

Housing Matters

News from your Council



Regulator of Social Housing results

Doug Goldring's farewell

Major works update

Tracking our Grenfell commitments

Our annual report to residents

Diary dates, opportunities to get involved, and more.



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA



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Welcome to this edition of Housing Matters.

As some of you will be aware, in August we received our judgement following the inspection by the Regulator of Social Housing. We received a C3 judgement.

You can read more about the judgement and what it means in this edition, but I just wanted to take this opportunity to give my perspective.

I viewed this inspection as a progress statement on our improvement journey as a Housing Service. When we took on housing management responsibilities in spring 2018, the scale of the challenge was clear: our homes were in very poor condition, and trust with our residents was at an all-time low.

The Regulator's inspection presented us with an opportunity to seek an independent view on the progress we have made.

The Inspector found that all our homes were safe, that we had appropriate systems in place to ensure the health and safety of our tenants and that our teams went about their work with passion, compassion and dedication, treating tenants with fairness and respect.

I find this encouraging, it shows that our approach is working, and that today we are a fundamentally different housing service to the one that took on management responsibility in 2018.

However, the Regulator also found that on the Decent Homes Standard, we failed to meet the requirements set out. Too many of our homes were not classified as decent and we have not yet made enough progress with our stock condition surveys. You can find out more about what this means later in this edition.

Let me assure you though, that we were aware of the deficiency in this area prior to the Regulator's visit and have a comprehensive plan to reach full decency by 2030; crucially this plan has been endorsed by the Regulator.

With our fantastic officer team, I am absolutely committed to complete the turnaround of our housing management service and deliver something we can be proud of. This judgement shows that we have made huge strides, and with our decent homes plan feel we have everything we need to complete the journey.

Cllr Sof McVeigh

Lead member for housing management,
housing safety and building new homes



Regulator of Social Housing inspection results

Earlier this year we welcomed the Regulator of Social Housing’s team of inspectors who carried out an inspection of our housing management services. They have now published their report, and we have received a C3 rating.

You can read the full report by visiting the Regulator’s website www.gov.uk/government/publications/royal-borough-of-kensington-and-chelsea or by scanning the QR code.



This means that, while we are delivering 18 of the 20 required outcomes for our residents, there are two areas that we need to address. The two areas we need to improve on are delivering the Government's Decent Homes Standards and improving our knowledge of the homes we manage. Our top priority is resident safety, and the Regulator found that we are meeting all the safety outcomes.

services, and offering meaningful opportunities to influence the way services are delivered. We were also pleased that the Regulator saw the passion, compassion and dedication in our teams and how we treated tenants with fairness and respect. In particular, they highlighted how we engage with and bring residents into our decision-making. They gave special praise to the work and support we provide around Tenancy Sustainment which helps to prevent tenants from losing their homes as well as our visiting officer schemes. Despite these positive comments, we take the Regulator's report on our Decent Homes Standard seriously and we are sorry to those residents waiting for improvements to their homes.

Since 2020, we have invested heavily in our major works programme which looks to improve the homes we manage and is delivering at pace. In 2024 we started a programme to install modern kitchens and bathrooms where they were needed. We will add substantial further investment to fund the major works programme over the next five years which will mean all our homes meet the Decent Homes Standard by 2030. Our new stock condition survey launched last year, and by the end of 2026, we will have inspected every home we manage, so if you are contacted for access please do let us inspect so we can improve your home.

For more detailed information and to read a statement from the leader of the Council, please visit the Council’s website at www.rbkc.gov.uk/newsroom/council-receives-c3-grade-regulator-social-housing

The report says:

.....
“RB Kensington and Chelsea demonstrated that outcomes across all main areas of health and safety compliance, including gas, fire, electric, water, asbestos, lifts, and smoke and carbon monoxide detection were good. RB Kensington and Chelsea has provided evidence-based assurance that it has appropriate systems in place to ensure the health and safety of its tenants in their homes and associated communal areas and that performance is monitored, including by councillors and tenants”.

The Regulator’s report also confirmed that as well as meeting the safety standards, we are delivering in other areas such as running a repairs service without a backlog, working with partners to address antisocial behaviour, providing residents with information about our



Doug's farewell

Dear residents

"It has been a really difficult decision for me to retire from this Council – it ends almost 40 years in social housing, nearly all in local authorities in London – but to do this job, you need to give it your all - 100 per cent of the time. I'm not getting any younger, and I need to take care of my blood pressure.

I came to the Council in the most awful of circumstances, soon after the Grenfell fire. I felt that with more than 10 years' experience as a director, maybe I could help improve the situation.

When I got here, almost every area of delivery needed rethinking and new processes had to be brought in. The difficulty was simply knowing which urgent priority came first.

A lot has been done to get our services on the right footing. Staff know the standards expected of them when dealing with residents. No resident should feel spoken down to and everyone should feel they are treated with respect. We have spent a lot of time appointing managers who understand this principle and who will keep the momentum going.

