# Homelife

Issue 102 Sept 2024



# **Useful contacts**

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



#### **Housing contacts**

#### **Housing Customer Centre**

90 Putney Bridge Road London SW18 1HR (serving Central, Eastern and Southern Area Teams)

#### Western Area Housing Office

Roehampton Parish Hall, Alton Road, London SW15 4LG

#### **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

**Housing hotline:** 020 8871 6161 **Mould Removal Team:** 020 8871 8887

mould.removal@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk wandsworth.gov.uk

Joint Control Centre (formerly known as Wandsworth Emergency Control) (housing emergencies, out of hours) 020 8871 8999

#### **House Purchase Grants**

housinginitiatives@ richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk

#### **Downsizing options**

allocationteam@wandsworth.gov.uk

#### Landlords looking for tenants

privatelandlords@wandsworth.gov.uk

Details of how to make a complaint are on our website at wandsworth.gov.uk/complaints



# 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

South West London Fraud Partnership (Fraud

Team) 020 8871 8383

Email: swlfp@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk



#### 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

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 call 020 8871 7040



#### Housing Ombudsman

If you have made a complaint to your landlord and you feel your complaint is not being dealt with correctly, you can escalate your case to the Housing Ombudsman who will provide impartial advice and support to try and resolve the matter for all parties.

#### The Housing Ombudsman can be contacted via:

Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Telephone: 0300 111 3000 housing-ombudsman.org.uk

### **Keep connected!**

We would like to encourage our residents to ensure their contact details are correctly updated with the Housing Department.

There are times where it may be important for us to contact you without delay or need to send you information about your home or community.

You can update your details via Wandsworth Housing Online: wandsworth.gov.uk/housing/wandsworth-housing-online or you can contact us using the details below:

Email: hms@wandsworth.gov.uk

Central Area: 020 8871 5333Eastern Area: 020 8871 7439

Southern Area: 020 8871 7288

Western Area: 020 8871 5530

# Welcome to the September issue of Homelife!

In this issue, we present our annual report to residents, highlighting our performance across key areas such as the home, neighbourhood, community, tenancy, resident involvement, and value for money. I want to extend my thanks to the resident focus group who helped shape this report over the summer (pages 9-20).



I'm excited to announce the Alton Estate Renewal Plan, developed with feedback from local residents. This long-term project aims to improve the estate and contribute to a fairer, more sustainable borough (page 21). Additionally, we will be upgrading the Henry Prince Clubroom in Earlsfield, and Focus Hall (Roehampton) as part of a broader effort to expand cultural activities, ahead of the London Borough of Culture programme for 2025 (page 21).

Safety is a top priority, and with the increasing number of e-scooter and e-bike fires, we are working with the

London Fire Brigade to raise awareness about safe charging and battery use (page 6). This month, the Council is also participating in Sustainable September, an initiative focused on tackling climate change and protecting nature (page 8). We encourage residents to report flytipping and illegal waste dumping to help keep our streets clean (page 8).

Mark your calendars for the annual Residents' Conference on Wednesday 23 October. Even if you have never attended the conference before, we'd love to see any resident interested in how we run the service, or with ideas on how to change

it come along. It's not too late to confirm your attendance (page 3).

I'm also really pleased with the response to this year's gardening competition. It's wonderful to see residents showcasing their beautiful gardens. We've been judging the shortlisted entries, and the winners will be announced in the next issue of Homelife (page 25).

I hope you enjoy this issue of Homelife. If you have any suggestions, please contact me at hms@wandsworth.gov.uk.

Aydin Dikerdem
Cabinet Member for Housing

### Residents' Conference 2024

We are inviting residents to participate in the council's annual Residents' Conference.

Following last year's successful event, the conference will be returning to the Town Hall on Wednesday 23 October.

There will be guest speakers and a range of workshops where you can find out more about:

- Accessing Small Improvement Budgets
- Reducing damp and mould
- Making best use of the Council Community Clubrooms
- Exploring different resident engagement options
- Help and information regarding the cost of living
- Services provided by the community safety partnerships

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Aydin Dikerdem says: "the residents' conference is a great way to learn more about what the council is doing in a number of areas. But equally, it gives people a good opportunity to find out what they and their neighbours can do to make their homes and communities even better places to live."

In addition, representatives from different council services, community groups, charities and other stakeholders who work

with local communities will be on hand to answer any questions. Refreshments and lunch will also be provided.

A selection of comments from last year's attendees:

- a very successful day... looking forward to the next one!"
- "thoroughly enjoyable and interesting"
- "it is good that this will be an annual event going forward...

  I look forward to getting more involved"

It's free to attend for Wandsworth council tenants and leaseholders but you'll need to register first (spaces are limited). You can do so by contacting your local Resident Participation Officer or by emailing conference@wandsworth.gov.uk

DATE: Wednesday 23rd October
TIME: 9:30am (registration starts) to 3.30pm
ADDRESS: Civic Suite, Wandsworth High Street,
London SW18 2PU



### Beware of scams

Residents are being reminded to be on the lookout as scammers seek to exploit the upcoming switch from analogue to digital landline services.

The UK's traditional landline system is being upgraded, with most calls transitioning to broadband lines. This switchover is expected to be complete by December 2025 and no one will lose their landline service. Telecommunications providers are working with Ofcom, the government, and charities to ensure a smooth transition.

However, we have received reports of scammers targeting older and more vulnerable individuals, including users of healthcare devices. These criminals falsely claim that residents will be disconnected unless they provide personal details, including bank information. Residents should never give out personal or financial information and if in doubt, **contact Action Fraud at 0300 123 2040.** Stay alert and protect yourself from these scams.

# Move to Universal Credit

If you are currently claiming benefits and tax credits you will soon receive a Migration Notice regarding the transition to Universal Credit. The following benefits and tax credits will be replaced by Universal Credit under this new system:

- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Income Support

- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) will send a Migration Notice to all recipients of these benefits, instructing them to claim Universal Credit to continue receiving financial support. It is important to pay attention to the Migration Notice, which will specify instructions and the date by which you need to claim Universal Credit, as the transition will not be automatic. For more information, visit **gov.uk/ucmove** and for additional support or advice, contact Citizens Advice at, **0800 144 8444.** 

# Update on repair contractors

We have new contractors in place.

