity occupying a shop in the Old Brompton Road and run by a volunteer management committee. Around five hundred individuals a week use Response's premises making it one of the busiest and best used community resources in the borough.

Response relies on its local membership to ensure that it continues to provide its services, from the free internet shop, room hire facilities and drop in coffee bar to the homework club, IT, language and Yoga courses, with regular social activities for the elderly. You can play a part by becoming a member of Response.

 020 8960 3722 **Volunteer Centre**

 www.responseprojects.org.uk

St Mungo's

St Mungo's is London's largest charity for homeless people. It opens its doors to homeless and vulnerable people, enabling their recovery, and works to prevent rough sleeping in the first place.

Volunteering at St Mungo's is perfect for people who want to gain experience in the housing sector, or for those who may simply wish to donate a few hours of their time every week. St Mungo's especially encourages people with their own experience of homelessness to volunteer.


 020 8960 3722 **Volunteer Centre**

 www.mungos.org

Staying Put Services/Furnish

Staying Put Services/Furnish collect items of donated furniture and redistribute them to vulnerable clients. They also provide new furniture, including domestic appliances, to social housing clients.

You could donate your good quality furniture to Staying Put or play a part in the running of the organisation. As a volunteer you could work on one of the four vehicles delivering and collecting furniture, helping in the warehouses or in the office and assisting clients.

 020 8969 3332

 furnish.enquiry@sbhg.co.uk

 www.stayingput.co.uk/furnish



The CARA Trust

The CARA Trust is a local volunteer organisation working in west London since the late 1980s. CARA provides a range of services to people living with HIV, helping them to live life to the full.

Volunteers will work in this caring environment in a variety of roles, from providing care to using your organisational and administrative skills. You would support the Trust's many services, including home and hospital visiting, peer support groups, information provision, discussion and personal development, spiritual reflection and regular group meetings.

 020 8960 3722 **Volunteer Centre**

 www.caralife.com

Chelsea Methodist Centre

Chelsea Methodist Centre accommodates a wide variety of groups and activities, including work with families and a counselling service. Volunteers work in the café and assist in the Centre's projects, such as the Winter Night Shelter, working with wide variety of people who use the facilities, including those who are homeless, the lonely, people living with mental health problems, and guests from Chelsea and from far afield.

 020 8960 3722 **Volunteer Centre**

 www.chelseamethodist.org.uk

Action Disability Kensington and Chelsea (ADKC)

ADKC works to enhance opportunities for disabled people living or working in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. ADKC provides a Resource Centre, helping to set up and support new services in response to needs.

As a volunteer you could help to remove the barriers that disabled people face. Volunteers assist by giving practical help, such as completing small DIY projects, spending one-to-one time with our users or providing assistance at the team's office.

 020 8960 3722 **Volunteer Centre**

 www.adkc.org.uk

Terrence Higgins Trust (THT)

THT is the UK's leading HIV and sexual health charity, providing a wide range of services across England, Wales and Scotland.

THT was founded in 1982. People voluntarily offering their time and experience continue to be vital to the charity. People volunteer for all sorts of roles, from helping out for a few hours at a fundraising event to running the reception desk at a service centre for a couple of days a week. They train all volunteers for their role and give support and supervision to ensure that they remain happy with the work they are doing.

 020 8960 3722 **Volunteer Centre**


 www.tht.org.uk



Positively Women

Positively Women is a charity where women living with HIV provide support to other women living with HIV. Its services and volunteer opportunities are specifically intended to help women build skills, confidence, and move into employment, further education or other areas of volunteering.

If you are a woman living with HIV then getting involved with Positively Women is a chance to share your skills and experiences with others, help with fundraising or enjoy the opportunities for personal development through training and volunteering.

 020 7713 0444


 info@positivelywomen.org.uk

 www.positivelywomen.org.uk

The Kensington and Chelsea Talking Newspaper

The Talking Newspaper is a fortnightly publication gathering together the most interesting and informative stories of the past two weeks.


It is put together by volunteers and new members are always welcome to join the team of editors, readers and technicians. Editors select items from national and local press to produce a sixty minute audiotape for visually impaired listeners in the Royal Borough. Readers and sound technicians then produce the tape before it is dispatched to all our listeners. Come and join in at the recording sessions in the Central Library.

 020 7727 7626

Nucleus LAC

Nucleus is an independent agency offering general legal advice and assistance. The organisation specialises in cases related to debt, housing, and welfare benefit. Nucleus is based in Earl's Court and provides advice to the local community through open door sessions, advice lines and by appointment.

Volunteers work throughout the organisation, complementing the service provided by paid staff. Volunteers help in all aspects of the service from admin work to providing information and advice up to tribunal level.

 020 7373 2102


 advice@nucleus.org.uk

 www.nucleus.org.uk

Cruse Bereavement Care

Cruse exists to promote the well-being of bereaved people and help them understand their grief and cope with their loss.

Anyone can apply to be a volunteer for Cruse. You do not need to have any qualifications or previous experience but you do need to care about bereaved people and have time to offer. You will be given all the preparation, training and support you need to give support to people coping with loss of loved ones. Cruse also needs administrators, trainers, supervisors and fundraisers to maintain the organisation's service.

 020 8964 3455

 kensington@cruse.org.uk

 www.cruse.org.uk



The ClementJames Centre

The ClementJames Centre is based in Notting Dale and its Community Education Programme provides a structured, integrated set of activities for disadvantaged people in the local area.

