

Spring 2024

Page 3

Last ever
edition of North
Ken News.

Page 5

Brand new
Council-built social
homes.

Page 6

Could I really
be a foster
carer?



**Discover
your local
Family Hub**
page 8

About your North Ken News

North Ken News is a dedicated newsletter for North Kensington communities produced by Kensington and Chelsea Council.

Have you got news for us?

This will be the last edition of North Ken News as a printed product. You can read more information about this on page three. You can continue to let us know about any good news stories, whether they are about an event you are running, a local hero who is working wonders in your community or a programme or course that local residents could benefit from.

Please contact the Council's Communications Team if you have a story you would like to tell. We have a range of channels including the borough-wide Our Borough newsletter, social media and newsletters that could be a fit for your story.

To contact the Communications Team, email **CommsTeam@rbkc.gov.uk**

Staying in touch

There are other ways to keep up to date with borough-wide news as well as news and announcements from Kensington and Chelsea Council.

 **@RBKC**  **www.facebook.com/royalborough**


 **www.nextdoor.co.uk**

 **www.instagram.com/kensingtonandchelseacouncil**

For updates on Grenfell:

 **@GrenfellUpdates**

 **www.rbkc.gov.uk/grenfell**

 To stay up to date with the latest news and events sign up to our newsletter mailing list, visit **www.rbkc.gov.uk** and search K&C Life.

Council approves budget for 2024/25

Last month, the Council approved the budget for the year ahead, focused on delivering quality services to our residents and communities while balancing the books.



Financial pressures and increased costs to deliver services mean councillors have had to take the decision to increase council tax this year by 4.99 per cent. This means an average Band D property (excluding garden squares) will rise from £988.26 to £1,037.58, an increase of £49.32 from last year.

From helping low-income families with a £100 payment to £10 million in the pipeline for new facilities for residents with social care needs in North Kensington, we are committed to deliver a budget that is greener, safer and fairer for all.

You can read the Council's budget plan for 2024/25 by visiting www.rbkc.gov.uk/council-spending-plans-2024-25 or scan the QR code.



Thank you from North Ken News

This will be the last edition of this magazine as we come to the end of North Ken News as a printed product.

We want to thank the many outstanding people, organisations, and groups who have helped shape more than 40 editions of the magazine since 2019.

From this year onwards, we hope to increase the amount of news and features we collaborate on with the communities of North Kensington and cover these issues across our increasing number of digital newsletters and in the pages of our borough-wide printed *Our Borough* magazine.

We will continue to share stories, community spotlights and important updates about the response to Grenfell on our website and in our digital newsletters, as well as bespoke printed communications wherever necessary.

Stay in touch:

You can stay up to date on the latest news and information from the Council by subscribing to one of our digital newsletters. Visit www.rbkc.gov.uk and search K&CLife for more information.

You can also follow the Council on our various social media channels:

▶ X: @RBKC

▶ Facebook: www.facebook.com/royalborough

▶ Instagram: @kensingtonandchelseacouncil

For general enquiries to the Council's communications team, contact CommsTeam@rbkc.gov.uk



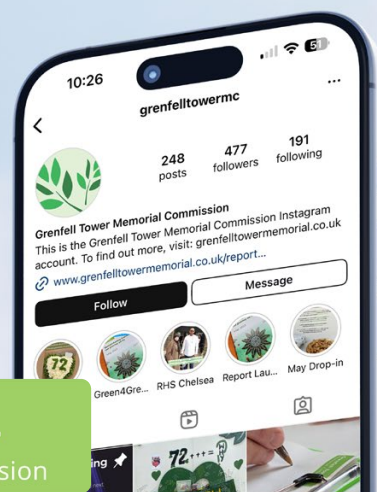
Next steps to a Grenfell memorial

Following the publication of the Grenfell Tower Memorial Commission's recommendations last November, the Commission is now preparing to launch the memorial design team selection process.

Clear criteria and details will be published in the coming months about how interested teams can apply.