F.G. Keen Ltd have taken over the communal repair contracts from the Breyer Group in the Southern and Western areas of the Borough and, from 1 October, MNM will take over the tenanted repair contracts in the Southern and Central areas.

We have a longstanding relationship with both contractors and are confident in their ability to provide a high-quality service.



#### New rules on microchipping your cat

Cat owners are reminded that since July it has been a legal requirement for all cats over 20 weeks old to be microchipped, with the keeper's details kept up to date. Failure to comply with the legislation could result in prosecution and fines of up to £500.

The same legislation has applied to dogs over eight weeks of age since 2016. Since then, the council has prosecuted over 70 dog owners for non-compliance, with the average penalty, including council costs, being £750.

If you would like to discuss this or any other animal-related issue, please contact the Animal Welfare service by emailing: animalwelfare@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk or by telephone: 020 8871 7606

#### **SHELTERED HOUSING NEWS**

supportedhousingservices@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk • 020 8871 8369 • wandsworth.gov.uk/shelteredhousing



# Age UK visit to Cowick Road and Washington Court

Residents at Cowick Road and Washington Court Sheltered Housing schemes welcomed a visit from Wandsworth Age UK.

The visit provided essential information and advice on various issues and services that Age UK offers to elderly residents. It also contributed to their sense of community connection, financial security, and peace of mind knowing that financial assistance and additional services are available if needed.

Patricia Armstrong, a resident at Cowick Road, said: "It was a very interesting and informative event. We were all given goodie bags that contained lots of useful telephone numbers and information about services that Age UK offers to the elderly residents of Wandsworth."

Residents were thankful for the visit and the valuable advice they received, feeling reassured and more confident in their ability to stay safe and access the support available to them.

#### Roehampton Men's Shed

Special thanks to Derek from the Roehampton Men's Shed for handcrafting a bespoke clothes rail for the Grosse Way and Hepplestone Close sheltered housing scheme.

This unique clothes rail aims to promote the recycling of good quality clothing for tenants, guests, relatives, and community groups. Additionally, it will be used during fundraising events such as table-top sales.



Thanks to Anna and Gwen, who actively participate in activities at Grosse Way and championed this initiative with Derek.



In June, residents of Minstead
Gardens celebrated the 80th anniversary of D-Day and enjoyed a lovely time, complete with live entertainment.

Gardens

Many residents also shared their childhood stories from during and the end of the war, adding a personal touch to the celebrations. One resident remarked, "we had a lovely time and a brilliant singer to entertain us".

# FIRE SAFETY UPDATE





## #ChargeSafe: e-bike and e-scooter safety advice

Wandsworth Council is supporting the London Fire Brigade's #ChargeSafe campaign to prevent e-bike and e-scooter fires. Despite being a great way to travel around, if the batteries become damaged or begin to fail, they can start large fires within seconds.

Last year the London Fire Brigade attended an e-bike or e-scooter fire on average, once every two days. The #ChargeSafe campaign urges people to stay safe by never charging batteries by doors or escape routes, when asleep, and only buying batteries and charger from a reputable seller. For more advice on storage and charging visit: london-fire.gov.uk/chargesafe



london-fire.gov.uk/ protect

#### A message from Grant Bishop Borough Commander for Wandsworth

As the autumnal weather arrives and the nights draw in, we want you to enjoy the various festivities safely. With an increase in the use of fireworks during this period, we would like to remind you of the benefits of

attending organised events, including fireworks and religious occasions.

If you choose to enjoy festivities at home, here are some safety tips for bonfires and fireworks.





- Only buy fireworks that carry the CE or UKCA mark. Keep them in a closed box and use them one at a time
- Read and follow the instructions on each firework, using a torch if necessary
- Light the firework at arm's length with a taper and stand well back
- Keep naked flames, including cigarettes, away from fireworks
- Never return to a firework once it has been lit
- Don't put fireworks in pockets and never throw them
- Direct any rocket fireworks well away from spectators
- Never use paraffin or petrol on a bonfire. Build your bonfire clear of buildings, sheds, fences, and hedges
- Make sure the fire is out and the surroundings are safe before leaving. Don't leave bonfires unattended, an adult should supervise until it has burnt out. If it must be left, damp it down with water
- Always keep a bucket of water or a hosepipe nearby in case of emergency





#### SPARKLER SAFETY

Sparklers are often viewed as being harmless, but they burn at fierce temperatures, equivalent to a welding torch. Follow these top tips for sparkler safety to ensure a fun and safe celebration for everyone:

- Don't give sparklers to under-5s
- Make sure everyone handling sparklers wears gloves
- Hold sparklers at arm's length while being lit and light them one at a time
- Don't wave sparklers close to other people
- Never hold a baby in your arms while you're holding a sparkler
- When the sparkler has finished put it in a bucket of cold water
- Check out our online advice provided at, www.londonfire.gov.uk/safety/fireworks



#### USING PORTABLE HEATERS SAFELY

Equally with temperatures dropping you may choose to utilise other ways to keep nice and snug such as portable heaters, Firefighters' tips for using heaters safely are:

- Ensure heaters are well-maintained and in good working order
- Check that your heater is not on a recall list, as many fires in the past year have been linked to recalled heaters
- Never install, repair, or service appliances yourself. Ensure anyone who does is registered with the Gas Safe Register (for gas appliances), the Heating Equipment Testing and Approval Scheme (HETAS) (for solid fuel appliances), or the Oil Firing Technical Association (OFTEC) (for oil appliances)
- Don't take risks with old heaters. If it's electrical and getting older, have it tested by a qualified electrician or replace it

- Where appropriate, secure heaters against a wall to prevent them from falling over, or install wall-mounted heaters
- Keep heaters well away from clothes, curtains, and furniture, and never use them for drying clothes
- Always sit at least one metre away from a heater to prevent it from setting your clothes or chair on fire
- Turn off heaters and allow them to cool before attempting to move them

