

Home *life*

Wandsworth Council's housing newsletter wandsworth.gov.uk/housingnews



First new council homes completed as part of the Winstanley and York Road regeneration [page 14](#)

- Celebrating ARCH: find out about the Association of Retained Council Housing [page 4](#)
- Christmas celebrations with a difference at our sheltered schemes [page 20](#)

Useful contacts

There is a range of housing services and information available on our website www.wandsworth.gov.uk/housing

Housing contacts

Housing Customer Centre

90 Putney Bridge Road
London SW18 1HR

Western Area Housing Office

Roehampton Parish Hall
Alton Road, London SW15 4LG
Housing hotline: 020 8871 6161

Housing Area Teams

Central: 020 8871 5333
Eastern: 020 8871 7439
Southern: 020 8871 7288
Western: 020 8871 5530

If you do not know your area team email: hms@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk

Wandsworth Emergency Control

(housing emergencies, out of hours)
020 8871 7490

Home Ownership

housesales@wandsworth.gov.uk

Downsizing options

allocationteam@wandsworth.gov.uk

Landlords looking for tenants

private landlords
@wandsworth.gov.uk

Details of how to make a complaint are on our website at

www.wandsworth.gov.uk/complaints

For breakdowns, leaks and servicing heating/hot water systems speak to your gas contractor:

■ For properties across the borough where heating is supplied by a **central communal boiler.**

Smith & Byford

020 8722 3431 or 0808 196 1791
CommercialServices
@smithandbyford.com

■ **Battersea, Central Wandsworth and Earlsfield** with an individual domestic heating system.

PH Jones

020 3657 0304 or 0333 004 2333
[wbcrepairs@phjones.com](mailto:wbc repairs@phjones.com)

■ **Putney, Roehampton and Tooting** with an individual domestic heating system.

T Brown

0800 977 8472 or 020 8786 1244
repairs@tbrown.com

To find out your gas contractor
020 8871 7040

Other council contacts

Adult social services

020 8871 7707

Births, Deaths, Marriages and Voting

020 8871 6120

Child social services

020 8871 6622

Environmental services (including pest control, private housing)

020 8871 6127

Finance (including council tax, benefits, rent, service charges)

020 8871 8081

To make a telephone payment: 0800 021 7763

Parking and Streets

020 8871 8871

Rubbish, recycling and litter

020 8871 8558

Report It App

You can report issues directly to the housing department through the council's app!

This is a quick and easy way to tell us about any issues with cleaning, gardening and maintenance on your estate.

Report it in just three easy steps:

- 1 Choose your location
- 2 Take a photo
- 3 Choose the council housing estates category

Once you've submitted your report, it will go straight to our dedicated estate services team to be dealt with.

Search for Wandsworth Report It on the Apple, Android or Windows app store

Find out more at www.wandsworth.gov.uk/reportitapp



Welcome to the spring issue of Homelife

I hope this finds you and your family well. It is now a year since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic and it continues to be a challenging time for us all. I would like to take this opportunity to say again how



impressed I've been by the fantastic community spirit I've witnessed throughout the borough and by how our communities have pulled together, and continue to do so, to look after each other as best we can.

On page 20 we feature some of the ways that officers and local community groups have helped keep the spirits up of our sheltered housing residents and reminded them that they're not alone at this time.

I'm proud to be Chair of the Association of Retained Council Housing, an organisation that Wandsworth helped form in 2006 and has been heavily involved with since. You can find out more about ARCH and why I think it's so important for tenants and councils alike on page 4.

The climate crisis has never been more important and on page 10 we have tips on what you can do now to reduce your energy use and improve your carbon footprint.

There are some important reminders in this issue: the Mayoral and London Assembly elections are due to take place in May (see page 24); census 2021 day is 21 March (see page 24); and page 5 contains some important information for Universal Credit claimants.

I hope you enjoy this issue of Homelife. If you have any suggestions please contact me by email on hms@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk.



Cllr Kim Caddy
Cabinet Member for Housing



New repairs satisfaction survey

Feedback from residents is invaluable in helping the council to monitor and improve services. In February the housing and regeneration department launched a new satisfaction survey.

Every day, tenants who have just had a repair completed in their home will be sent a text message from our survey contractor, BMG*, asking them a few short questions about their experience of the repairs service on that occasion. All responses are confidential - results are anonymised before being fed back to the council.

Tenants receiving the survey can be assured that there are robust data sharing protocols in place and all resident data processed as part of the survey programme complies with the UK Data Protection Act 2018, General Data Protection Regulations and the council's own privacy notice.

The survey will help us to respond to any issues with the tenanted repairs service as they arise, and analysis of results over time will help to identify areas where improvements are needed.

Residents are reminded that non-urgent repairs may take longer than usual to complete at the moment due to Covid-19 restrictions and are asked not to chase contractors. Thank you for your continued patience and cooperation.

* BMG are a market-leading research company who have worked with the council for many years to deliver the Housing Link satisfaction survey programme.

Celebrating 15 years of

We look back at the history and achievements of ARCH, and Wandsworth's role over the years

What is ARCH?

ARCH (Association of Retained Council Housing) is an association of councils in England who have retained ownership and management of their council homes, such as Wandsworth.

About 100 local authorities still own and manage around 800,000 homes, and ARCH's aim is to get the best deal for councils and their tenants.

In 2003 the Government published its plan to build sustainable communities and as part of this local authorities had to decide how to ensure their housing stock would meet the Decent Homes standard by 2010. Options included setting up an Arms-Length Management Organisation or transferring the management of housing stock to housing associations. With input from a residents' group Wandsworth decided to retain management of its stock.

Together with a small group of councils who had also retained their housing stock, Wandsworth was a founding member of ARCH in 2006. Brian Reilly, Director of Housing and Regeneration, has been heavily involved in the organisation from the outset. What started as a loose network of around eight stock-holding councils has grown into an accredited Association, representing 68 local authorities from across the country who manage around 635,000 council homes between them.

What does ARCH do?

- **Represents** the collective interests of retained stock councils;
- **Lobbies government** for a strong retained stock sector;
- **Helps members** meet the challenges and seize the opportunities of the council housing finance system and other government initiatives;
- **Demonstrates** the benefits of retained stock in meeting wider local and national priorities;
- **Promotes** best practice;
- **Listens** to the views of tenants.

