

Housing Matters

News from your Council

Our first Residents' Summit

Fire safety: Our commitment to residents

Moving forward with capital works



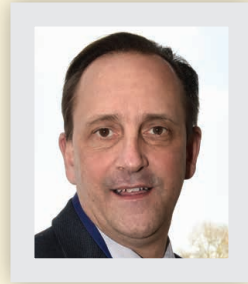
Help with
your fuel
bills

Keeping
you gas
safe



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Welcome by Doug Goldring

This edition of Housing Matters is the first since the report from the first phase of the Grenfell Tower public inquiry. We'll continue to do everything we can to

assist the public inquiry and we're looking closely at the findings and recommendations.

Our fire safety article on page 4 outlines the fire safety standard that we're aiming to achieve, which is rightly above and beyond our statutory requirements. We're making good progress in this area and have already started work on the Hackitt Review's recommendations.

We've established a new fire safety team and we're working towards having third-party certification for our fire risk assessments which would make us the first local authority to do so. There is a lot of work to do before we achieve the fire safety standards we're aspiring to, but we're quickly moving in the right direction.

I also want to thank everyone who has given us their feedback on our Draft Housing Strategy. We've had a few people asking for the consultation to be extended, however our consultation closing does not mean the opportunity to contribute has passed.

We're putting the Housing Strategy to our Leadership Team meeting in December, and we would welcome any written contributions before then. If you would like to comment, please email joe.philp@rbkc.gov.uk

There will be opportunities to help shape the Housing Strategy as the new policies and strategies are developed over the next few months. Some of these include the homelessness review, a new tenancy strategy and our approach to tackling fuel poverty - issues that residents have told us they care about as part of our consultation.

We received some really positive feedback from residents who attended our Housing Summit last month. We also received significant feedback on things we could do better and differently. We'll take this into account and use it to form part of our improvement plan and let you know what differences have come from this later next year.

Doug Goldring
Director of Housing Management

You want us to manage your homes

Thank you to everyone who responded to our consultation on the future management of your homes. Your feedback showed an overwhelming preference for the Council's continued management of your homes for the foreseeable future.

Your feedback confirms to us that the work we are doing is making a positive difference to our residents and leaseholders.

We know there is always room for improvement, and how important it is that we continue to improve the safety, quality and security of your homes. We will do this in partnership with you.

For more information visit www.rbkc.gov.uk/housing-management

A return to lifetime Council tenancies

On 23 July, the Council's Leadership Team supported a recommendation to grant lifetime tenancies to new Council tenants.

The Council introduced fixed-term tenancies (of five years and in exception two) in January 2014 believing it would help make the best use of our housing. We now believe there is far greater benefit in lifetime tenancies, helping residents and their families to build secure, stable lives, and supporting communities to thrive. We also believe there are better ways to improve the use of our stock than to require tenants to move at the end of their fixed-term tenancy.

If you took out your tenancy before January 2014, the changes won't affect you. If you are an existing tenant with a fixed-term tenancy, you will move to a lifetime tenancy at the end of the current term, unless there has been a serious breach of your tenancy agreement.

However, before any changes are introduced we need to consult with residents on an amended Tenancy Policy. The Tenancy Policy explains the type of tenancies we offer when rehousing residents to a Council home. Look out for details of the consultation.

For more information visit www.rbkc.gov.uk/housing-management

Don't fall behind with your rent this Christmas

We know that Christmas can be a busy and expensive time of year but it's important to remember to pay your rent, so that you don't start the New Year in arrears.

We're available to take payment throughout the Christmas period with the exception of Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day. Our automated services are available throughout the entire Christmas period.

Telephone **020 3772 2602** or visit www.rbkc.gov.uk/hmpayments.

Let us know if you are having difficulties – help is available. Contact Your Rent Income Officer on **020 7605 6341** or **020 7206 7525**.



Left to right: Paul Coffey (Fire Safety Project Consultant), Simon Morriss (Fire Safety Operations Manager), Kimberley Gordon (Fire Safety Team Administrator), Keith Todd (Head of Fire Safety), Lucy Podraza (Fire Safety Data and Performance Manager), Olivia Post (Fire Safety Surveyor).



