

# Newsletter

For Council tenants

## 70% of tenants are satisfied with our housing services



Seventy per cent of tenants who responded to the recent Tenants Satisfaction Survey are - taking everything into account - satisfied with the Housing services provided by Runnymede Council.

Last year the result was 67 per cent satisfied.

A big thank you to the 679 tenants who completed the survey. This is 24 per cent of all tenants. In 2023 the response rate was 28 per cent.

Response rates by method 2024

- Postal 36 per cent
- Online 50 per cent
- Phone 14 per cent

The survey was open for six weeks during December and



January. The full findings will be presented to the Council's Housing Committee in March.

Committee meetings are open to the public and residents are welcome to attend. The full results of the survey will then be published on the Council's website.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures are set by the Regulator of Social Housing. The results for all social landlords can be found on the Regulator's website.

The average satisfaction score for tenants of all local authorities last year was 68 per cent.

Four lucky respondents were picked at random by Acuity, each receiving a £50 gift voucher.

## Let's get building

Regeneration proposals for New Haw: Nancy Waterhouse is our experienced Housing Development Manager.

She is leading on the proposed regeneration of the Parkside estate in New Haw. This project has been an aspiration of the Council for some time but because of the complexity of the site, there have been a number of delays.

We are now completing flood modelling and seeking advice from the Environment Agency.

Nancy will then be able to update local residents, seek their views on the principle of development and talk about the likely benefits for the wider community.

As we move forward with this project, involving residents is key to delivering a sustainable new development, with the community at its heart. We will be in contact with all residents about how best

to engage with you and your community to ensure that everyone's views are heard.



To request this newsletter in a different format, or for anything else we can help with, contact us on [Listening@runnymede.gov.uk](mailto:Listening@runnymede.gov.uk) 01932 838383 or at the Civic Centre, Addlestone, KT15 2AH.

## Top tip!

# OneAccount

The Housing Register for Council tenants wishing to transfer and for first time applicants is moving to One Account.

Please check the Council's website for the latest information and advice on how to apply.

## New Council homes for Egham

The Council is negotiating with a property developer to buy 13 new homes for rent at Thorpe Lea, Egham.

The scheme should deliver three houses and 10 apartments for affordable rent, with a mix of one and two bedrooms.

These exciting new homes should be ready to move in during Spring 2026.

## Struggling with your rent?

Don't forget to notify Universal Credit of the increase in your rent.

It is important that your rent is paid to ensure you do not breach the terms of your tenancy agreement.

All tenants must pay their rent, service charge and any other charges weekly in advance – or set up another arrangement with us. Rent is charged weekly on Mondays, and it is your responsibility to ensure your full rent is paid each week even if it is paid on your behalf by Housing Benefit, Universal Credit or someone else.

Getting behind with your rent means you risk losing your home.

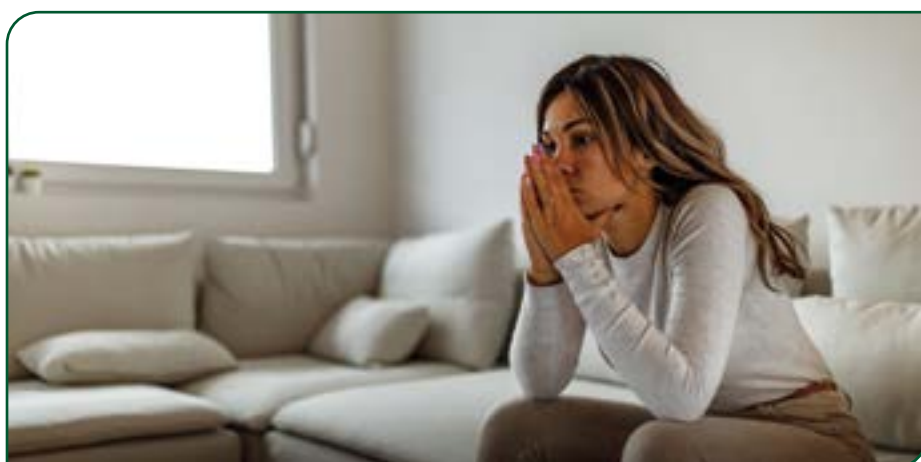
**I'm struggling to pay my rent – what do I do?**

Contact us as soon as possible.

If you are working age, you may be eligible for help towards your rent through Universal Credit.

If you are receiving a pension, you may be eligible for Housing Benefit or Pension Credit.

Our Tenancy Services Team is here to offer help and advice on 01932 838383 or by email at [Tenancy.management@runnymede.gov.uk](mailto:Tenancy.management@runnymede.gov.uk)



## Who gets social housing?

### A new Housing Allocation Scheme

The Council has a statutory responsibility to publish an up-to-date Housing Allocation Scheme, setting out the criteria for joining the Housing Register and how social homes are to be allocated.

We looked at data on incomes, demand including homelessness and the future housing needs of the Borough.

We also reviewed issues such as the age at which a child should ideally have their own bedroom.

We asked for views on proposed changes to the scheme between November – January.

We received 137 responses, which were mainly supportive.

We are grateful to all the people who took the time to respond.

The new scheme will be presented to the Council's Housing Committee on 5 March for approval. It includes:

- Increasing the financial net thresholds to allow registration of single households with income of £35,000 or more per year, couple households with income of £40,000 or more and family households with income of £55,000 or

more per year.

- Different priorities for homeless households to support the emphasis on preventing homelessness
- Allowing someone helped to find a privately rented home outside the Borough to retain their "local connection" for three years
- Reducing the length of time you are barred from the Register following housing fraud or antisocial behaviour from five years to two years.