The organisation's key achievements over the years include having a pivotal role in changing how council housing is financed. Under the previous housing subsidy system one quarter of rents collected from Wandsworth tenants had to be given to the Government to fund housing elsewhere. Working closely with Wandsworth, ARCH lobbied for many years to end this unfair system and in 2012 it was replaced with a self-financing model.

Wandsworth had to pay the Government a one-off settlement price to become independent but, since then, has been able to keep all its rents. This means we can plan better for the future and reinvest in our housing stock for the benefit of Wandsworth's residents, both now and in the future.

Recently, ARCH has been involved in the development of the social housing white paper, a new charter for social housing tenants which puts tenants' views at the heart of decisions about housing.

ARCH Tenants' Group

Scholey House resident Marlene Price has been an active member of ARCH since its formation. Early on, it was recognised that to truly represent council residents ARCH needed a resident representative on board and Mrs Price was invited to join the Executive.

The first annual Tenants' Conference was in 2007 and by 2008 the Tenants' Group was formed with Mrs Price elected Chair. The Tenants' Group started with eight members and now has a full complement of 24. The Chair and Vice Chair are full board members of ARCH.

The Tenants' Group feeds into the submissions ARCH makes on proposed governmental policy, ensuring that the voices of both council landlords and residents are put to decision-makers in Central Government. Mrs Price attended a round table meeting with the then Housing Minister Alok Sharma to provide a residents' perspective of what the Social Housing Green Paper should address and facilitated some of the consultations that Kit Malthouse hosted around the country following its publication. Along with another member of the Group, Mrs Price also attended the initial meeting held by Dame Judith Hackitt on building safety following the Grenfell Tower tragedy.



Marlene Price



Cllr Kim Caddy and the then Housing Minister Kit Malthouse at a House of Commons reception co-hosted by ARCH and the National Federation of ALMOs to celebrate the centenary of the Addison Act

A word from Cllr Caddy

Since 2012 Wandsworth have held the position of Chair of the Executive Board, with Cllr Caddy being the current Chair. On the importance of ARCH, Cllr Caddy says: "I've been involved with ARCH for several years and am proud to help deliver its aim of getting the best deal for councils and their tenants. ARCH represents a strong voice in Central Government, ensuring that the views and interests of stock-holding authorities and - crucially - their residents are considered.

"ARCH has played a role in shaping some of the most important policy decisions in social housing - from the reform of the housing subsidy system to the Hackitt review. Providing a forum for councils across the country to collaborate and share best practice, members work together towards common goals.

"The Association provides a unique perspective on housing matters, with the Tenants' Group at its centre. As we move forward with changes arising from the social housing white paper, this focus on tenants' voices will be strengthened."

For more information on ARCH, see www.arch-housing.org.uk

Important reminder about your Universal Credit payment

If you are in receipt of Universal Credit it is your responsibility to inform the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), who administer Universal Credit, of your new rent charge.

It is important that you do this to ensure that the new rent charge is paid from the date the change takes place. The council cannot tell the DWP about the rent increase on your behalf. Should you need help using the internet or accessing your Universal Credit journal please contact your work coach or Citizens Advice Wandsworth who will guide you through the process.

Please remember if you do not inform the DWP of the change in your rent amount you will have to make up the shortfall in rent. You can avoid rent arrears by updating your Universal Credit journal on time.

If you are having problems paying your rent or other bills and need support with this or claiming benefits please contact the council's financial inclusion team on 020 8871 8780 or email financialinclusion@wandsworth.gov.uk



Fly-tipping puts extra strain on services

Cleaning and rubbish collection staff have worked extremely hard throughout the pandemic to keep estates clean and safe - please don't make their job harder by dumping rubbish.

The council's bulky waste collection service is up and running again after pausing earlier in the pandemic - please use this to dispose of bulky/DIY waste in the proper way.

A bulky waste collection can be organised through the council's website at www.wandsworth.gov.uk/rubbish-and-recycling or by calling 020 8871 8558.

The council's new complaints procedure

The council has a new two stage complaints procedure which aims to give its customers an effective way to complain about the services we provide and, where possible, resolve matters straight away.

The two stages are:

Stage one – investigation by the responsible manager (we aim to acknowledge your complaint within two working days and respond within 20 working days).

Stage two – review of the investigation by a senior manager (we aim to acknowledge your complaint within two working days and respond within 15 working days).

If you are still not satisfied after stage two of our complaints procedure, you can contact the Housing Ombudsman or the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (depending on the nature of your complaint).

We are always looking at how best to provide our services and we use complaints as an opportunity to put things right and to learn how we can improve.

A service fault is not a complaint, so things like repairs, dog fouling, fly-tipping or cleaning issues, which are faults, are dealt with in a different way. Full information on the new complaints procedure can be found at: www.wandsworth.gov.uk/the-council/have-your-say/make-a-complaint.

The Housing Ombudsman

The Housing Ombudsman is appointed by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to look at and impartially resolve disputes between tenants and landlords.

The Ombudsman has launched a new scheme and a new Complaint Handling Code and, as a member of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme, the council has completed a self-assessment to check our complaints handling processes. We are currently making several changes to ensure we comply with their scheme.

The new scheme places greater focus on learning from complaints, on avoiding making the same mistakes again, and giving residents fair and easy access to getting issues resolved and having their voices heard. The Housing Ombudsman now has powers to issue complaint handling failure orders to a landlord who fails to comply with their Code without good reason.

For more information on the Housing Ombudsman Service visit: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Keeping Children and Vulnerable Adults Safe

Picking up the phone to report a concern about a child or vulnerable adult can be a difficult decision to make, but it is important that you report any worries you have that a child or adult is the victim of abuse or neglect.

You might not be sure of what you've seen or heard, or whether it is abuse or neglect, but reporting it means that a professional can check out the situation. Abuse and neglect can take many forms, including emotional, financial, physical and sexual.

Some examples are: a young child being left at home alone; a vulnerable adult not being cared for properly or not being able to look after themselves; a child under the age of 18 being sexually exploited (this can be in exchange for alcohol, drugs or gifts); a vulnerable adult's money being controlled by someone else; a child witnessing domestic abuse.

Concerns can be reported anonymously.

