

Talk Housing

News for Royal Greenwich tenants and leaseholders

WELCOME

Welcome to Issue 36 of the Talk Housing newsletter, packed with information for tenants and leaseholders. We hope you enjoy it and if you have any feedback or ideas for future issues we would love to hear them.

Please email community-participation@royalgreenwich.gov.uk

SUMMER 2026 ISSUE 36



Enjoy a summer of culture pages 6-8

Inside

- 4. Giving residents a stronger voice
- 5. Keeping your home safe – why access matters
- 11. Performance Spotlight: Repairs

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5 minutes with Cllr Jackie Smith



Following the local elections in May, I'm delighted to introduce myself as the new Cabinet Member for Housing, Greenwich Builds and Estate Regeneration and Deputy Leader of the Council.

I'd like to warmly thank my predecessor Cllr Pat Slattery, for the fantastic work she has helped deliver over the past four years for tenants and leaseholders. I wish her well in her retirement - along with a well-deserved rest!

Inside this edition you'll find a special feature on pages 6-8 of free, family events on this summer as part of Royal Greenwich Festivals, ParksFEST and the Greenwich+Docklands International Festival.

The Seaside and Country Scheme can help you if you're over 55 and want to relocate to seaside or country areas – find out on page 4.

And a gentle reminder that when requested, to allow our contractors and staff to carry out important checks and inspections of your home – read more on page 5.

Finally, we're preparing for an inspection by the Regulator of Social Housing this summer – see page 10 – and we'll keep you updated on the outcome of it.

Thank you to everyone who has given us such valuable feedback to help shape future policies and initiatives. We are listening to you and with your help we can help shape future improvements together.

I hope you enjoy this issue of Talk Housing. If you have any suggestions for future editions, or feedback on this one, please email community-participation@royalgreenwich.gov.uk.

Jackie Smith

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing, Greenwich Builds and Estate Regeneration



Making food waste easier to recycle

Food waste collections are being rolled out to housing blocks without an existing service, starting with flats in SE10, SE8 and SE13, and then expanding boroughwide.

Eligible households will receive a kitchen caddy and access to a communal outdoor food waste bin, making it easier to recycle food waste.

Read more at: royalgreenwich.gov.uk/flats-food-waste



House Exchange platform closing



After running the service on behalf of the sector for over 20 years, Clarion Housing Group has decided to close the House Exchange mutual exchange matching platform to focus resources on improving and maintaining its homes and delivering key services to its residents.

As a result, the House Exchange platform will close on Friday 31 July. After this date you will no longer be able to use the platform to look for homes or have access to your account.

If you have already submitted an application to House Exchange that has been approved before the closure date, this will continue to be processed as normal.

If you have an account with House Exchange, your details will not be transferred to another provider.

So, from 1 August, please use homeswapper.co.uk to search for homes.

Who's in the new Cabinet?

Following the local elections held on Thursday 7 May, the council's new Cabinet, and their portfolio roles, were formally approved at the council's Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 27 May.

The new Cabinet, along with their area of focus, are:



Cllr Anthony Okereke
Leader of the Council



Cllr Jackie Smith
Deputy Leader and Housing,
Greenwich Builds, and Estate
Regeneration



Cllr Adel Khaireh
Culture, Equalities and Leisure



Cllr Asli Mohammed
Economy, Town Centres
and Co-operatives



**Cllr Calum O'Byrne
Mulligan**
Transport, Climate Change,
Waste & Streets



Cllr Joshua Ayodele
Community Safety and
Integrated Enforcement



Cllr Mariam Lolavar
Health, Adult Social Care
and Communities



Cllr Rachel Taggart-Ryan
Finance and Resources



Cllr Sandra Bauer
Children, Young People and
Post-16 Futures



Cllr Tom Creswell
Planning and Development

Local ward councillors

Your ward councillor may have changed following the elections. To find out who your local ward councillors are visit royalgreenwich.gov.uk/find-your-councillor

Have you thought about moving out of London?

If you're aged 55 and over and ever thought about moving away from London for a life by the coast or countryside, then the Seaside and Country Homes scheme might be for you.

The Seaside and Country Homes scheme is run by the Mayor of London and over the past two years, 15 households from Greenwich each year have successfully relocated to one- and two-bedroom flats or bungalows near the coast or countryside.

