

# Housing Matters

News from your Council

**Home  
condition survey**

**Listening Forum**

Front door replacement programme update

Reporting a repair Fly-tipping

**Residents' charter**

**Employment training and support**

**Winter readiness**

How are we performing?

**The fire risk of smoking**

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## Welcome by Kim

It's now nine months since the Council took over the management of your home and real improvements are starting to show. The most significant has been tackling the backlog of repairs, which has had a positive impact on many residents.

The service we provide benefits in so many ways from your participation. We are very grateful to residents who share their views with us, and give so much of their time and effort.

We want to manage our homes better and in doing so we want to put you at the heart of our policies. The Tenants' Consultative Committee has been making huge progress, which you can read about on pages 10 – 11. There's a whole range of 'task and finish' groups driving service improvement; those of you who are leaseholders will also benefit from several improvements we want to introduce as a result of your input.

Last month the Council published a discussion document called *Kensington and Chelsea Homes: solving the challenge together*, which sets out some ideas on housing policy; you can read more about it on the opposite page. We'd like your thoughts on it and the remaining Your Home, Your Voice engagement events listed on page 10 are one way in which you can do this.

Lastly, this edition is the first overseen by the new editorial panel. My thanks to them for their hard work and commitment in helping produce what I hope you will think is an informative magazine.

Best wishes

Cllr Kim Taylor-Smith  
Deputy Leader

# News in brief

Our amazing young cricketers have won Middlesex Cricket Club's (MCC) Chance to Shine Street Project of the Year. The award was presented at a special ceremony at Lords Cricket Ground in July.

Our young sports people play cricket and football every Tuesday in Kensal New Town, North Kensington; this is organised in association with the MCC and Chelsea FC Foundation.

To find out more about this and other youth activities, please contact Clive Hornsby on **020 8964 6073** or email **clive.hornsby@rbkc.gov.uk**



One of our cricketers, Zeeshan Islam

## Council launches discussion paper on new housing policy

The Council has launched a discussion paper designed to generate views on future housing policy in the borough.

The paper, *Kensington and Chelsea Homes: solving the challenge together*, sets out ideas for future housing management in the borough. It also suggests new ways to provide more homes in Kensington and Chelsea.

Launching the paper, Cllr Kim Taylor-Smith said: "We want to provide new homes in the borough for the many families who need them. We also want to manage our homes better. We are setting out some ideas for discussion and want feedback on them so that we can deliver for our residents."

The paper sets out some of the housing challenges facing the borough: the high cost of renting or buying on the open market, too few council homes, how we manage and repair the homes which we do have and how building developers and housing associations need to do more to work with us to meet those challenges.

The paper is the start of a conversation with residents. Alongside the challenges, Cllr Taylor-Smith suggests some potential answers; but it will be residents working with us who decide on the way forward.

To read the document, see: [www.rbkc.gov.uk/new-homes-better-homes](http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/new-homes-better-homes)





## Hosting Europe's biggest street celebration

**This summer saw our borough host the latest carnival in Notting Hill – one of the largest street celebrations in Europe and known throughout the world. Carnival is community-led and community-owned and the Council is proud to help support an event that is at the heart of the cultural life of the borough.**

Our area welcomed an estimated two million plus revellers from far and wide to take part and enjoy the unrivalled atmosphere of the two-day event. The streets were brought to life with the sight of dazzling costumes, the sound of Calypso, Dub and Reggae and the aromas of an array of Caribbean foods. Over 70 floats and 15,000 costumes were on show.

In collaboration with Grenfell survivors, there was a 72 second silence on both days at 3pm.

While revellers and participants prepared to party through the streets of the borough, an army of Council staff put their well laid plans into action to help residents have a safe and spectacular celebration.

A meeting for council home residents was held beforehand, at which questions were put to event organisers Notting Hill Carnival Limited, the Metropolitan Police and the Council.

We know Carnival can get loud. There were 89 complaints about noise recorded between the Saturday evening and dawn the following Tuesday – down from 98 in 2017. Our enforcement officers worked closely with the Carnival organisers on managing sound levels.

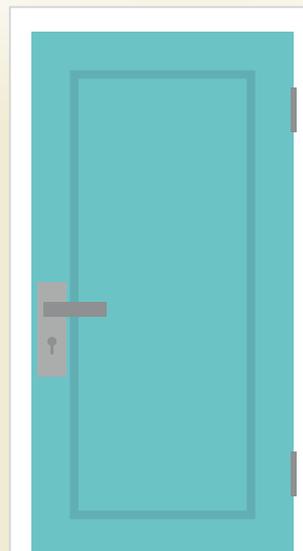


Clearing up is always a massive task. In total 244.04 tonnes of material were collected; of this, 57.96 tonnes went for recycling and 186.08 tonnes was sent for converting into energy. This year the Council made recycling at Notting Hill Carnival a real focus with a new stand on Portobello Green that meant people could recycle their aluminium cans, plastic bottles and even their leftover food – with rewards on offer for top recyclers. We know temporary toilets were an issue this year, as some of the extra toilets planned for the event arrived late. We will make sure this does not happen again.