# Tenants: you can get involved

There are lots of ways for residents to have their say.

## Repairs and Maintenance Group

A recent meeting of the Repairs and Maintenance Group looked at how we arrange planned upgrades, like new bathrooms, kitchens, central heating, roofs, windows and door replacements, with a budget of over £7 million for 2025/26.

We discussed the Procurement Act 2023 which aims to empower and involve residents in securing contracts for these works.

## Continuing programmes for this year:

- Kitchen and bathroom renewal.
- Planned boiler replacement.
- Planned electrical re-wiring and upgrades.
- Windows and doors programme.
- Fire door replacement programme.
- Wall and loft insulation along with solar panel installation.

Replacing Surrey Towers lifts

## New programmes starting:

- Roofing
- Cyclical decoration and painting

The next meeting is on 10 March at 10.30am at the Civic Centre. Contact us if you would like to join.

Did you know delays and added costs are incurred if tenants do not agree to access for modernisation works?

If you have questions or concerns about upgrades to your home, please talk to us as soon as our contractors contact you.

## Neighbourhood and Communities Group

Corporate Head of Housing, Maggie Ward explained the different contracts for the repairs and maintenance programmes and the Council's in-house grounds maintenance service.

We discussed the £90 million loan the Council has to pay for owning the housing stock, why rents have to go up; and the on-going investment in new IT.

There was lively discussion about whether councils are better landlords than the housing associations! We are following up:

- DIY Shed for Addlestone.
- Gardening/Crafts workshops.
- Energy saving leaflets.

The next event is on 17 March at 10.30am at the Civic Centre. Contact us to get involved.

## Meet our new Antisocial Behaviour Officer

I'm Ashley Gordon, your new Antisocial Behaviour Officer.

I have a background in conflict resolution and community safety and am looking forward to working with tenants, colleagues and the Police to tackle antisocial behaviour with prevention and early intervention.

I will be engaging with tenants to understand key concerns and discuss potential solutions.

If you need to report an issue or seek advice, please don't hesitate to contact the team on [Tenancy.management@runnymede.gov.uk](mailto:Tenancy.management@runnymede.gov.uk) or by calling 01932 838383.



Ashley Gordon

## What you need to know about Asbestos

Some properties built between the 1930s and 1990s may contain some asbestos-containing materials (ACMs).

Asbestos is only risky if disturbed or damaged. Activities like sawing, drilling, or sanding can cause exposure, but ACMs

in good condition and left undisturbed are usually safe. The Council has legal responsibilities and is committed to managing Asbestos safely by surveying homes before doing maintenance work and maintaining an Asbestos Register to ensure safe

working practices.

If you are worried that asbestos in your home has been damaged, please contact us.

For more information visit the Health and Safety Executive website at [www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos](http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos)

# Wellbeing and a healthy lifestyle

*Andrea Norman-Walker, Housing Engagement and Inclusion Officer and qualified Health and Wellbeing Coach writes:*

We all know we should eat healthily, exercise, get enough sleep etc. Daily physical activity has many positive health benefits and, as we get older, it gets more important to have different types of exercise - cardio exercise to help with our heart health, strength exercise to keep our bones strong, flexibility exercise to reduce injuries, and balance

exercise to prevent falls.

No one can escape stress in our busy, modern world. Techniques like breathing, exercise, yoga and meditation can help.

Food choices can also have a profound impact on our mood, energy and concentration. Air fryers can be a great solution to easy, nutritious meals, with savings on fuel bills. **We have 4 Air Fryers to give away!** Simply sign up for a new One Account on the Council's website. Contact us if you need any help.

## New Citizens' Panel created

The Citizens Engagement Panel is the Council's commitment to understand what really matters to the residents of Runnymede.

This initiative aims to give residents a voice in matters that will inform the Council's understanding on public priorities.

Particularly the Council's policies, strategies and services which impact the whole community, and how we can best make real positive difference to the quality of life of all our residents.

The pilot will run for 12 months, during which people who sign up and join the panel will be invited to participate in two consultations.



Sign up to register for our Citizens' Panel by calling 01932 838383 or visit our website [www.runnymede.gov.uk/CEP](http://www.runnymede.gov.uk/CEP)

## Bulky waste collection information

Kingston Community Furniture Store collects bulky household items suitable for reuse.

Items that can be collected:

- Large household electricals such as washing machines, fridges and cookers.
- Wooden furniture such as tables, wardrobes or desks.

- Upholstered furniture such as sofas and chairs.
- Beds and mattresses

Items that cannot be collected:

- Garden waste
- Building rubble
- Hazardous waste

## Reminders

### Recycle rules for a reason

Contaminated recycling from Council homes is charged to the Housing onto your rent bills. So for the planet and your rent bill please follow the Recycling Rules:

Only put acceptable items in your recycling bin.

Use the search tool on the Council's website if you are unsure.

Make sure items are clean and dry and rinse bottles, tins and jars.

Put any food waste into a bag in your green caddy if you have one and leave it out in the street on your weekly collection day.

It's important not to put food waste into your blue lid bin. Doing so could mean all the recycling has to be dumped.

### Insurance

All tenants are responsible for having adequate contents insurance. The Council's buildings insurance is only for the property.

If you don't arrange your own contents insurance and you suffer a loss through accidental damage such as a leak, your possessions will not be covered.

The cost is £85 for one to five items. If you are on Income Support or Pension Credit you may be eligible for a discount. To book call 020 8942 5500 or email [collections@kcfurniture.org.uk](mailto:collections@kcfurniture.org.uk)