#### GAS FIRES AND BIOFUEL HEATERS

- Gas heater cylinders should be changed in the open air. If you must change them indoors, ensure all rooms are well-ventilated by opening windows and doors
- Store spare propane or oxygen cylinders upright and outside whenever possible
- Never store them in basements, under stairs, or in cupboards containing electric meters or equipment
- Ensure empty cylinders are collected regularly
- Fireboxes and containers should always be placed on a stable surface. When using biofuel, always follow the manufacturer's guidelines and instructions
- Don't overstock fuels of any type, including paraffin or biofuel, and store them safely
- Never add fuel to a burning fire or refill a firebox fuel container that is still hot

For more information and other home fire safety advice, visit: www.london-fire.gov.uk/safety/the-home

# Tackling the climate emergency

# Wandsworth Sustainable September 2024

- Sustainable September in Wandsworth is a month of community action to tackle climate change and protect nature. You can get involved by:
- Visiting the Wandsworth Climate
  Change webpage to find out about
  events near you! From repair cafes to
  sustainability webinars to community
  gardening, there are lots to choose
  from, wandsworth.gov.uk/wandsworthsustainable-september
- Making your daily habits more sustainable and use active and sustainable travel methods such as public transport, cycling, wheeling or walking to your destination.
- Borrowing from the Library of Things libraryofthings.co.uk at Southside Shopping Centre and find out your carbon footprint at footprint.wwf.org. uk to see how you could improve your home, food, travel, and consumption.
- Planning a community event for our monthly microgrant scheme which offers funding of between £100 and £500 to support community groups, individuals, non-profits, and schools to

- run sustainability and climate change events. wandsworth.gov.uk/climateaction-microgrants
- Any questions? Please email: togetheronclimatechange@ wandsworth.gov.uk



### Our Cleaner Borough Plan



We continue to deliver our Cleaner Borough Plan to make it easier to do the right thing with your rubbish and recycling and improve the services you receive.

We have already installed new bins, replaced damaged ones and put up new signage on several housing estates. We are continuing this work across the borough and are also making it easier to report fly-tipping. In response to resident feedback, we have also doubled the number of locations where we offer FREE mega skips days, so you can dispose of bulky items for free, visit wandsworth.gov.uk/megaskipdays



# Recycle your electricals campaign

Small electricals can now be recycled and turned into something new, thanks to funding from Material Focus, the not-forprofit organisation leading the Recycle Your Electricals campaign.

Any electrical thing with a plug, battery or cable up to the size of a four-size toaster - 25cm (L), 25 cm (W) and 25 cm (H) in size – can now be recycled, including hairdryers, electric toothbrushes and irons.

Just take your small electricals to one of their new recycling banks across the borough and in all libraries. Batteries, vapes and lightbulbs should be recycled elsewhere.

For more information on how to recycle your electricals please visit: recycleyourelectricals.org.uk



# Housing

# **Annual Report**

2023-2024



Welcome to the Housing Annual Report 2023-2024 which sets out how the Council's Housing and Regeneration Department (HRD) has performed over the last year in accordance with our Housing Service Standards.

New legislation has meant this has been an even busier year for the department. The Social Housing Regulation Act (SHRA) 2023 now places new responsibilities on all social housing providers. In preparation for these

changes, a full review of the Housing Service Standards was completed, and we will be publishing our response to the newly introduced Tenant Satisfaction Measures later in the autumn. The council's complaint procedure was also updated to ensure it aligns with the statutory Housing Ombudsman complaint handling code.

Earlier this year we published the Resident Participation and Consultation Strategy, which was shaped by feedback from residents through consultation and the Residents' Conference 2023. The new strategy includes more informal participation routes to encourage residents to get involved in their communities and to have their voices heard.

We continue to offer a fully flexible and in-person service and have increased staff visibility. The delivery of services has been impacted due to the costs of labour and materials caused by inflation. However, since last year repair completion times have improved and the number of major disability adaptions has risen significantly.

New services have been introduced including a dedicated mould removal team so reports can be prioritised and fast-tracked. We are committed to taking a zero-tolerance approach to how we deal with damp and mould.

A Building Safety Team was established in 2023 and has been working hard to meet the obligations as set out in the Fire Safety Regulations and Building Safety Act (2022). A Building Safety Resident Engagement Strategy specifically for those living in high-rise buildings will be published later this year.

The Homes for Wandsworth programme that aims to deliver 1,000 new social rent homes by 2027 is progressing well, and social housing tenants have moved into new homes such on Colson Way.

We have remained committed to tackling rough sleeping in the Borough and are using £4.8m of government funding to establish a rough sleeping hub. The hub will bring together council services and other partner agencies to provide a single point of access for rough sleepers.

We are also partnering with a new groundbreaking provider called Proxy Address to provide more support to our rough sleepers who have no postal address.

This Annual Report was produced in partnership with a residents' focus group and I'd like to sincerely thank all the participants for their valuable contributions.

To find out more about how you can get involved with matters affecting your housing or join your local residents' association, visit: wandsworth.gov.uk/getinvolvedhousing

#### **Brian Reilly**

Executive Director of Housing and Regeneration

#### The Annual Report tells you how well we have done in five key areas:

- Quality
- Safety
- Neighbourhood and community
- Tenancy
- Transparency, influence and accountability

A traffic light system is used within the Annual Report to assess how well we have performed.



standard met



standard partially met, some work to do



work required to meet the standard

# Priorities for **2023-2024** were:

- Through a series of resident focus groups review the Wandsworth Service Standards.
- Review the Wandsworth Housing and Homelessness Strategy.
- Mobilise a new under occupation team to target those under occupying to free up larger social housing properties for homeless households.
- Hold an annual Resident Engagement Conference.
- Review how we engage with residents.
- Ensure the Borough maintains DAHA (Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance) accreditation when being re-assessed in 2024.
- Invest £33.5 million into our housing stock to continue to achieve the Decent Homes Standards.
- Continue green works to move towards being carbon neutral by 2030.
- Continue to progress the Homes for Wandsworth Programme to deliver 1,000 council rent homes.