Our thanks to all residents living on the Carnival route for their help and support again this year.



# Front door replacement programme update



In Issue 2 we told you about our intention to replace the front entrance doors of 4,000 flats with new fire resistant door sets. Since then you may have seen in the media that the Government has started testing a number of types of new fire doors but that some of these have failed the tests.

As a result of this testing, some door manufacturers have suspended the production of these doors so that they can be improved to pass testing requirements.

This has caused problems with the availability of some types of doors, resulting in us having to put our front door set replacement programme on hold. We will go ahead when we are sure that the door sets we buy and fit have passed stringent tests.

We had already committed to commissioning separate independent tests on any door sets we select and we maintain that commitment. In fact, we have commissioned testing at the Building Research Establishment and this is now underway.

The door sets we will be replacing are those that do not meet the standard set in the latest building regulations. This doesn't mean that the existing doors are unsafe, but we are committed to enhancing fire safety and upgrading these doors.

While this reprocurement is underway, there are a few things that you can do to help to keep your home safe. See next column.

## Smoke alarms

Please regularly test your smoke alarm. Press the button on your smoke alarm every month to check it still works. If there is no sound when you test it, report it to us on **0800 137 111** or **020 3617 7080**.



## Door closers

Where your flat entrance door is fitted with a closer (it may have been removed for some reason) it's important to ensure it is fitted and operating correctly. This is easy to do: simply let the door close behind you without pulling any handles; if the door closes against the frame and "clicks" shut, it's operating correctly.

However, if for any reason you suspect the door closer is not working correctly (or it's been removed and you need a new one) please report this to us on **0800 137 111** or **020 3617 7080**.



## The fire risk of smoking

**S**moking is the cause of an average of 22 fires in London per week. In recent months we have seen a number of grass, rubbish and balcony fires, caused by carelessly discarded smokers' materials including cigarette ends and matches.

The most common causes of smoking-related fires are falling asleep while smoking and discarding cigarette ends or matches that have not been properly extinguished.

If you smoke it's vital that you never leave your cigarette unattended and make sure that you put it out completely; ideally in an ashtray that won't burn or tip over easily.

Never throw cigarette ends and matches over the balcony, out of windows, or into bins – they cause fires. If you avoid storing items on your balcony that can burn, you minimise the risk of fire.

Following the advice of the London Fire Brigade will also help to minimise the risk of fire in your home:

- Have smoke alarms fitted in every room you regularly use in your home including in the hallways.
- Never smoke in bed.
- Make sure you stub out cigarettes properly and dispose of them carefully.
- Keep matches and lighters out of children's reach.
- Never leave lit cigarettes or cigars unattended.
- Empty ashtrays carefully, ensuring all smoking materials are stubbed out and cold.
- If you must smoke, do it outdoors.

We all have a responsibility to do what we can to prevent fires. Be safe, follow fire safety advice and don't be the cause of a fire.

Anthony Courtney, electrician, about to start a job in North Kensington

# Reporting a repair



## A step-by-step guide

We've made significant improvements in tackling the backlog of repairs.

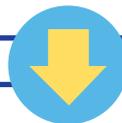
Our aim is to make the process of reporting a repair and having it resolved much quicker and smoother, and we're working with a residents' task and finish group to review the service.

This is how to report a repair and what you can expect to happen.



### 1. Reporting

Call **0800 137 111** or report the repair online:  
[www.rbkc.gov.uk/housing-management/report-new-repair](http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/housing-management/report-new-repair)



### 2. Diagnosing

We'll ask you to describe the repair and will ask some questions so we can find the right contractor to fix it.



### 3. Prioritising

This depends on the nature of the repair, but also your personal circumstances.

**Routine = within 20 days**

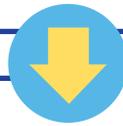
**Urgent = within five days**

**Emergency = within 24 hours**



Issues that would qualify as an emergency include:

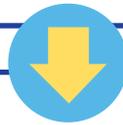
- total loss of electric power or water supply
- loss of heating between 1 November and 31 March
- insecure front or rear door or ground floor window
- risk of flood
- gas leak on the property side of the meter
- toilet blocked, leaking or not flushing (where there is only one toilet in the home).



### 4. Booking a visit

We use an online scheduling system which highlights the earliest appointment available but also schedules by area and trade. So, for example, if a plumber is going to be in your area for another job, the system will highlight this. Reducing the travel time of our repairs staff helps us to do more jobs in a day.

There are some specialist repairs where our staff won't be able to give you an appointment date straight away. These are usually repairs relating to heating and hot water. They will pass them on to a specialist contractor who will give you a call within 48 hours, unless it is an emergency when it will be sooner.



### 5. Visiting

All our staff and contractors will show you their ID badge. They will have details of the repair on a small, handheld computer.

Our priority is to fix things first time round. However, repairs staff may need to return to finish the work, either because more materials are needed or because the repair is going to take longer than first anticipated. Before they leave your home they will give you another appointment date for their second visit.



## Letting us know how the repair went

An independent organisation, KWEST, calls ten per cent of residents who have had a repair completed, so you may receive a call to ask how satisfied you are. This information is really useful to help us to continue to make improvements.

You can also let the Customer Service Centre know if there is anything you are not happy with. Please also let us know if things went well. We can learn from this too and try to make sure repairs go smoothly for all our residents.

# Tenants' Consultative Committee (TCC) update

**T**he re-established Tenants' Consultative Committee (TCC) has been working with the Council since December 2017. Every month it brings together representatives from over 60 local associations from all around the borough.

The Council works closely with the TCC on developing policies and delivering service improvements. Over the past three months the TCC has focussed on the work being carried out by Traverse on future housing management options, proposed changes to our leasehold management service and proposals to give the management of Kensington and Chelsea Places community buildings to resident associations.

In addition to the monthly meeting, residents from the TCC are working with the Council on service improvement through seven 'task and finish' groups:

- the procurement of major works
- repairs and maintenance services
- anti-social behaviour management
- workforce development
- complaints and customer service
- estate services
- *Housing Matters* Editorial Panel.

## Kensington and Chelsea Places

The Council will be changing the way it currently operates its estate community rooms, collectively known as Kensington and Chelsea Places (KC Places), following consultation with the TCC and local residents' associations.

In the future there will be an opportunity for agreements between the Council and recognised residents' associations which would allow them to manage the KC Places venues on the estates they represent, based on a set of obligations and responsibilities for both parties.

The Council would oversee compliance with legal requirements for effective premises control and make sure they are operated effectively and inclusively. Residents' associations who take on the management of their KC Places venue would be responsible for their day-to-day management and hire bookings. They would be allowed to keep the income generated from hire bookings in a residents' association account to fund other projects for their estate and community.

Residents' associations which choose to take on the day-to-day management of their community room would be supported by the Council in taking on the responsibility.

This work is currently in progress and more information will be available as the changes in management are developed.



Kensal Resource Centre, North Kensington

## Leaseholder services

The TCC has been discussing a new Council 'offer' for leaseholders, based on feedback on the current service. This identified the need for more clarity about how costs are calculated and more transparency on major works and improvements.

Leaseholders have raised concerns about the standard of service delivery which prevents them from properly being able to plan, budget and above all trust the consistency of the services the Council currently delivers.

As a result, proposals to improve the service include:

- publishing a seven year capital programme for major works and a decorations plan. This will be based on the findings of the new home condition survey (see p12)
- carrying out additional and early consultation on major works and cyclical programmes
- limiting major works final bills to 15 per cent variance
- introducing itemised billing
- reviewing service charges annually
- plain language leases
- offering a 2.5 per cent discount off the major works bills if paid in full within a specified time period
- offering, in certain circumstances, the sale of the freeholds to blocks where there are no Council tenants.

To sign up to an event by telephone, please call 0800 137 111.

If you cannot attend any of the events, but would like more information or to share your views, see: [yourhomeyourvoice.traverse.org.uk](http://yourhomeyourvoice.traverse.org.uk) You can also send us your comments using this website's online comments form.



## Future housing management options: engagement events

When the Council took back housing management services, Cllr Kim Taylor-Smith said that the decision on how your homes will be managed in the future will be made by residents.

Therefore in early summer a resident panel appointed an independent organisation called Traverse to work with residents to plan a series of engagement events called 'Your Home, Your Voice'. These are being held to seek residents' views on how you want your homes managed in the future and the ways in which you want residents to be involved in decision making.

We have written to all residents inviting you to attend one of 11 events, including the following:

### Saturday 17 November 10am to 12.30pm

Treverton Community Centre  
Balfour of Burleigh Estate, Ladbroke Grove,  
W10 6BG

### Wednesday 21 November 6.30pm to 9pm

Silchester Community Room  
Frinstead House, Freston Road, W10 6TY

### Wednesday 28 November \*\* 6.30pm to 9pm

Kensington Leisure Centre Meeting Room,  
Silchester Road, London, W10 6EX  
\*\*This is for Lancaster West residents only

### Saturday 1 December 3pm to 5.30pm

World's End Community Centre  
Blantyre Street, SW10 0EH

### Wednesday 5 December 6.30pm to 9pm

World's End Community Centre  
Blantyre Street, SW10 0EH

### Thursday 6 December 6.30pm to 9pm

Small Hall, Kensington Town Hall, Hornton St,  
Kensington, London W8 7NX

# Home condition survey complete

In the last issue of *Housing Matters* we told you about our plans to look at the general condition of the exterior and communal areas of every block.

**A** big 'thank you' to all our residents for your co-operation as we carried out the survey. Thanks also to the tenants who allowed us to survey the interior of their homes.

The survey is now complete and we will use the information we have gathered to carefully plan investment into all homes across the borough, not just those we have visited.

