



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

Our Borough

Winter 2025

Our biggest budget challenge

Our special guide to the borough's future finances

Prepare for the polls

What you need to know ahead of the 2026 local elections

Super streets

How we're supercharging our mission to create London's cleanest streets

Century of culture

Head inside Leighton House as it celebrates 100 years as a museum

Protect yourself and those around you this winter

Flu and COVID-19 can be very serious.

These viruses spread easily in colder months and cases are on the rise. For some people, they can cause serious illness that requires hospital care.

Now's the time to get vaccinated to protect yourself and others.

Are you eligible for winter vaccinations?

You are eligible for a flu vaccine if you are:

- aged 65 years and over
- pregnant
- aged 2 - 16 (or from 6 months old for certain health conditions)
- aged 18 - 65 and at clinical risk (search 'flu vaccine' at nhs.uk to check)
- living with someone who is immunosuppressed
- a care home resident or a carer for an older or disabled person
- a frontline health and social care worker.

You can also get a COVID-19 vaccine if you are:

- aged 75 years and over
- a care home resident
- an individual aged 6 months or older who is immunosuppressed



Many pharmacies offer free vaccination - no appointment needed.
You can also use the NHS App or contact your GP.
To find out more visit: www.nwlondonicb.nhs.uk/fluCOVID



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From the leader

Welcome to this edition of Our Borough.

This summer, the Government launched its Fair Funding Review 2.0 – the first review of how local authorities are funded since 2013. Unfortunately, the implications of the proposals for our Council are extremely concerning.

We currently estimate that we would lose £82 million over the next four years – a huge sum, equivalent to 40 per cent of our controllable budget.

I am deeply worried about the impact of this level of funding reduction on residents of this borough. We are campaigning strongly for the Government to think again. As it stands, the current formula will make Kensington and Chelsea – and London as a whole – poorer, failing to consider the real costs of living and working in the capital, such as higher housing expenses and a large number of daytime visitors.

We hope the Government listens to our concerns, but as a prudent and well-run authority we must prepare for the worst. We are making savings in our back office, but the scale of potential reductions means we are now having to consider some more wide-reaching savings to balance the books.

This is the most challenging financial picture our Council has ever faced. I will continue to fight every day; making the argument to the Government on what these cuts would mean and protecting the services that matter most to you.

You can find more detail about the Government's plans, the potential impact on our borough, and how you can get involved, in our special section from pages 15 to 18.



Cllr Elizabeth Campbell

Leader



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Cracking down on e-bikes

We have seized more than 1,000 rental e-bikes parked dangerously on our streets.

Since January 2025, our teams have been in action across the borough to take dangerously parked rental e-bikes from Lime, Bolt, Forest and Voi off the streets and placing them in storage.

The enforcement action is a direct response to feedback from residents who have expressed their concerns about e-bikes as trip hazards and highway obstructions.

To have the bikes released, the providers are paying a one-off seizure fee, plus a daily storage fee if the bikes are not collected within 14 days.

Where bikes are outside a bay, but not causing an obstruction, enforcement officers report the bikes to the operators, who have to move them within two to six hours or face more bikes being seized.

So far, we have collected more than £81,000 in charges to the providers. The income is being used to increase the enforcement.

The enforcement team is made up of our street enforcement officers and has been bolstered since July with additional resources from our contract with Kingdom's local authority support service.



Scan me



To report a dangerously parked e-bike, scan the QR code or go to www.rbkc.gov.uk/contact-us/report-problem

Discover what's on for young people

Looking for exciting activities for young people? Our Youth Offer has something for everyone.

From sports and music to art, cooking, and wellbeing sessions — all shaped by local young people.

We've partnered with Young K&C and invested £5 million over the next five years to create the best offer possible for our young residents.

Visit the Youth Services page of our website by scanning the QR code to explore what's on right now — from creative workshops to outdoor adventures.

Whatever their interests, there's a place for every young person to thrive in Kensington and Chelsea.



Scan me



Find your next adventure today!
Visit <https://ourcity.org.uk/>
to discover more.

Lots Road South planning update

A planning application for 274 new homes on the Lots Road South site has been submitted and a consultation has now closed.

Proposals for the site include 118 social rent homes providing housing for those most in need on the housing register in Kensington and Chelsea and Hammersmith and Fulham. This is comprised of 65 Extra Care Homes – providing safe, affordable homes and care for some of the most vulnerable members of the community – and 53 other social rent homes.

If approved, there will also be 156 high quality homes for sale, alongside:

- affordable workspace
- flexibly designed community centre space available to the whole community
- other commercial spaces designed for a range of businesses and traders
- widened pavements on Lots Road, a creekside promenade and a new community square

The consultation comments are now being reviewed and will form part of a report and recommendation which will be considered by our Planning Committee.



Scan me



When the application has been decided we will publish the decision notice on the Planning Application website.

Find out more at <https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/planningsearch/cases/PP/25/04416> or scan the QR code.



Celebrating our young leaders

More than 250 young people and other community members attended the 2025 Young Leaders Awards at Kensington Town Hall.

Around 60 young people were nominated, with one winner picked in each of the 10 categories.

This included Djibril (pictured right) who was named Environmental Champion for teaching other young people how to upcycle used bikes with funding he received from Go London.



Find out more about the worthy winners – search Young Leaders Awards at [rbkc.gov.uk](https://www.rbkc.gov.uk)

New public park agreed

Following a consultation with Chelsea Riverside residents, the final design for the new Open Space at Lots Road has now been selected.

This will be the first new public park in the area since Westfield Park was created in the early 1980s. The site, which is part of the Thames Tideway Tunnel, is being returned to public use as part of our commitment in the Council Plan.