\* Council residents means council tenants, council leaseholders and people living in properties managed by a Resident Management Organisation (RMO).

\*\*Where available, figures for the previous year (2022-23) are shown in brackets.

# Quality

#### We will...

- Provide a timely and good quality repairs and maintenance service for residents and ensure they can easily provide their feedback and satisfaction
- Maintain all homes to the Decent Homes Standard as a minimum and take a zero-tolerance approach to damp and mould
- Deliver environmental improvements to homes and estates
- Monitor and report our performance for emergency, urgent and routine repairs and act where contractors do not meet standards set



#### **Quality of accommodation**

Meet the Decent Homes Standard and carry out improvement works to make homes more energy efficient.

#### How have we met the standard?

- Continue to invest in our stock to maintain decency standards\* and invested £36.82m (£35.33m) to maintain the council's housing stock, an increase compared to last year. Works included:
  - roofing works at Carey Gardens, Newlands, Southmead and Felsham Road
  - continuation of the kitchens and bathrooms renewal programme
  - installation of new heating systems
  - upgrading of fire alarm systems for our sheltered residents.
- The results from our recent stock condition survey confirm that 95% of our stock is decent and there are plans in place to ensure that we continue to invest in our stock.
- We undertook further environmental improvements to our estates at
  - a cost of £1.18m (£185,348). This included:
  - Improvements on local playgrounds
  - landscaping, additional planting and improvements to the paved areas at Cowick Road
  - creating **new outdoor** gym equipment, benches and fencing

- Started 48 (50) major works projects including roof renewals, window renewals and external decoration schemes.
- Our partnership and investment with Thinking Works has resulted in 356 tenants being supported on energy and fuel initiatives. This has resulted in over £127,000 of household savings via help accessing bill discounts, alleviation of debt, and through savings from LED lighting.
- £1m from the council budget has been prioritised for improving the energy efficiency of existing council properties.
- A heat-pump system is scheduled for installation at Holmleigh Court starting in July 2024, and further feasibility studies are being carried out on systems to reduce their CO2 output.
- Heat metering systems have been installed in Castlemaine Tower, which will accurately measure the amount of energy each household uses to ensure residents are only paying for what they use.
- New and novel technologies continue to be tested for suitability, such as the long-term test of infra-red heating panels to replace traditional electric heaters.
- Designs are underway to install Solar Panels on all existing blocks on the Fitzhugh Estate as part of roof renewal works.



\*The Decent Homes Standard is set by the Government and outlines specific criteria that social housing must meet to be considered decent. For more information gov.uk (search Decent Homes).



#### Repairs and maintenance

 Provide an efficient and cost-effective repairs service.

#### How have we met the standard?

- £43.6m (£37.2m) has been spent on planned and responsive repairs.
- 85% (72%) of repairs were completed within target times, showing
  an improvement when compared to the previous year. Challenges
  caused by supply chain and labour issues following rising inflation
  continue to have an impact on repair completion times. However, the
  close monitoring of contractor performance has helped us respond to
  any problems that arise.
- Following the introduction of the mould removal team, 364 mould washes were completed and the team has been expanded to help manage the demand to further improve our response.
- A cleaning contract is in place in line with the HouseMark Caretaking cleaning standards guidelines and performance is measured via inspections from Estate Service Officers. Contractors are graded on a scale of A-D, with the expectation that 90% of inspections will receive a grade B or above. During 2023-2024 96.3% (95%) of inspections were graded B or above.
- 294 (255) disability adaptions were completed to enable people to remain independent in their home.

#### Repairs and maintenance

53% of tenants and 47% of leaseholders

are **satisfied** with the overall repairs they received. **52%** of tenants and

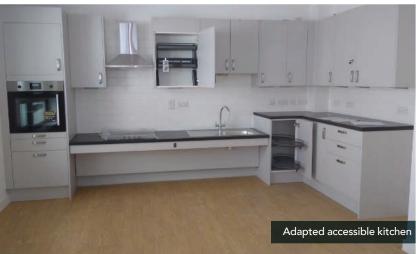
46% of leaseholders

are **satisfied** with the time taken to complete a repair.

59% of tenants and 61% of leaseholders are satisfied that homes are well maintained.







# Safety

#### We will...

- Meet the requirements as set out in building and fire safety legislation
- Carry out routine safety checks which includes checks on gas, fire and electrical safety
- Provide more opportunities for residents living in high-rise blocks to be involved and inform decision-making on matters involving building safety

### •••

#### **Keeping homes safe**

- Carry out health and safety checks and routine inspections.
- Respond to all concerns or emergencies with urgency to ensure our buildings are safe.
- Ensuring staff are qualified and trained to deal with issues.

#### How have we met the standard?

- Retrofitting sprinklers in the council's sheltered housing schemes is progressing well. In total, 23 (14) blocks have been fully fitted with sprinkler systems.
- A new programme has been commissioned to complete water risk assessments, all of which should be completed by the end of 2024.
- Fire safety and tackling damp and mould is included in every Homelife article to ensure residents are kept well informed on these vital areas.
- Quarterly health and safety inspections continue to be carried out by our Building Safety Team.

- Staff involved in building safety and damp and mould removal are fully trained with regular refresher training to ensure safety standards are met.
- A resident engagement strategy for Building Safety will be published later this year and a copy will be shared with all residents living in high-rise blocks.
- Residents are being engaged in the management of their blocks in relation to Building Safety to ensure they are kept informed of decisions that affect them.

#### **Building Safety Tenant Satisfaction Measures**

Carried out annual gas servicing in

99% of tenanted properties that have gas appliances

76% of residents are satisfied that their home is safe

99%

of all **fire risk assessments** for our **148 high rise** blocks and all **1,066 low rise** blocks are up to date

98% of emergency repairs completed within target time

84%

of the required lift safety checks have been completed



# Neighbourhood and community

#### We will...

- Work with partners to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour and domestic abuse
- Work with residents to improve local facilities and the environment
- Keep our estates clean and safe



#### Tackling anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse and crime

- Work with other services and the police to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB), domestic abuse and crime.
- Consider the full range of action to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour.