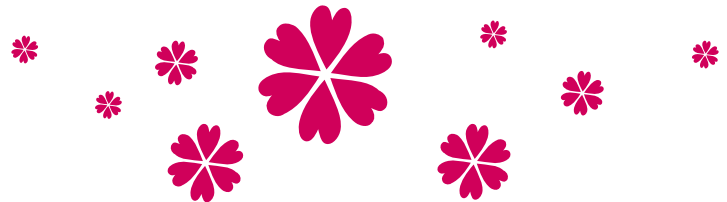
This includes English language classes, a film club, the IntoUniversity scheme (see p21 for more information), a community shop for those on low incomes and a community garden. As a volunteer you could support this by using your gardening skills, providing administrative support, becoming a mentor, supporting the IntoUniversity scheme or taking part in fundraising.

 020 8960 3722 **Volunteer Centre**

 www.clementjames.co.uk

Preserving our borough's legacy

Kensington and Chelsea is full of historic landmarks and areas of outstanding beauty. The Council works hard to preserve and improve these public spaces but you can play a significant role in helping to maintain the Royal Borough's unique character.



Natural History Museum

The Natural History Museum has over 200 active volunteers involved in a range of diverse roles. All the volunteers are unified by a shared appreciation of the natural world.

The opportunities include teaching and interacting with our visitors, the meticulous maintenance and cataloguing of the collections or helping behind the scenes in an administrative function. Volunteers have the chance to get their hands dirty in the Museum's own wildlife garden, helping maintain the ecosystem and monitoring biodiversity in the garden. Positions are advertised via the Museum website and opportunities arise as outlined in the main summary.

 www.nhm.ac.uk/take-part

Victoria and Albert Museum

The V&A is London's museum of art and design and volunteers assist in many activities and departments. They work on the information desks, as tour guides, as escorts for people with disabilities and also in administrative roles in the offices.

As a volunteer, you will be part of a large, friendly team and really discover the V&A. You will enjoy training, special talks and behind-the-scenes tours, as well as previews to special exhibitions and discounts in the V&A shop and restaurant.

 hr@vam.ac.uk


 www.vam.ac.uk





The Friends of Leighton House Museum and Linley Sambourne House

The Friends is a charitable organisation set up to support the preservation and on-going restoration of two remarkable Victorian historic houses in Kensington. The charity relies heavily on volunteers to help with events, administration, fundraising and other activities.

 020 7471 9157

 friendsofleightonhousemuseum@rbkc.gov.uk

 www.rbkc.gov.uk/leightonhousemuseum

Open spaces

Despite its small size the Royal Borough is home to many parks and areas of peace and quiet. There are groups that work to ensure that these historic areas are maintained as sites of natural beauty. Look for signs at the park entrances for specific information about Friends groups.

The following organisations can be contacted for more information about preserving the Royal Borough's open spaces:

Royal Parks Foundation

 www.royalparksfoundation.org/support/volunteer.cfm

The Friends of Kensal Green Cemetery

 www.kensalgreen.co.uk

Brompton Cemetery

 www.royalparksfoundation.org.uk/parks/brompton_cemetery

London Waterways Recovery Group


 www.london.wrg.org.uk



HISTORYtalk

HistoryTalk helps people, communities and organisations to bring their history to life. HISTORYtalk offers its specialist knowledge of the history of Kensington and Chelsea, training courses, and opportunities for learning, voluntary work or specialist interest.

HISTORYtalk runs the Reminiscence at Home project, recording the lives of older residents in the Royal Borough. Anyone who is over 65 years old is welcome to take part. Volunteers from all over London are also invited to become interviewers on the project and help collect people's accounts of the past.

 020 7792 2282

 dwelsh@historytalk.org

 www.historytalk.org

Friends of Portobello

The Friends of Portobello is a local campaign that aims to preserve Portobello Road as Britain's first 'Business Conservation Area'. The Friends want to help this great London street market keep its unique appeal and stop it turning into another stereotypical high street.

 info@friendsofportobello.com

 www.friendsofportobello.com

[case study]

The Friends of Brompton Cemetery

I joined the Friends of Brompton Cemetery not long after moving to London to retire. I had spent almost thirty years working in Hong Kong and Japan and I wanted to get to know London better.

A friend of my wife mentioned that the Friends needed a guide to take visitors around the cemetery and I offered to help out. I was evidently competent enough as now I'm a member of the committee. We liaise with the Royal Parks, who own the cemetery, and decide how to spend the money that we raise, as well as organising the annual open day and occasional lectures in the chapel.

I still take visitors around the cemetery, as we have scheduled guided tours once a fortnight. I tell them about the cemetery's history, its few famous graves and how much buying a plot now would cost! The numbers can range from three to 33; during the holidays we often have a number of people and if it's raining no-one might turn up. I always enjoy it no matter how many people there are.

Joining the Friends has certainly helped me settle in London and I still meet new people whenever I lead a tour. It has also given me the chance to learn about the Royal Parks and the other open spaces around the city. The Friends aim is to enable as many people as possible to enjoy Brompton Cemetery. It's surprising how much there is just on your doorstep.

David Beauchamp



Kensington and Chelsea In Bloom

Every year the Royal Borough participates in London in Bloom, a competition encouraging the Council, local business and residents to make London a brighter place to live, work and visit.