Report concerns about a child/ young person to the Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH):

■ 020 8871 6622 (weekday 9am-5pm)

■ 020 8871 6000 (after 6pm and weekends)

■ Email: mash@wandsworth.gov.uk

■ For further information please visit: www.wscp.org.uk

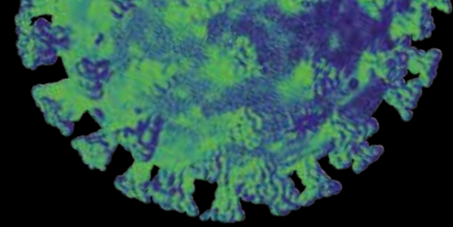
Report concerns about an adult to the Access Team:

■ 020 8871 7707 (weekday 9am – 5pm)

■ 020 8871 6000 (after 6pm and weekends)

■ Email: accessteam@wandsworth.gov.uk

■ For further information please visit www.wandsworth.gov.uk and search for 'safeguarding adults'.



COVID-19: SMS / Text message SCAMS

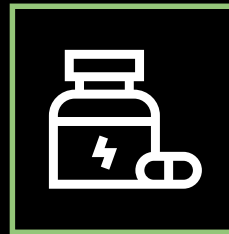
TOP 4 SMS SCAMS



Fake URL links claiming to link to GOV.UK website to claim supposed COVID-19 related payment



Lockdown fines suggesting you have breached lockdown



Offers of health supplements that will prevent you becoming infected



Financial support offers that appear to be from your bank

HOW DO SMS SCAMS WORK

Cyber criminals are preying on fears of the coronavirus and sending 'phishing' text messages that try and trick users into clicking on a bad link. Messages are short and simple and often claim to be from a known entity. Web links are harder to spot on a SMS as they are shortened so apply caution clicking on links!

Sender of UK Government SMS:

Genuine text messages from the UK Government will only come from **UK_Gov**

You will only ever be directed to **GOV.UK/coronavirus**.

HOW TO VERIFY THE MESSAGE?

1

Challenge - Could it be fake? It's ok to reject, refuse or ignore any requests that don't feel right. Check **GOV.UK** to ensure it's genuine.

2

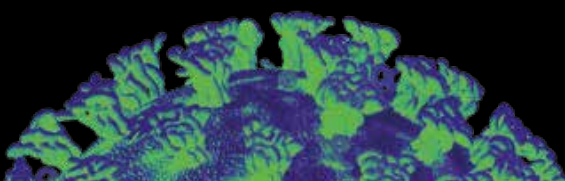
Be wary of text messages that try to get you to send money, or important personal information such as bank details or passwords.

3

Take a moment to stop and think before parting with information to keep you safe or your money.

4

Use official government websites and refer to 'Contact Us' sections of websites to access information and services.



Building safety update



London Fire Brigade's top tips for kitchen safety

Cooking is the most common cause of fires in London, with 60% of fires at home beginning in the kitchen. Read on for some tips on safe cooking.

- **Try not to leave cooking unattended** on the hob or grill - if you have to leave the kitchen, turn off the heat.
- **Not feeling 100%?** Avoid cooking - if you're very tired, have been drinking alcohol or are taking medication that might make you drowsy, it's safer not to risk it.
- **Be fabric aware** - loose clothing can easily catch fire, so take care not to lean over a hot hob and always keep tea towels and cloths away from the cooker and hob.
- **Keep the oven, hob, cooker hood, extractor fan and grill clean** - built-up fat and grease can ignite and cause a fire.
- **Use spark devices** to light gas cookers - they are much safer than matches or lighters, as they don't have a naked flame. They are safer around children, too.
- **Double check the cooker and hob are turned off** when you've finished cooking - if you're forgetful (or someone you care for can be), why not take a photo if you have a smartphone? The action will remind you to double check every time.
- **Check toasters are clean** and not placed under kitchen cabinets or close to anything that can catch fire.
- **Never put anything metal in the microwave.**
- **Always keep an eye on children and pets in the kitchen:** don't leave them unsupervised; put matches

away; and keep saucepan handles out of reach.

What to do if clothes catch fire?

If clothes have caught fire, don't run. Try and remember 'stop, drop, roll' - which means:

- **Stop** - don't run, you'll make the flames worse.
- **Drop** - lie down on the ground at once.
- **Roll** - in heavy fabric or a fire blanket to smother the flames, though just on the ground will help.

Even if you're a very careful cook, accidents can happen - so it's a good idea to know what to do. If a pan catches fire, there are 4 steps to take to stay safe:

- Don't tackle the fire yourself and don't try to move the pan.
- Never throw water over a fire as it could create a fireball.
- Turn off the heat - but only if it's safe to do so.
- Leave the room, close the door, shout a warning to others, and call 999.

Important reminder: does your smoke alarm work?

Smoke alarms save lives and you should regularly check that all smoke alarms within your home are working. If you do not have a working smoke alarm, contact your area team urgently.





Are you struggling with everyday tasks or unable to keep in touch with family?

Wandsworth Adult Social Care has launched a new service, The Hub.

The Hub is a new project team that has been set up to help people with care and support needs to live as independently as possible doing the things they enjoy.

How we can help you

The first thing The Hub will do is have a detailed conversation with you to find out what matters to you, what you are struggling with, what your strengths are and what you are trying to achieve. We'll focus on your personal strengths, your current support networks and together we will put a plan in place that supports your independence and well-being. For example, this can be a regular activity you enjoy, help to set up telephone shopping, help to manage your bills and finances or a volunteer to run the odd errand and spend time chatting with you about your interests.

Using technology

The Hub will also explore with you how technology aids such as apps and other assistive devices can help support your independence, safety and well-being.

We are working in partnership with Alcove to provide people with a Video Care Phone. This is a simple tablet with

a video calling function, to help people see other and stay in touch with loved ones

and carers. The tablet is easy to use and does not require you to remember passwords or navigate menus. It comes with pre-installed 4G SIM card and to keep you safe from scam callers, the tablet is 'locked down' so that you can only be called by approved friends, family and carers that are part of your support network.

How to get in touch

We had hoped to be out in the community, based in community buildings having face-to-face conversations with you. Unfortunately, that isn't possible yet but as soon we are, we will let you know. For now, we are available on the end of the phone.