#### How have we met the standard?

- After successfully gaining the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation in 2021, the department has been preparing for re-accreditation for 2024. This chartermark recognises that we have a comprehensive and robust response to domestic abuse that puts residents' safety at the heart of our decision making.
- A Domestic Abuse Coordinator has been recruited which will strengthen our response in ensuring safe and suitable accommodation is offered to domestic abuse victims.
- The department continues to have representation on the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) every four weeks to discuss the highest risk domestic abuse cases in the borough.
- All new staff continue to receive mandatory training in how to recognise and respond to domestic abuse.
- The department still has 21 (21) Domestic Abuse Champions across all our teams who ensure that an excellent service is given to those fleeing or seeking assistance for domestic abuse.

- The number of 'Stay Put Stay Safe' (SPSS) applicants assisted during the year was 35 (41).
- Served 15 (10) Notices of Seeking Possession (NOSP) for ASB.
- There has been 1 (2) eviction due to ASB during 2023-2024.
- 9 (0) possession orders due to ASB were granted to the council during 2023/2024.
- Served 24 Section 80 notices on tenants and 7 Section 80 Notices on leaseholders for noise nuisance.
- Improvements have been made to the way noise complaints are recorded and monitored, and performance has improved, with 90.5% (90.2%) of noise complaints being followed up within five days following the initial report.
- We continue to support the Safer Neighbourhood Team, Metropolitan Police Officers and Police Community Support officers in crime prevention measures.





# Neighbourhood management

- Work with residents and contractors to improve local facilities and the environment.
- Respond to emergencies within target times.

#### How have we met the standard?

- There were 62,996 (53,615) calls to the Joint Control Centre (JCC) which required further action during 2023-24.
- 99.56% (99.92%) of emergency calls\* to the JCC were responded to within 30 minutes.
- Removed 30,688 square metres (30,831 msq) of graffiti at a cost of £220,033 (£208,169).
- 95% (99%) of graffiti was removed within target time.
- To improve energy efficiency across the borough, we have increased the number of LED lights from 2,964 to 3,444.
- Residents celebrated the grand re-opening of **Doddington** playground with council staff.
- Spent £127,051 (£211,221) from the Small Improvement Budget for residents' associations (RAs) to fund community projects. This year these have included:

 ${\tt *Emergency\ calls\ include\ lift\ trappings, fire\ related\ incidents\ and\ dangerous\ structures.}$ 

- Smithford & Weydown **motorcycle barrier**
- Cadnam Point garden patio and picnic table
- Aboyne Estate new hard-standing and recycling bin enclosures
- Langton House RA a secure cycle hangar
- 762 (706) residents use WATCH Lifeline service which helps older residents and those with disabilities to remain independent in their homes. 166 (167) new users signed up to the service in 2023-2024.
- There were 444 (420) Telecare users at the end of 2023-2024.
   Telecare provides a range of sophisticated sensors and alarms to help residents remain independent.

#### **Animal Welfare Team**

dog related incidents were responded to by the animal welfare team

70 stray dogs handled

prosecutions with 100% success

**223** microchipping enforcement notices issued; 208 complying; 11 prosecuted

39 microchips implanted

142 verbal warnings to dog owners who broke by-laws



# Tenancy

#### We will...

- Make the best use of the available housing stock
- Be clear with residents about how properties are allocated
- Provide tailored support and easily accessible information to all tenants that enables them to maintain their tenancy



#### Allocations and transfers

- Provide clear and accessible information on how we allocate properties and how to apply for housing.
- Ensure we are making the best use of the housing available to meet a range of needs.

#### How have we met the standard?

- Housed 1,202 (928) households in 2023-2024 which is lower than the forecast target of 1,356 (1,471).
- Received 2,488 (1,805) online housing applications this year, which equates to 90% (81.8%) of all applications received.
- 288 (188) vulnerable families had their homelessness prevented by our teams through provision of privately rented accommodation.
- It took an average of 33.83 (36.76) days to re-let a property which is an improvement on last year.
- A new under occupation team has been established, and has helped 69 under-occupiers move to smaller and more suitable accommodation, which has freed up larger properties for househoulds in need of a social housing allocation.
- Following the re-introduction of issuing secure (lifetime) periodic
  - tenancies, 290 social housing flexible fixed term tenants have now been issued with new secure (lifetime) tenancies, offering greater security and removing the stress of having a tenancy review.
- The number of households in temporary accommodation (TA) rose to 3,802 (3,590) which is slightly higher than the forecast of 3,647 (3,472).
- 1.9% (2.8%) of households in TA are in bed and breakfast, which is lower than the council forecast of 6%.
- We continued to focus on supporting rough sleepers off the streets by accommodating 80 (99), with 65 (88) currently in TA as of 31st March 2024 and 344 (293) now permanently rehoused.
- Our plan to build a rough sleeping hub has progressed, and a location has been agreed locally in the borough. The rough sleeping hub will provide a safe place

- for rough sleepers to reside and receive bespoke advice and support.
- We have partnered with a new rough sleeping service called Proxy Address, who will support our rough sleepers by providing a correspondence address so they can access essential services such as medical care, welfare benefits or employment/training.
- There were 26 successfully tenant applications for House Purchase Grants, which tenants then used to buy their own home. This also freed up the properties to be allocated to other households in need of social housing.
- New social housing tenants have been issued with a secure (periodic) tenancy on all properties that are four bedrooms or less, which provides households with long term housing security.
- 36 (24) illegally occupied properties were recovered by the council in partnership with the South West London Fraud Partnership.
- 34 new fully accessible homes are currently being built.
- 8 new supported housing units are now completed at Colson Way.
- 33 people requiring adapted housing were allocated accessible homes.
- 1 extra care scheme at St. John's Hill is now complete and provides 54 new homes.
- The Alton Road extra care scheme is progressing and is due to be completed by August 2024, and will deliver 41 new homes.