In Bloom encourages residents to make positive and lasting changes in their local area through floral displays, permanent planting and sustainability. If you are particularly proud of your trees, shrubs and flowers or want to join in with efforts to make London a more attractive city then contact the Council about Britain in Bloom.


 britain.inbloom@rbkc.gov.uk

 www.rbkc.gov.uk/ParksAndGardens/inbloom

Chelsea Physic Garden

The historic Chelsea Physic garden is run by a charity. It enables the public to develop their knowledge of plants and their varied uses. The garden has a small staff, resulting in its dependence on a team of volunteers who provide a number of invaluable services.

If you would like to help the Chelsea Physic Garden there are a number of areas where volunteers make a crucial difference. The garden always needs trained guides to assist visitors and look after the premises during opening hours. The education department is always looking for helpers and volunteer gardeners embarking on a horticultural career are highly valued.

 020 7352 5646

 curator@chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk

 www.chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk

River Thames Society

The River Thames Society organises the Volunteer River Warden Scheme. Wardens monitor the condition of the Thames, both its banks and the water, in the tidal and non-tidal areas. Their work includes recording the condition of footpaths, banks, vegetation, fences, riverside furniture and safety equipment.


They work closely with the Environment Agency and Natural England, local authorities and others to safeguard the river and its environment.

 admin@riverthamesociety.org.uk

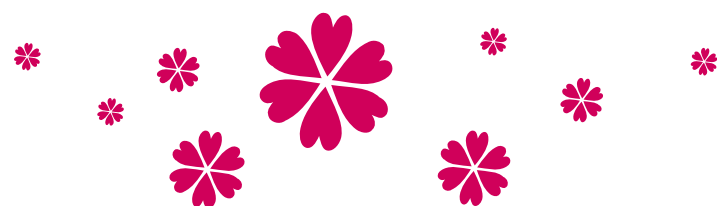
 www.riverthamesociety.org.uk

The Kensington and Chelsea Environment Round Table

The Environment Round Table is a residents' group that meets every two or three months to discuss, question and debate issues around pollution and the environment in Kensington and Chelsea. Contact the Council for more information.

 020 7361 2605

 www.rbkc.gov.uk/Consultation/General/consay2.asp





London Parks & Gardens Trust

London Parks & Gardens Trust aims to increase the public's knowledge and appreciation of the parks, squares, community gardens, cemeteries and churchyards that make up London's open spaces.

Members provide and attend lectures, walks, day trips, children's programmes, involve themselves in the newsletters and journal, as well as organising the annual Open Garden Squares Weekend.

The London Parks & Gardens Trust is looking for volunteers to research and expand information in its Inventory of Historic Garden Spaces. It welcomes new members who care about London's natural and designed open spaces.

 www.londongardenstrust.org

Westminster, Kensington & Chelsea Friends of the Earth

Friends of the Earth groups consist of ordinary people who volunteer some time to try to improve the environment locally, nationally and internationally.

Westminster, Kensington & Chelsea Friends of the Earth meets every other month and welcomes new members. There is a role for everybody in the local group, regardless of the amount of time they have available, their experience or their knowledge of environmental issues.

 jahallpike@hotmail.com

 www.wkcfoe.org



Meanwhile Gardens Community Association

Meanwhile Gardens Community Association aims to enhance the lives of residents in north Kensington and north Westminster by providing safe and inclusive open air leisure, play, and training and education opportunities in our four-acre community park.

 020 8960 3722 **Volunteer Centre**

 www.meanwhilegardens.com

Opportunities for young people

Most of the opportunities outlined in these pages are open to all residents but some are just for young people. Getting involved in your community doesn't just mean helping those in need and there are lots of opportunities across the Royal Borough for you to try new things from five-a-side football to performing opera.

KCcentral

KCcentral is the website for young people in Kensington and Chelsea. It provides a space for younger residents to access a variety of information about the borough. KCcentral has competitions, advice, news of events and details about the many services provided for young people.


If you would like to give your opinions about KCcentral and its content you could join the KCcentral Forum. The Forum is a group of young people who support the KCcentral website manager and provide content on a number of areas of the website.

 kccentral@rbkc.gov.uk

 www.rbkc.gov.uk/kccentral

Royal Court Young Writers Programme

The Royal Court Young Writers Programme is committed to developing an exciting and diverse range of new voices in the theatre. It is open to anyone between the ages of thirteen and twenty-five who wants to create and enjoy contemporary drama. The programme runs playwriting courses at the theatre, as well as holding playwriting projects in schools, youth centres and colleges.

 0207 565 5050

 ywp@royalcourttheatre.com


 www.royalcourttheatre.com

Children's Forum

The Children's Forum provides opportunities for children to debate and actively participate in local services for children.

The forum is open to children aged eight to 13 who live or go to school in the Royal Borough. There are two groups which meet fortnightly from 4 to 5.30pm.

Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that children are citizens and share the same fundamental rights to participate in the decisions that affect their lives as adults.

 020 7938 8071

 chif@rbkc.gov.uk

 www.rbkc.gov.uk/kccwhats_up/volunteering





W11 Opera for Young People

Since its foundation in 1971 W11 Opera has commissioned and produced almost 30 new pieces of musical theatre, providing a rich repertoire for its cast of nine to 18 year olds. W11 Opera builds strong relationships with the cast and their parents, with everyone contributing their time and skills to the production of the annual show.

This inspiring company provides a unique opportunity for young people from all backgrounds to become involved in opera.


 auditions@w11opera.org

 www.w11opera.org

Youth Culture Television

If you have ever watched TV and wanted to get involved then YCTV will give the chance to try it out. YCTV provides free training in all aspects of television, from writing and producing to directing and editing.