Fire Safety: Our commitment to residents

New Head of Fire Safety Keith Todd tells Housing Matters about his plans to ensure residents feel safe in their homes.

Keeping our residents safe from fire is an absolute priority for the Council. We're committed to meeting and exceeding the safety requirements introduced following the Grenfell tragedy.

Not long after I joined the Council, we had a balcony fire at Markland House. While the fire was relatively minor, it served as an important reminder to us all of the importance of fire safety in and around our homes. The exact cause of the fire will never be known, but it's likely that it was caused by sunlight reflected by bottles on the balcony onto stored combustible furniture and bubble-wrap. It could also have been caused by a cigarette discarded from another balcony, igniting those items.

Thankfully no one was injured, but the lives of residents were disrupted. The Fire Brigade

had to break into other flats to tackle the fire from various angles. Some residents evacuated their flats and were out of their homes for a few hours.

The fire reminded me of my obligation to make sure that residents understand how their building is expected to perform in case of fire, and what the procedures are.

My team will be working hard on this over the coming months as we deliver the borough-wide fire strategy. As part of this we're seeking to make Kensington and Chelsea Council the first local authority to receive third-party accreditation for fire risk assessments. This means we will be one of the top local authorities when it comes to our approach to assessing the risk of fire.

Fire has the potential to impact us all, but working together, we can all make our buildings safer. There is some useful fire safety information below. I want residents to feel

safe in their homes and be fully involved in the management of fire safety in their buildings. I'm enjoying meeting residents and starting to work with residents' associations and I want to put resident engagement at the heart of our fire safety strategy. Please email us at firesafety@rbkc.gov.uk if you have concerns or questions.

Barbeques

Never use a barbeque, including disposable barbeques, on your balcony. It's dangerous to have a barbeque so close to a building. They can stay hot for hours and smouldering debris is dangerous and a nuisance for neighbours.

Smoking

If you smoke on your balcony, make sure you put your cigarettes out completely. Never throw lit cigarettes or butts from your balcony, they can cause fires. Make sure you dispose of them properly.

Storage on balconies

It's important to keep your balcony free from combustible, flammable and dangerous items.

Please don't store any of the following on yours:

- gas canisters, barbeques or patio heaters
- fuel or petrol of any kind (or equipment run on fuel, such as generators or gardening equipment)
- trailing cables, sockets or electrical white goods such as fridges or tumble dryers
- glass bottles or mirrors
- paints, oils or paint thinners
- any type of upholstered furniture, wood, plastic or combustible materials
- loose plant pots or unsecured pots on ledges
- curtaining or enclosing of balcony on any side.

Only keep furniture that you use and keep your balcony free from excess clutter. As well as being a fire risk, clutter can be a dangerous trip hazard to you and your family. This applies to all communal areas in our blocks. Items stored in corridors can block escape routes and hinder the work of the Fire Brigade in an emergency. If you have furniture to get rid of, use our Too Big for the Bin collection (see p19).

Doors and security gates

Never wedge open your front door (or doors to communal areas) and do not remove the self-closers from doors.

London Fire Brigade advice is that a security gate over your front door can hinder their operations in a fire, and can block your escape. If you have a security gate, we strongly recommend that you remove this. We're replacing front doorsets (see p6) which will provide more security for your home, and we're looking at other security improvements across our buildings.

Smoke alarms

Test your smoke alarm regularly. It can prevent the spread of fire and warn you if a fire does occur.

Holiday time

There is a much higher number of fires at this time of year than any other, particularly around Christmas. Festive trees and decorations can cause extremely serious and damaging fires. Take simple precautions to keep the season merry:

- if you use candles, make sure they are in appropriate, fire-proof containers and away from any combustible materials
- if you have a Christmas tree, keep it watered every day and don't use candles on or near it. Only use low temperature LED lights that are fused and of suitable quality, bought from a reputable supplier
- don't leave cooking unattended for extended periods.