#### Services and advice

- Empower tenants by providing support and advice to ensure they can best manage their tenancies.
- Maintain contact with residents including regular occupancy checks 1,800 completed in 2023-2024, up from 487 the previous year.
- Deliver 1,000 new social homes for council rent.

#### How have we met the standard?

- At the end of the year, total rent arrears were £11.5m (£9.16m).
   This equates to 8.16% (7.13%) of the total rent collected. This increase is due to the ongoing cost-of-living crisis and rent/heating and hot water increases in April 2023. Our financial inclusion, tenancy support and rent collection teams are assisting tenants where possible to clear debts with extended affordable payment plans amounting to £5m of the total arrears value.
- For those tenants who need assistance, the Financial Inclusion Team provides free benefit advice, debt management intervention and help with budgeting, assisting 618 (576) tenants during 2023-2024. The team also run monthly virtual Introductory Tenancy Support advice sessions, attended by 58 (51) tenants and responded to 310 (298) notifications of households who entered Breathing Space, a national debt respite scheme.
- The percentage of tenants with more than seven weeks' worth of arrears has increased from 12.30% last year to 13.74%.
- 269 (134) tenants were helped by the Tenancy Support Team during 2023-2024; this included support to reduce arrears by £25,615 (£37,444).
- The department continues to actively work in partnership with the Cost-of-Living hub in encouraging residents to obtain professional advice and support if they are financially struggling.



#### Homes for Wandsworth programme

8 new homes completed in 2023-2024

383 homes are under construction

**168** due to be completed in 2024-2025

**80** new homes are due to start construction during 2024-2025

A further 155 have had or are due to have planning applications submitted for 2024-2025

**123** have secured planning consent during 2023-2024



- The Alton Arts hub has been relaunched and a newly established community kitchen has opened on the Alton Estate, which offers free and nutritious meals for residents to eat in or take away.
- 7 new council social homes via the self build supported housing scheme became available, one of which is wheel chair accessible.
- We supported housing associations in delivering 17 fully accessible social homes for wheelchair users.
- 46 replacement new homes for existing estate residents have been completed at Mitchell House, Grant Road and a further 126 are due to be handed over to the council in summer 2024.
- The Battersea Baptist Church and the Thames School moved to their new premises on Grant Road in 2023 and their old buildings in Pennethorne Square were demolished creating part of the site for the future construction of new build council homes.

# Transparency, influence and accountability

#### We will...

- Provide residents with a variety of methods to become involved in decision-making processes that affect them
- Support the development of accredited residents' associations
- Deliver an effective complaints process that puts the resident first and is used to improve services
- Publish easily accessible, transparent and clear information on performance and services



# Customer service and complaints

- Deliver a clear and robust complaints service that listens.
- Provide an inclusive service that considers the needs of all residents.

#### How have we met the standard?

- We have kept residents up to date through letters, webpage updates, social media feeds and the Homelife newsletter.
- We celebrated our 100th edition of Homelife.
- There has been an increase in the number of complaints: 409 (291).
- A new two stage system was introduced during 2023-2024 to make the process fairer and to enable us to respond faster to complaints.
- Complaint response times have slightly decreased with 72.6% (76.9%) of all complaints responded to within target time.
- 66.2% (70.1%) of complaints were responded to at stage one of the complaints procedure.

- We held a successful residents' conference and have used feedback received to shape the next conference (October 2024).
- Through a series of resident focus groups we have agreed a new set of service standards.
- We continue to work with our co-ops to amend their management agreements and support them with the new complaints process.
- We publish details of the Housing Ombudsman service in each edition of Homelife.
- We have access to comprehensive translation and interpretation services to support residents where required.
- To ensure an inclusive service, sheltered housing residents were consulted with on improvements to housing services and facilities. Feedback from the group included improvements to communal areas, landscape gardens and a larger choice of social activities.
- Equalities data is analysed and published on the council's website to
  ensure services are accessible to all residents.
   The council also completes Equality Impact Need Assessments
  (EINAs) for all policy statements to ensure we are serving all
  members of the community fairly.





# Resident involvement, fairness and respect

- Encourage and inform residents about participation opportunities.
- Respond to resident concerns in an efficient and sensitive way.
- Make sure services meet a range of needs.
- Offer accessible participation and consultation options so residents can shape our housing services.



- Battersea Rotary Club partnered with us to host events over the Christmas period for 350 residents who would otherwise have spent Christmas alone; the celebrations included Christmas meals, games and dancing.
- ROSE Community Clubroom have been very active throughout the year by organising regular coffee mornings, supporting the Happy Streets Festival, offering free social activities for families and holding community engagement meetings – open to all residents.
- We continue our partnership with Chelsea Football Club via the Chelsea Kicks programme. This year physical sessions were back in full swing, with 10 sessions across six days every week for young residents aged 8 to 18.
   In total, 254 (239) young residents signed up to participate.
- The popular Roehampton Christmas market returned, offering residents a variety of free arts and crafts activities, including a Santa's Grotto and stalls hosted by local residents selling a range of homewares, crafts, candles and clothing.
- Women of Wandsworth (WoW) continues to provide support to vulnerable residents with the help of volunteers from South Thames College by organising games and activities and delivering free food parcels for the residents.
- Supported 36 (28) accredited Residents' Associations in the Borough; our RPOs continue to work with 5 (5) associate RAs who hope to gain their accredited status soon.