If you think The Hub could support you or an adult you know please get in touch. You can contact us on 020 8871 7707 or email accessteam@wandsworth.gov.uk



Be alert to scams in your area

Several residents in the Roehampton area have recently been the victim of a doorstep scam. Bogus callers, impersonating council contractors, have claimed to be attending to carry out repairs while distracting the resident in an attempt to steal from them.

Council officers and contractors carry photo ID and residents should request to see this before they enter their home. If you're not expecting a visitor and they can't produce ID or you have any reason to be suspicious, call your area housing team to check before letting them in. If you have been the victim of a scam, report this to your local Safer Neighbourhood Team or by calling 101.

The community safety team are aware of these scams and have urged residents across the borough to sign up for OWL - the online watch link. This is a crime and community safety messaging system that acts like a digital neighbourhood watch. Members receive crime prevention advice plus alerts about local crimes as they are happening. For more information and to sign up, visit www.owl.co.uk



Tackling the climate emergency



Go green and save money!

Some tips on reducing your carbon footprint and saving on energy bills:

- **Switch lightbulbs within your home to LEDs.** LED lightbulbs use 60-90% less energy than halogen bulbs and should last at least 10 years, meaning they make financial and environmental sense. The housing and regeneration department has a programme underway to replace all communal block lighting and estate lighting columns with LEDs.
 - **Switching off standby.** Leaving devices turned on, even in standby mode, uses electricity even when they're not being used. Turning electrical devices off properly saves energy and your electricity bill could be up to £80 a year lower.
 - **Behavioural changes** including using a clothes horse rather than a tumble dryer, taking showers rather than baths where possible and turning off lights when not needed all help to reduce energy consumption.
 - **Free water-saving devices** from Thames Water include water-efficient shower heads, toilet flushing devices, shower timers and kitchen swivel taps. Visit their website to find out more: <https://watersavingdevices.thameswater.co.uk>
- Other ways to help tackle the climate crisis:**
- **Eat less meat.** Cows and sheep emit large quantities of methane, a powerful global warming gas. A vegan diet can reduce your overall carbon impact by as much as 20% but simply cutting out beef will deliver a significant benefit on its own.
 - **Drive less.** Reducing the mileage of the average new car from 15,000 to 10,000 miles a year will save more than a tonne of CO₂, about 15% of the average person's footprint. If you can, cycle, walk or take public transport to cut down on emissions.

Another successful bid for the housing and regeneration department

In November the department successfully bid to be part of the social housing technical assistance pilot run by the Greater South East Energy Hub.

One of only three successful bidders, the council has secured the services of a specialist consultancy to undertake an assessment of the council's tenanted housing stock at no cost to the council. This analysis

will be used to develop a strategy to raise the energy efficiency of homes which the council will use to plan future works. The council is also undertaking a retrofit pilot using Green Homes Grant funding that will inform decisions about the best types of technologies to use to improve our stock.

The project is underway. All analysis is done remotely using property records; visits to individual homes are not required as part of the pilot.

In 2019 Wandsworth Council declared a climate emergency, setting a target to be a carbon neutral organisation and the greenest inner-London council by 2030. We will be keeping residents up to date with the actions being taken and encouraging you all to play your part in tackling the climate emergency.

Carbon neutral by 2030 | **Zero Carbon by 2050**

Tips to reduce plastic pollution and litter

Tackling plastic pollution and litter is a key issue for the council. According to environmental charity WRAP, the UK generates 2.4 million tonnes per year of packaging waste, plastic bottles, pots, tubs, trays and bags. We can all play our part in reducing plastic:

Bring your own bottles and containers

Globally, plastic bottles dropped on the ground are a huge issue. In the UK alone, we use 13 billion plastic bottles every year - and 7.5 billion of these end up in landfill, being incinerated, or making their way into our oceans, accounting for a third of all plastic pollution in the sea.



Give up gum

In Britain, we are the second biggest consumers of gum in the world, chewing an estimated 130 sticks per person each year. Chewing gum (made from plastic itself) can be swapped for plastic-free alternatives such as Glee or Chewsy.

Always carry a reusable bag

Always carry a cloth bag or put some bags in the back of your car, so that when you go out shopping you reuse a bag rather than buy a new one.



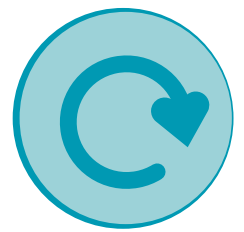
Say no to plastic cutlery

By carrying a spork (if you google it, you'll find it), reusing your plastic cutlery, going for a compostable alternative or carrying your usual cutlery with you, you could personally save 466 items of unnecessary plastic every year. On average we use plastic cutlery for just three minutes before throwing it away.



Check what can be recycled

Lots of plastic can be recycled, so check what can and can't be recycled - this information can be found on the council's website.



Buy more bulk food and fewer packaged products

Buy in bulk, if you have space, and look for shops that supply food in packaging that's reusable, recyclable or compostable. As well as less plastic packaging, it also saves you money, as items will cost less per unit including staples like washing powder, washing up liquid, kitchen roll, batteries, plasters and canned foods.

Switch shower gel for soap

Bars of soap use far less plastic than shower gel and generally last longer and therefore work out cheaper.



Reuse or give some of the packaging a new purpose

If you have no choice but to buy a plastic bottle or a plastic container at the supermarket, reuse it instead of throwing it away.



DOMESTIC ABUSE AND COVID-19

**Are you isolated at home
and feeling unsafe?**

**Are you frightened of your partner
or a family member?**

**Are you worried that someone you know
is experiencing abuse?**

National and local services are still here for you:

National Domestic Violence Helpline 24/7
0808 2000 247

Safety Net Independent Domestic Violence Advisors
Monday to Friday 9am-5pm
020 7801 1777

Metropolitan Police
If in an immediate danger call 999
For non-emergencies, dial 101

Crimestoppers - Anonymous line
0800 555 111

**During lockdown
you can leave if
you're at risk!**



**METROPOLITAN
POLICE**





Support for local entrepreneurs

The council has launched a range of business support programmes designed to help entrepreneurs in the borough – to start, reset or grow their business – during these difficult times.

The package of bespoke support includes:

Re:Create 2021, which launches in March, is aimed at artists, makers and creative businesses. The programme will give participants the opportunity to connect and network with like-minded creatives and hear from leaders from the creative sector through a series of specialist 1-1 sessions and themed networking events.