You may want to move to be nearer family or friends, to improve your health or wellbeing, or live among people of a similar age. Rents remain at social levels and you keep your existing tenancy rights. You can also get help with moving costs as well as £1,000 for every spare bedroom given up.

The scheme can also help increase the availability of larger homes for families on the housing register or in temporary accommodation.

To apply, you must be aged 55 or over, hold a secure tenancy with the council or a housing association in the borough, have no rent arrears in the past 12 months, and no history of antisocial behaviour.

Find out more royalgreenwich.gov.uk/seaside-country-scheme or call **020 8921 2941**.



Giving residents a stronger voice in housing

We're making an important change to how residents can influence housing services.

Local Housing Panels have ended under our new Resident Engagement Policy, and we are introducing the Tenant Influence and Oversight Panel (TIOP).

TIOP will be a tenant-led group working with the council to review and improve housing services. Panel members will use their experience to ask questions, highlight what works and what doesn't and help shape changes for residents.



The panel will give residents a stronger say in how housing services are run and improved by promoting:



1. Transparency – so residents can clearly see how decisions are made and how services are performing

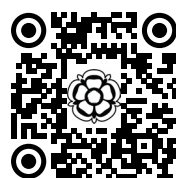


2. Accountability – giving residents a direct role in holding the council to account



3. Influence – enabling tenants to shape policies and services in ways that reflect their needs

We invited tenants to join the panel; applications will close on 2 August. Panel members will be trained and supported to improve services and hold us to account.



To apply or find out other ways you can get involved visit **communityconversations.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/tenants-and-leaseholders**

Major refurbishment complete at Gavestone Road

We've completed work on a council block at 115-128 Gavestone Road, following a major multi million pound upgrade as part of our £430m Housing Our Greenwich programme, to make it stronger and better suited for the future.

The two-storey block, originally built in the 1960s, has had work done to strengthen the building's foundation, external walls and brickwork, with the addition of a new roof.

Each home has also had new windows, front entrance doors, ceilings and floors, kitchens and bathrooms as well as electrical rewiring throughout.

The homes are currently being let to people on our housing register.



Keeping your home safe: why access matters

Giving us access to your home is essential for maintaining a safe, well-managed home.

Sometimes, council staff or any of our authorised contractors may need to carry out inspections, safety checks or repairs which can help protect both you and your neighbours.

You may receive a letter or telephone call to make an appointment, and it is important that you respond so that we can arrange and complete any necessary work.

Allowing access to your home when required is part of your tenancy agreement and refusing entry

without a good reason could lead to us taking legal action to be able to enter your home. We want to avoid this wherever possible, so please work with us to complete this process.

If someone in your household has a disability or medical need, please let us know. We will make sure we handle everything with care and flexibility.

All council-appointed contractors and staff carry ID so please make sure you check this before letting anyone in. If in any doubt call us on **020 8921 6584** or email **capital-investment-admin@royalgreenwich.gov.uk**.



New surveyors appointed

We have appointed Ridge and Partners, alongside our existing consultants FFT and Potter Raper, to carry out stock condition surveys on our behalf.

ENJOY A SUMMER OF CULTURE

Get ready for another incredible summer of free art, culture and events funded by the council as part of a £2.3million investment into arts and culture in the borough through our Getting Things Done programme.

From art installations to the spirit of carnival, we're bringing you over 40 free, diverse, accessible, family friendly events and activities from now until September, supported by the Mayor of London and the National Lottery Heritage Fund.



See full details of what's on near you this summer at:
royalgreenwich.gov.uk/events/summer



WHAT'S ON

Royal Greenwich Festivals

Free, family festivals on your doorstep funded by the council.

Our Heritage UK: Ise Agbe

- Saturday 1 August, 12 noon to 5pm, Tramshed
- Saturday 15 August, 1pm to 6pm, African cultural dance celebration, Birchmere Park
- Saturday 22 August, 12 noon to 5pm, Craft workshop and African folklore story time, Charlton Assembly Rooms
- Saturday 29 August, 12 noon to 5pm, Afrobeat music and talking drums festival, Abbey Wood Park
- Saturday 12 September, 12 noon to 5pm, Ise Agbe at Woolwich Carnival

Celebrations and workshops exploring African culture through folklore storytelling, creative activities including jewellery making and basket weaving, dance, music and youth-led performances.