You will get the opportunity to sample a variety of options and concentrate on the ones that you're most interested in. You might want to direct a film, shoot a documentary or decorate your MySpace page. YCTV will give you the chance to try it out.

 020 8964 4646


 info@yctv.org

 www.yctv.org

Sports Coaching Qualification Scheme

The scheme is a unique opportunity for young people to gain Level 1 and Level 2 coaching qualifications. It offers young people the flexibility to choose which coaching course they want to do and when they want to do it.

The scheme accepts applications throughout the year and is available to young people aged 16 to 19 years who live or go to school in the Royal Borough.


 020 7351 2346

 www.rbkc.gov.uk/sport/sportsdevelopment

Other youth activities

There are many groups where you can get involved with other young people, enjoy a variety of activities and learn new skills. These include:

The Duke of Edinburgh Award

 020 7352 3931


 saffron.burley@rbkc.gov.uk

 www.dofe.org

The Fourth Kensington Scout Group

 020 7808 0900 (The London Oratory Church)

Air Training Corps

 020 7584 8914

 whq-londonao1@atc.raf.mod.uk


 www.aircadets.org



Westway Youth Sports Academy


Westway Youth Sports Academy is open to people under 18 and offers professional football coaching, special events and competitions. There is something for everyone from beginners upwards and the emphasis is on action and involvement.

You could attend our open sessions, taught by qualified coaches. There are also holiday coaching courses for children of all abilities and special events such as five-a-side competitions, leagues and taster days organised throughout the year. In addition to our regular programme, there is also a Sunday league for local junior teams.

 020 8968 2633

 www.westway.org/sports

The Westway Development Trust also has a bursary scheme for local young people who would otherwise be financially excluded from sports activities.

 020 8962 5735

 jobrien@westway.org

Sixty Plus - Intergenerational Project

Sixty Plus is a charity that assists older people in Kensington and Chelsea to maintain their independence. Their Intergenerational Project provides opportunities for any young person aged 16 to 25 to volunteer for one hour a week to help visually impaired people, provide IT support and coaching for housebound older people or to offer help with learning English and practising conversation. The project aims to create partnerships of mutual benefit between older and younger people.

 020 8960 3722 **Volunteer Centre**


 www.sixtyplus.org.uk/services.htm

Peer tutoring

If you have an interest you want to share or if you are someone that others find easy to talk to then you could become a peer tutor. Peer tutors are volunteers aged between ten to 19 years old who support other children and young people to get the best from out of school hours learning and activities.

As a peer tutor you could help run courses in sports, art, music, film, media, homework and career advice as part of the Summer Uni activities or throughout the year.

All tutors receive training and it is a great asset for future education or employment, and a way to meet new people as well as develop new skills.

 020 7938 8053

 summeruni@rbkc.gov.uk

Work Experience at the Natural History Museum

The Natural History Museum has a work experience programme for students aged between 15 to 18 years old. The museum offers placements of up to two weeks in our specialist science departments: Botany, Entomology, Mineralogy, Palaeontology and Zoology. Given the high volumes of applications received they specifically seek students with an obvious interest in natural history and the science subjects.

To apply for a placement, students will need to complete an application form and send it in to the Volunteer Office.

 www.nhm.ac.uk/take-part/volunteer/work-experience



Arts and creativity


Taking part in creative activities lets you do something you enjoy, discover and develop talent and often produces something that you can share with others too. Join one of the groups here and start expressing yourself.



The Video College

The Video College is a west London charity set up through a local residents' association in 1994. The college provides free, high-quality, production-based video training with a strong drama element.

It encourages people of all ages to discover and develop their skills in video production. The college in particular looks to work with people traditionally under-represented in film and television industries, focussing on young people and adults who are unemployed or on low incomes.

 020 8964 2641


 thevideocollege@ukonline.co.uk

 www.thevideocollege.co.uk

Opera Holland Park Friends

Opera Holland Park Friends (OHPF) is a charity founded to broaden the appreciation and appeal of opera. This is achieved through educational events and by supporting Opera Holland Park's mission to provide quality, affordable opera to all.

Volunteers are the backbone of the organisation, helping with mailshots, administrative support, event planning, writing articles, education and fundraising. If you feel you have any skill that could benefit OHPF your input is welcome. From just a few hours a month to full-time – everything helps.

 020 7361 3910

 friends@operahollandpark.com

 www.rbkc.gov.uk/ohpfriends

Kensington Symphony Orchestra

The KSO enjoys its reputation as one of the finest amateur orchestra in the UK. Its founding premise is to provide non-professional and amateur musicians with an opportunity to perform concerts at the highest level.

The orchestra attracts the best non-professional players from around London and is keen to develop new contacts. The orchestra rehearses and regularly plays within the Royal Borough and in Westminster.

 www.kso.org.uk

Reading groups

Have you ever read a good book and been dying to talk to somebody about it? Would you enjoy discussing books in an informal and relaxed atmosphere? Then come along and join one of the library reading groups. There are groups for adults and children held at Chelsea Library and North Kensington Library.

 reading.groups@rbkc.gov.uk

 www.rbkc.gov.uk/libraries/readinggroups



Working with older people

Many older people live far from their families or have become unable to leave their homes regularly. A small thing like taking someone to the shops can make a huge difference to an older person's day. You can be a part of the many local and national organisations committed to making sure that any older people who need assistance can get it.



Open Age

Open Age provides a wide range of physical, creative and mentally stimulating activities that enable older people to develop new skills and socialise. Their work includes the 'New Futures 50 Plus' project, supporting people over 50 in employment and training, and a drop-in information service.