Wandsworth Digital, which also launches in March, is being run in partnership with Enterprise Nation. The programme, which aims to help businesses to start trading online, will comprise a digital bootcamp and 1-1

tailored advice sessions.

Ready, Steady, Grow, launching in April, is being delivered in partnership with Virgin StartUp to support entrepreneurs wanting to kickstart their business idea or scale up their existing start-up. Ready, Steady, Grow will feature a series of workshops, networking opportunities, information on funding and a dedicated business helpline.

For more information on the above programmes and additional business support including Brexit advice, 1-1 monthly advice sessions, webinars and information on funding, visit www.wandsworthenterprisehub.com



Revamp for sport and play areas in Nine Elms

Carey Gardens, Patmore estate, Savona estate and the Yvonne Carr Centre in Nine Elms are set to receive a face-lift of their outdoor and sport and play areas.

Improvements include sensory planting, play equipment for toddlers and those aged 14 and above, table tennis for all ages and sports equipment with a focus on cardio and resistance training.

Based on residents' feedback, the council is working hard to make sure the plans for installation run smoothly in 2021. The improvements are part of Wandsworth Council's investment in local spaces, using funding from nearby developments.

Visit www.nineelmslondon.com for more information.



Exciting year for Nine Elms residents

Tenants and leaseholders in Battersea's estates including Carey Gardens, Patmore and Savona are invited to find out about Nine Elms' latest exciting changes, opportunities and improvements ahead of the new Northern Line stations opening later this year.

'Come along' to this year's virtual evening community engagement advisory group (CEAG) meetings on 24 March, 23 June, 29 September and 1 December. Check the website to find out how to join in: www.nineelmslondon.com.

regeneration updates

Christmas 2020 on the Alton estate

The Alton Regeneration Team, in collaboration with the Economic Development Office, installed the Alton estate's first Christmas tree in November 2020.

The 20ft evergreen conifer was locally sourced and situated at the junction between Danebury Avenue and Holyborne Avenue for five weeks. The tree's lights were switched on by the Mayor of Wandsworth, Cllr Jane Cooper, and local resident and founder of Estate Art, Lynne Capocciama. In January the tree was donated to Roehampton Community Shed to be recycled into woodwork projects for the local community including in the building of wooden geometric shaped toys donated to children, edge boarders for plants and hedgehog boxes.

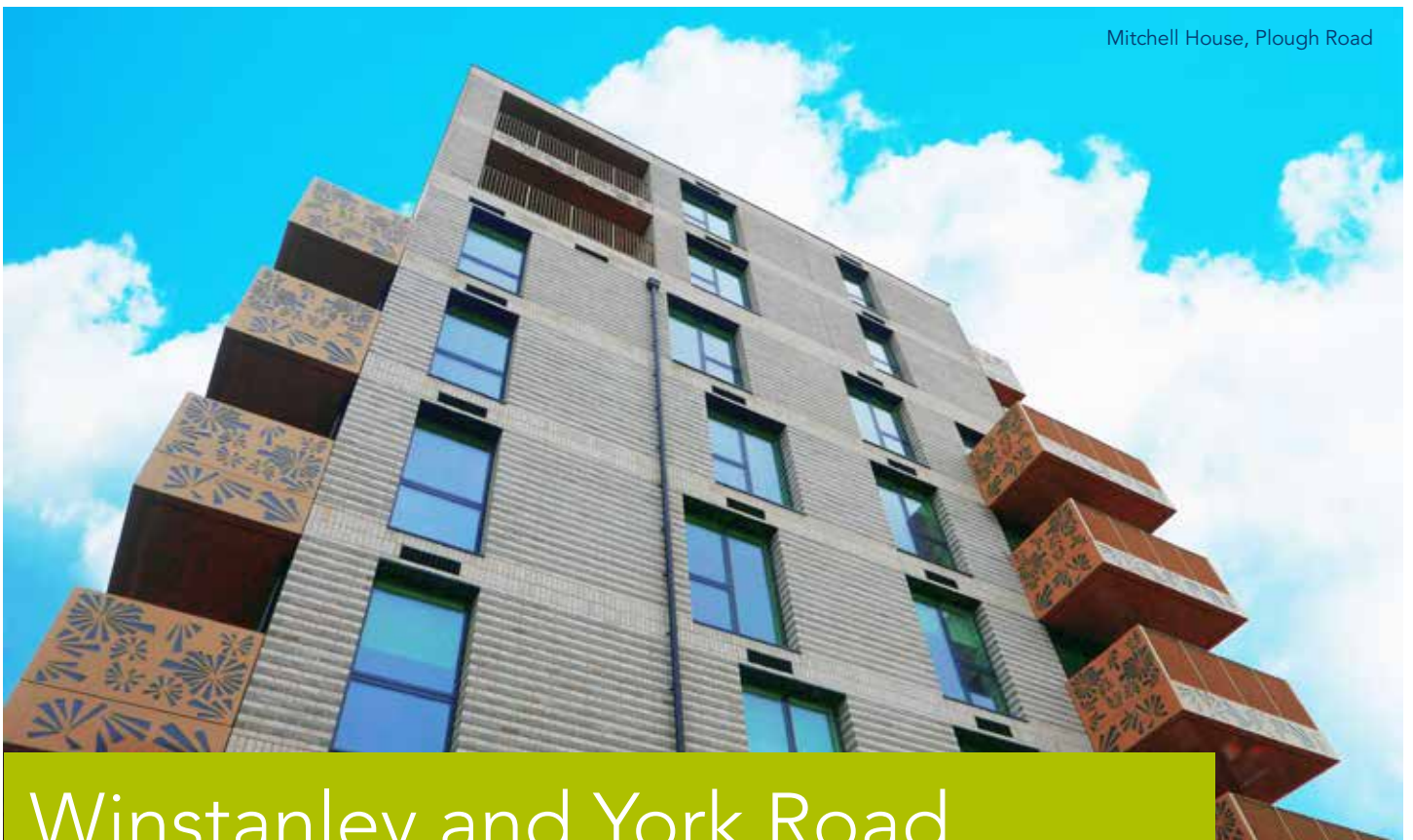
During December, the Regeneration Team hosted virtual craft sessions with local schools and youth groups to create paper chain decorations. Each paper strip was individually decorated to depict a feeling, an experience or a hope, and the strips were linked together into chains measuring two metres in length to represent the recommended social distance. The chains symbolised unity and connecting with others during 2020. The team also supported Estate Art to carry out cube decoration workshops with local schools and families on the Alton estate. The finished decorations were displayed in local shops and Roehampton Library for the community's enjoyment.