- The second consecutive Residents' Conference was held in October 2023, attended by residents involved in our participation structures.
- The resident participation and consultation strategy underwent a full review which included a consultation at the Residents' Conference.
   This resulted in more informal participation routes being introduced to increase resident participation.
- There are now 17 (12) Housing Community Champions. These are
  resident volunteers who have been recognised for the community
  work they do on their estates. We support them to continue their
  work and provide funding.
- We continue to work with Wandsworth Workmatch to provide training and employability support. In total, 268 (276) residents secured employment via Workmatch. Workmatch engaged 903 (720) residents, providing training to 725 (670) of these.
- The Cromwell House and ROSE Community Clubroom partnered with Workmatch by setting up monthly drop in-sessions for local residents to receive advice and support on training and employability.
- Aboyne community garden was established and residents are using it to grow a range of vegetables, fruits and herbs.
- Our first gardening competition for council residents was successfully delivered and in celebration residents were invited to a ceremony at the Mayor's office. We have committed to running the competition every year in the summer.





# Performance, information and tenant satisfaction measures

- Provide clear updates on the Housing Revenue Account and how money is being used.
- Make accessible and easy to follow performance and monitoring reports available for all residents to review.

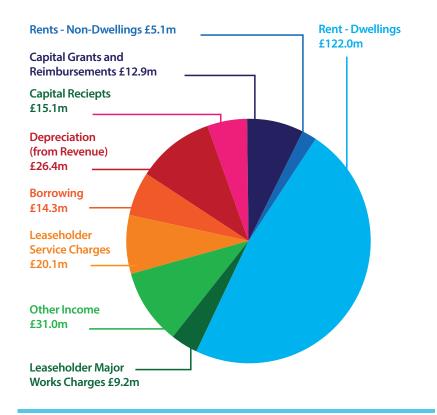
#### How have we met the standard?

- Overall tenant satisfaction with housing services is 64% (54%) and 64% (43%) for leaseholders.
- We responded to the new 22 Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) which will be published on our webpages later in the year.
- Balances have reduced by £63.5m to £192.2m.
   This reduction was expected as the significant investment in site development and estate regeneration schemes is under way.
- The council consulted on all major works and external redecoration schemes. We served:
  - 1,628 (2,354) Notices of Intention\*; and
  - 1,819 (2,458) Section 20 Notices\* on leaseholders.
- Average weekly rent was £139.23 compared to £130.12 last year.
- \*These are a statutory requirement to consult leaseholders on schemes of major works costing more than £250 per leaseholder.

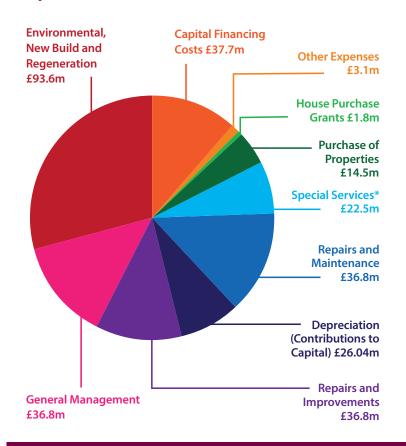




### Housing revenue account 2023/2024 Income total £260.7m (£250.3m)



### Housing revenue account 2023/2024 Expenditure total £324.3m (£277.3m)



# Priorities for 2024-2025

- Continue to work to deliver 1,000 new council homes.
- Open a new rough sleeper hub in 2024.
- Develop a rolling programme of stock condition surveys.
- Continue to prepare for the increased regulatory regime.
- Deliver the Resident Participation
   Strategy
- Continue to hold repairs contractors to account.
- Continue to build in house capacity to deal with incidents of damp and mould.
- Complete an analysis of the CCTV monitoring pilot to assess whether additional resources are required.
- Produce a new housing asset management strategy.
- Maximise the use of funding sources to deliver energy efficiency works
- Maintain DAHA accreditation



#### **REGENERATION NEWS**



# Alton Estate renewal plan

The Alton Estate is set for improvements thanks to the new Alton Renewal Plan launched by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Simon Hogg.

Immediate improvements to the wider neighbourhood including two new bus services and revamped play areas, community facilities, roads and pavements. These will be followed by proposals to build genuinely affordable homes for local people, replacing the previous masterplan for the Alton Estate.

At this summer's Alton community drop-in event at Roehampton Leisure Centre, Councillor Hogg was joined by local ward councillors, cabinet members and Fleur Anderson, MP for Putney and Roehampton to explain the new plan and hear local people's feedback.

Councillor Hogg said: "This summer we have already started to act on what we heard and we're planning major investment for the renewal of the estate over the longer term. Residents will continue to see better local facilities coming forward as part of a whole area improvement package, ahead of a local ballot on our proposal to deliver new homes. This will include building much more affordable housing so that people can choose to stay in their neighbourhood near their families and support networks."

# Exciting upgrades coming to Henry Prince Clubroom and Focus Hall

The Henry Prince Clubroom in Earlsfield and Focus Hall in Roehampton are set for significant upgrades thanks to the United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Funds we have secured to enhance the cultural provision within the borough.

The funding is being used to improve the buildings' appearance, security, and energy efficiency, and enable more cultural activities to be hosted at both centres as part of our London Borough of Culture programme in 2025.

The many improvements will include new entrance doors and windows, redecorating with new flooring, paint, sanitary ware, tiling, and refurbished internal doors. The Henry Prince Clubroom kitchen will be modernised with new units, a cooker, and an extractor fan. Additionally, the electrical system will be rewired with low-energy LED lighting and sensor controls, and the heating

system will be upgraded for better energy efficiency. Fire safety will be enhanced with new alarms, internal doors, and a modern roller shutter. Externally, new signage will be provided to create a more welcoming atmosphere.

These improvements are part of a wider programme to increase the usage of both centres by attracting more cultural and creative community-based and voluntary sector organisations. The building work is expected to be completed by March 2025 so that events can start taking place in spring 2025.













### Wellbeing First Launches Community Programme on Henry Prince Estate

On Saturday, June 1, the Wellbeing First team hosted a community funday to launch their new programme on the Henry Prince Estate.

The event attracted over 100 residents, along with external organisations and local businesses.

The Wellbeing First programme was created to address the lack of accessible physical activity for new mums, children and young people and adults. It aims to improve physical activity and wellbeing by offering free weekly classes on the estate. The event was a huge success and brought the community together to celebrate the new initiative. This success was made

possible through the partnership with the local charity Nicholas Stewart Project, fitness instructors, and the Henry Prince Residents' Association.