The new open space will be unique, as it sits directly above the Thames Tideway Tunnel. It will include planting and greenery, seating areas, and spaces for play and recreation.

The proposal is expected to go to the Planning Committee early in 2026, with construction hoped to begin shortly afterwards.



Keep up to date with the latest developments at www.rbkc.gov.uk/lros

Keeping well this winter

If you're eligible for the flu and Covid jabs, there is still time to get your free vaccination and winter booster.

It is important to get protected, even if you have had a vaccine or been ill before, as immunity fades over time and these viruses change each year.

The NHS is also offering the respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccine for those age 75 to 79 or who turned 80 after 1 September 2024, and pregnant women from 28 weeks – all year round.

It protects against RSV which can lead to severe illness in older adults and newborn babies.

Call your GP or speak to your midwife to find out more and book.



Check your eligibility and book your appointment at <http://www.nhs.uk/wintervaccinations>, by calling NHS119 or checking whether your local pharmacy offers it.

Supporting rough sleepers

Did you know that throughout the year, our outreach teams are out across the borough at night and early in the morning helping to support people sleeping rough and into more secure accommodation?

Their work is especially important during extremely cold weather when rough sleeping becomes even more dangerous. When temperatures drop below zero on any given night, we activate the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol to help as many people as possible out of the cold and into emergency accommodation.

If you or someone else are sleeping on the streets, use the StreetLink website (www.thestreetlink.org.uk) or app to make a referral to a local rough sleeping outreach team.

Our partner St Mungo's helps to run StreetLink in London. You can find out more about St Mungo's work at www.mungos.org/we-are-here.

Ways to wellbeing

If you're feeling lonely this winter, you're not alone. Visit our Wellbeing Hub at www.rbkc.gov.uk/wellbeing-hub to discover a directory of national mental health and social support services.

Christmas checklist

As some pharmacies and GP surgeries will close over the Christmas break, it's best to make sure you are prepared by:

- Picking up your medication in advance
- Checking you are up to date with your winter vaccinations
- Remembering to call NHS 111 or using the 24/7 online service for urgent help that's not life-threatening

Grenfell updates

Reflections on the Grenfell Recovery Programme

A new report has detailed the impact and reach of the Grenfell Recovery Programme, which concluded in 2024 after running for five years.

The £50 million programme was established in 2019 to provide long-term support for bereaved families, survivors and the local community following the Grenfell tragedy. It delivered assistance including a Dedicated Service, housing support, targeted emotional wellbeing support and community-led initiatives such as the Grenfell Projects Fund and the Housing Legacy Fund.

The report to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee highlighted some of the programme's key lessons, including that recovery works best when people shape the support themselves.

Our work with bereaved and survivors on the Dedicated Service showed:

- The importance of choice, control and flexibility for families
- The need to recognise the different experiences of different groups and individuals
- The value of sharing challenges and involving families in decisions.

Our work with the community demonstrated that:

- It is critical for residents to be involved in decisions from the start
- We needed to consider the specific needs of the immediate community living close to the Tower
- We had to find ways to communicate more effectively with residents to show the support was for them.

These lessons are now guiding the Future Grenfell Support programme, ensuring that resident involvement, communication and avoiding further harm remain at the heart of how support is delivered.

Key facts on the programme's reach

- 748 bereaved and survivors, or 96 per cent of those eligible, accessed the Dedicated Service before it transitioned in June 2024
- 1,103 children were supported in schools between September 2022 and July 2024, with a further 2,356 through community-based provision
- Between October 2022 and August 2024, 369 adults had accessed the Together4Grenfell support and, between October 2022 and March 2025, 2,464 adults had accessed the peer support programme. A large proportion of participants reported positive outcomes from the provision.
- 3,293 residents took part in 40 projects through the Grenfell Projects Fund, and more than 1,000 local residents voted on the next round of projects

The report, which is the third of its kind, focuses on activity across the programme since the last report in December 2022.

Scan this QR code to read it in full or visit <https://q.me-qr.com/l/read-report>

Scan me



Our commitments to the Grenfell Inquiry

We are continuing to make progress in meeting the 45 commitments we made in response to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry's phase two report.

Following an initial six-monthly progress report in May 2025, a second update was published as this issue of Our Borough went to press and was discussed at the meeting of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20 November 2025.

Recent updates include:

Resident involvement and research in housing

We are working on a new Housing Management Resident Involvement Strategy, with consultation closing in October. This will aim to promote a system that better values and uses the experiences of residents in delivering our services. In addition, a new piece of research will be undertaken by an external organisation and is designed to feed into service design and policy development across all housing departments. It is part of our commitment to work collaboratively with residents and staff to explore lived realities of housing services and is expected to be ready early next year.

External review of culture

Following feedback from residents in response to the Inquiry report, we committed to commissioning an independent external review of the culture within the Council. This was to address ongoing concerns about the culture of the organisation, ways of working and the treatment of residents. The specification for this will be shaped with residents, including the new Independent Advisory Panel, and a person or organisation commissioned to undertake this work in 2026.

Details of progress on the commitments, broken down into 12 themes, can be found on our website at <https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/grenfell-response-and-recovery/our-commitments-inquiry-tracking-progress>. The page will be updated following November's Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting.



If you have any questions about the commitments, please email GTI.contact@rbkc.gov.uk

Sensitive deconstruction of Tower underway

The Government is continuing with the sensitive deconstruction of Grenfell Tower.

Principal contractor DCUK completed preparatory works over the summer, including installing a crane, and the top banner has been removed with a second banner being lit from dusk until 11pm.

Work to remove the plant room from the top of the Tower has finished and work is now underway on the residential floors.

The wrapping is gradually reducing in height as the work sensitively progresses down floor by floor. It is expected to complete in 2027.