The Regeneration Team also worked with local people, organisations and businesses from the Alton estate to put together a 2020 version of the 12 Days of Christmas. The short film also features a clip of the Alton Christmas tree lights being switched on. To view the film, search 'Roehampton's 12 Days of Christmas' on YouTube.

Cllr Jane Cooper, and local resident and founder of Estate Art, Lynne Capocciama.



Christmas cube decorations



Winstanley and York Road regeneration on course for 2021

Plans to build up to 2,550 new homes on the Winstanley and York Road estates are moving ahead at pace in 2021.

The GLA approved the plans towards the end of last year, and now the first blocks of new homes are completed with residents soon to move in.

Leader of the Council Cllr Ravi Govindia said: "This endorsement of our approach means we can push on with our plans. We have made a commitment to every secure council tenant and resident leaseholder that they will have the right to a new, improved property."

Wandsworth Council's Cabinet Member for Housing Cllr Kim Caddy visited Mitchell House, in Plough Road – the first new homes completed as part of the Winstanley and York Road regeneration in November.

The block has eight floors of 21 two-bedroom homes and 25 one-bedroom homes.

Six of the 46 flats have been specially adapted to accommodate residents who may need wheelchair access now or in the future, including moveable worktops, wide corridors and adaptable bathrooms.

Speaking after touring the homes,

Cllr Caddy said: "I'm delighted the residents should be moving soon. I'm so impressed with the standard of the flats and the quality of the build."

The Winstanley and York Road regeneration, a joint venture between Taylor Wimpey and Wandsworth Council, will provide 35 per cent of the homes for social rent, London affordable rent or shared ownership, while the rest are for private sale or rent.



Interior of flat in Mitchell House

Home Ownership Team

Improving purchase options for council tenants



Helping you to buy a home

House Purchase Grant Scheme

Despite the pressures of the current climate, the house purchase grant scheme has continued to be very active; this was helped in July 2020 by the Chancellor announcing the stamp duty holiday for all property sales less than £500,000 which is due to expire on 31 March.

This scheme offers eligible secure council tenants a grant to use towards buying a home of their own on the open market within the UK or anywhere else in the world or to use towards purchasing a share of a shared ownership property (part rent/part buy) within the UK. It can also be used to adapt a family member's home within the UK to create a self-contained extension to enable tenants to move in.

So far this year we have had 41 tenants who have taken advantage of the grant scheme with many more who have secured funding.

Grant levels (for tenants who have at least 3 years secure tenancy)

Bed Size	Grant amount up to:
Studio or 1 bed	£50,000
2 or 3 bed	£70,000
4, 5 or 6 bed	£100,000

If you are interested in the house purchase grant scheme and wish to find out if funding is available, please contact the Home Ownership Team.

Right to Part Buy

We are pleased to have received our first application to purchase additional shares from one of our Right to Part Buy leaseholders who originally purchased 25% of their council property in October 2018 and has now returned to staircase to 75%. They chose to staircase with the intention of eventually gaining full ownership of the property in order to provide security for their child as their support network reside within the borough. A second leaseholder

is also looking to staircase from 50% up to full ownership.

Right to Part Buy is Wandsworth's unique scheme which enables eligible secure council tenants who qualify for the Right to Buy (but are unable to afford to purchase their council home outright) to buy a share of their property with the added benefit of receiving an apportioned discount equal to the share purchased and pay a low rent on the remaining share.

Shared Ownership

New Shared Ownership developments in the borough include the following:

A2 Dominion – York Road

York Road has 67 new properties available at a new residential development on the bank of the River Thames in the vicinity of Clapham Junction. The site boasts excellent transport links with regular rail and bus connections into central London. The new homes will be let out on an intermediate rent basis at 80% of the ongoing market rate.

Please contact A2 Dominion at www.a2dominion.co.uk/contact-us, by email newbuildslettings@a2dominion.co.uk, or tel 0800 432 0077



Optivo – Riverside Quarter / Waterway, SW18

A mix of one bedroom and two-bedroom units are still being marketed, ideally located on the banks of the River Thames with great transport links to central London, this development is perfect for young professionals. Please contact JLL on sharedownership@eu.jll.com or call 020 7852 4300.

PA Housing – Linton's Way, SW18

Linton's Way is a combination of 33 one and two bed apartments available now via shared ownership. Likewise situated by the river, these are modern properties with balconies and access to a private resident's landscaped garden. The prices for these homes range from £135,000 for a 25% share of a 1-bedroom home and £162,500 for a 25% share of a 2-bedroom home.

For further information, you can contact the sales team on 0203 3940 078, email sales@pahousing.co.uk or check the website www.sales.pahousing.co.uk/development/lintons-reach/

Intermediate Rent

There will be a large number of intermediate rental opportunities within the borough over the next few years.

Intermediate rent offers the opportunity to those who are not able to purchase straight away to rent a brand new or refurbished home, or a home that is being re-let at less than the market rate. Rents are subsidised so they are let at below open market rent levels, with discounts of up to 65% against open market rents to ensure they are affordable to a range of households incomes. As well as being more affordable, there is the reassurance that the home is built, managed and let by a registered housing provider. It is designed to give people a chance to use the saving made on the subsidised rent to save for a deposit to purchase a home within the next five years. If you would like to register for this scheme, please complete one of our Combined Sales Scheme (CSS) application forms.

Save the date

The Home Ownership Team members will be available for a webchat session on 25 March for any queries you may have. Check the team's webpages for details of this and future events and webchats.

For more information on any of the above schemes please contact the Home Ownership Team (see details at the top of the page).

community news



Bug hotels

Several Resident Associations expressed an interest in installing large bug hotels to encourage biodiversity in their community gardens and applied for funding from the small improvement budget. Bug hotels increase the chances that beneficial insects will naturally visit a garden, as well as being educational.