I have enjoyed working with some truly wonderful residents who have clearly articulated the issues they've faced, their expectations from the landlord service, and rightly challenged us to do better. Some have given up a large part of their free time to design services with myself and officers — it's been amazing to see.

We are still not a perfect landlord. We face challenges, such as delivering a large-scale investment programme in our homes, improving how we diagnose leaks, and resolving ongoing issues with our heating and lift contractors.

Our job is to work for you — the residents — and we should do our utmost to never be seen as the enemy. This is public service after all, and my thanks go out to all of you who have helped us improve.

I also want to thank some of the most hard-working and dedicated staff I have worked with in the Council. Some, like me, came here having worked in housing for many years and could see that what was in place needed significant improvement. I know they'll make sure the foundations now in place are built upon.

As for me, I'm going to take things a little easier. I'll keep following my beloved Brighton and Hove Albion (Hove being where I grew up) and my other passion — watching punk rock!

So, in the words of Joe Strummer — lead singer of The Clash — "The future is unwritten," and we can make it what we want it to be. With every change comes opportunity.

Thank you all.

Doug

Introducing... Kojo Sarpong

Following Doug Goldring's retirement from the Council, Kojo Sarpong will be leading our housing management service until a permanent director is appointed. Kojo has more than 20 years' experience in housing and has been director of housing needs at Kensington and Chelsea since 2021. Kojo said:



"I'm proud to have the opportunity to lead the department and I'm looking forward to getting out and about and meeting with residents. I believe housing management is generally a good service, but I'm keen to understand the challenges from the residents' point of view.

"As an interim appointment I'm not looking to make any major changes as whoever takes the role on a permanent basis will want to set their own course. However, I will have a keen eye out for any improvements that can be made during my time in charge.

"I have worked in housing since joining Southwark Council as an apprentice back in 2002, and I'm committed to delivering great services. I know this can only be achieved by listening to residents and working together. I look forward to working with you all."

Recruitment for a permanent director is currently underway, with residents involved in the process. We anticipate a permanent director will be in place in the spring of 2026.

Have your say

Resident involvement strategy

We know our services get better when residents help us design them. We've worked with residents to create a new resident engagement strategy to set out how we'll make sure your views are at the heart of how we work. Let us know what you think.



Investing and maintaining residents' homes

How we spend your rent on improving and repairing your homes is one of the most important decisions we make. We've worked with residents to help decide the priorities for how we do this over the next five years and we'd like to hear your opinion. Have your say.



Major Works

New
homes,
Safer
homes

Swinbrook completion

Over the past two years, the Council has invested more than £10 million into making exciting improvements to more than 480 homes on the Swinbrook Estate. Alongside our contractors Amber Construction, we have upgraded windows, doors, lighting, and fully revamped communal areas.

The involvement of residents on the estate has been a key part of the success of this major project and we want to thank everyone who has dedicated time by joining working groups, attending meetings, and sharing ideas and feedback.

Amber Construction has been giving back to our community throughout the project by:

- employing three residents as liaison officers
- creating a designated dog area to keep the estate clean and tidy
- contributing food supplies to our local food bank
- organising skip days for residents to help with unwanted items; and
- planning a family fun day for everyone in May 2024.

We are committed to continuously enhancing the estates we manage through our planned major works programme. If you have any questions about this project or any upcoming works email us at capital.investment@rbkc.gov.uk



Silchester fun day was a blast!

As work continues on Silchester Estate, we take a quick look back at a great day out for the residents on the estate, friends, neighbours, and the wider community.

The exciting fun day was hosted by our contractor Equans, who are in the process of completing major works to the estate, and the Silchester Estate Residents Association.

There were freebies and safety advice for younger residents, face-painting for the kids, and what's a fun day without exciting prize giveaways?

Winners took home an air fryer, love2shop vouchers, and a delightful assortment of sweets and chocolates, generously donated by Equans.

We want to send a huge thank you to everyone who came out to enjoy the day with us! The feedback we received from residents has been overwhelmingly positive, and we look forward to planning more enjoyable events for everyone living on the estate.

Thanks to residents for their patience - living alongside building work can be tough. These works are needed to keep homes up to scratch, and make sure they meet the Decent Homes Standard.



Help us tackle damp and mould

Autumn's damp and cool conditions create a prime environment for mould growth in homes. If you find damp or mould in your home, please call us on **0800 137 111** and ask for the repairs team.

Mould can be caused by condensation from moist air which forms water that can get into surfaces and furniture. Moistness in the air is caused by normal household activities such as cooking and cleaning. But there are ways to stop it developing into condensation:

Ventilation: Extractor fans are common in kitchens and bathrooms and help get rid of steam. They should draw enough air to hold a sheet of toilet paper in place. Check, and if they're not working give us a call.

Open two windows on opposite sides of your home for 10 minutes each morning. This will swap out damp air for fresh air.

Heating: Check your radiators – if they're colder at the top than the bottom they may need to be bled to make sure you're getting the most from them.

Heating your home to 18°C throughout the day is cheaper and more effective at dealing with condensation than heating single rooms in small bursts.