Please visit www.gov.uk/grenfell-community-updates or email GrenfellTowerSite@communities.gov.uk for the latest updates.

Investing in London's cleanest streets

We're allocating £700,000 to make the borough cleaner and greener

Our mission to have the cleanest streets in London will get a boost in 2026 thanks to a major enhancement to our street cleaning and waste collection services.

Thanks to changes to national parking penalty charges and new enforcement against environmental offences in the borough, we have been able to unlock more than £1 million to further improve street cleaning. Parking income is legally ringfenced for specific uses, such as environmental improvements. Alongside the new enforcement income, this has made new investment possible in otherwise challenging financial times for the Council.

The improvements build on our existing much-valued twice-weekly waste collections and will see more staff, new electric vehicles, and increased services across the borough to tackle everything from overflowing bins to fly-tipping.

This is a direct response to feedback from our residents and businesses, and London-wide challenges seen since the pandemic, such as increases in dumped rubbish and graffiti.



To make a visible and lasting difference, we are boosting our services in six key areas:

1

New street cleaning staff to allow for more detailed cleaning. They will join our existing team of 101 “beat sweepers” and allow the service to target specific locations.

2

Two new electric Goupil vehicles, allowing us to empty bins and react to dumped rubbish more quickly. The new vehicles will join our fleet of four Goupils, which operate across Portobello Market, Abingdon and Earl’s Court and Brompton and Hans Town.

3

An additional “clear all” crew will be deployed to remove waste left on non-collection days. This will allow us to add around 50 more streets to the current daily schedule. The two existing crews have cleared more than 2,953 tonnes of rubbish from around 100 streets .

4

Three electric sweepers and a new operative, which will complement existing crews to carry out enhanced cleaning.

5

More staff to empty litter bins at weekends, particularly the borough’s 220 column-mounted bins. The additional crews will mean all of these bins will be emptied at least once on a Saturday and Sunday and potentially allow for an additional 20-to-30 bins to be installed.

6

A new, dedicated street washing vehicle and crew focused on busy areas such as outside shops, restaurants, and station entrances.

The enhancements will be delivered with our contractor, Suez, to ensure our public spaces are cleaner, safer, and more pleasant for everyone.

They will also help us towards our goal of having the cleanest, best maintained streets in London and tackling fly tipping and graffiti more effectively.



Get ready for local elections

Don't lose your vote

On Thursday 7 May 2026, Kensington and Chelsea residents will take to the polls to vote for their ward councillors. The party with the highest number of votes will form a majority and lead the Council.

Ward councillors are your local link into the services the Council provides, and which your council tax pays for. Don't miss your chance to vote for the party and politicians you want representing your area.



Vote via post? You may need to reapply

New laws mean postal voters are now required to reapply for their postal vote every three years.

If you made your last postal vote application before 31 October 2023, you will need to reapply for your postal vote by Saturday 31 January 2026.

If you do not provide a fresh application by this date, we are required by law to cancel your current postal voting arrangement.

You will still be able to vote in person at a polling station, but you won't be able to vote by post again until you have reapplied. The quickest and easiest way to do this is by visiting www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote

Where do I go to vote?

You should always double check where your nearest polling station will be. Even if you've voted before, locations can change. Avoid hassle on polling day and check where your polling station will be now on the gov.uk website.

If you can't or don't want to vote in person, you can apply for a postal vote or a proxy vote (where you nominate someone to vote on your behalf).

X Are you election ready?

- Registered to vote
- Found my local polling station
- Got my valid photo ID
- Voted



Find out all you need to know about upcoming elections on the Council website, visit www.rbkc.gov.uk/council-councillors-and-democracy or scan the QR code.



Staying curious

How lifelong learning keeps residents connected and confident.

Kensington and Chelsea's Adult Learning Service provides residents with opportunities to gain new skills, build confidence, and stay connected to their community. The experiences of local learners Rukiya and Mahomed (pictured below) demonstrate the benefits that taking part can bring.

After relocating from Malawi to the UK to be closer to family, they were looking for ways to remain active and independent. Rukiya lives with dementia and had begun to lose confidence in everyday activities. Through low-cost courses delivered by Open Age, both have discovered the transformative impact of digital learning.

A Microsoft Word and touch-typing class helped improve Rukiya's memory and coordination, while enjoyable digital activities such as online puzzle apps supported her concentration.

The pair's growing curiosity led them to explore topics they had previously been hesitant about, including an Introduction to artificial intelligence (AI) course. This inspired Mahomed to begin writing his memoirs, providing a new creative outlet and sense of purpose.

Expanding horizons

Learning practical digital skills has also expanded their horizons. Courses on Google Maps and travel apps have enabled them to take independent trips to cities including Birmingham and Leicester, using passenger assistance services with confidence, and Mahomed says using navigation apps has boosted his confidence when driving.

The social aspect of learning has been equally valuable. Through classes, they have met people from a wide range of backgrounds and cultures, which has strengthened their sense of belonging and encouraged them to engage more with others.

Creative courses have added further enjoyment. After completing a digital photography class, Rukiya now captures moments from their travels to share with family.

Discover Open Age

Open Age is a free membership organisation for Londoners, aged 50 and over, offering a wide range of low-cost, fun-filled courses and activities every week. Funded by the Mayor of London's Adult Skills Fund and delivered through trusted community partners, Kensington and Chelsea's learning offer supports residents to stay active, curious, and connected. It is a chance to learn something new at any stage of life. Learn more about Open Age at www.openage.org.uk



Scan me



Find out more about the opportunities available by searching 'adult learning' at www.rbkc.gov.uk or scan the QR code.

Celebrating a century of Leighton House

Do you know what Spandau Ballet's 1980's hit *Gold* and the film *Wonka* have in common? The answer is that filming for both took place at Kensington's very own historic Leighton House.

The former studio-home of eminent Victorian artist, **Frederic, Lord Leighton (1830-1896)** became a public museum in 1926, under the care of The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

One hundred years have since passed, and Leighton House is now celebrating its centenary with an imaginative and enlightening programme of exhibitions, special events and outreach initiatives.

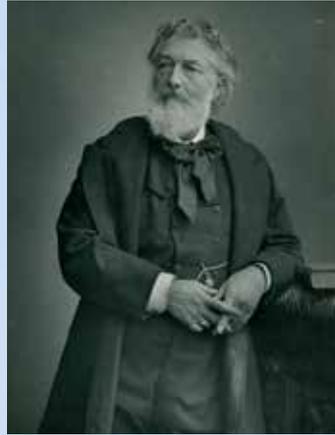
Looking to encourage participation from local residents and communities, the museum is open six days a week and offers free areas to visit, including a glorious garden, café and temporary exhibitions.

One of three current exhibitions documents the museum's fascinating journey from post-war whitewashed walls to the reinstated opulence in the 80s that often featured in music videos and films.

The King has visited twice, most recently in 2023 to recognise ongoing work with displaced Syrian artisans, honouring Leighton's interest in craftsmanship of the Middle East.

Leighton House is a unique blend of art, culture and creativity where richly decorated interiors are enhanced by contemporary installations, including the current Ghost Objects exhibition featuring life-size paper replicas of four lost items from Leighton's

original collection, and the forthcoming programme, inspired by Leighton's Arab Hall, in 2026.



Want to discover what's going on at Leighton House? Visit www.rbkc.gov.uk/museums

We're facing an £82m budget cut over the next four years

£82 million to save

With tough choices ahead, tell us what services matter most to you.



Help us tackle our biggest budget challenge

Take part in our budget consultation. Scan the QR code or visit <https://q.me-qr.com/l/budget-challenge> Deadline is **Friday 9 January 2026.**



SCAN ME

Your community
Your voice

Help us tackle our biggest budget challenge yet

Share your views on our plans to save £82 million and secure a fair deal

Did you know, the Council must set and balance the budget each year? This means making careful decisions about how we manage and spend money wisely.

We provide around **200 services**, from keeping our streets clean and maintaining open spaces to providing essential services such as adults and children's social care.

The budget challenge

The Government's Fair Funding Review is proposing to change the way it works out how much grant funding the Council will get in the future. If it goes ahead, Kensington and Chelsea is expected to lose an estimated **£82 million** in government funding over the **next four years** – this is equivalent to **40 per cent** of our controllable budget. On top of the funding we lose from government, costs of delivering our services continues to go up, from increased need and growing inflation.

How every £1 is spent in Kensington and Chelsea



This Council has a very strong record on sound financial management, but the current financial situation means it will be increasingly difficult to set a balanced budget.

We want to make every pound count in our budget so we can continue to deliver value for money and quality services to our residents, but tough decisions will need to be made.

What we are proposing in our budget

Here are the main things we want your views on:

- raising council tax by five per cent each year
- reviewing changes to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme
- considering introducing a Council Tax premium on second homes
- setting our fees and charges for 2026/27

Finding savings

We are transforming how we work and deliver Council services to make them more efficient. For next year, we are proposing to save **£22 million** by finding savings through a staff voluntary redundancy scheme, making better use of buildings we own for services and finding opportunities to generate additional income through advertising.

We will continue to invest in housing, social care, and our amazing spaces in the borough including adult and children's social care support, temporary accommodation and additional street cleaning.

Join the conversation

We understand these proposals will have a significant impact on our residents and we are doing whatever we can to protect and deliver services that matter to you the most. That's why it's important we hear from you.

Help us tackle our budget challenge by sharing your views in our draft budget proposals for 2026/27.

Have your say here <https://consult.rbkc.gov.uk/resources/budget-2026-27/>

The budget consultation ends on Friday 9 January 2026.

For more information or to request the survey in another language or format please email Budget@rbkc.gov.uk

Scan me



How our Government funding could reduce



How the fair funding review affects our budget

In summer 2025, the Government consulted on changes to local government funding. Under the headline “fair funding”, the proposals change how much money each council gets. Inner London could lose out by around £700 million, with funding diverted to more rural areas.

For Kensington and Chelsea, we are expecting a loss of £82 million from our budget over the next four years. That level of funding cut means this Council would be impacted in every service we provide and would need to find very wide-reaching savings. We have already started to find efficiencies in our back office to minimise impact on residents, for example with a voluntary redundancy programme accepted by 180 of our staff.

However, leader Cllr Elizabeth Campbell has argued since the summer that the Government can and should make some changes to help prevent major cuts to frontline council services.

The formula proposed by the Government assumes a higher level of council tax on Band D properties than we charge in Kensington and Chelsea. This means councils that have kept taxes low and ran services efficiently are being hit the hardest.

The cost of housing is a big factor in a council’s costs, given the demand in London. The formula does not account for this. It also assumes that fewer children and young people are requiring additional support, when in reality demand is rising.

We have been asking the Government to make some changes to the formula, such as:

- including housing costs
- giving more time for councils to implement changes
- recognising the true demands facing children’s social care
- recognising the additional costs associated with being in the centre of a capital city, such as a higher daytime population.

Hail a local hero in 2026

Mayor's Awards

It's time to shine a light on the amazing people who make Kensington and Chelsea a fantastic place with a nomination for the 2026 Mayor's Awards.

This is your chance to celebrate the achievements of individuals, groups and organisations that have made an outstanding contribution to life in Kensington and Chelsea. This could be residents running initiatives to improve mental and physical wellbeing, those strengthening community safety or champions of culture and heritage in the borough.

Make a nomination via our website, in the following three categories:

- Individual Contribution
- Young Achiever
- Voluntary and Community Sector Organisation

Nominations will close at 5pm on Monday 19 January 2026 and winners will be selected by a six-person panel comprising councillors, the youth mayor and community figures.



Find out more and make your nomination today – search “Mayor’s Awards” at www.rbkc.gov.uk

The Mayor of Kensington and Chelsea, Cllr Tom Bennett, said:

“We are very lucky in this borough to be surrounded by hard-working and selfless people and organisations that go above and beyond to contribute to their communities.

“Now, it's our chance to shine a well-deserved light on their efforts.

“I encourage you all to take a moment to think about those in our borough who give back and dedicate their time for the benefit of others.”

Hear from past winners

Rohan Mehta, who received the Young Achiever’s award for his voluntary initiative In The Bag, said:

“I think it's really important to try and do your part especially if you have the means. I think you'll find a lot of support if you reach out, there's a great network here in RBKC.”

Carolyn Arnold, chair of Clarendon Cross Residents’ Association, said:

“I love what I do in the community and it's great to work with so many amazing people, so to get an award for doing something you enjoy with lovely people is rather special.”

Alex Coackley, head of advice and guidance at Nova New Opportunities, added:

“It is lovely to be recognised for the work that the organisation is doing. I think it's fantastic to see grassroots work going on, particularly people who are doing it essentially by themselves using their own sort of get up and go.”



A sound investment

How we're using the borough's parks, buildings and more to benefit residents

Have you heard about social investment?

It's the way we use our resources – like our buildings, parks, housing and the goods and services we buy – to get the best possible return, or social value, for our residents.

We've embedded it across the Council and have even begun to use a special formula to measure the financial value it produces across five key themes.

The results will be published in our Social Investment Impact Report, which is due to be published at the end of 2025, but here we provide a sneak preview of some of the key facts and figures across each of the themes.

Promoting fairness

Money Cafes

Our financial inclusion money cafes provide free financial advice and cost-of-living support and can be found on our estates at Kensal, Portobello, World's End and Henry Dickens.

In 2024/25, the cafes were the site of half of our financial inclusion team's 451 processed cases. The team also completed 50 financial health checks as part of the Warm and Well project, and 115 financial health checks for new tenants.

- **Social value generated (April 2024 to March 2025): Approximately £1.7 million**
- **Social return on investment: £3.66 for every £1 spent**

Supporting local organisations

Social investment leases

A key way that we use our buildings to create social value is through social investment leases. This is where we provide organisations, projects and businesses a base from which to operate at a reduced level of rent in return for tangible social value outcomes.

We currently provide two of these leases – one to the Children's Book Project in North Kensington, and the other to World's End Lots Road Big Local in the south of the borough.



Children's Book Project

- **Social value generated (April 2024 to March 2025): More than £158,000**
- **Social return on investment: £3.38 for every £1 spent**

World's End Lots Road Big Local

- **Social value generated (April 2024 to March 2025): More than £897,000**
- **Social return on investment: £5.16 for every £1 spent**

Money Café

Providing support and advice at four venues across the borough every month to help you better manage the cost of living.

Café operates between 10am to 1pm

- Free Lavazza coffee, tea and refreshments
- Digital offers of free SIM cards and fibre broadband
- Public computers with Wi-Fi

One to One Advice Drop-in service available 10am to 2pm

- Welfare and Debt Help and Advice
- Neighborhood Officers
- Library of Help and Support Services

Upcoming Sessions

Thursday 2 May
Thursday 6 June
Thursday 4 July
Thursday 1 August
Thursday 5 September
Thursday 3 October

Henry Dickens Court Community Centre
104 St Ann's Road W11 4DH

For more information
Call Customer Services on 020 890 117 111 or email financialinclusion@rlbc.gov.uk

20 Housing Management



Health and wellbeing Libraries

Our borough's six libraries welcomed 615,000 visitors between April 2024 and March 2025 – and they offered much more than just books. Each site provided learning opportunities for children and adults, reduced social isolation, and promoted digital inclusion to those who struggle to get online.

They also hosted our adult learning programme, which ran 38 courses for 340 residents.

- **Social value generated (April 2024 to March 2025):** Approximately £13 million
- **Social return on investment:** £4.33 for every £1 spent

Employment and skills Economic development team

We employ an employment opportunities co-ordinator, alongside a construction and partnerships advisor to help residents overcome employment barriers.

Both roles assist residents not in education, employment or training by providing access to training, work experience, apprenticeships and job opportunities.

Through their work, 104 residents were engaged about roles in construction, 26 received training, and 17 found employment in the sector and held positions for six months or longer. In other sectors, 210 residents were referred and supported towards employment opportunities.

- **Social value generated (April 2024 to March 2025):** Approximately £343,000
- **Social return on investment:** £3.43 for every £1 spent

Environment and sustainability Idverde parks and leisure contract

Our borough is home to 28 parks, two cemeteries and more than 60 highway sites, grass verges and planters – all of which are maintained by Idverde on behalf of the Council.

But Idverde does much more than keep our green spaces looking beautiful. Last year, the firm welcomed 6,905 volunteers and took on a supported intern as a permanent member of staff, while supporting another through a 12-week placement.

It also funded the complete renovation of the Ecology Centre Garden in Holland Park, and provided plants and labour for a replant of the Isaac Paulos Centre garden in North Kensington.

- **Social value generated (April 2024 to March 2025):** More than £2.6 million



Find out more



The latest Social Investment Impact Report will be published at the end of 2025. Keep an eye on www.rbkc.gov.uk to learn more about the social value we're generating.

Services under the spotlight

External inspectors deliver verdict on our children's, adult social care and housing management services

It's been a busy year for inspections at Kensington and Chelsea, with three of our departments being visited by external examiners.

Starting with an inspection from Ofsted for our children's services at the end of 2024, we then hosted teams from the Care Quality Commission, which inspected our adult social care provision, and the Regulator for Social Housing, which examined our housing management service.

The results are now in, with us becoming one of only two local authorities in the entire country to have Outstanding children's and adult social care services. Our housing management service was rated C3, which means there are some parts that need to be improved.

Here's what the inspections found in more detail...

Children's services

Grade: Outstanding

Ofsted announced in January that we had become the first local authority in the country to receive three consecutive Outstanding ratings, marking 10 years of Outstanding.

In re-awarding the top rating previously handed out in 2015 and 2019 for an unprecedented third straight time, inspectors concluded that young people in Kensington and Chelsea receive "excellent" services that make a "significant difference" to their lives.

They also concluded that we offer:

- A strong response to children at risk of exploitation, with decisive interventions "reducing risk for the vast majority of children"
- Outstanding care for young people who need protection, with children and families receiving "the right help at the right time"

- "Experienced and committed social workers" who are "tenacious advocates" for their children
- An "exemplary level of support" for care leavers who enjoy "positive, trusting and stable relationships" with social workers

You can read the full report at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/44/80544>

Adult social care

Grade: Outstanding

We were told in July that we had also been rated Outstanding by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), the independent regulator of health and social care in England.

The CQC inspectors praised our exceptional levels of service and high-quality, person-centred and inclusive care. They highlighted how we have learned from the Grenfell Tower tragedy to build genuine partnerships with our communities, and have showed a clear commitment to prevention and early support, helping people to stay well and live independently in their own homes for longer.

Other feedback included:

- Residents get an immediate response when they ask for support, with no waiting lists for assessments, safeguarding, occupational therapy or reablement services
- The service that helps people recover after a hospital stay is highly effective, with 92 per cent of residents who used it not needing long-term care afterwards

- We have “one of the most mature approaches” to working with residents, involving over 100 community champions and more than 200 safeguarding ambassadors
- Support is tailored to the needs of the borough’s diverse communities, including services for autistic people, older LGBTQ+ adults, and refugee communities.

Check out the full report at www.cqc.org.uk/care-services/local-authority-assessment-reports/kensingtonchelsea-0725

Housing management

Grade: C3

The Regulator for Social Housing’s grade relates to how we are delivering the outcomes for residents that are expected in the consumer standards for social housing, and means there are some parts of the service that need to be improved.



We already meet 18 out of the 20 required outcomes for residents, with work well underway to address the two areas where we need to improve – the number of our homes that meet the Government’s Decent Homes Standards and our knowledge of the homes we manage by completing a stock condition survey.

We are meeting all the safety related standards, and providing safe homes for residents remains our number one priority.

The Regulator highlighted a number of areas where we meet the Standards, including:

- Our repairs service operates without a backlog
- We treat tenants with fairness and respect and engage with and bring residents into our decision-making
- We provide support around tenancy sustainment which helps to prevent tenants from losing their homes.

Find out more and read the full report at www.rbkc.gov.uk/newsroom/council-receives-c3-grade-regulator-social-housing



Change a life through fostering

Like most councils around the country, we have many children in our care waiting to be fostered. They come from an array of backgrounds, and all have a different story to tell. But they are united by one thing: their longing for a stable home and safe family life.

When Ben and Lizzie began exploring fostering around five years ago, they admit they had some apprehensions. Ben told Our Borough:

“There was a lot to learn. We didn’t know if it would be a problem that we didn’t have children of our own. You hear about people drawing on the experience of raising their own children to be successful foster carers.”

The couple initially fostered with another local authority, but following their own research, plus support from the Fostering Shared Services of Kensington and Chelsea, Hammersmith & Fulham and Westminster, Ben and Lizzie decided to continue their fostering journey with us.

Six years later, having looked after two children on a short-term basis, they welcomed six-year-old Ashley into their home – a decision that would change their lives forever.

As Ben explains how Ashley has developed while in their care, his pride shines through: “They were once the child who would need a little more time to speak up and talk to new people – now, Ashley is confident and chatty, constantly making new friends at school and activity clubs”.

“There’s a misconception that children in care come with insurmountable challenges. It’s a stigma that surrounds these children. The reality is, like any child, what they really need more than anything is love and care.”



Describing how he and Lizzie have been supported, Ben praised the amount of help available – from in-person training to online modules – all of which they were able to fit in around their full-time jobs.

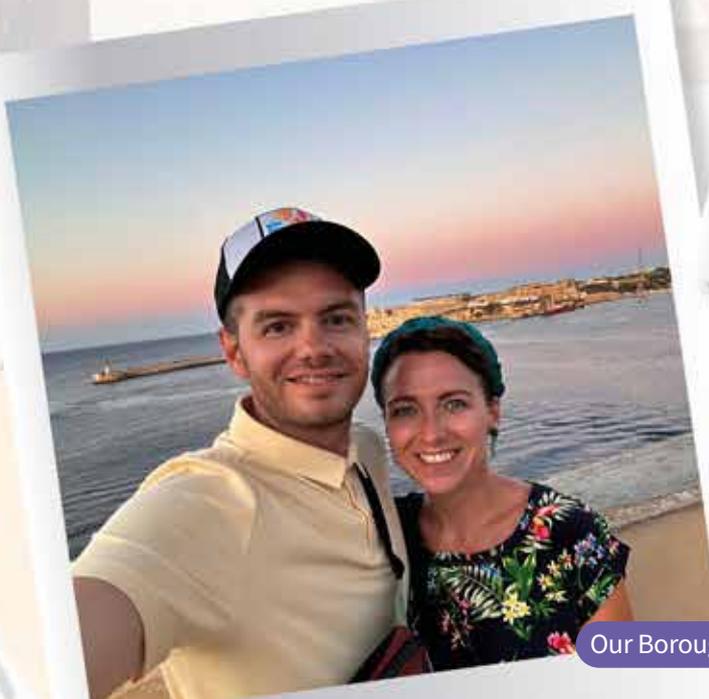
“Fostering isn’t for everyone – it does require a lot of you, but if you are caring, empathetic, nurturing, and you do want to change the life of a child, I can’t think of anything better than fostering.”

What support will I receive?

As a foster carer in the Fostering Shared Services, you’ll receive an allowance and fee for each child placed in your care of up to £2,348 per child per month, depending on the child’s age. You’ll also receive a grant to cover your council tax, blue light card, birthday and festival money, support with holidays and other discounts and benefits.

Could you do something life-changing and foster a child? Join a no-commitment meeting online or in person to find out more.

Visit www.fosteringsharedservices.org.uk to learn more about our Ofsted Outstanding fostering services and see dates of our upcoming information sessions.



Tips for a jolly green Christmas

After a visit from Santa or a big family meal, the rubbish can build up quickly. If you want to clean up the festive leftovers and dispose of them correctly, follow this handy guide...

Item	Disposal
Tinsel	In the bin! Tinsel can't be recycled
Leftover turkey	Food waste recycling – have you signed up for a new food waste collection?
Fairy lights	Household waste recycling centre or mini on street recycling centre
Real Christmas tree	We recycle your tree! Drop off at one of our recycling points.
Christmas jumpers	Clothes can be recycled at some mini on street recycling centres, or if it's in good condition, donate to charity!
Wrapping paper	If you can scrunch it up and there is no glitter or foil, then wrapping paper can be recycled. Anything that refuses to scrunch or is sparkly goes in the black sacks for waste.
Christmas cards	Plain cards can be recycled, glittery or shiny cards go in the black sacks for waste.
Cooking foil	Once it's greasy and used, this is for the waste bin!

Christmas waste collections

Household waste will not be collected on Thursday 25 December 2025, Friday 26 December 2025, or Thursday 1 January 2026. If you would normally have your waste collected on a Thursday or Friday, please do not put it out on these days and hold onto it until your next scheduled collection day.

We know that sometimes Christmas means more leftovers and more recycling to do! So if you are running out of space you can find details about on street food waste bins or mini recycling centres.

Scan me



Scan the QR Code or visit <https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/waste-and-recycling/recycling/mini-recycling-centres>

Christmas opening hours

Our customer-facing services are available **Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm**, excluding weekends and bank holidays.

Outside of these hours, residents and customers can access support via telephone for the following **priority services** from **5.01pm to 8.59am, Monday to Friday, and 24/7 on weekends and public holidays:**

Housing (homelessness and temporary accommodation); social services; major emergencies; terror threats; noise and nuisance; highways emergencies; environmental health; dangerous structures; fallen trees; parks and cemeteries; registrars; stray dogs; street lighting.

These services can be reached via the following telephone numbers:

Housing: 020 7361 3008

Social services: 020 7361 3013

Environmental services: 020 7361 3002

General enquiries: 020 7361 3000

A free telephone line located outside the Customer Services Centre at Kensington Town Hall is available for contacting the above services outside normal working hours, including evenings, weekends, and bank holidays.



Recycling your tree
Last year, we recycled 72 tonnes of real Christmas trees!

Find out the nearest drop off point to recycle your real Christmas tree: <https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/waste-and-recycling/recycling/christmas-tree-recycling>

Our Borough

We headed out into the borough to find out what some of our residents like most about Christmas in Kensington and Chelsea...



Susan Butt

I wander around the shops with all the Christmas bits and pieces. I am already studying the Christmas cards! It's nice to have Christmas trees around the borough, and I love carol singing as I am a churchgoer.



David Taylor

I like to go to exhibitions, and to places like Kensington Gardens for fresh air and nice walks. Also, I do like a bit of shopping, I visit Portobello Road where they have community stalls and things to buy for the festive period.



Will and Isa

We have kids, so we love to see Santa and enjoy the Christmas lights. We are very close to the library, if there are like activities such as night markets during Christmas that would be really wonderful.



Nicholas Harland

We enjoy all the Christmas lights and like sampling some of the live music across the borough. There's just so many things. I am also part of a charity for people with disabilities, and we do big parties for them over Christmas – that's fun.



Fiona

We've got a few churches around us. St. John's Church does an incredible service, and I like to go to that. I love Holland Park and I love Kensington Gardens. I also like to go to the Christmas market.



Murray Gordon

I love Holland Park, and I play tennis here and at other tennis courts in the borough. This borough is probably one of the best that you could live in.

Streets ahead

Discover how our streetscaping schemes are transforming the borough

We are investing in public spaces like never before, transforming our streets into vibrant, inclusive and sustainable places and creating a borough that is greener, safer and fairer for everyone.

The work is already underway, and you may have come across the already-completed projects on Sloane Street and Draycott Avenue, both of which were identified as key opportunities to work alongside funding partners to upgrade our neighbourhoods.

Draycott Avenue has been re-imagined as a true neighbourhood centre with space for cafés, markets, trees, seating and pedestrian-friendly design.

Sloane Street underwent a £46 million transformation to deliver wider pavements, in excess of 100 new trees, enhanced lighting and much more.

And that's just the start.

Pay a visit to Hogarth Road and you'll be greeted by new trees and improved surfaces which have elevated the local high street.

Hogarth Road

Amazing spaces





Find out more on our dedicated hub at www.rbkc.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/amazing-spaces



SCAN ME

Kensington Park Rd



Bute Street has been transformed into a level, piazza-style setting with outdoor dining and greenery, supporting the local market.

Another streetscaping scheme is underway on Kensington Park Road, where we're introducing wider footways for pedestrian priority, pleasant al-fresco dining areas, raised planters and a two-way cycle lane. Works began in September and will be complete by spring 2026.

Powering up Portobello

We've also taken the first steps in our Strengthening Portobello Road project – a long-term programme to improve one of London's most iconic and diverse market streets.

We are investing in upgraded infrastructure, safety measures, improved lighting, greening and flood-resilience, ensuring the street remains a thriving and characterful destination for residents, traders and visitors.

Community input has been central to shaping the proposals, building on years of engagement through local panels, forums, workshops and consultations. Work on phase one of the scheme is due to start in autumn 2026.

These investments link directly with some of the ambitions we set out in our Council Plan: creating safe and welcoming neighbourhoods, nurturing a thriving local economy and building strong connections with our communities.

By enhancing pedestrian space, outdoor hospitality and planting trees, we are making streets more liveable and accessible. The new trees, raised planting beds and sustainable drainage features will also improve air quality, biodiversity and flood resilience, making our borough greener and healthier for everyone.

Through our Amazing Spaces projects, we are investing in upgrades that will provide real benefits for residents, businesses and visitors.



Shaping the future of public participation

Your community
Your voice

Earlier this year, we asked residents to share their views on how we can improve public participation in local decision-making.

The consultation to review our existing Charter of Public Participation was part of our ongoing commitment to become a more transparent and listening Council following the Grenfell tragedy and Inquiry recommendations.

The Charter first launched in 2019 and sets out the promises we make as a Council about how we listen, engage and work with our residents. The review of the Charter was about asking how we can make sure it reflects the needs and expectations of residents today.

More than 500 people took part, through surveys, focus groups and community events.

Key findings from the consultation:

- Residents care about influence
- Trust and transparency are critical
- Digital isn't enough
- More visible leadership is needed
- Feedback must close the loop
- Non-traditional forms of engagement must be used to reach younger audiences



Using the consultation feedback, a new version of the Charter for Public Participation has been co-designed with a group of residents across three sessions, to make it clearer, more accessible and measurable.

The group included members from the Tenants Consultative Committee, the Citizen's Panel, the Youth Council, Local Account Group and Action Disability Kensington and Chelsea and was independently chaired.

Residents told us they want to see:

- Greater accountability from us
- A system to monitor impact and whether the new Charter is being embedded
- Consistency in how services and engagement are delivered across departments
- A clearer, more human tone in the Charter, making it easier to understand
- More meaningful feedback following consultation

The new version of the co-designed Charter is now being considered by councillors and a formal decision to adopt it will be taken at Full Council on Wednesday 3 December.

Thanks to all residents who took part – and watch this space.

View full consultation results at

<https://consult.rbkc.gov.uk/communities/charter>



Do you want to make your voice heard on decisions affecting communities across Kensington and Chelsea?

From waste and noise to housing and parks, our consultations consider a huge variety of issues – and we want your input.

Taking part is easy. Our online consultation hub contains details of past and current consultation and engagement activity, and you can search it by keyword, postcode, interest and more to find the issues that matter most to you.

You can even register for our dedicated consultation e-newsletter to keep on top of how and where you can make your voice heard.



Find out more and get involved today

Visit <https://consult.rbkc.gov.uk/>

Want the latest updates sent straight to your inbox? Sign up for Consultation News, as well as other Council newsletters, at <https://pages.comms.rbkc.gov.uk/pages/subscribenewsletters>

Useful Council numbers and contact information

General contact details

- 📞 020 7361 3000
- 🌐 www.rbkc.gov.uk

Benefits

- 📞 020 7361 3006
- 🌐 benefits@rbkc.gov.uk



Council tax

- 📞 020 7361 3005

Electoral services

- 📞 020 7361 3444
- 🌐 elect@rbkc.gov.uk



Education

- 📞 020 7361 3009
- 🌐 educationline@rbkc.gov.uk

Environmental health

- 📞 020 7361 3002
- 🌐 environmentalhealth@rbkc.gov.uk

Family information service

- 📞 07814 804262
- 🌐 families@rbkc.gov.uk



Housing solutions

- 📞 020 7361 3008
- 🌐 housingsolutions@rbkc.gov.uk

Housing management

- 📞 0800 137 111 or 020 3617 7080
- 📞 HM-CustomerServices@rbkc.gov.uk

Libraries

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



Licensing

- 📞 020 7341 5152

Parking

- 📞 020 7361 3004
- 🌐 enquiries@rbkcparking.com

Parking permits

- 📞 020 7361 4381
- 🌐 residentparking@rbkc.gov.uk

Parks

- 📞 020 7361 3000
- 🌐 parks@rbkc.gov.uk



Planning

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

Registrars

- 📞 020 7361 4100 (for emergencies only)
- 🌐 registrars@rbkc.gov.uk



Report a problem

- 🌐 www.rbkc.gov.uk/contact-us/report-problem or via your MyRBKC account

Social services

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

Streetline

- 📞 020 7361 3001
- 🌐 streetline@rbkc.gov.uk

Tell Us Once bereavement service

- 📞 020 7361 3940

Help for those affected by the Grenfell tragedy

020 8637 6279 (8am to 8pm)
or 0800 0234 650 (8pm to 8am)

www.grenfellwellbeing.com

Why not sign up for a **MyRBKC** account? Once registered, you can view council tax and benefits, track the progress of problems you have told us about, set up email notifications for the Council issues you care about and more.

www.rbkc.gov.uk/myrbkc