Open Age depends on volunteers in all areas of its work, including planning and managing Open Age activities, as well as providing help in the reception and administrative services at our centres.

 020 8960 3722 **Volunteer Centre**


 www.openage.co.uk


Contact the Elderly

Once a month local volunteers pick up one or two older people and visit the home of a volunteer host. Here they all spend a few hours together, chatting whilst enjoying afternoon tea and good company.

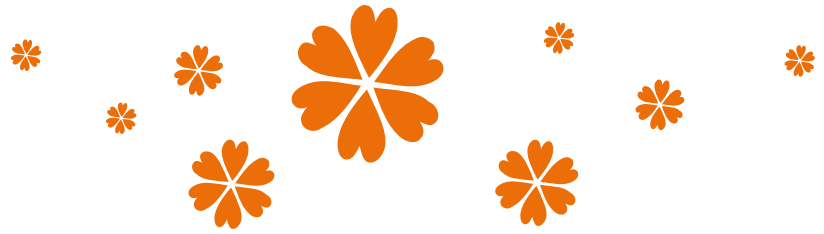
The older people who benefit from the service are over 75, live alone and are unable to easily get out on their own. With little or no contact with friends and family they can become isolated and joining a local group restores contact with the community.

To enjoy afternoons of great stories and ensure that the older people in your area are not forgotten you can volunteer as a driver or a host and make a difference to someone's day.

 0800 716543

 info@contact-the-elderly.org.uk


 www.contact-the-elderly.org




Westway Community Transport

Westway Community Transport provides a range of services for those who find using public transport a challenge. In addition to providing a fleet of minibuses for community groups, it offers door-to-door transport for individuals.

There are a number of volunteering possibilities, from vehicle maintenance to providing passenger assistance on shopping trips and excursions. Drivers can also use their own cars to provide one-to-one transport. All volunteers are fully reimbursed, supported and trained.

 020 8964 4928

 info@contact-the-elderly.org.uk

 www.westwayct.org.uk

Sixty Plus

With the help of over 150 volunteers who range in age from 16 to 84, Sixty Plus is able to offer that little bit of help which enables many older people to remain living at home for longer. Because it uses volunteers, all services are free of charge, enabling it to support the large number of members on means-tested benefits.

Volunteers at Sixty Plus befriend older people, offer practical help in the garden and around the home, and act as escorts to appointments or the shops.

 020 8960 3722 **Volunteer Centre**

 www.sixtyplus.org.uk

[case study]

"I started to volunteer as a minibus driver for the Sixty Plus shopping trips over ten years ago. I had been looking after my mother as her full-time carer for the last five years of her life, and after she died I felt really lost and useless. Then I saw an advert in St Mary's Hospital for volunteers in Kensington and Chelsea and via the K&C Volunteer Centre, I was put in touch with Sixty Plus.

I quickly got into the swing of driving once a week to the various supermarkets including Tesco Brent Cross, Morrisons Chalk Farm and Asda Park Royal and thoroughly enjoyed meeting all the wonderful people who come shopping. Sadly I have had to say goodbye to several that have died, all of whom became really good friends.

The trips are lots of fun and we have a great time singing along to all the old war songs, and pulling each other's legs. Everyone gets on well together and we are all good friends."

Mary Allen

Volunteer Driver
Sixty Plus



Working with young people

Volunteer Reading Help

Volunteer Reading Help is a national charity that helps disadvantaged children develop a love of reading and learning. They recruit and train volunteers to work with children aged six to 11 who find reading a challenge and may need extra support and mentoring.

A trained network of reading helpers support the same children week in, week out, giving each an hour of quality, one-to-one time. With your support children can gain greater confidence and self esteem as their reading standard improves.

 020 8960 3722 **Volunteer Centre**

 www.vrh.org.uk

West London Action for Children

West London Action for Children (WLAC) helps families, teenagers and children to face many different challenges, including domestic violence, bereavement, divorce and racism.

WLAC relies on volunteers from a range of backgrounds and there are many areas that you can get involved in. As a small charity volunteers can get involved with everything and are given full training for whatever task they embark on.

 020 8960 3722 **Volunteer Centre**

 www.wlac.org.uk

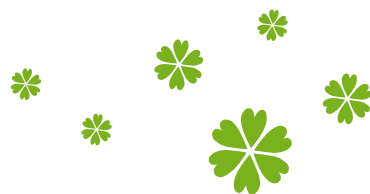
Havengrove

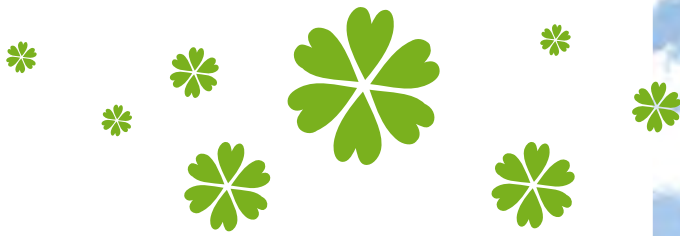
Havengrove is a charity dedicated to helping children and families in the Ladbroke Grove area by providing temporary accommodation, education, advice, and support to homeless mothers and babies. They run Grove House Mother and Baby Hostel, providing supportive, temporary accommodation to homeless pregnant women and new mothers who are not living with a partner.

Havengrove always needs mature, responsible people to fill a range of volunteer positions in childcare roles or as general helpers and trustees. The basic commitment is to attend one evening meeting a month and to participate in the decision making of the governing body. Full training will be given, and travel, childcare and other expenses are reimbursed.

 020 8960 3722 **Volunteer Centre**

 www.havengrove.org.uk





SpaceKC

SpaceKC works with people between 12 and 30 years old in Kensington and Chelsea. They offer a variety of services including information about contraception, a Young Women's group, the chance to talk with a counsellor, help to stop smoking and advice about benefits.

SpaceKC's volunteering programme welcomes a wide range of people and recognises that many people's talents are not identified by formal education but that skills can be developed through volunteering and work experience in a supportive environment.

 020 8960 3722 **Volunteer Centre**

 www.thespacekc.org

Rugby Portobello Trust

Rugby Portobello Trust works with the young people of north Kensington to provide a positive alternative to crime and social exclusion. The Trust provides a wide range of activities and learning programmes.

Volunteers support young people in all areas of the work and play a valuable part in supporting the services. Some act in general roles, for example, supporting a teenage mother, while others are from specialist backgrounds and work as maths or accountancy tutors. Others help in the homework club, in the evening Youth Club or in administration. All volunteers work under the supervision of experienced staff.

 djmoss@btinternet.com

 www.rugbyportobello.org.uk



IntoUniversity

IntoUniversity addresses underachievement and social exclusion among young people by offering an out-of-school study programme, mentoring, aspirational coaching and, in partnership with universities, specially-devised FOCUS weeks, days and weekends.

There are many ways you can help. At the heart of the programme is the belief that underachievement is best addressed in the context of a long-term pastoral engagement. You could help a child to read, help a young person with their GCSE coursework, join us on a FOCUS week or provide administrative support.

 maeve@intouniversity.org

 www.intouniversity.org


Becoming active in your neighbourhood

The Council works hard to make sure it listens to residents but there are many other organisations that represent the specific concerns of local neighbourhoods. These organisations allow individuals to come together to pursue their shared interest in ensuring their neighbourhoods are good places to live.

Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation (TMO)

If you are a tenant or a leaseholder in the Royal Borough's housing stock you have the opportunity to become a member of the TMO, which manages housing on behalf of the Council. The majority of the TMO's board of directors are made up from TMO residents and members.

As a member you can attend board meetings and all residents are able to participate through various committees and focus groups. The TMO has a dedicated Residents Involvement Team supporting all the TMO local residents associations and estate groups. The Residents Involvement Team also runs various training programmes and courses along with other participation events.


 020 7605 6500

 residentsfirst@kctmo.org.uk

 www.kctmo.org.uk

Residents Associations

The Council recognises the key role that tenants and residents associations have in conveying the views of residents to the Council and other public bodies. Residents who are interested in joining an association or who wish to start their own group can go to the Council's website to find an association in their area, or contact the Community Engagement Team at the Council for more information.

 020 7598 4633

 communityengagement@rbkc.gov.uk

 www.rbkc.gov.uk/residents



[case study]

World's End Residents Association

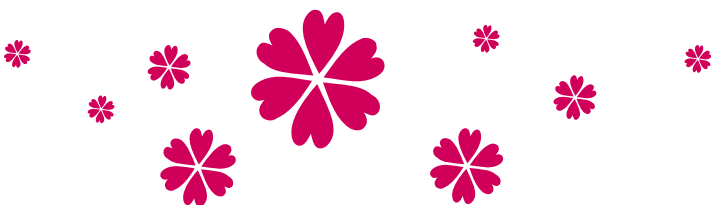
WERA was set up by the residents of the estate to represent the views and interests of all residents when dealing with the Council, its agents and contractors. It ensures that residents are regularly and properly consulted on what is happening on the estate. WERA tries to foster a wider sense of community and cooperation amongst all of the estate's residents and aims to ensure that all of the estate's communities are properly represented and are able to participate in its activities.

Any legal resident aged 16 or over can become a member of WERA by applying for membership to the Committee of the Association. WERA has a Management Committee of residents who meet once a month to discuss matters of interest to all residents of the World's End Estate. The Committee's main aim is to improve the estate and make it a better place in which to live. Any WERA member can become a member of the Committee by being nominated and elected at the WERA AGM. The Committee also plans and holds regular public meetings to try and keep all residents informed about what is happening on the estate.

 020 7795 3095


 wera@worlds-end.org.uk

 www.worlds-end.org.uk/wera



Gold Standard Award Scheme for tenants and residents associations


Tenants and residents associations can apply to the Council to be recognised as a Gold Standard organisation. The award acknowledges the excellent work that associations do in representing residents. Anyone wanting to consult with or join a Gold Standard association can be confident that it is well run and representative.

 020 7598 4633

 communityengagement@rbkc.gov.uk

Starting a new association

It could be that there is an important issue no-one else is addressing or your area is not represented by a residents association. Why not think about setting up your own organisation with help of the Volunteer Centre and the Kensington and Chelsea Partnership?

 020 7598 4633

 communityengagement@rbkc.gov.uk

Freecycle

The Freecycle Network is a website helping local people dispose of their property by giving it away. Members update the site with details of any unwanted items and the other users simply collect them at a convenient time.


Each local group is moderated by a local volunteer and membership is free. You can find your nearest Freecycle group by visiting the website.

 www.freecycle.org

Notting Hill Housing

Notting Hill Housing is one of the UK's largest providers of affordable housing. It employs approximately 750 staff, manages 19,000 homes and houses nearly 50,000 people across London.

NHH depend on feedback from residents, as well as the invaluable time and effort supplied by volunteers. These are individuals and groups from every walk of life who live or work locally and are prepared to give up some of their free time to befriend a isolated person or give practical assistance around the neighbourhood.

 020 8357 5139

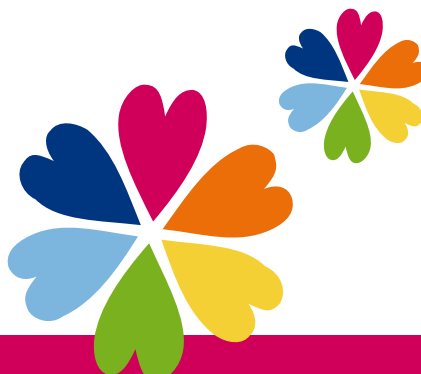
 volunteer@nhhg.org.uk

 www.nottinghillhousing.org.uk

Council events

Kensington and Chelsea Council organises and hosts events across the borough throughout the year. To keep up with the latest happenings keep an eye on the Council's online events calendar.


 www.rbkc.gov.uk/events



The Community Engagement Team

The Community Engagement Team works with Council departments and partners to devise, support and run projects that help build communities and neighbourhoods in which all our residents can thrive.

The Team works to strengthen community organisations. It empowers people to access services and helps contribute to the improvement of services. You can register your contact details with the team to be kept informed about community engagement projects in the Royal Borough.


 020 7598 4633

 communityengagement@rbkc.gov.uk

Annual Community Relations Forum

The Council's Annual Community Relations Forum is an opportunity for residents and anyone who has an interest in improving life in Kensington and Chelsea to participate in discussions with decision makers and those responsible for delivering services.

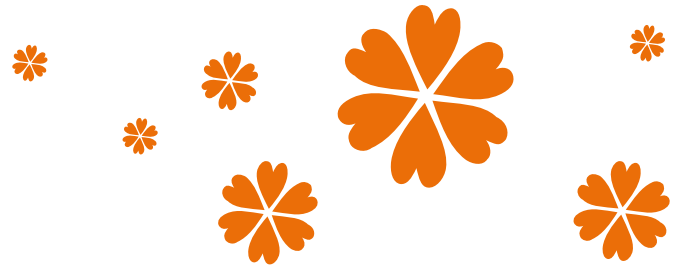
The Forum is a popular event that attracts up to 200 participants and is free and open to all.

 020 7598 4633

 communityengagement@rbkc.gov.uk



Voting and local democracy



The key principle of British democracy is that the electorate choose the men and women who make the decisions that shape society. Residents of Kensington and Chelsea are able to vote in a number of elections.

Who am I voting for?

Your vote helps decide who will represent you in either your local authority, Parliament, the Greater London Authority or the European Parliament. You also vote for the Mayor of London.

Can I vote?

There are different entitlements to vote depending on the election. You must be 18 years old or over to vote in a UK election but there are other criteria relating to nationality. These are summarised below:

To vote in a general election you must be:

- a British or Commonwealth citizen resident in the UK or
- a citizen of the Irish Republic resident in the UK

To vote in a European election, local government election, Greater London Authority election or London Mayoral election you must be:

- a British or Commonwealth citizen resident in the UK or
- a citizen of the Irish Republic resident in the UK or
- a citizen of an EU country resident in the UK

For more information about voting see


 www.aboutmyvote.co.uk

How do I register to vote?

In order to vote your name must be on the Electoral Register. You can register to vote if you live in the Royal Borough, are 17 or over and are of British, Irish, EU or Commonwealth nationality.

The electoral registration form must be filled in with your full name, address and nationality. You must live at the address when you apply to register and you cannot register before moving to an address. If you mainly live abroad please contact the helpline. Only those aged 18 or over can vote but 17 year olds should also be registered. 16 year olds can also register depending on their birthday. Nationality is regarded as passport/s held.

Once the completed form has been processed your name will be added to the electoral register and you will be entitled to vote in the area where you live.

 020 7361 3444

 elect@rbkc.gov.uk

 www.rbkc.gov.uk/yourcouncil/localdemocracy






How do I vote?

Several weeks before every election you will be sent a polling card informing you of the forthcoming election, the day on which the election will be held, and the polling station where you should vote.

You will only be able to vote at the polling station listed on your card. The polling station will be near to your home and the address will be clearly stated on the card.

If you will not be in the country on polling day or are unable to vote at your local polling station you can apply for a postal or proxy vote. Contact Electoral Services for more details.

 020 7361 3444

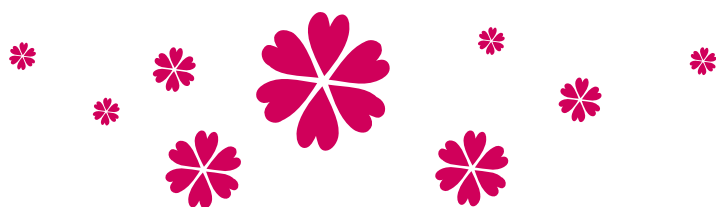
 elect@rbkc.gov.uk

 www.rbkc.gov.uk/yourcouncil/localdemocracy

For more information about voter registration see:

 www.aboutmyvote.co.uk

Making your voice heard in the Council




Not everyone is able to commit to volunteering but you can still play a part in the life of the Royal Borough. Just taking the time to report a faulty street lamp or an uneven paving slab can help to keep Kensington and Chelsea a safe and welcoming place.

The Council is always looking to ensure that decisions have been subjected to public consultation. Day-to-day operations are constantly subject to public scrutiny and residents are encouraged to become involved in the process of developing and improving local services.