We will consider how homes which were previously identified for improvements may fit within the new programme. We've already started to draft our plan and will be able to share this with residents by the end of the year.

By carrying out such a detailed review of our housing we will be able to plan much better for the future and the improvements we need to make.

## Focus on **asbestos**

**M**any homes built or refurbished before 2000 contain asbestos. Asbestos was used in building materials such as floor tiles, roof tiles, insulation, ducting and various other common building products.

Left undisturbed and in good condition, asbestos containing materials are not a risk to health. However, if they become damaged asbestos fibres can be released into the air. These can be breathed into the lungs, and over time, with prolonged exposure, can cause cancer.

To prevent exposure, therefore keeping residents and contractors safe, it's important that asbestos containing materials are protected and remain in a good condition. In some cases they will need to be removed, usually to allow work such as kitchen and bathroom replacements to be carried out. We may also consider removing asbestos if we feel there is a risk of the materials becoming damaged during the course of everyday activity.

It's important that you contact us if you wish to carry out any home alterations or DIY.

We can do an assessment to see if there are any asbestos materials that could be disturbed during the course of your work. If that is the case we can arrange for a specialist contractor to remove and dispose of them.

When tenants move into their new home we tell them about the asbestos that is recorded on our asbestos register, but you can ask for this information at any time.

We have a legal duty to ensure that asbestos in the communal areas of blocks stays in good condition and to tell our contractors where it is. This is documented in our asbestos management plan. We do this by regularly surveying the common areas, so you may see surveyors in your block taking photos and small samples.

See [www.rbkc.gov.uk](http://www.rbkc.gov.uk) for information on asbestos.

Contact Chris Cloete, Asbestos Manager:

**020 7605 6400**

**[chris.cloete@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:chris.cloete@rbkc.gov.uk)**

# UNIVERSAL CREDIT

## What is Universal Credit?

Universal Credit is a new single payment for people who are looking for work or on a low income. It is being introduced in stages, having been introduced in the SW5, 7 and 10 postcodes in 2015. From **12 December 2018** it will start to replace the benefits listed below for new claimants living in the W8, W10 and W11 areas:

- **Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance**
- **Income-related Employment and Support Allowance**
- **Income Support**
- **Working Tax Credit**
- **Child Tax Credit**
- **Housing Benefit.**

## How will Universal Credit affect me?

Most people will not be immediately affected if they already claim one of the benefits listed above. You will claim Universal Credit if there is a change in your circumstances or if you are a new income-related benefit claimant.

Most importantly, Housing Benefit for your rent will stop. The housing element support towards your rent is paid directly to you, which means that you will be responsible for paying your Council rent.

Universal Credit payments are made monthly in arrears.

## How will I claim?

New claimants will need to apply for Universal Credit online. Please advise the Rent Income Team of the change to your payment date.

You will need to have a bank, building society or credit union account. If you have an account already, check that it has the facility to receive automated payments.

There is plenty of help and support available. You can contact:

- Audrey Giscombe, Welfare Reform Officer, **Tel: 020 8964 6095. Email [Audrey.giscombe@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:Audrey.giscombe@rbkc.gov.uk)**

## Rent and service charge payment budgeting

With Christmas approaching, the need to pay your rent and service charges is as important as ever. Budgeting carefully throughout the year helps ensure that you always pay these on time.

We use income and expenditure plans to assist you in managing your money and tracking payments. We can also discuss with you the range of support services available to help you to manage your money including Citizen's Advice, National Debtline, Step Change and the World's End Neighbourhood Advice Centre.

**For help and advice call the Rent Income team on 0800 137 111.**



Beth Fisher,  
Jean Mercer,  
Nina Lincoln,  
Linda Thomas  
and Margaret  
Poulden

## Meet Wiltshire Close Residents' Association, Chelsea

**W**iltshire Close Residents' Association is going places. Re-started just two years ago thanks to the vision of its chair Nina Lincoln, it's accomplished a lot in a short time.

Chief amongst the association's many achievements is regaining the use of the community centre on the estate with the help of The Chelsea Champions and buying an attractive and prominent new noticeboard on which to publicise all their activities.

Nina has a team of four on her committee: Beth Fisher, Jean Mercer, Margaret Poulden and Simon McAndrew; they've all known each other for many years. Nina first came to live on the estate in 1980 and is Chelsea born and bred. The residents' association (RA) has become known and admired for putting on a whole series of

attractive events and activities, from exercise classes and health fairs to coffee mornings, community days and day trips. Their latest achievement was in September, when a coffee morning for Macmillan Cancer Relief – part of the World's Biggest Coffee Morning fundraising push by the charity – raised £200.

Nina told *Housing Matters*: "We're encouraging estate residents to join the association and let us know what they want for their estate. This is a way of identifying those who haven't previously engaged with the RA. Our new noticeboard is key to this, but we've also sent newsletters, fliers and posters to every home on the estate, as well as visited the elderly and isolated. If we make a difference to just one neighbour, then that's what matters."

“We’ve already secured £100 from the Community Gardening Team for our new gardening club, £840 from the Council’s City Living, Local Life fund for a new noticeboard, £300 for community outings and £200 for community lunches”, she adds.

Critical to their success has been their close working relationship with the Chelsea Champions Community Project, which is a bi-borough (Kensington and Chelsea Council and Westminster City Council) Public Health Department funded project started at the end of 2017.

Community Champions Development Officer Linda Thomas explains; “I first met Nina when I did a walkabout on the estate to introduce myself. The RA was already in existence with Nina as the Chair, but it had nowhere to meet without access to its centre, which was let out. I vowed then that I would help them get proper access to this community space before the end of my pilot project. They were sceptical, but we succeeded and the Macmillan Coffee Morning is the latest of many activities and events the RA has held.”

[www.communitychampions.uk.org](http://www.communitychampions.uk.org)  
[www.rbkc.gov.uk/citylivinglocallife](http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/citylivinglocallife)



Nina Lincoln



Beth and Nina with Marisa Caneda



# Are you **winter ready?**

**W**ith the nights drawing in and our glorious summer soon to be a distant memory, staying healthy and well through the winter months should be at the top of all our lists.

Every year the NHS runs the Stay Well at Winter Campaign [www.nhs.uk/staywell](http://www.nhs.uk/staywell). The website offers advice on how to stay healthy including how you can get free flu vaccine.

You are eligible for the free flu vaccine if you are pregnant, are aged 65 years or over, have a long-term health condition, or are a carer. Children aged 2 or 3 years are also eligible.

**Always ask your GP if you are unsure or would like more information.**



## ADVERTISEMENT

# Is your home too **COLD?**

Does it affect your health?  
Do you find it hard to pay your energy bills?

We can offer **FREE** help if any of the following apply to you:

- Over 65
- On a low income
- Long term health condition or disability

Our friendly Green Doctors can make your home warmer, saving you money and improving your health.

They will:

- Explain how to make your home energy efficient
- Install energy saving devices
- Offer impartial advice on switching fuel companies to save money
- Give you income support and debt advice
- Put you in touch with various services



To book your **FREE** home visit, or for more information, get in touch!



0300 365 5003



[GreenDoctorsLDN@groundwork.org.uk](mailto:GreenDoctorsLDN@groundwork.org.uk)



# Senior Citizens' Annual Party

Friday 1 February 2019

Open to all residents currently receiving the Council's supported housing services, as well as to other Council property residents who are over 60.

## Includes:

Three course lunch • Dancing  
Free raffle • Places are limited.

**To book: telephone 020 8964 6061**

Booking line opens on 10 December

**RSVP by: Friday 18 January 2019**

12 noon to 4pm

Holiday Inn  
Kensington  
Forum Hotel

97 Cromwell Road  
London  
SW7 4DN



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF  
KENSINGTON  
AND CHELSEA

## Age UK services in Kensington and Chelsea

Whether it's through befriending volunteers or lunch clubs, helping someone get to an appointment, or just being somewhere to turn to, Age UK Kensington & Chelsea provides crucial companionship, information, advice and support to thousands of older people every year.

Age UK K&C provides a wide range of services to help you to stay independent, well and connected to your community. If you want to meet new people, take a trip or learn a new skill, they also offer a huge range of events and activities.

These include:

- Information and advice on topics including housing, benefits, social care, fuel poverty and consumer issues. They offer drop-in, appointment and telephone services as well as home visits.
- Services which combat loneliness and isolation, including one-to-one befriending in your home and a variety of social activities and events such as coffee mornings, knitting clubs, language classes, lunch clubs, computer tuition, concerts and day trips.

- Escorting volunteers to help you get out and about if you have reduced mobility, as well as walking support volunteers to help you regain your confidence walking outside. They also offer group shopping trips if you're unable to do your own shopping due to reduced mobility or disability.
- Specialist support and social opportunities if you have dementia or memory loss, including one-to-one support workers, memory cafés and group exercise classes.
- Simple practical help in your home; for example assembling flat pack furniture, changing lightbulbs, hanging curtains and putting up shelves.
- Paid-for care through their At Home service, including help with bathing and dressing, basic footcare, meal preparation, shopping, housework and laundry.

1 Thorpe Close, London, W10 5XL.

**Tel:** 020 8969 9105

Open Monday to Friday

9.30am to 1pm and 2pm to 5pm

**[www.aukc.org.uk](http://www.aukc.org.uk)**

# Complaints and the wider resident experience

We know from speaking to residents how important it is that we listen to you when things are not working and keep you updated on what we are doing to resolve them. So, making sure we manage complaints as best we can is a key priority for your housing management service.

**W**e have reviewed our Complaints team structure and in future the team will focus on the wider customer service we offer and not just complaints. We want to be able to address any service failures promptly, so that we offer you a standard of service you should rightly expect.

Residents are always best placed to advise us on how and where we need to improve, and we have set up a task and finish group to look at how we deliver a quality complaints service. This group, which met for the second time recently, decided that they wanted to focus on the wider customer experience.

We're proposing to develop a Residents' Charter which sets out your expectations from the service we have in place. It will also reflect the Council's new values, which include Putting the Community First – and we want to put you, our tenants and leaseholders first.

There's still a lot to do to improve complaints and the customer service we offer, and we have developed an action plan to take this forward.



The action plan includes things such as 'lessons learned'; this is when we reflect on how formal complaints have come about and how we respond to them so that we use this learning to improve our services and our responses.

Doug Goldring, Director of Housing Management, reviews all Stage 2 complaints formally with the staff members involved, so he has first hand experience of what service failures have led to residents' complaints and what is being done to address them.

Over the next few weeks we will be concentrating on getting the basics right: responding on time, keeping you informed, resolving concerns quickly, learning from complaints and making sure we meet our commitments. There'll be an update in the next edition of *Housing Matters*.

# HOW ARE WE PERFORMING?

Here are the figures for how Housing Management performed in the first six months of this current financial year. These figures are very helpful to the Council in giving us a clear baseline on which to build.

Performance measure	2017-18	April-September 2018	2018-19 Target
<b>Repairs Direct</b>			
Number of responsive repairs completed	<b>22,069</b>	<b>13, 683</b>	–
Percentage emergency repairs completed within 24 hours	<b>97.39%</b>	<b>89.56%</b>	<b>99%</b>
Average days to complete a responsive repair <sup>1</sup>	<b>14.5</b>	<b>15.1</b>	<b>less than 11</b>
Work in progress	<b>5,875</b>	<b>1,269</b>	–
Of which this percentage either is overdue or the subject of a dispute with a sub-contractor	<b>83.17%</b>	<b>46.49%</b>	–
Resident satisfaction with repairs service	<b>67.18%</b>	<b>81.9%</b>	<b>80%</b>
<b>Gas servicing</b>			
Properties with valid Landlords' Gas Safety Certificate	<b>99.78%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Customer contact</b>			
Number of calls received by Customer Service Centre	<b>101,855</b>	<b>47,119</b>	–
Percentage of calls answered	<b>90.92%</b>	<b>93.52%</b>	<b>90%</b>
Percentage of calls answered within 30 seconds	<b>54.94%</b>	<b>60.59%</b>	<b>70%</b>
New complaints reported	<b>561</b>	<b>165</b>	–
Percentage of complaints responded to within target <sup>2</sup>	<b>97.88%</b>	<b>66.22%</b>	<b>90%</b>
<b>Empty properties</b>			
Number of general needs homes re-let in the period	<b>50</b>	<b>103</b>	–
Average time taken to re-let an empty general needs home requiring minor works (calendar days) <sup>3</sup>	<b>33.33</b>	<b>144.67</b>	–
<b>Rent collection</b>			
Collection rate excluding arrears brought forward	<b>98.79%</b>	<b>99.97%</b>	<b>97.6%</b>
Current tenant rent arrears	<b>£1,566,273</b>	<b>£1.629m</b>	<b>less than £1.566m</b>
<b>Neighbourhoods and estates</b>			
Number of new anti-social behaviour (ASB) reports	<b>593</b>	<b>255</b>	–
Percentage of residents satisfied with ASB case handling	<b>71.20%</b>	<b>68.04%</b>	<b>75%</b>
Percentage of estates passing estate inspection standards	<b>98.99%</b>	<b>98.95%</b>	<b>97%</b>

1. This has gone up partly because of the need to reduce the backlog of repairs first, which we have successfully done.

2. This figure is based on an old system whereby a holding response to a complaint was counted as a complaint response.

3. This is because many homes have been empty for an unusual length of time, as general lettings were stopped from June 2017 until March 2018. We expect these longer void periods to continue until the number of current empty properties returns to pre-June 2017 levels.

# Employment, training or work issues? Help is at hand

**If your efforts to find work are falling flat, you want to find training but don't know where to start or claiming benefits has you confused, give the Housing and Employment team a call.**

**Nicole**, who lives in North Kensington, received support from the team when she was struggling to find work.

Having been unemployed for four years, she contacted team manager Charlene Hallal. "Charlene has guided me all the way from my first 'work experience' in the City" said Nicole.

"I worked with no salary, but it helped my CV. A two-month internship followed, again helping around the office but in an industry that I was very interested in. I finally progressed into a paid job as an analyst for a global financial news provider, which is my perfect job.

"I get a salary and feel a great sense of satisfaction in earning my money and being self-sufficient with my rent and expenses, as well as having spending money to treat myself.

"You are not alone and the option for you to change your life for the better is out there."

**Marina**, a resident in temporary accommodation, appreciated the help she received to understand benefits and complete forms as she worked to rebuild her life: "I was struggling to make sense of the benefit cap, discretionary housing allowance and working tax credit", she said.

"After listening to how I was trying to improve my circumstances, my caseworker helped me to break down everything into manageable tasks. She supported me to apply for benefits and put me in touch with other helpful organisations.

"Because of the genuine encouragement and support I have received, I have gained the confidence I needed to strive towards improving

and rebuilding mine and my children's lives."

**Peter** sought help from the Housing and Employment team when he was overwhelmed by changes to his benefits.

A single man with no family nearby, multiple medical issues and waiting for surgery, Peter was distressed to find himself needing to find money to cover the shortfall between his new and existing benefits. He also had real difficulty in recalling dates and providing evidence to support his claims. The team put him in touch with HMRC and the Pension Service, who were able to provide the necessary information. This was sent off to complete Peter's application and he was awarded Pension Credit.

Working with other agencies the team was able to help arrange the start date so there was no gap in his usual fortnightly payment.

Peter was delighted at the result: "Thank you for your help, he said. "I had no idea what to do and I'm so glad I don't have to worry about the benefit cap."



If you would like to find out more about the support the Housing and Employment team can offer, send an email to [housingandemployment@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:housingandemployment@rbkc.gov.uk) or call Charlene Hallal on **020 7361 2957**.

# COUNCIL MEETINGS

## November to December 2018

The 50 local councillors whom you've elected to represent you consider local issues and take decisions at committee and other meetings each month as listed below.

The Leadership Team is the Council's executive, responsible for most of the major decisions the Council has to take, while scrutiny committees review policies, services and decisions and make recommendations.

Meetings start at 6.30pm and take place at Kensington Town Hall unless otherwise indicated.

You are most welcome to attend any of the meetings below and will only be asked to leave the room if and when private or confidential matters are under discussion. You will find the published agenda for each of these meetings on the Council website at [www.rbkc.gov.uk/committees](http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/committees)

### 20 November

Planning Applications Committee

### 21 November

Administration Committee (5pm)

### 27 November

Planning Committee  
Grenfell Recovery Scrutiny Committee

### 28 November

Investment Committee  
Family & Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

### 3 December

Housing and Property Scrutiny Committee

### 4 December

Planning Applications Committee

### 5 December

Council

### 6 December

Adult Social Care & Health Scrutiny Committee

### 10 December

Executive & Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee

### 11 December

Public Realm Scrutiny Committee

### 12 December

Leadership Team

### 18 December

Planning Applications Committee

For more information on the Council's governance arrangements, and the role of Councillors in taking and scrutinising decisions, visit [www.rbkc.gov.uk/councilanddemocracy.aspx](http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/councilanddemocracy.aspx). Alternatively, call **020 7361 2477/2265** to talk to a member of the Governance Services Team, who can explain things further. Please check in advance if you are planning to attend a meeting as dates/times may change.

# Fly-tipping

Fly-tipping is a blight on our borough and, whether it's a bin bag or a truckload, it's a criminal offence to dump rubbish on our streets.

**T**he Council invests money and effort in keeping our neighbourhoods clean, safe and pleasant for our residents, so it's frustrating for everyone when the area is treated as a dumping ground.

Spending money clearing fly-tips means we have less to spend on other services, so we are determined that we will seek and prosecute anyone we find fly-tipping to recover our costs and to act as a deterrent.

The Council provides a twice weekly refuse and recycling collection service, a range of free and low cost options for the disposal of items 'Too Big for the Bin' plus a fortnightly garden waste collection service that residents can sign up to.



If your property has a refuse storage area then you should use it; otherwise, please leave your rubbish and recycling on the pavement – as near to the kerb as possible and without causing obstruction – before 7am on your day of collection and not the night before. Don't get caught out! Anyone found putting rubbish out at any time other than immediately before their collection is due, could be issued with a fixed penalty notice of £80. Other offences could mean prosecution.

If you live in a mansion block, flat or on an estate then please dispose of your general waste by using the bin chutes and external bins. Your clean and dry recycling should be put in your recycling banks, located around your estate. You should not put large objects down the bin chutes which could block them.

## Too Big for the Bin collection service

If you need to dispose of large bulky items such as TVs, washing machines or sofas you can book a refuse collection, or if they are unsuitable for refuse, a 'Too Big for the Bin' bulky waste collection.

The Council will collect up to ten bulky items for £32 (the service is free of charge if you are receiving housing and/or council tax benefit, we will need your National Insurance number when booking).

If you're elderly, disabled or special circumstances prevent you from moving the items to the collection point yourself, please telephone Streetline on **020 7361 3001**.

To book a 'Too Big For The Bin' collection contact Streetline on **020 7361 3001** during opening hours (Monday to Friday between 8.30am and 5.30pm) or visit [www.rbkc.gov.uk/specialcollections](http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/specialcollections)

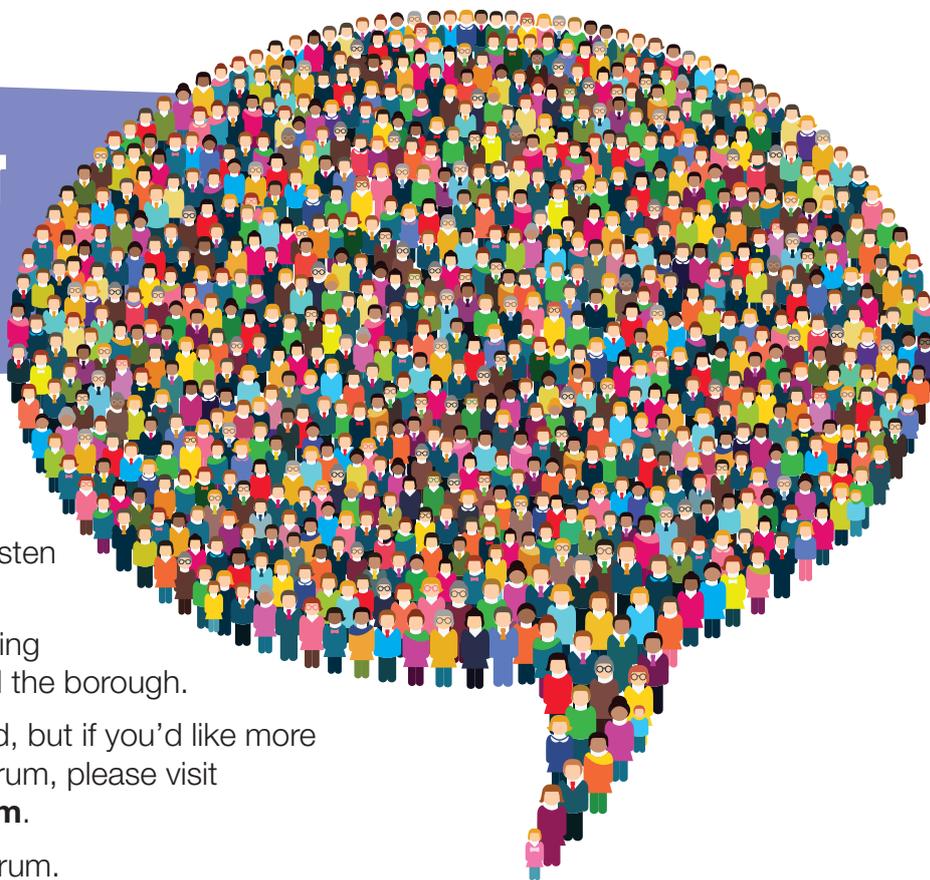
# Listening Forum

We want to hear from you on any local issues that matter to you. Our leadership team wants to hear your views, answer your questions and listen to your concerns on these.

We will be holding a series of Listening Forums in different locations around the borough.

There's no need to register to attend, but if you'd like more information and to find your local forum, please visit [www.rbkc.gov.uk/listening-forum](http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/listening-forum).

We hope to see you at your local forum.



## Improving *Housing Matters* magazine

This edition is the first one to have been overseen by a new editorial panel. This panel has worked hard to ensure that the articles are straightforward and relevant. Layout, pictures and graphics are important too and the panel has ensured the magazine is also clear and easy to read.

The panel consists of a small group of residents from the Tenants' Consultative Committee and members of the Council's Communications and Housing Management teams. It has three key roles:

1. To discuss future content of *Housing Matters*, and make sure that content is useful and relevant to residents and stakeholders.

2. To provide direction and suggestions for *Housing Matters* content. The panel reviews and comments on draft articles to help ensure they are factual, balanced and fair whether the article is of a positive or negative nature.
3. To review areas such as design, readability and content to ensure communications are understandable, jargon-free, cover topics of interest to residents and contain relevant information.

Our thanks to one reader who suggested the article on the opposite page about fly-tipping. Suggestions are always welcome.

Please share your photos and stories and we will publish the best of them.

If you would like to share stories, photos, ideas and feedback, please email us on [Housing.Matters@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:Housing.Matters@rbkc.gov.uk)

TCC representatives on the panel: Keith Benton, Jill Brown, Cynthia Dize and Iain Smith.

# Housing Matters



## CONTACT US



0800 137 111 or 020 3617 7080  
For all enquiries



Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea  
292a Kensal Road, London W10 5BE



HM-CustomerServices@rbkc.gov.uk



[www.rbkc.gov.uk/housing-management](http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/housing-management)



Finished reading me? Recycle me!

## YOUR LOCAL HOUSING OFFICES

### Network Hub

292a Kensal Road  
London W10 5BE  
Open weekdays 9am to 5pm

### Blantyre Office

Blantyre Street  
London SW10 0DS  
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](mailto:LancasterWestoffice@rbkc.gov.uk)

### 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.

### Somali

Macluumaadka dokumentigan waxaa lagu heli karaa qaabab kale iyo luuqado kala duwan. Haddii aad u baahan tahay caawinaad intaas dhaafsiisan fadlan isticmaal xiriirka faahfaahinta hoose.

### 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.

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.