If you notice condensation has formed on any surfaces in your home, wipe it up so it doesn't have the chance to get into the walls. If you notice any black mould, you can wipe it down with a mould and mildew cleaning product, and give us a call.



New block at Barlby Road to be named after Notting Hill Carnival legend

A residential block at the Council's Barlby Road new homes development will be named after Lady Lee Woolford Chivers MBE, in tribute to her ground-breaking work with children at the Notting Hill Carnival.

Lead member for housing Cllr Sof McVeigh recently visited the site with Lady Woolford Chivers' daughter Kim Woolford to check on progress and so the latter could walk around the block that will carry her mother's name. You can watch a video at www.rbkc.gov.uk/carnival-pioneer



Thanks for your feedback

In the spring issue of the magazine, we included a survey to find out what you thought about our communications. We focused on the magazine, our enewsletter and the posters and leaflets we publish.

The feedback was generally positive with 77 per cent of the 414 respondents saying they found the content of the magazine 'useful and relevant'. For the enewsletter 68 per cent of you said the content was 'useful and relevant'.

As well as finding out what you thought of the publications, we wanted to know what you were interested in, and what you were less interested in.

Residents were most interested in:

- Major works
- Financial inclusion and skills
- Grants and funding for local projects

We'll try to include more on those topics in future editions.

You said you were less interested in:

- Stories about new housing the Council builds
- 'Day in the life' articles about our officers
- Consultations

Communicating with you your way

We send information out about our services in a number of ways, and we want to make sure you're getting the information you need in the best format for you. We'll use the answers you provide to this survey to make sure we're focusing on what matters most to residents in the coming years.

This survey has two parts – firstly it will ask about the formats of information you receive and the kind of information you'd like more of. And secondly, we'll ask about the specific formats and what you think of them.

At the end there will be an option to get more involved with the work of our communications team if you'd like to. By taking part in the survey you can choose to enter a prize draw for a £50 Love2shop voucher.

Please send your completed survey back by 13 May 2025 in the FREEPOST envelope provided.



We'll look at reducing the 'day in the life' articles and find other ways to introduce you to our teams and their services. We do quite a lot of consultation, but we know it can be overwhelming. Sometimes there's not a lot of opportunity to make meaningful changes so we're going to reduce the amount of consultation we do. This should give us space to do better consultations, about the things that matter most. Check out our consultations page at www.consult.rbkc.gov.uk/housing-consultations for a chance to have a say about how we involve residents in shaping our services, and how we invest your rent into improving and maintaining your homes.

Thanks to those of you who volunteered to be part of a reading or focus group. We're going to use the data from the survey to help shape our communication strategy over the coming year, and we'll get in touch with people who volunteered to talk about how they can help.

A £50 love2shop voucher has been delivered to our winning respondent, who was chosen at random but prefers to remain anonymous.



Track our progress on Grenfell Inquiry commitments

An online tracker highlighting the latest progress made against the Council's 45 commitments made in response to the Grenfell Inquiry report has been published. The tracker is split into ten thematic areas, along with themes covering organisational change, and monitoring and scrutiny, and will be updated on an ongoing basis. We are also publishing six-monthly updates on our progress, with the next one due in November. You can read the first update on our website by scanning the QR code.

View the tracker: www.rbkc.gov.uk/grenfell-response-and-recovery/our-commitments-inquiry-tracking-progress



Kensington and Chelsea Adult Social Care rated 'Outstanding'

In July, Kensington and Chelsea was rated as Outstanding for its Adult Social Care services by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), the independent regulator of health and social care in England.

The top rating makes the Council one of only two local authorities in the country to receive an Outstanding rating for both adults and children's services.

The CQC inspectors praised the Council for its exceptional levels of service and high-quality, person-centred, and inclusive care. They highlighted how the Council has learned from the Grenfell Tower tragedy to build genuine partnerships with its communities.

Inspectors also highlighted that the Council had strong leadership, no waiting lists across its Care Act functions and showed a clear commitment to prevention and early support, helping people to stay well and live independently in their own homes for longer. This also included safeguarding which was noted for being highly effective.



Need a lift to get into work?

The Council's housing and employment service is dedicated to supporting our residents with sound advice around employment, training, welfare benefits, money management, and income maximisation.

Employment pathways team leader Olivia Burke-McGhie (far right in the photo) tells us more.

"Our team provides one-to-one tailored advice to help residents take the next step—whether they're looking for their first job, returning to work, or aiming to progress their career.

"We can provide support with CV writing, job searches, application forms, interview preparation, volunteering opportunities, work placements, and accessing training courses.

"We're also trained to help with benefit applications, money management and income maximisation – that includes budgeting advice, appealing benefit decisions, debt support, and accessing grants. Residents can sign up to one of our popular Money Wise courses! We also work closely with partner organisations across the borough and can link service users into further support that's tailored to their needs.

"Wider support for families is provided by the families and communities employment service (FACES) – they specialise in help around training in IT skills, English language courses, advice about childcare and referrals to wider family services.

"Ultimately, we see ourselves as a 'one stop shop' for all our residents' employment support and advice needs."

If you think the team could help you, call them on **020 7361 2070** or email

HousingandEmployment@rbkc.gov.uk

For support from FACES, contact

FACES@rbkc.gov.uk or call the number above.

Here's what some of our residents have said about the service.

- "Employment and financial support officer Jasmine has been absolutely professional and instrumental in helping me get back on the path to work. She has helped identify my core skills and guided me through updates on my CV and LinkedIn profile. I would recommend her to anyone with complex needs or who is an experienced senior and has a genuine belief and desire to get back to work."
- "I want to give employment coach Aaron a huge thank you as he's changed my life and I am who I am today partly because of him. The support and advice he's given me has shaped me into a better person."
- "The service provided by Jessica was amazing - kind, caring and compassionate. She listened to me, made me feel heard and I truly felt better and supported after meeting her."
- "I'm very pleased I was assigned public health-funded employment and financial support officer Edyta. She has supported me tremendously - this is taking a huge load off my shoulders and is helping my family thrive."

Annual Report to Residents 2024-25

Each year we put together facts and figures about our performance so you can see how we're doing and hold us to account. We've changed the look of this year's report following consultation with residents – we hope you like it.

We published our tenant satisfaction measures in the last Housing Matters – scan the QR code to revisit them.



Our year in numbers



Gas safety checks complete 99.98%



Electrical surveys complete 98.7%



Fire risk assessments complete 100%



Call centre resident satisfaction 86%



Tenancy sustainment grants given to residents £468,720



Amount spent on estate improvements £776,000



Grants to pensioners who lost winter fuel allowance £54,600



Repairs completed 24,804



Resident satisfaction with last repair 83.86%



Repairs appointments kept 81.9



New fire doors installed 656



New kitchens/bathrooms installed 207 (project started mid-year)



Amount spent on major works £50 million



Aids and adaptations completed 186



Estate inspections complete 167



Stock condition survey visits 749 (since December)



How we spend your rent

This chart shows a breakdown of how the money you pay in rent and service charges is currently spent.

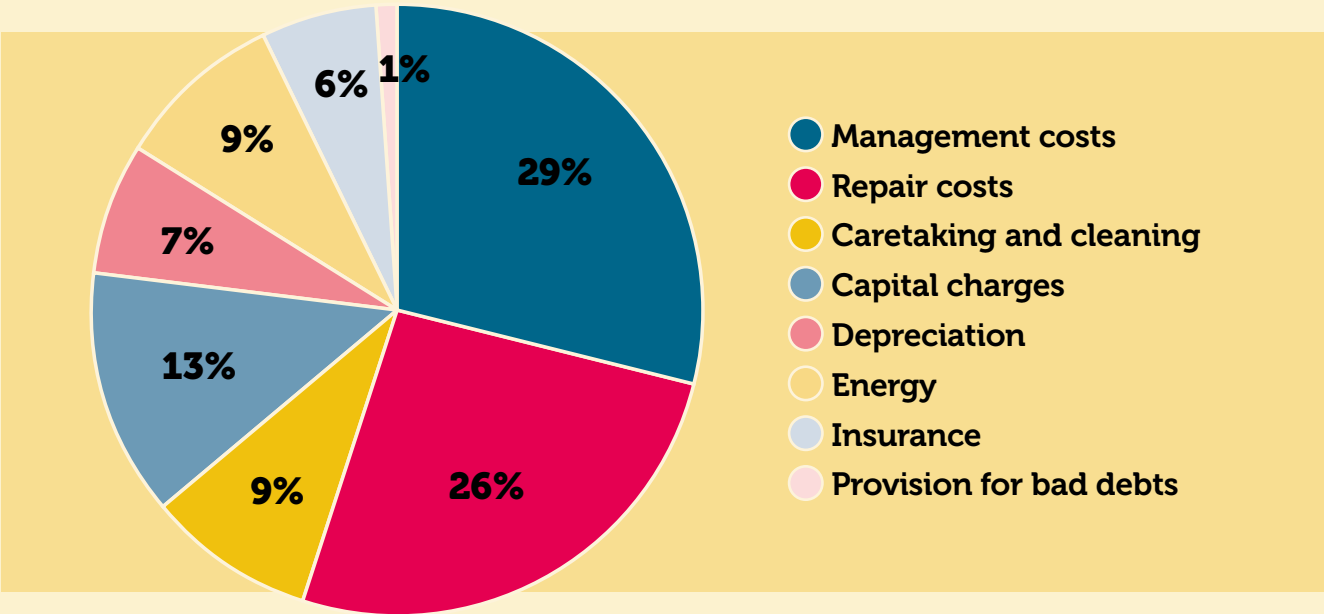
Housing management had a total budget of £78,800,000 for the year. You can see on the chart how this was allocated.

In 2024/25 we asked residents at the Residents’ Summit for feedback on the budget, and suggestions on how it should be allocated in future.

Management costs include things like our neighbourhoods service, IT, fire safety team, support services, community alarm service and home ownership services.

Capital charges are the cost of money we’ve previously borrowed – like interest on a credit card.

Depreciation is money set aside to offset wear and tear on buildings. This fund contributes to major works in future.



Looking ahead

In 2025/26 we have lots to work on. Much of it comes as a result of what you’ve told us you’d like to see.

Resident involvement strategy

Our new resident involvement strategy is a long time in the making. At the Residents’ Summit in 2024 we carried out a pulse survey to identify the kinds of improvements you’d like to see in this area. We set up some co-design panels where a group of involved residents could really help to shape the strategy to make sure it works for residents and prioritises their needs. The final consultation for the strategy closes on Monday 6 October 2025.

Investing in and maintaining your homes

One of the most important decisions we make is how we reinvest the money from your rent into maintaining and improving your homes. The consultation for this strategy closes in October 2025, and we’re looking to launch it in early 2026. As with the resident involvement strategy, there have already been co-design panels and resident-led input into this strategy which will set the department’s priorities for how we spend money on major works and repairs in the coming years.



Keeping your homes safe

Safety is at the heart of everything we do. Here’s how our teams have been working on keeping you and your household safe:

Fire safety actions

We closed **2042** fire risk assessment actions in 2024/25.

Person-centred fire risk assessments

We offer residents the chance to have a person-centred fire risk assessment (PCFRA) carried out if they are likely to find it difficult to leave their home in an emergency.

In 2024-25 we carried out 188 PCFRAs. If you want a PCFRA please contact the health and safety team

HM-HealthandSafetyTeam@rbkc.gov.uk

CCTV

We installed new CCTV cameras across eight estates in 2024/25 to help keep residents safe.

Major works – capital delivery

Our capital delivery team work to improve your homes by carrying out large scale projects involving a whole block or estate. They can include things like replacing lifts, window or roofs, or redecorating the communal parts of the building. They are often linked to improving residents’ comfort or safety in their homes.

There were 19 projects on site in 2024/25, and we spent £50m on major works projects that year.

In December 2024 we started our stock condition survey to make sure we have up to date information about the state of all the homes we manage and carried out **714 visits**.

We replaced door entry systems at nine blocks benefitting **294 homes**.

Our budget for the next four years agreed a further £300 million which will help guarantee residents a safe, warm, modern home.

Estate improvements

We are always looking for ways to work with residents to improve your estates. We look for funding from a range of sources, and also provide an estate improvement budget to pay for local projects. In 2024/25 some of the projects included:

New playground at Longlands Court

The new playground was funded by £57,000 of section 106 funds which are collected from developers working in the area. Residents picked out the fantastic new play equipment to provide a variety of creative play options for children of all ages.

Powis Square solar lighting

Using the estate improvement budget (a fund created by a donation of £67 per home, per year from housing management), residents at Powis Square opted for an eco-friendly upgrade. We added three new fully solar-powered lamp columns to light the pathways on the estate.

Estate care in numbers:

- Completed **2279** communal repairs
- Spent **£776,000** on **86** estate improvement projects
- Collected **545** tons of waste
- Carried out **167** estate inspections
- Carried out **366** health and safety inspections
- Handled **550** pest control cases



Repairs

We measure our repairs performance in a number of ways, through surveys we carry out ourselves, through performance against targets, and through the tenant satisfaction measures (TSMs) - scan the QR code for more on our TSMs.



TSM results for 'residents are satisfied with the overall repairs service' improved from 62.3 per cent in 2023/24 to 69.13 per cent in 2024/25. However, our own surveys showed a drop in 'satisfaction with the last repair' from 84.3 per cent last year to 83.86 per cent in 2024/25. Though this is above our target of 80 per cent, the team is looking into the reason for the decrease and what we can do to improve it.

You said, we did...

70 per cent of complaints from our residents were about our repairs and maintenance services.

We reviewed our leaks procedure to ensure a better service for our residents.

We employed a specialist damp and mould coordinator to lead our approach to dealing with damp and mould, as well as reviewing and improving our processes.

We reviewed the contracts with our repair partners and asked for increased numbers of staff during winter months so there were more people available during the times of highest need.

Involving residents

We know we can't deliver great services for residents unless we work with you to achieve it. Our resident engagement team strive to bring residents into our work through a variety of routes, including formal ones like the residents' associations, and the Tenants' Consultative Committee, and less formal ones such as training people to assess our services through mystery shopping.

In 2024/25

- There were **320** members of residents' associations and compacts
- **90** residents attended training events
- **78** residents joined our team at wellbeing walks in the borough



The residents' summit

220 residents joined us for a day of discussion and planning in November 2024. During the event we held workshops on residents' views on how the housing budget should be spent, the Grenfell Inquiry report, and our approach to resident engagement.

During the sessions we asked residents 'Where do you see money well spent?'

Some of the feedback included:

"Grounds maintenance and gardening is routine and well maintained"

"Replacing of gutter and drain water goods carried out by Major Works. This impacted with a positive result"

We asked, 'What specific ideas do you have for increasing income/cutting waste in spending?'

Residents said:

"Residents to be more involved, especially in the procurement of contractors"

"Charging electric car points on estates"

The level of discussion and feedback from the summit was fantastic and has given us a lot to work on over the coming years.



You said, we did

Residents asked for more detailed clarification on timeframes for addressing damp and mould issues.

We updated our damp and mould policy to include clear timeframes and improve transparency and accountability.

Residents would like to see more resident involvement in repairs and maintenance, anti-social behaviour management and safety and building standards.

We started consulting on a new Resident Involvement strategy which will place emphasis on working with residents to improve services in these areas.

Help to make your money go further

Our friendly financial inclusion team offers free support at regular Money Cafés to help you make the most of your income.

We can help you:

Create a personal budget

Check benefit entitlements

Apply for essential items like a bed or fridge

How to access support:

Visit a Money Café (details below) or ask your rent income officer for a referral.

Venue	Address	Times	When
Kensal Resource Centre	Bosworth Road W10 5EQ	10am–4pm	Thu 2 Oct
Henry Dickens Court Community Centre	104 St Ann's Road W11 1DH	10am–2pm	Thu 9 Oct
Portobello Court Community Centre	Portobello Court W11 2DL	10am–4pm	Fri 10 Oct
World's End Community Centre	16 Blantyre Street SW10 0DS	10am–4pm	Mon 13 Oct

Call **0800 137 111** and ask for the financial inclusion team, or email **financialinclusion@rbkc.gov.uk**

Live well for less in the borough

Wellbeing



Our resident engagement team host visits to some of the borough's world-class museums, galleries, and music venues - followed by coffee, cake, and conversation.

housingconsult@rbkc.gov.uk

Leisure

Our beautiful parks offer playgrounds, outdoor gyms, sports facilities, plus an ecology centre and Japanese garden in Holland Park. **www.rbkc.gov.uk/parks**

Health & Fitness

Free swimming for under-eights at leisure centres. Outdoor gyms at Avondale, Holland, and Kensington Memorial Parks.

www.rbkc.gov.uk/parks-leisure-and-culture

Libraries

Books, ebooks, and a massive selection of board games plus many stay-and-play groups, courses, and clubs for all ages.

www.rbkc.gov.uk/libraries

The People's Kitchen

Free monthly no-questions-asked meals and an opportunity to connect. Find out more **www.panellalondon.com**

Diary date

- the housing management event of the year!

Make sure you have housing management's event of the year in your diary - the Residents' Summit takes place from 10.30am to 3.30pm on Saturday 15 November at the Town Hall, Hornton Street, E8 7NX.

The annual Residents' Summit, now in its fifth year, is an opportunity to meet your lead member for housing, senior managers and officers and get involved in shaping how your housing management services are run. It's also a chance to connect with fellow residents, hear speakers, take part in workshops, and have a say on all topics up for discussion. As always there will be a delicious lunch and a few surprises on the day.

Keep an eye on our webpage

www.rbkc.gov.uk/housing-news for updates as plans progress. In the meantime, make sure you have Saturday 15 November in your diary.



Get involved

Training opportunities

We run a programme of training opportunities for residents to become effective advocates for their community and drive positive change. Sessions run from 6pm to 8pm and are held at the Kensington Town Hall, Hornton Street, W8 7NX. You must register for a place.

Monday 27 October

- Safeguarding

Monday 24 November

- Communications

Mystery Shopping date to be announced



Wellbeing outings

We run regular wellbeing outings for residents to get together to explore the borough in likeminded company.

All events are free but places are limited, so you need to register. Wellbeing outings start at 11am and are followed by free refreshments.

Friday 17 October

- Natural History Museum

Monday 17 November

- Leighton House



Register for a place at **housingconsult@rbkc.gov.uk**

Changes for residents on heat networks

Big changes ahead for heat networks - what it means for you

If you get your heating or hot water from a heat network, there are some important changes coming your way. These changes are being introduced as part of new government regulations designed to give residents more control, improve energy efficiency, and ensure fairness in how you're billed.

Here's a quick guide to what's happening. More information will be available soon.

First of all - what is a heat network?

A heat network is a system that supplies heating and/or hot water to more than one home from a shared source.

There are two main types:

Communal heating – where several homes in one building share a single internal boiler or energy source. For example, if there's a boiler room in a block that sends hot water to all the flats.

District heating – where several buildings are supplied from an external, central energy source. For example, if there's a boiler or plant room on an estate that sends hot water to several blocks.

These networks can be more efficient than each home having its own boiler – but until now, residents haven't had much control or oversight into how much energy they use.

So, what's changing and why?

At the moment, residents served by a heat network pay a share of total energy used by all the homes on the network. In the coming months, we'll be installing meters on the main energy sources and, in many cases, inside individual homes (where required by law and financially viable). We'll also be fitting new controls to heat systems in homes.

The new meters and controls will allow:

🔥 Fairer billing

You'll only pay for the energy your home uses.

🔥 More control

You'll be able to monitor how much heat you're using and have complete control on how much you choose to use.

🔥 More support

By understanding energy usage better, we'll be able to identify residents who may be in fuel poverty and offer support where needed.

Under the new rules, the Council (as the operator of the heat network) becomes your energy supplier, and our service will be regulated by Ofgem, the same body that oversees electricity and gas companies.





Better system monitoring

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Meters at the source of our networks also help us monitor how efficient our heating systems are. This means we can spot problems early, fix issues faster, and reduce the number of repair call-outs over time.

How will billing change?

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If your home has an individual meter installed, you'll receive individual bills based on your usage. Your charges will be clearer and more aligned with what you actually use.

Mythbusters

.....

Myth: Heat meters mean bills will go up

Busted: Not necessarily. Giving you control over your usage could help you reduce your bills. You'll no longer pay a flat share; you'll only pay for what you use.

Myth: This just about saving money for the Council

Busted: The main goals are to give residents more control, ensure fairer billing, and help the UK move toward a more energy-efficient, low-carbon future. That said, better efficiency can also reduce long-term costs for everyone.

What's next?

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These changes will be rolled out in phases. Phases one and two are about fitting metering and monitoring devices to the boilers and plant systems. In phase three, we'll assess which homes qualify for individual meters and contact you directly if your home is affected.

We'll continue to update you every step of the way and let you know when any changes will take place.

Got questions?

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We've updated our website with more information, visit www.rbkc.gov.uk/heat-networks or scan the QR code.



We're working on some FAQs and organising drop-in sessions for people who want to know more.



Co-design in action

The Council is committed to working collaboratively with residents using a process known as co-design. This approach empowers residents to actively shape and improve local services, fostering a sense of ownership and involvement from the community.

Co-design goes beyond traditional consultation. It's about working in partnership with residents, recognising their valuable lived experience, and incorporating their insights into service design and delivery.

It provides numerous benefits including:

Improved services

Services are more likely to meet the actual needs of the community when residents are involved in their design.

Increased trust

Working together builds stronger relationships between residents and the Council, fostering trust and transparency.

Greater impact

Co-designed projects tend to be more effective and sustainable, as residents are invested in their success.

What does this look like in action?

As part of our response to new housing regulations, the housing management service improvement and the Lancaster West community development teams set up the Housing Improvement Resident Co-Design Panel.

Panel members were recruited in two ways:

Volunteers from the "Improving Our Services" consultation

Members of the Tenants Consultative Committee (TCC)

In the first session, residents were shown different areas of the housing management service that are being reviewed. They chose to focus on the housing management resident involvement strategy for 2025–28.

Over five two-hour sessions, the panel explored different parts of the strategy, from its purpose to how success would be measured.

Two key highlights were:

Using insights from the resident involvement pulse survey to help shape the strategy.

Designing success measures that could help build trust between residents and housing management.

A second panel was formed to focus on the Council's housing asset management strategy. We believe that working together with residents in this way produces successful results and we will be running similar projects in the future. Keep an eye out for opportunities to get involved online at **www.rbkc.gov.uk/housing-news**, on your estate noticeboards, or via email communications.

You'll find open consultations on our website at **www.consult.rbkc.gov.uk/housing-consultations/**



Could it be tenancy fraud?

More than 3,000 people and families need a place to call home in this borough.

Tenancy fraudsters lie on their application, don't live in their property, or illegally sub-let for huge profits.

If you suspect tenancy fraud report it.

You can tell us anonymously – you don't have to tell us your name, and we won't share your details.

Call the fraud hotline on **020 7605 6401** from 8am - 5pm Monday to Friday or report online at **www.rbkc.gov.uk/suspected-fraud**

You can also email us at **tenancyfraud@rbkc.gov.uk**



Bogus winter fuel payment text messages

Scammers purporting to be from the DWP or HMRC are sending texts claiming to be about winter fuel payments.

If you receive such a message, do not click on any links as they could take you to malicious websites.

Pensioners will automatically receive the winter fuel payment this winter if they are eligible.

The DWP know who is eligible. No action needs to be taken to apply for the payment or confirm details.

Forward suspicious text messages to 7726 - it's free. This will report the message to your mobile phone provider.



Fairer Action Plan

Recently we launched our Fairer Action Plan, which details the Council's strategy to tackle inequality, celebrate diversity, and promote inclusion across the borough.

Developed through extensive engagement with residents, community organisations and partners as well as an analysis of data about the borough and our communities, the Fairer Action Plan focuses on five key aims, which were agreed with by over 80 per cent of those we spoke to.

- Making services more accessible
- Taking action based on listening to residents
- Improving communication in an accessible way
- Tackling discrimination and celebrating diversity
- Building a diverse and engaged workforce

Fairer Action Plan 2025 – 2029

Tackling inequality, celebrating diversity and promoting inclusion



The plan outlines 18 specific actions to tackle the causes of inequality and deprivation, focusing on areas such as health inequalities, employment, and education — areas where the Council can make the biggest difference.

Read more on our website, at www.rbkc.gov.uk/fairer-action-plan-2025-2029

Vote via post? You may need to reapply

New laws mean postal voters must reapply every three years.

If you've had a postal vote in place since before 31 October 2023, you will need to reapply.

If you are affected, you'll have been contacted advising you that you have until 31 January 2026 to reapply, or your current postal vote arrangement will be cancelled.

You will need to vote in a polling station until a new postal vote application is received, or a proxy is appointed.

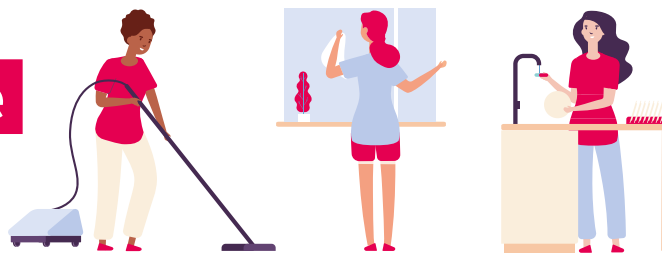
The quickest way is to apply online, visit www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote

For more information on elections and voting, search Registering to vote RBKC.



Leave your property clean when you leave

If you are moving on from your tenanted property, please remember your responsibility as part of your tenancy agreement. You must leave the property empty - remove all your belongings, those belonging to any other person, and clear it of all refuse.



If you need to dispose of bulky items, the Council provides a 'too big for the bin' collection service. We can collect up to 10 bulky items for £41.95. Please note, this is a non-refundable service.

If you receive housing benefit and/or council tax support, you may be eligible for free collection.

To confirm your eligibility, please provide your National Insurance number when booking.

Too big for the bin will collect:

TVs and stereos

washing machines

sofas

tables and chairs

mattresses

Commercial customers including property managing agents, commercial and private landlords can use our commercial waste services. www.rbkc.gov.uk/bulky-waste

To recycle smaller electrical items like toasters, kettles, and mobile phones take them to the Smugglers Way Household Waste and Recycling Centre or one of the WEEE banks at the mini recycling centres at:

Holland Park car park W14
(Abbotsbury Road entrance)

Fulham Road SW10

(junction with Hortensia Road)

King's Road SW10

(outside Co-op)

Find more information by visiting
www.rbkc.gov.uk/waste-and-recycling/recycling/waste-electronic-and-electrical-equipment



You've got mail

Would you like to receive your next Housing Matters by email instead of by post?

Contact the Housing Matters team at housing.matters@rbkc.gov.uk or call us on 0800 137 111.

Housing Matters



CONTACT US



0800 137 111 or 020 3617 7080

For all enquiries



Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
Town Hall, Hornton Street, W8 7NX



HM-CustomerServices@rbkc.gov.uk



www.rbkc.gov.uk/housing-management



Finished reading me? Recycle me!

YOUR LOCAL HOUSING OFFICES

Malton Road Office

2-4 Malton Road
London W10 5UP
Open weekdays 9am to 5pm

Blantyre Office

Blantyre Street
London SW10 0DS
Open weekdays 9am to 5pm

Pembroke Office

Pembroke Road
37 Pembroke Road, W8 6PW
Open weekdays 9am to 5pm

Lancaster West Estate Office

Unit 7, Baseline Studios
Whitchurch Road London W11 4AT
Open weekdays 9am to 5.30pm
Email: LancasterWestoffice@rbkc.gov.uk

Information from this document can be made available in alternative formats and in different languages. If you require further assistance please call us on 0800 137 111 or 020 3617 7080.

Arabic

يمكن توفير المعلومات التي وردت في هذا المستند بصيغ بديلة ولغات أخرى. إذا كنت في حاجة إلى مزيد من المساعدة، الرجاء استخدام بيانات الاتصال الواردة أدناه.

Farsi

اطلاعات حاوی در این مدارک به صورتهای دیگر و به زبانهای مختلف در دسترس می باشد. در صورت نیاز به کمک بیشتر لطفاً از جزئیات تماس ذکر شده در ذیل استفاده کنید.

French

Les informations présentées dans ce document peuvent vous être fournies dans d'autres formats et d'autres langues. Si vous avez besoin d'une aide complémentaire, veuillez utiliser les coordonnées ci-dessous.

Portuguese

A informação presente neste documento pode ser disponibilizada em formatos alternativos e em línguas diferentes. Se desejar mais assistência, use por favor os contactos fornecidos abaixo.

Tagalog

Ang impormasyon sa dokumentong ito ay maaaring makuha sa iba't-ibang format at wika. Kung kailangan niyo ng karagdagang tulong, mangyari lamang na kontakin kami gamit ang mga detalye sa ibaba.

Spanish

La información en este documento puede facilitarse en formatos alternativos y en diferentes idiomas. Si necesita más ayuda por favor utilice la siguiente información de contacto.



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