More information

If you have any concerns about fire safety or about what you can store on your balcony, please email firesafety@rbkc.gov.uk or call our Customer Service Centre on **0800 137 111** or **020 3617 7080** and ask to speak to a member of the fire safety team.

The London Fire Brigade's website also has lots of useful information about fire safety in the home, go to www.london-fire.gov.uk/safety/

An update on fire doorsets

We understand that our tenants, and many others across the country, have been concerned about fire doors. The majority of entrance doors to flats act as fire doors and current building regulations require them to have 30 minutes fire resistance on both sides (FD30s).

We've signed an agreement with Gerda Security Products to provide 2,000 doorsets. The doorset includes the door frame and letterbox

cover, which are crucial parts of the fire resistance, as well as the door itself. Gerda will also be installing the doorsets and we expect these to all be done by September 2020. The contract with Gerda has the option of an 18 months extension to supply another 2,000 doorsets.

Delays in starting the work were the result of uncertainty in the market. In 2018 as we were about to order new doors, the Government announced that fire doors had at that point usually only been tested on one side. We cancelled the order until clarification on standards and guidance were in place. We're using timber door sets as they performed most consistently in Government tests.

We've already replaced 145 fire doorsets on five sites across the borough (prioritising high-rise buildings). We've also surveyed 400 fire door units on the Lancaster West Estate and have repaired or replaced as needed. The remaining few will be completed by the end of this year.

We will contact you directly when your door needs to be replaced so we can arrange a convenient time for Gerda to carry out the work. We'll also give you a choice of door style and colour.



What you can do to help

- Reply as soon as you can when we write to you, indicating the colour and style of door you would like. This means we can get the doors ordered quickly.
- Let us know when it's convenient to have the door installed. If you arrange a time and it's no longer convenient, please let us know.
- Once your new doorset is installed, don't do anything to alter it such as removing the self-closer, letterbox cover, changing the lock or painting it. This could reduce its effectiveness and will cancel out any guarantees from the manufacturer.
- If you have a security gate over your front door, you will need to remove this so we can install the new door. We do not recommend replacing it. The new doorset will allow you to leave your home quickly in an emergency without the use of keys and they are designed to be secure against unauthorised entry.

For more information contact your local housing officer or resident liaison officer or call Customer Services on **0800 111 137**.

Moving Forward

with capital works



Next month (December 2019) we will reach an important milestone in our schedule for the major investment project to upgrade your homes. It's when we'll be appointing the contractors who will carry out the major works.

We've already agreed a framework, or general terms and conditions, for the work with a range of companies and organisations. Having this framework means that we don't have to tender every time we need a contractor. It saves us time and money and having a long-term relationship with contractors allows us to work together to make continuous improvements to the service you receive.

Appointing contractors comes as a result of many months of preparation work. We've been busy writing specifications for the type of work and expertise we need. For example, surveyors who can inspect buildings and make recommendations, mechanical and electrical specialists who can advise on lifts and heating systems and contractors to carry out the work. We invited companies to tender for the work and evaluated their bids. Residents from our Procurement Panel were involved throughout the process and we carried out statutory consultation with leaseholders.

We've been meeting as many residents as we can to find out how you want your work delivered and to hear about any issues you may have had with contractors so that we can make the very best appointments. We've also recruited extra technical staff to the Property team to increase our inhouse expertise in managing the works.

You'll be able to see when work is due to be carried out on your home by visiting our website. Please bear in mind that all dates are provisional and before any work starts, we'll need to carry out further surveys.

Our resident liaison officers will contact you before any work starts to make sure you have the information you need and to hear your views about how the work is done. We'll give you plenty of notice if we need access to your home to complete the work.

We look forward to the contractors being in place for the next phase of work which starts in April 2020. If by any chance we do not successfully appoint the number of contractors we need, we will put interim contracts in place so that we can deliver the work that is needed to your homes.

For more information visit the Council website at www.rbkc.gov.uk/housing-management or email InvestmentProgrammeEnquiries@rbkc.gov.uk



Planning some alterations to your home?

If you are a leaseholder and you're planning some alterations or improvements to your home, you must get the Council's agreement before starting any work. As your landlord, the Council needs to agree the removal or addition of internal walls, building an extension or conservatory or a loft conversion.

You will need to complete a form and send it to the Leasehold Alteration Team. We charge a standard processing fee to check and review your proposal and work out what type of consent you will need. Standard applications usually take between four to eight weeks to process, depending on the extent of the proposed work.

If the work you're proposing requires a licence, we'll let you know and tell you what the legal costs are to prepare this. It usually takes around four to six weeks to prepare a licence.

Getting our agreement (Landlord consent) is separate to any Planning or Building Control Consent that you may also need before you carry out any work.

Not getting the relevant permissions can cost you dearly. You will need to return the property to how it was before the alterations, at your own expense, and you may face legal action. If you are not sure whether you need permission for any work to your home, please check with us before you begin.

For more information, or a leasehold alteration form, call Leasehold Alterations on **0800 137 111**.

Residents' survey 2019

You should have received a copy of this year's residents' survey from Opinion Research Service (ORS). The survey is your chance to tell us how satisfied you are with the housing services we currently deliver. The results will help us to understand your priorities and allow us to compare our performance with other housing providers and identify where we need to improve.

If you haven't received a copy, need help to complete the questionnaire or a copy in an alternative format, please contact Catherine Wall at ORS on Freephone **0800 324 7005** or email **rbcstar@ors.org.uk**.

The closing date to get your completed form back to us is **Monday 9 December 2019**.

How we're doing

Areas showing improvement or exceeding targets

Voids and lettings:

We've begun to see positive improvements in this area. At the time of writing, we have let 248 homes since April 2019, with 115 let in September alone. This compares to 218 lettings for the whole of 2018-19.

Whilst the level of vacant available homes remains high, at a current position of 77 the figure has continued to reduce from the March position of 120. We're reviewing the voids (homes that need work before they can be let) and lettings process to identify how to further streamline it and improve efficiencies. We are asking for feedback from individual households about their experiences, see p12.

Customer Service Centre (CSC):

As the first point of contact, the Customer Service Centre is a key communication point for residents. Call handling by the centre has continued to improve throughout the year, with 95.28 per cent of calls answered, of which 73.20 per cent were answered within 30 seconds. The average call waiting time has reduced from 86 seconds in 2018-19, to 46 seconds.

A focus on the quality of call handling is ongoing. Of the 1,008 residents surveyed to-date this year, 81.3 per cent were satisfied with how the CSC handled their repair request. The survey responses are continually reviewed to pick up areas needing improvement or where there may be training or skills issues with team members.

Areas requiring improvement

Door entry systems:

Quick and high quality repairs to door entry systems are a priority. Disappointingly, only 80 per cent of door entry repair callouts

were attended to within target last year. Performance has fallen further this year with only 65.09 per cent of callouts meeting the set target.

We've reviewed the service and agreed improvements with our contractor, which are being closely monitored. If their performance does not improve, we will take measures to replace them.

Current tenant arrears:

Tenant rent arrears have continued to increase, rising from £1,65m at the end of March to £1,78m in late October. Debt levels continue to be impacted by the roll out of Universal Credit for all new claims and changes in circumstances. The number of households moving to Universal Credit increases weekly; however, it is positive to see that the average debt level for a household claiming Universal Credit has fallen from £946 in March to £831 in late October.

Work continues in the following areas in order to reduce further increases in tenant debt:

- more home visits and office appointments by our Rent Income Team to carry out income and expenditure assessments
- additional training for our staff to help them to identify residents struggling with debt
- increased links between our employment service and those in debt
- streamlining the process to recover arrears. We do sometimes need to take legal action to recover the debt owed. So far this year we have issued 325 notices seeking possession and evicted five households for non-payment of rent.

If you're struggling to pay your rent, call us. We may be able to help.
Call **0800 111 137**.



Our first Residents' Summit

Over 200 residents came to our first Residents' Summit on Saturday 12 October.

North Kensington resident Jessica Jones welcomed everyone, acknowledging the positive changes that have taken place since the management of your homes returned to the Council. Planned and designed with residents, the Summit was a key step in developing a shared vision for housing in the borough. Resident Gordon Futter stressed the role residents are playing and how vital it is that this continues.

Other speakers included the Deputy Leader of the Council, Cllr Kim Taylor Smith; Director of Housing Management Doug Goldring and the renowned architect and local resident, George Clarke who spoke passionately about the importance of social housing.

Residents noted the many positive improvements since the Council took back management of their homes, but there was also opportunity to discuss areas that need improvement. These include how we deal with antisocial behaviour, making our neighbourhoods greener and ensuring that we have input from a wide range of residents.



Resident Jessica Jones



Around the table to share ideas

The continued commitment to supporting residents in north Kensington affected most acutely by the Grenfell tragedy was also highlighted.

After a hot lunch provided by a local community based business there was a chance to try out something new with tai chi and gardening workshops, while young people were kept busy with a range of games and activities. Throughout the day there was an opportunity to meet staff, gather information, share ideas and report any issues.

Four lucky residents went home with gift vouchers, kindly donated by Gerda and LFS Fire Solutions and Maintenance in our prize draw.

Thank you to everyone who came along. We'll be looking at all your feedback and comments from the day and using it to make improvements. We'll update you in the next issue. We look forward to seeing you at next year's event!



Architect and resident George Clarke



Enjoying a gardening workshop



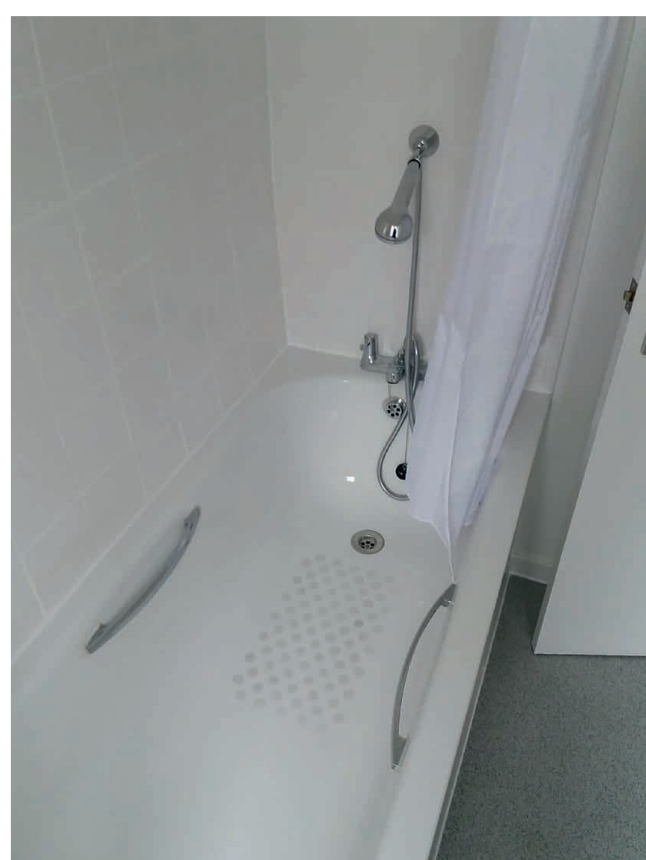
An opportunity to gather information



Welcome to your new home – how did we do?

We'd like to hear about your experience of moving into a Council home. Did you find things as they should be or were there any outstanding repairs or things you weren't happy with? Did you get the information you needed?

With a high demand for housing, when a home becomes empty, we want to make sure it is let as quickly as possible. There's often work to do before this can happen, such as carrying out repairs or redecoration, cleaning and having new keys cut. We want to make sure that when a new tenant moves in, it's a positive experience and they have all the information and support they need.



If you've recently moved, we'd really like to hear about your experience, what went well and equally what didn't.

If you would like to give us your comments or arrange to take part in a focus group please email HM-communityinvestment@rbkc.gov.uk or call **020 8964 6059**.

Help us keep you gas safe

The colder weather is well and truly here. The time of year when you want to turn up the heating, run a hot bath and have a cosy night in.

It's great to be warm and cosy when it's cold outside but the sad reality is that around 14 people die each year from accidental carbon monoxide poisoning caused by gas appliances and flues which have not been properly installed or maintained, (Source HSE Gas Appliances guidance). Many others will suffer ill-health.

Carbon monoxide poisoning can kill without warning in a matter of hours. You are particularly at risk when you are asleep because you cannot recognise the early symptoms which are tiredness, drowsiness, headache, nausea, chest and stomach pains, all of which mimic many common ailments.

As a landlord, it is our duty to check the gas appliances and gas pipework in tenanted homes every year. We'll do our bit, but we



need you to play your part by allowing us access to your home to carry out the checks annually.

Regular checks will keep you, your family and your neighbours safe and it's part of your tenancy agreement to allow us reasonable access to your home to carry out the checks.

When your next check is due, our contractor will write to you to make an appointment. If it's not a convenient time, please respond to them as quickly as possible to rearrange a date.

Please help us to keep you safe by allowing us access to your home to complete our gas safety checks quickly and efficiently. If you allow our gas engineers access to your home on the first attempt, we'll enter you into our quarterly prize draw and you could win £250.

Keep warm and stay gas safe.

Tumble dryer and dishwasher recall

A number of tumble dryers manufactured under the Whirlpool brands of Hotpoint, Indesit, Creda, Swan and Proline, made between 2004 and 2015 have been recalled.

If you think you may have one of these dryers, visit the website www.dryerrecall.whirlpool.co.uk or call **0800 151 0905** and check the model of tumble dryer.

If your tumble dryer is affected, you'll get the choice either to have it replaced free of charge, to opt for an upgrade, to have it fixed by an engineer or to choose a refund, depending on how old it is.



In the meantime, unplug and do not use the tumble dryer until it has been replaced or modified.

B&Q has identified a safety concern with Cooke & Lewis slimline dishwasher (CLDW451W-C/DI6014) which was on sale between 2012 and 2017. If you have one, stop using it immediately, unplug it and call the **helpline 0333 014 3476** for assistance.

Help with your fuel bills

Keeping warm when the temperature dips can send our fuel bills rising and when you're on a tight budget, it can be a worry. Many struggling with winter fuel bills aren't aware of the help available, or how it's possible to keep the bills down.

Make sure you are claiming all you are entitled to and follow our tips below to see how much you can save.

Payment plans

If you're finding it difficult to manage a higher energy bill over the winter months contact your energy supplier to discuss different ways to pay, such as working out a payment plan or making sure you're on the best tariff.

Think about switching

Find out if you can make savings by switching supplier. Visit www.Ofgem.gov.uk to find an approved price comparison online site. You can also look up comparisons for your telephone services, broadband, insurance and more.

Cold Weather payment

Some people who receive benefits get a cold weather payment if the temperature reaches zero degrees Celsius or below for seven consecutive days. If you qualify you will receive £25 towards the extra costs. This will be paid automatically for each seven-day period of extra cold weather between 1 November and 31 March. Visit www.gov.uk and search 'cold weather payment'.



Winter Fuel Payment – if you were born on or before 5 April 1954

If you get State Pension Credit or another social security benefit and were born on or before 5 April 1954 you may automatically get between £100 and £300 help towards your heating bill. If you're eligible but don't receive payment automatically, you'll need to make a claim. Visit www.gov.uk and search 'winter fuel payment'.

Warm Home discount scheme

If you receive the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit, or are on a low income and meet your energy supplier's criteria for the scheme, you can apply for the Warm Home discount scheme. You could get £140 off your electricity bill for winter 2019 to 2020. Visit www.gov.uk and search 'warm home'.

Healthier Homes

Leaseholders may be able to get further help from the Council's Healthier Homes project. Contact us on **0808 202 6204**.

Benefits calculator

Find out if you are entitled to benefits that you are not aware of. Visit www.gov.uk for an online benefit calculator to find out how much you could get and how to claim.

The Council's the Welfare Reform Officers can help you to find out if you can get support with your energy bill payments and help you look at the benefits you may be able to claim.

Contact your Welfare Reform Officer on:

North Office **020 8964 6095**

South Office **020 8964 6089**



New policy on paying compensation if things go wrong

The Housing Management compensation policy sets out our approach to awarding compensation if services fail, or fall below published standards. For example, if the heating or hot water fails in your block or a repair goes badly wrong.

We were working to a policy that was several years old and it was time for a review, with the aim of making the policy clearer for residents and staff alike.

We started by looking at best practice elsewhere and spoke to the Housing Ombudsman to get their advice on what the compensation policy should look like. We then discussed the policy at the Tennants' Consultative Committee, the Homes Group and the Customer Services Task and Finish group and consulted with residents' associations.

The policy covers two kinds of compensation:

Payments which the Council is legally obliged to make and has no choice over the amounts awarded (known as statutory compensation).

Payments the Council has no legal obligation to make, but has chosen to do so to compensate residents in certain situations (known as ex-gratia payments).

The key changes we have made are:

- **Policy wording:** The policy now directly refers to major service failures and compensation for lift breakdowns, heating and hot water failures. It also recognises distress to residents.

- **Amount of compensation:** To make things fairer we've set criteria to assess how much should be paid, with a limit of £1,000.
- **Lift failures:** Compensation will now be paid to residents regardless of which floor they live on.
- **Timescales:** Compensation must be claimed within three months. However, if the compensation is linked to a formal complaint, the timescale will be the same as the duration of the complaint.
- **How compensation is paid:** The current policy is to offset compensation payments against rent arrears. We'll now be more flexible and can repay actual costs if not doing so would cause you additional financial hardship.
- **Cancelling appointments:** You'll be eligible for compensation if we cancel an appointment without giving you two working days' notice. The previous policy did not specify what is 'reasonable' notice for cancelling an appointment.

Our aim is to stop things from going wrong as much as we can. If and when they do, we hope that working to the new policy will ensure the compensation we award you is in proportion to the loss and/or inconvenience caused and payments are made within clear guidelines.

For more information email
HM-CustomerServices@rbkc.gov.uk

Activities for young people



Want to be a cheerleader? Just turn up and give it a go. Want to be a cricketer? All the greats start somewhere. Football more your thing? This where your talents could be spotted.

Cricket and Football (Chelsea Foundation & Middlesex Cricket Club)

Every Tuesday during term time
5pm to 7pm
Age 10-19
Hazlewood Football Pitch
Appleford Road, W10 5EA

After School Club (Epic & Chelsea Academy)

Every Wednesday during term time
2.30pm to 5.30pm
Age 11-16
Chelsea Youth Club
Blantyre Street, SW10 0EQ

Kensal Youth Club (Youth Club Insight Partnership)

Every Wednesday from January to December
5pm to 8pm
Age 13-19
Kensal Resource Centre
Bosworth Road, W10 5EF

Cheerleading (Chelsea Academy)

Every Friday
4pm to 6pm
Age 10-19
Chelsea Academy
Lots Road, SW10 0AB

Saturday Football (Chelsea Foundation)

Every Saturday during term time
4.30pm to 8pm
Age 10-23
Westway Leisure Centre
1 Crowthorne Road, W10 6RP

There's lots of opportunity for young people to take part in sport and social activities across the borough. For more information call Clive on **07850 751314**.

Repairs service welcomes first apprentices

We're delighted to welcome the first four members of our new apprenticeship scheme which provides opportunities to residents across the construction industry.

While training, our apprentices: two electricians, a carpenter and a plumber, will work across the repairs service, learning the skills of their trades along with our organisation's policies, procedures and values. They'll be attending West London College to complete their qualifications.



Apprenticeships are a great way of learning and gaining nationally recognised qualifications while also getting paid.

We're always on the lookout for outstanding people. If you would like to find out more about apprenticeships or apply for a job with us at the Council, visit the jobs page on **www.rbkc.gov.uk**

Council meetings

November 2019 to January 2020

There's a range of committee meetings and forums where local people can get involved in the Council's decision-making. You are most welcome to attend any of the meetings below and will only be asked to leave the room if private or confidential matters are under discussion. You'll find the published agenda for each of these meetings and details of other meetings on the Council's website one full week before each meeting.



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

Date	Meeting(s)
28 November	Health and Wellbeing Board
2 December	Adult Social Care and Select Committee
3 December	Investment Committee
3 December	Planning Applications Committee
4 December	Full Council
5 December	Planning Committee
9 December	Environment Select Committee
10 December	Family Services Select Committee
11 December	Pension Board
16 December	Housing and Communities Select Committee
17 December	Leadership Team and Planning Applications
19 December	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
8 January	Administration Committee
14 January	Planning Committee
15 January	Leadership team
20 January	Schools' Forum*
22 January	Full Council
28 January	Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Visit www.rbkc.gov.uk/council-councillors-and-democracy for further information or call **020 7361 2477/2265** to speak to a member of the Governance Services Team.

Sign up **sign up!**

Subscribe to K&C Life, the Council's new monthly e-newsletter that brings you the latest news and updates from around the borough.

Discover what's on for families during schools' breaks, learn about our latest community safety initiatives, receive updates about our services, what we're doing to help the environment, the many cultural places right at your doorstep and so much more. Find out more about our e-newsletter or join the mailing list, at www.rbkc.gov.uk.



A budget to bring your ideas to life



Ever thought the entrance lobbies on your estate could do with a refresh? Would you and your neighbours feel safer with improved security, CCTV or additional lighting? Maybe you'd love to see some landscape planting, a new playground for the youngsters or a cycle store?

The Council is committed to working with residents to improve the communal areas in and around your homes. We have set up the Estate Improvement Budget to give you a direct input into how your local environment is enhanced.

Since the scheme was set up in April 2018, every Council managed home has been designated a sum of £67 each year towards enhancing the block or estate that it is on. The allocation for each home on your block or estate is added together to give an annual budget.

For example, if your estate has 200 homes, then £67 multiplied by 200 gives a total of £13,400 to spend.

Each estate or block can have its own account and you, and your neighbours, can decide how to spend or partially spend, the budget within the year, or accumulate it over a few years to increase the amount. You could use your budget to attract additional income from other funders to increase your spending power!

There are so many ways that you and your neighbours can be directly involved in making your local environment better. Whether you get together with your neighbours or through your Residents' Association we're here to help you make your home-grown ideas become a reality for the benefit of all the community.

If you want to know more, please contact Patrick Sullivan, Projects Officer on **020 8968 2795** or patrick.sullivan@rbkc.gov.uk

Need a bulky waste collection?

Residents who have large items that are too big for the bin can book a special 'bulky waste' collection online.

If your item is unsuitable for reuse, the Council will collect up to ten bulky items for £32.60 from domestic properties in Kensington and Chelsea. The service is currently free for residents in receipt of Housing and/or Council Tax benefits.

We will collect most furniture and household items like TVs, stereos, washing machines, sofas, tables, chairs, mattresses, and cabinets etc.

Please visit www.rbkc.gov.uk/specialcollections for more information and to choose your collection slot, or telephone Streetline on **020 7361 3001**.



Residents can also donate furniture, small and large electrical items, textiles, books, toys and bric-a-brac to the British Heart Foundation. All of the items are collected for free and reused or recycled to raise much needed funds in the fight against heart disease.

For more information, please visit www.bhf.org.uk

Stop and think before you pour it down the sink

Whether it's butter or olive oil, fats and cooking oils should never be put down your kitchen sink. They'll eventually turn solid, blocking pipes and causing problems for you and your neighbours.

Pour extra fat or oil in to a solid container such as a glass jar or yoghurt pot (once it's cooled), continue filling it until full, then seal it and put it in with your rubbish. Use kitchen roll to wipe up any fat that won't pour out.

If you receive a food waste recycling collection, small amounts of cooking oil, fats,



plate scrapings of fatty food can be put in your food waste caddy.

Find out more at **Western Riverside Waste Authorities** website, www.wrwa.gov.uk.

For more information about recycling in the borough, visit www.rbkc.gov.uk/recycling

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



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

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.