The large bug hotels are divided into sections and stuffed with different natural materials. They create safe, warm and dry spaces that attract different insects such as bees that help pollinate gardens and ladybirds that eat aphids and other pests. They are a great benefit to organic gardeners.

If you have an idea for a small improvement to benefit your estate, speak to your resident participation officer.



Bisley entrance improvements

Bisley House have a lovely front entrance, however visitors, delivery drivers and taxis often struggled to find it as the signs weren't visible. The Resident Association applied for small improvement budget funding to install lights above the signs. The works were completed in December and residents are delighted.

Are you interested in getting more involved?

The department regularly use readers' panels and focus groups to get the advice and views of our residents. This is an opportunity for residents to have their say about decisions which affect their housing. This might be reviewing a draft of the housing annual report before it's published or letting us know what you think can be improved on the housing webpages.

If you would like to be involved, please contact your resident participation officer (RPO).

Once you have contacted your RPO, we will contact you whenever we are hosting a focus group/readers' panel and you can choose to partake or not

Rene Coles

It is with regret that we heard the sad news that a wonderful Roehampton resident passed away in Kingston Hospital at the beginning of February. Rene Coles had lived in Roehampton for many years and was well known and respected by many residents and council officers.

Rene will be remembered as caring person - she worked in Nicks Fish Bar when it was in Roehampton High Street and worked at Queen Mary's hospital for many years. She worked in the evenings at the Alton Youth Club.

For many years she was the chairman and arranged all bookings for the Alton Community Hall in Bessborough Road, as well as helping run the bingo in the hall. Rene enabled many improvements to be made to the hall - it will continue once the restrictions are lifted and we are thinking of changing the name to the Rene Coles Memorial Hall!

A wonderful caring person; we send our best wishes to her children, Traciey and Nick, her grandchildren and great grandchildren and many friends.



Rene Coles

Resident Association Annual General Meetings

You may have seen in the previous edition of Homelife that the council are assisting Resident Associations to become reaccredited. Due to Covid-19 the vast majority of our RAs have been unable to meet and hold their annual general meetings (AGMs); rather than lose their accredited status the council has been working hard with its RAs to bring the AGMs onto a virtual platform.

Park Court RA kindly agreed to act as a pilot and undertook the first AGM using Microsoft Teams, including a vote for new positions online. The meeting went very well with residents able to attend from the safety and comfort of their own home, and the RA now have a newly elected Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

If you would like to find out more about RAs, please contact your resident participation officer.

Helping residents dispose of their rubbish responsibly

Putney Vale residents benefited from a large skip being situated at the estate just before Christmas. Residents were encouraged to make use of the skip to get rid of rubbish they'd gathered during a pre-Christmas clear out. Staffed by estate services officers, the initiative proved to be very popular!



Your resident participation team

There are a variety of ways to get involved in your community and decisions about your housing.

Speak to your resident participation officer.



Foday Kamara
Southern Team
(020) 8871 8639
fkamara
@wandsworth.gov.uk



Lee Bushell
Eastern Team
(020) 8871 8638
lbushell
@wandsworth.gov.uk



Jo Baxter Central Team
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jbaxter
@wandsworth.gov.uk



Sarah Stevens
Western Team
(020) 8871 5505
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@wandsworth.gov.uk

sheltered housing news

Bringing Christmas cheer to sheltered housing

Sheltered housing residents usually look forward to a jam-packed schedule of festive fun including parties and Christmas meals.

This year, the normal group events weren't possible but sheltered housing officers and others in the community did their best to bring a little cheer to our sheltered residents and remind them they're not alone.

AGE UK kindly donated hundreds of gifts which officers delivered to tenants across the borough's schemes. Sheltered housing officers also made up gift packages for their own tenants which were all gratefully received. Home Instead Senior Care also delivered some resources to keep residents busy including a puzzle, quiz and local information booklet.

Hyacinth Ebanks of Abyssina Close said: "It was such a nice surprise to receive this gift from Age UK. During this awful pandemic it was important to know that others care about us and this gift truly made me feel special and loved. My thanks go out to all concerned".



Above: Hyacinth Ebanks of Abyssina Close was delighted with her gifts. Inset: Gifts under the tree at the Ashburton estate

Hearts for Homes

Mrs Ann Cotton of Nursery Close

Residents of Chelverton Court and Nursery Close received some beautiful gifts from local children at Christmas.

The children of Our Lady of Victories in Putney have been concerned about older people in their community. In response, they wrote uplifting messages on hearts as part of the project Hearts for Homes. These were delivered to residents at nearby sheltered housing schemes, Chelverton Court and Nursery Close. The residents were very touched by the kind words and really appreciated they were being thought of during the pandemic, with some sending Christmas cards to the children to thank them.

Mrs Maureen Walker, Mr Joseph Berlin, Mrs Hazel King and Mrs Rosa Pat of Chelverton Court





Christmas garden performance

Despite Covid restrictions residents of Francis Snary Lodge were able to have some socially distanced fun in the scheme's garden.

They were lucky enough to be entertained by The Jingle Bell Singers from the Rah Rah Theatre Company who performed their fun version of the twelve days of Christmas and some heartfelt Christmas carols.

The show kept residents and officers thoroughly entertained and certainly brought some fun and excitement to the scheme. While some residents enjoyed the show from their windows others ventured into the gardens and danced along with the performance, all while following social distancing guidelines...wearing their face coverings, tinsel and Christmas hats!

Because of the unusual setting of the performance, the Rah Rah Theatre Company had lots to contend with, including rain! But being the professionals that they are, they were prepared for this and carried on the show under their umbrellas!

The Rah Rah Theatre Company had been granted National lottery funding to enable them to perform some charitable shows, and Francis Snary Lodge was very lucky to have the performance offered completely free of charge. Everyone at the scheme was incredibly grateful for this moment of Christmas joy.

Dance on your doorstep!

Residents at sheltered schemes across the borough have been treated to a wonderful Brazilian



dance routine performed by local dance group Elements Dance Company.

The dancers performed outside schemes and residents either braved the cold to watch outside or enjoyed the entertainment from the comfort of their homes.

The performances brought some fun to our sheltered schemes and went down very well with residents. One resident of James Searles Lodge commented that she'd have liked to join in as it brought back memories of her younger days as an accomplished dancer.

A big thank you to Elements Dance for entertaining our residents so brilliantly!