The Commission's November report presented the Grenfell community's vision for a memorial, and the next steps to turn that into a reality.

Grenfell Tower Memorial Commission



For more information, please contact the Commission directly:

- ▶ Email: GTMCSecretariat@levellingup.gov.uk
- ▶ Phone: **0303 444 4831**
- ▶ Go to: www.grenfelltowermemorial.co.uk/contact
- ▶ Follow the Commission on social media: [@GrenfellTowerMC](https://www.instagram.com/GrenfellTowerMC)

Get ready for upcoming elections

Are you ready for the upcoming Mayor of London and London Assembly elections on Thursday 2 May 2024?

To have your say, you will need to make sure you are registered to vote and have a valid photo ID, which is now required when voting at a polling station. A range of photo ID is accepted, including passports and driving licences. If you don't have a valid photo ID, you can apply for a free Voter Authority Certificate, which will be accepted.

The deadline to register to vote is **Tuesday 16 April**.



For more information and to register to vote, visit www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

Don't miss out

Remember to

1. Register to vote
2. Check I have a valid photo ID
3. Vote at my local polling station



To apply for a Voter Authority Certificate, visit www.electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID

Brand new Council-built social homes nearing completion

Brand-new homes for social rent are nearing completion at Acklam Road in North Kensington and will be welcoming new residents by the end of the summer.

Acklam Road is one of the Council's new homes sites which is on track to deliver 20 new social rent homes, including four fully wheelchair accessible properties, alongside 12 market rent homes and community facilities.

The site is located next to the Swinbrook Estate, and opposite the Al-Manaar Muslim Cultural Heritage Centre, both of whom have been involved in developing proposals. Swinbrook Residents' Association has been working with us to help create a new improved accessible ground floor space which will meet the future needs of residents.

The remaining ground floor space is to be taken by Al Manaar to create new facilities for the community including a nursery space and community kitchen which will be used to train local people looking for a career in catering. The community facilities are due to be completed later in the summer.

Richard Dobson, Morgan Sindall Construction's London Area Director, said: *"We're really looking forward to seeing the doors of Acklam Road open later this year, as it's going to deliver a long list of benefits for the local area. As well as providing a significant number of high-quality affordable homes, this development will also create valuable community spaces for those living and working in Kensington."*



Find out more about the Council's New Homes programme on the Council website:

www.rbkc.gov.uk/housing/new-homes-safer-homes



Could I really be a foster carer?

– Sharon's story

Throughout the past 20 years, Kensington and Chelsea foster carer Sharon has welcomed 14 foster children into her home.

Sharon's decision to become a foster carer was borne out of her love for children and a desire to provide a safe home for those in need. Her journey into fostering began with a simple suggestion from a friend.

Looking back, Sharon recalls her uncertainty around taking the first step into being a foster carer. She realised, though, that in considering becoming a foster carer, she had already taken one of the most important steps. After attending a meeting and hearing about the experiences of others, and learning about the range of support available, Sharon decided to take the plunge.

For those who are considering becoming foster carers, Sharon's message is clear: the rewards of fostering far outweigh the challenges. By opening your heart and home to a child in need, you are making a lasting impact in their life and contributing to a brighter future for them.

The process of fostering is not without its challenges. From helping children understand their situations to navigating behavioural issues, fostering requires patience, empathy, and a deep commitment to the well-being of the children in your care.

If you are considering becoming a foster carer, Sharon says take the leap, embrace the challenges, and experience the profound joy of changing a child's life for the better. Sharon's journey is a reminder that fostering is not just about providing a temporary home; it's about building relationships, creating memories, and shaping futures.



Could you be a foster carer, or want to learn more about the process of fostering a child? Visit:

www.fosteringsharedservices.org.uk



Grenfell Tower update from the government

The future of Grenfell Tower

No decision has been made on the future of Grenfell Tower and decisions about its future are incredibly sensitive.

The secretary of state for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities is responsible for decisions on the future of the tower. He has been clear that he will not make a decision without having further conversations with the community, and that the voices of the bereaved, survivors and immediate community must be at the heart of any decision.

**Grenfell
community
updates**

The secretary of state continues to meet the community. Meetings were held in March and an update will be shared at www.gov.uk/grenfell-community-updates where you can also find the latest updates on the Grenfell Tower.

For information about the Grenfell Tower site, or to ask the Grenfell Tower community engagement team any questions, please email: GrenfellTowerSite@levellingup.gov.uk or phone **0303 444 0011**.

You can also talk to us at our regular drop-ins at Kensington Leisure Centre and Al-Manaar Muslim Cultural Heritage Centre. Please contact us for details of the next drop-ins.

Find your next job as a personal trainer

Ever considered being a gym instructor? A new course funded by the Council and delivered by Learning & Skills Solutions could be for you.

The six-week course, delivered locally at the Fit For Life Youth Gym near Latimer Road, will help you get a Level 2 diploma covering areas such as lifestyle management and health awareness, alongside safeguarding so that you can run your own classes.

Ezekiel Gilbert, a local learner who joined the course in January, said: "At the start I was excited to try something new, but I found it difficult as I hadn't been in a classroom for years. Our instructor made everything so easy. I've always been into fitness from a young age, but life got in the way, so this year I finally said to myself I have to put my all into it."

For more information on the gym instructor course, contact Learning Skills & Solutions at 01206 769099.

Seve Bello, Learning & Skills Solutions Centre Manager, said: "Teaching others to embrace wellness is a powerful journey that not only transforms bodies but also uplifts spirits. Join us at Fit for Life, where becoming a personal trainer isn't just a career choice – it's a commitment to fostering health, inspiring change, and leaving a lasting mark on the lives you touch."



Ezekiel Gilbert

Explore all our adult learning opportunities by visiting
www.rbkc.gov.uk/adultlearning



Healthy, green and happy schools

Six North Kensington schools are getting a makeover to help keep classrooms warm, reduce energy bills and cut carbon into the atmosphere as part of our plans to become net zero.

Highly energy efficient air source heat pumps are replacing old gas heating systems, displacing all the gas consumption associated with providing heating and hot water.

New radiators and pipework are replacing original Victorian pipes. Large radiators with a bigger surface area will help the spaces to get warm, without having radiators at very high temperatures, making them safer for the children, more efficient and more environmentally friendly.

At the Grade II listed Colville Primary School, where works have just begun, the changes are

expected to save 57.4 tonnes of carbon emissions per year. The school has around 450 pupils and was built in 1879.

Works at Avondale Park Primary, St Francis of Assisi, All Saints Catholic College, Thomas Jones Primary School and Bevington Primary School are all due to complete this spring and we are already looking at which buildings we can improve next.

Discover your local Family Hub

Families in North Kensington can access a host of family-friendly activities, events and support through their local Family Hub at Holmfield House, 4-6 Golborne Road W10 5PE.

Family Hubs are not just spaces; they're lively community hubs designed with you in mind. Whether you're expecting your first child or have years of experience in raising children, these hubs are your go-to destination for parenting tips, educational resources, connecting with fellow residents and more.

Our Local Offer is delivered at our Family Hubs. It provides:

- ▶ Parenting workshops, covering everything from sleepless nights to teenage tantrums.
- ▶ Playgroups and activities, to let your little ones unleash their creativity in a space dedicated to fun and games.
- ▶ Community support: Need a helping hand? Family Hubs connect you with local services and support, so you're never alone on your parenting journey.
- ▶ Events and outings: Family Hubs organise exciting family events and outings, creating memories for your family.

Find out more about our Family Information Service:
www.rbkc.gov.uk/FIS



Listen and learn about local parks

We have produced a brand-new podcast all about our local parks, including their history, how they work and info on activities and events you can enjoy in your local green space.

Each episode will give you a unique insight into our parks and answer your questions about looking after plants or supporting bees and other pollinators. Listen now, search **"Kensington and Chelsea Parks Uncut"** on Spotify or Amazon.