TARU Arts: Summer Festival and Woolwich Carnival

- Sunday 16 August, 2pm to 6pm, TARU Arts: At Garrison Church Summer Festival
- Saturday 12 September, 12 noon to 7pm, Woolwich Carnival, Woolwich Town Centre

The spirit of carnival will return to Woolwich with music, dance, food and community stalls.



Woolwich Garrison Church Trust: Garrison Church Summer Festival

- Sunday 16 August, 2pm to 10pm
- Monday 17 August, 2pm to 10pm
- Wednesday 19 August, 2pm to 10pm
- Thursday 20 August, 2pm to 10pm
- Saturday 22 August, 2pm to 10pm

A multi-day festival extravaganza of music, arts, film and crafts, in collaboration with the local community, including the army and local school children.

Woolwich Works: Brassworks

- Saturday 5 September, 12 noon to 6pm, Woolwich Town Centre and Woolwich Works courtyard

The courtyard will come to life with musical performances, plus a community brass parade through Woolwich town centre.



Emergency Exit Arts: Youth Club Tour and Youth Fest 2026

- Saturday 26 September, 12 noon to 7pm, General Gordon Square

A free, one-day summer festival, co-created with young people, featuring live performances, creative workshops, a youth marketplace, and sports activities. Plus, touring youth club workshops throughout the summer.



ParksFest

Free, family events and activities run by Greenwich Parks Forum and Friends of Parks groups, with support from the Royal Borough of Greenwich.

- Saturday 22 August - Hornfair Park
- Sunday 23 August - Mycenae House and Gardens
- Sunday 6 September - East Greenwich Pleasaunce
- Sunday 13 September - Southwood Park
- Sunday 13 September - Maryon Wilson Park



Greenwich+Docklands International Festival

The globally renowned Greenwich+Docklands International Festival (GDIF) returns to animate our open spaces this August and September.

- Friday 21 August 7pm - 360 (dance), General Gordon Square, Woolwich, SE18 6AB
- Saturday 22 and Sunday 23 August, 1pm to 6pm – Greenwich Fair, General Wolfe Piazza, Observatory Hill, Greenwich Park, SE10 8XJ
- Saturday 29 and Sunday 30 August - Luciana Acuña & Alejo Mogueillansky (Argentina) present: Efectos Especiales (theatre), Greenwich Peninsula, SE10 0XX
- Monday 31 August, Kobby Taylor (UK) presents: The Torch (music/dance), General Gordon Square, Woolwich, SE18 6AB
- Monday 31 August, Olúwatósin Omotosho (UK) presents: The Aunties – House of Masks, Beresford Square, Woolwich, SE18 6AB
- Friday 4 and Saturday 5 September - El Conde de Torrefiel (Spain) present: I have no name (installation), Tump53 Nature Reserve, Thamesmead, SE28 8AS
- Friday 4 and Saturday 5 September - Lorna Rees Company (UK) present Canopy (installation), Tump53 Nature Reserve, Thamesmead, SE28 8AS
- Sunday 6 September - Luca Silvestrini's Protein Dance presents: (In)visible Dancing, General Gordon Square





Living in a Greenwich Builds council home? Tell us what you think!

If you recently moved into a new Greenwich Builds council home, we want to hear about your experience.

From your experience of moving in to the quality of your home, and any issues you may have encountered, your feedback will help us improve our homes and services for current and future residents.

These surveys are only for people living in Greenwich Builds accommodation – if this is you then visit royalgreenwich.gov.uk/gbsurvey

Get the best from the cutting-edge heating and ventilation in your Greenwich Builds council home



Our new Greenwich Builds council homes are fitted with the latest heating, ventilation and energy technologies to reduce both running costs and carbon emissions.

If you've moved into a Greenwich Builds development you should already have been shown how to use these systems, but if you need a reminder, we've created handy animations which cover the use and maintenance of your heat pumps, ventilation systems and solar panels.

These animations can be found at royalgreenwich.gov.uk/energyfeaturesflats (for people living in a flat or maisonette), and royalgreenwich.gov.uk/energyfeatureshouses (for people living in a house).

This should help you get the best out of your new home all year round!

Preparing for our housing regulation inspection

We are continuing our work to make sure we provide safe, high-quality homes and services that residents can rely on.

As part of this, we are preparing for a future inspection by the Regulator of Social Housing. These inspections take place every four years and will help ensure that landlords are meeting the standards expected of them and delivering services that put residents first.

Over the past year, we have been reviewing our services, policies and performance to understand what we do well and where we can improve. We have been listening to your feedback, strengthening our approach to complaints and anti-

social behaviour, reviewing how we engage with you and focusing on the quality and safety of our homes.

Your voice is an important part of this work. Through surveys, engagement events, resident panels and feedback from complaints and compliments, we are using what you tell us to help shape future improvements.

Preparing for inspection is not simply about meeting regulatory requirements. It is about making sure we continue to improve the services we provide and are open, accountable and responsive to the people who live in our homes.



Help to get working

Connect to Work is a free programme that helps people with health conditions, disabilities or other personal circumstances find and stay in meaningful employment.

If you are over 18, live in the borough and have experienced challenges finding work, you could be eligible.

Find out more or make a self-referral at royalgreenwich.gov.uk/CTW-self-referral

You can also speak to someone about the support available to you at Greenwich Local Labour and Business (GLLaB) on 020 8921 2440 or come see us in person at The Old Library, Calderwood Street, SE18 6QW.



Performance Spotlight: Repairs

You have told us that getting repairs completed on time and to a good standard is a top priority. We've heard this through the Borough Wide Housing Panel, from analysing the complaints we receive, and in our discussion with local councillors.



Survey results

72% of residents were happy with their last repair, and 66% with how long it took. That's down slightly on last year, but still ahead of the year before.

We think that this slight drop was tied to working through a backlog of older repairs that had long waits, which understandably can frustrate people. We expect results to improve next year.

Older and sheltered tenants were generally more satisfied - but views were mixed across all ages.

Checking every home - and fixing problems faster

Thank you for sharing your feedback - it's helping us improve, especially on damp, mould, leaks and condensation.

We're now inspecting every home to make sure it's safe and in good condition. We'll let you know when we're visiting, and if we find any issues, we'll work with you to get them sorted.



Repairs: faster service and quicker waiting times

We carried out over 60,000 repairs last year - around three per home. Some jobs needed multiple visits or different specialists.

Performance improved for non-emergency repairs, with 76.5% done on time (up from 67.2%) and average wait times cut from 15 days to 10.

For emergencies, 82.4% were fixed on time (within 2 hours) - a small drop from 83.5% last year.

Find out more

To see our full Tenant Satisfaction Measure performance, please visit royalgreenwich.gov.uk/tenant-satisfaction-measures

We'll be sharing more of our TSM results in Talk Housing in October.

We're here to help

If you are struggling to pay your rent, please speak to your Income Officer.

Our Income Officers can agree an affordable repayment arrangement and give advice on further support.

They can also refer you to the Universal Support Team for guidance with your Universal Credit claim.

The Universal Support Team can check whether your income could be maximised with additional welfare support, ensure your housing costs are being paid

at the highest eligible rate, and identify any disability benefits you may be missing out on.

They can also assist with claims or disputes you may be having with the Department for Work and Pensions. If you do not receive Universal Credit, your Income Officer can refer you to another team for benefits advice.

Call your Income Officer on the number at the top of your rent statement or email **rent-account-enquiries@royalgreenwich.gov.uk**

Get council updates by email

Subscribe now to get the weekly council bulletin sent straight to your email inbox.

From bank holiday bin collections to free events for all the family, our weekly bulletin tells you everything you need to know.

Sign up to the council's email newsletter: **royalgreenwich.gov.uk/newsletter**



Borough Wide Housing Panel

Borough Wide Housing Panel is our quarterly meeting for council tenants and leaseholders within the borough. This is an opportunity to meet with officers and other residents. If you would like to attend our next Borough Wide Housing Panel, please email us at **YourVIEW@royalgreenwich.gov.uk**.

No BBQs please!

To help keep everyone safe, please remember that barbecues, including disposable ones, are not permitted on balconies or on communal grass areas across our estates.

Follow us on WhatsApp

Follow us on WhatsApp:
royalgreenwich.gov.uk/follow-whatsapp