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Grant Buse, WAF 2019. Photo by Eoin Carey.

Wandsworth Arts Fringe 2021

Friday 25 June - Sunday 11 July 2021

Join us for WAF 2021 and help celebrate the return of live events to centre stage!

After an entirely digital festival in 2020, WAF 2021 is set to be Wandsworth's first ever hybrid digital and live festival (restrictions allowing). But just like in past years, WAF will shake up South West London with an eclectic programme of arts and culture that thrills, moves and inspires audiences from across the city.

The 2021 festival will fill the borough with creative events, from exciting interactive fun on high streets and community exhibitions to online workshops, comedy, circus, opera, dance, debates and everything in between.

Many events will be free, lots of them will allow you to try something new and all of them will give you a chance to connect with your own creativity. There really is something for every taste and budget!

To find out more, pick up a flyer around the borough or head to wandsworthartsfringe.com to search for the perfect event by genre, date or location from late April 2021.

Wandsworth Arts Fringe is brought to you by Wandsworth Council.



Image from Beautiful Mess at WAF 2016. Photo by Deborah Jaffe

Tenancy support during Covid-19

Since March 2020 the tenancy support team have been working from home with minimal face-to-face contact with clients.

By embracing technology the team have been able to offer a full range of support to help vulnerable tenants maintain their tenancy. This has included supporting tenants at benefit medical assessments and appeal hearings, helping tenants apply for benefits, working with tenants to reduce utility costs and supporting them to pay rent and other bills.

The tenancy support team will continue to work with clients and hope this year will allow them to once again meet in person.

The team can be contacted on 020 8871 6617 or HousingTenancySupport@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk

Resident satisfaction survey

The council is committed to seeking your views on the services we provide and recently conducted a survey of residents on our housing management service.

This year the survey included questions and the Covid-19 pandemic. Thank you to all who took part.

Since 2019 overall satisfaction with the housing service amongst both tenants and leaseholders has remained stable. Other findings include:

- Satisfaction with the way the council is running the local area has risen slightly since last year with **two thirds (66%) of tenants and 59% of leaseholders satisfied or very satisfied.**
- **71% of tenants and 76% of leaseholders are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live.** Although this means that three quarters of residents are satisfied, this is a drop in satisfaction from 2019 and will be investigated further. Fly-tipping and littering were the most common reasons given for dissatisfaction – see page 5 for information on the council’s bulky waste collection service.
- The Covid-19 pandemic meant that last year brought about unprecedented challenges. **64% of tenants and 57% of leaseholders were satisfied with the way the council responded to the pandemic.** When asked about specific aspects of the department’s response, satisfaction was high – **80% of tenants and 86% of leaseholders agreed that the Homelife Coronavirus special newsletter was useful.**
- Residents have played a key part in supporting their local community during the pandemic - **41% of tenants and 34% of leaseholders were involved in the community effort** and over a third of residents now feel a stronger connection to their local community.
- **17% of tenants and 13% of leaseholders experienced a change in employment status because of lockdown,** with a third of tenants and a quarter of leaseholders saying the pandemic has had a negative impact on their household finances. If you are struggling to pay rent or other bills, see page 5 for details of the council’s financial inclusion team who can support you.
- Information provided by the department on building safety has been well received - **85% of tenants who had read the Homesafe booklet found it useful, and 81% were satisfied with the information provided** on the council’s fire safety webpages.

NHS
111
When it's less urgent than 999

For urgent medical help

Contact **111** first for **FREE** to get help quickly and safely

Use **111 first** help us help you

Live in Tooting and worried about paying for your energy bills or topping up? CREW can help!

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Get ready for upcoming elections

Elections are due to take place on Thursday 6 May 2021 to elect the Mayor of London and London Assembly.

Many areas of London life are affected by the work of the Mayor of London and the London Assembly, such as policing, transport, housing, planning and the environment.

If you want to vote you must make sure you are registered. If you are not registered (for example, if you have recently moved), you can do so at [gov.uk/register-to-vote](https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote).

The council will be taking all possible steps to ensure that these elections are delivered safely. However, voting may look slightly different this year. Expect to wear a mask and socially distance. You can also bring your own pen or pencil.

If you would rather not attend a polling station in person during this time, you can apply to vote by post. If you would prefer to vote by

post (and you are not already a postal voter), you will need to complete an application form. The form can be downloaded at [wandsworth.gov.uk/postalvote](https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/postalvote) or you can arrange for a form to be posted to you by calling **020 8871 6023**. Please apply as early as possible for a postal vote.

More information about the elections can be found at [wandsworth.gov.uk/vote](https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/vote).



Stand up against fraud

People who commit fraud against the council are taking services away from you and your family.

Regrettably Covid-19 restrictions have not stopped the fraudsters. With council services in great demand we need to ensure that all available resources are effectively used for those in genuine need.

The council have a qualified team of fraud investigators who will take action against fraud and abuse. Over the last three years, with help from referrals from you, the public, the council have recovered 120 properties and taken action against those who seek to abuse council housing.

The council is again partaking in the National Fraud Initiative that helps in the fight against fraud. This includes sharing data on housing, rents, Right to Buy applications, business support payments, insurance and parking.

If you suspect that someone has committed fraud, or is attempting to commit fraud, against the council let us know. Email SWLFP@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk or **020 8871 8383** (calls may go to an answerphone). Your report will be treated in the strictest confidence.

HELP US TO SUPPORT YOU - REPORT IT TODAY

Census 2021

The national census happens every ten years.

Run by the Office for National Statistics, the census is a survey gathering information about all the people and households in England and Wales. All kinds of organisations, from local authorities to charities, use the information to help provide the services we all need, including transport, education and healthcare. Without the census, it would be much more difficult to do this. By taking part, you'll be helping make sure you and your community get the services needed now and in the future.

This year's will be a digital-first census, meaning that everyone is encouraged to complete the survey online if they can. The ONS will provide support and assistance for people to do this.

Census day is 21 March. After this date, field officers will visit people who haven't completed the survey to encourage them to do so. Be assured that field officers will comply with the latest Covid-19 restrictions and will not need to enter your home.

To find out more, visit www.census.gov.uk.

Large print version

Copies of this issue of Homelife are available in large print format contact (020) 8871 6800 or email: hms@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk