

Newsletter

March 2024

For Runnymede Borough Council tenants

Remember the housing survey you filled out?

Overall 67 per cent of tenants who took our survey last year were satisfied with the housing service we provide.

The survey was carried out by an independent company and was completed by 782 people. The findings will inform the Council's future planning.

Around two-thirds of tenants were satisfied that their home was well maintained. Half of tenants living in homes with communal areas were satisfied that they were kept clean and well maintained.

Seven out of 10 tenants were satisfied that Runnymede Borough Council provides them with a home that is safe.

Thank you to everyone who took time to complete the survey online, by post or over the phone.

Turn to page 3 to read more about what you said, and how you can get involved to help us improve.

Views wanted on important changes to Tenancy Agreements

All social landlords review their tenancy agreements every so often, so they remain relevant and effective, and the Council is doing so now.

Before we finalise the new agreement, we want to hear what you think about the proposed changes, which include clarity on succession rights, responsibilities on preventing damp and mould, plus explanations on lodgers and subletting.

All tenants should have received a letter which sets out the formal process for altering your Agreement.

Please share your views, which we will consider before finalising the new Tenancy Agreement. Feedback will also influence the new Tenants' Handbook. **Here's how to have your say**



Congratulations to Leanne Williams from Addlestone who won one of the gift vouchers for taking part in the survey!

Your feedback: Our action plan

- Better information using automated texts and system-driven updates to queries and transactions.
- Improved management of antisocial behaviour incidents and feedback to complainants.
- Helpful information on the web and One Account.
- New contract for cleaning of communal areas.

Drop in sessions with our staff:

- The Hub, 57 Larchwood Drive, Englefield Green - 7 March 10am - 12pm
- The Village Centre, Victoria Street, Englefield Green - 11 March, 10.30am - 12.30pm
- Civic Centre, Station Road, Addlestone - 12 March - 2.30pm - 4.30pm
- Hope Cafe, Manor Farm Lane, Egham - 13 March, 11.30am - 1.30pm
- All Saints Church, 98 Woodham Lane, New Haw - 14 March - 10.30am - 12.30pm
- Revive Coffee Shop, 99 Guildford Road, Chertsey - 15 March - 10am - 12pm

Email our housing team: listening@runnymede.gov.uk

www.runnymede.gov.uk/agreement-review

Energy bills bid

The Council is doing all it can to help tenants reduce the cost of energy bills and usage, and help the environment.

This year, we have bid for Government funding to insulate over 150 homes. If our bid is successful, we expect the tenants involved will save an average of £473.25 per year on their heating bills.

Every home will also receive a solar panel allowing the property to generate low Carbon, low cost energy. Many homes will also benefit from low energy lighting.

Community litter picking

Meet local volunteers and help make your community a cleaner, safer and wilder place for all to enjoy!

Council staff will be joining volunteers from 11am - 1pm on Saturday 16 March, meeting at Victoria Street Car Park, Englefield Green. Come and join us!

If you would like to organise your own litter pick email listening@runnymede.gov.uk.

We can provide bin bags, litter picks, gloves and even refreshments!

Warm packs may help to reduce costs



During the winter, we carried out a pilot project providing warm home packs to a small number of tenants. They included energy saving items to help save on household bills.

We have also worked with DraughtBusters, a voluntary organisation which can assess your home and do minor works to draught proof it.

We are committed to helping tenants save on energy costs, and this winter will be rolling out to more tenants with EPC rating of D and lower, who are on Universal Credit, and have been gas capped.

If you have an idea on how the Council can help tenants save on energy usage in the winter months, contact us on listening@runnymede.gov.uk

ACE
YOUTH PROJECT

SPORT4KIDS
KICKX



All sessions
are £2

Aged between 11-18 years?

Starting Monday 19 February 2024 during term-time come along and enjoy sports and other activities, whilst making new friends and having fun!

Monday, 4-6pm Kick X Football Arena, Addlestone

Indoor hybrid football with football formats including Padbol, Jorkyball, Teqball, Panna, KickX Goal, KickX Wall and KickX VR.

Tuesday, 5-7pm Egham Orbit, Egham

Delivered by Sport4Kids, activities such as tennis, football, basketball, fitness classes, and more.

Friday, 6-8pm Gogmore Farm Park, Chertsey

Delivered by Sports4kids, activities such as pool, tennis, football, table tennis, basketball and more.

No need to book, just turn up!

All activities are delivered by DBS checked staff.

enquiries@sport4kids.biz, 0300 303 3866

Hello@kickxfootball.com, 01932 821610

Runnymede
BOROUGH COUNCIL



How all tenants can get involved in helping us to improve

We are keen to work with and listen to our tenants and we have developed a menu of involvement, so you can get involved in a way that suits you.

To volunteer and improve our services you can

- Join a repair, communications, or community group.
- Become a resident reader, tenant voice or resident inspector.
- Take part in Be Heard from Home surveys, focus groups, or a Digital Champion.

To find out more, contact us on listening@runnymede.gov.uk call, 01932 838383 or visit our website, www.runnymede.gov.uk/tenant-engagement-1

Satisfaction survey results

61%
satisfied they are kept informed about things that matter to them.

65%
agree the Council treats them fairly and with respect.

47%
satisfied that the Council listens to their views and acts on them.

49%
of tenants were satisfied with the Council's approach to handling antisocial behaviour.

49%
of tenants were satisfied the Council makes a positive contribution to their neighbourhood.

67%
of people who had a repair carried out in the past year were satisfied with the repairs service. Slightly less people were satisfied with the time taken to complete their most recent repair after reporting it.

574
comments on what tenants said was important for the Council to do, including:

General comments about repairs, and timescales to complete repairs and outstanding or missed repairs.

Improvements to homes and the customer service received.

Neighbourhood problems, such as issues with car parking.

You said, we did: Improving how we handle complaints

In the satisfaction survey you told us we should improve how we listen to and handle complaints:

"Let people know when they put in a complaint in whether the Council is going to follow through"

"Listen to the tenant's complaints and take them seriously"

"Improve the time it takes to get back to you from a complaint."

"Take more responsibility for complaints from residents."

"Should get back to you when you put in any complaint about the maintenance of the property."

To address this we are:

- Completing extra staff training.
- Improving the numbers of complaints resolved at first point of contact.

■ Including tenants in checking how we perform against the Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code.

To help review how we handle complaints please contact us on listening@runnymede.gov.uk.

We are offering shopping vouchers to all tenants who contribute!

Making a complaint

Search for 'housing complaints' on www.runnymede.gov.uk.

Email us with your complaint at listening@runnymede.gov.uk.

Write to / visit the Civic Centre, Station Road, Addlestone, KT15 2AH.

Phone the Council to talk through your concern on 01932 838383.

If you are not satisfied with the Council's response, you can go to the Housing Ombudsman. Contact them on 0300 111 3000 or visit www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Thank you for paying your rent

The vast majority of tenants pay their rent by Direct Debit so they do not get behind with their rent.

We recognise the pressures from the rising cost of living in day-to-day life so we want to thank people for ensuring accounts are kept up to date.

As a social landlord all the rent collected goes into running our services and maintaining homes. Prompt payment means we do not have to spend money in chasing rent arrears.

If you are struggling with your rent payments, contact your Area Housing Manager by email on Tenancy.Management@runnymede.gov.uk or call us on 01932 838383. Alternatively, see the support available by visiting our website www.runnymede.gov.uk/cost-living or via One Account.

It's easy to swap your home

Homeswapper is the UK's biggest mutual exchange service, with over 400,000 users.

Tenants can use it and search for homes if they want to swap. There is instant messaging, online permission forms and a Multiswap tool to help you find the swap that's right for you.

For more information and to register, visit www.homeswapper.co.uk

We have paid the membership cost for all tenants.

Introducing our contractors

We partner with a number of contractors to provide our services:



NEO Property Solution is currently upgrading new fire doors over the next three years, for those living in flats and maisonettes.



Anglian Windows is installing new windows and doors over the next five years, for those living in houses.



MCP completes day-to-day repairs. You can raise repairs directly to their staff over the phone or online.



K&T Heating is our gas service and boiler maintenance contractor, carrying out annual gas safety checks.



Kincraig Construction is replacing kitchen and bathrooms.



Clairglow Heating is installing new boilers and carrying out electrical works, such as rewiring.

Please respond if you hear from our contractors. If in doubt, contact the Council.

Good, affordable housing for local people

Council contractors are forging ahead with the planned investment in our social housing, installing new kitchens, bathrooms, boilers and electrics.

The most recent area of work is to install new windows and doors and this started in January.

These upgrades, costing £34million over five years, will benefit tenants and bring more properties up to the government's Decent Homes standard.

New homes

Consultants are looking into the number of new homes that could be built if the Parkside estate in New Haw is re-developed.

Factors include any flood risk, soil conditions, ecology and of course, the cost.

During the spring and summer we will be able to update local residents on the proposals and we will



Council staff demonstrate a new boiler to a tenant.

be keen to listen to feedback.

It is hoped that the scheme will include a mix of property types and opportunities for low-cost home ownership.

To register for a transfer visit [RBC Living & Homes \(rbc-homes.org\)](http://RBC Living & Homes (rbc-homes.org)) or contact us.