Contact the relevant Council departments on the following numbers:

Enquiryline

 020 7361 3000


 information@rbkc.gov.uk

Streetline

 020 7361 3001


 streetline@rbkc.gov.uk

Environmental Healthline

 020 7361 3002


 environmentalhealth@rbkc.gov.uk

Arts and Leisureline

 020 7361 3003


 artsandleisure@rbkc.gov.uk

Parkingline

 020 7361 3004


 parking@rbkc.gov.uk

Council Taxline

 020 7361 3005

 counciltax@rbkc.gov.uk

Benefitsline

 020 7361 3006

 benefits@rbkc.gov.uk



Paymentsline

- 020 7361 3007
- www.rbkc.gov.uk/onlinepayments

Housingline

- 020 7361 3008
- housing@rbkc.gov.uk

Educationline

- 020 7361 3009
- education@rbkc.gov.uk

Librariesline

- 020 7361 3010
- libraries@rbkc.gov.uk

Recruitmentline

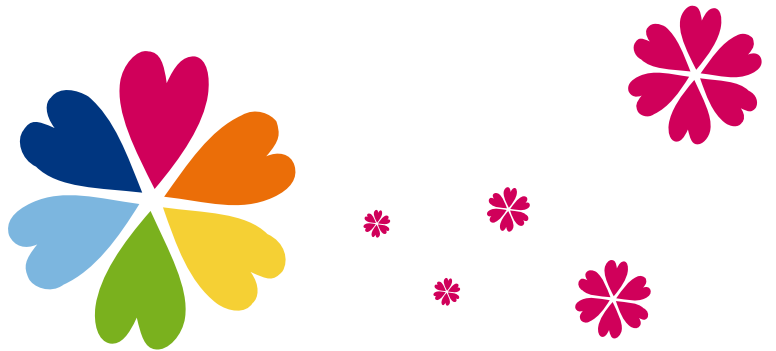
- 020 7361 3011
- recruitment@rbkc.gov.uk

Planning

- 020 7361 3012
- planning@rbkc.gov.uk

SocialServicesline

- 020 7361 3013
- socialservices@rbkc.gov.uk



Email updates


To be kept up-to-date with the Council's business you can receive email updates about a variety of issues, including Planning Applications and Key Decisions made by the Council.

 www.rbkc.gov.uk/secure/emailalerts

Kensington and Chelsea Social Council

Kensington and Chelsea Social Council (KCSC) works to empower and support voluntary and community groups in Kensington and Chelsea. It aims for all the residents of the Royal Borough to be able to access services, influence decision making and belong to an inclusive society.

Contact KCSC to find out about the voluntary sector and access training or resources.

 020 7243 9800

 info@kcsc.org.uk

 www.kcsc.org.uk


Council meetings information

The Council meets regularly for members to debate issues and make decisions. Details of the scheduling and agenda of future meetings, along with minutes from past meetings, can be found on the Council's website.

 www.rbkc.gov.uk/meetingsreports

Commenting on planning decisions

Town planning can be one of the most controversial of the Council's responsibilities. Residents have the opportunity to comment on the developments that may affect their communities and provide local knowledge and opinions. We welcome comments on all applications.

 020 7361 3012


 planning@rbkc.gov.uk

 www.rbkc.gov.uk/planning

Overview and Scrutiny Committees

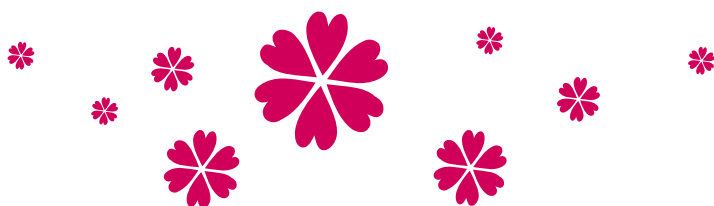
Cabinet decisions and policies are examined by Overview and Scrutiny Committees (OSCs). They review local services and recommend improvements, playing a critical role in holding the Cabinet and its members to account.

The public are welcome to attend these meetings, unless confidential matters are discussed, and can speak with prior agreement. The OSC Chairmen are keen to hear from individuals who would like to submit written evidence to their committees on any of the matters listed in the annual programme.

 020 7361 2477

 committees@rbkc.gov.uk

 www.rbkc.gov.uk/howwegovern





Becoming a Councillor

There are over 1000 local Councillors in London. Kensington and Chelsea Council has 54 Councillors elected from its 18 wards.

The quality of our Councillors is a major factor in the Council's continuing high performance and we are keen that it should continue to attract talented people. It is also important that, as far as possible, the range of candidates reflects the diversity of the Royal Borough's population and that nobody is deterred from standing.

Being a Councillor means taking part in decisions that shape the future of Kensington and Chelsea. It can be a demanding job but it is one that will give a variety of unique experiences and opportunities.

 www.rbkc.gov.uk/beacouncillor

The Leader's Say

You can visit the Leader of Kensington and Chelsea Council's comment page to find out his insights into local life and politics. Cllr Cockell's articles are intended to promote debate and dialogue, so if you have something to say about the latest topic please comment by emailing him.

 leader@rbkc.gov.uk

 www.rbkc.gov.uk/comment

Other ways of having your say include:

- writing to your local Councillor
- submitting questions at Council meetings
- find out if there are neighbourhood or user forums about issues that concern you
- become a school governor
- get together with local people and submit a petition
- join a residents or tenants group or start a new one.