Highlights from the day included food provided by Tooting Community Kitchen, live music featuring DJ Houdini & DJ T's, boxing sessions from Carney's Community, children's entertainment provided by Croydon Bouncy Castles, the Wandsworth youth bus, face painting, Urban Steppers, and football fitness. Adult activities included yoga by Live Karma Yoga, Mums Get Fit, and 80s cardio dance.

The Wellbeing First team looks forward to expanding the programme and hosting more community events to improve physical wellbeing and reduce social isolation.

# Free women-only fitness class in Roehampton

# The AFC Wimbledon Foundation now provides two free women-only fitness classes for residents of Roehampton.

Their Dons Fit sessions have had a tremendous impact on local women from the Alton Estate. The sessions offer women of all abilities a welcoming environment to take part in group exercises and wellness activities, such as circuits, yoga and sports with the aim to improve health, fitness and confidence whilst having fun along the way. The programme is funded by the Premier League Fan's Fund, a scheme which aims to inspire a sense of belonging through meaningful engagement between clubs, fans and their community.

Our Regeneration Team approached the Foundation about facilitating these sessions and then conducted a survey of local women to understand what kind of activities they would find most beneficial and where they would like them to take place.

Cheryl Gill, Community Development Manager for AFC Wimbledon Foundation, said:

"Dons Fit for women is not just about improving physical health but a chance to connect and build a supportive local community. We want to create a space that is inclusive, comfortable, and



empowering for women from diverse cultural backgrounds to take part in exercise and feel happier and healthier."

The weekly sessions take place on Mondays at Roehampton Leisure Centre between 10am – 11am and Tuesdays from 11am – 12pm in Davies Sports Hall, Roehampton University. The classes finish for the school holidays and resume again in September.

For more information please email:  ${\bf women and girls@afcwf.org.uk}$ 

# Edgecombe Hall Estate celebrates its 60th Anniversary

Edgecombe Hall Estate in Southfields recently marked its 60th anniversary with a lively celebration organised by the residents' association. The event brought together many residents who enjoyed the chance to catch up with neighbours and meet Wandsworth's newly appointed Mayor, Councillor Sana Jafri.

Residents enjoyed an array of treats, including traditional South Asian food, popcorn, candy floss, fruit and cakes kindly donated by the Tesco Local store on Beaumont Road. A bouncy castle and face painting was generously donated by the construction company KIND who recently built the new council homes on Whitlock Drive.

The party was well-attended by residents of all ages, from the youngest one-month-old Nevana to the longest-standing residents' association member, 90-year-old Pauline Edgeworth, who has lived on the estate since it was built in the 1960s.

The 60th anniversary not only celebrated the history of the estate but also strengthened community bonds.





# Happy Streets Festival in Battersea

In July, over 800 residents joined the Mayor of Wandsworth for this year's free Happy Streets festival in Battersea, featuring live performances and a range of activities for both adults and children alike.

Over 30 activities were held on Thessaly Road, including smoothie making, football by FAST London, and free pizza-making workshops.

As Wandsworth prepares to be the London Borough of Culture 2025, the Happy Streets Festival, produced by Swans Production on behalf of Wandsworth Council, was a huge success.



# **Gardening Competition 2024**

Thank you to everyone who submitted entries for this year's gardening competition!

The entries are being judged by officers and Councillor Dikerdem, the Cabinet Member for Housing. The winners will be announced in the December issue of Homelife. In the meantime, enjoy a sneak preview at some of the fantastic submissions we've received.



# Breathing new life into estate planters

With the help of Sheltered Housing Officers and local residents, Vicky Pigott, a Community Champion based in the Western Area, has brought the planters located outside the Lennox Estate sheltered clubroom back to life.

The new look planters have helped transform the space into a vibrant and welcoming area for the community.







# 'Gloomy' Clapham Junction bridge to be transformed

Falcon Road rail bridge is set to be transformed thanks to a design competition launched by the council.

Architects, designers, and artists are invited to submit innovative proposals for a chance to improve this busy route which runs through the heart of Clapham Junction.

Residents from the local community - which includes Winstanley and York Road estates, Kambala Estate and Falcon Estate - will be invited to have their say on the shortlisted designs this autumn ahead of the final decision. The designs will be installed before the end of 2025.

Simon Hogg, Leader of Wandsworth Council said: "The gloomy and unwelcoming Falcon Road bridge cuts right through the middle of Clapham Junction's thriving shopping, residential and transport area. Improvements here are long overdue, so as part of our decade of renewal we're excited to use funds we've collected from local property developers to finally get the bridge transformed into a striking landmark as well as a better and safer route for everyone who uses it."

Marsha de Cordova, MP for Battersea said: "I know many local residents and businesses will join me in welcoming this fantastic project. I have been campaigning for improvements to the whole environment under Falcon Road bridge, making it a more accessible and safer space for everyone, especially at night."



# Helping residents understand the planning system

Wandsworth
Council is working
to make the local
planning system
more accessible
for residents by
producing an
illustrated booklet
that explains how
planning works, why
it is necessary, and
how policies are
developed.

In preparation for this review, the Planning team has been working with Area Housing Panels and Resident Forums to help residents to understand how the planning system works and how to participate in the consultation.

Council Leader Simon Hogg emphasised the importance of community input in the planning process, while Aydin Dikerdem, Cabinet Member for Housing, highlighted the need for more social housing to address the issue of temporary accommodation for families.

To learn more or get involved, residents can visit wandsworth.gov.uk/localplan or email planningpolicy@ wandsworth.gov.uk



# **Open the door**

Affordable Housing Open Day

17 October 2024, 11am-6pm



The Civic Suite, Town Hall Wandsworth High Street SW18 2PU

To book an appointment to attend or for more information call (020) 8871 6161







### Residents' Conference 2024

Wednesday 23 October 2024, 9.30am to 3.30pm Civic Suite, Wandsworth High Street, SW18 2PU

# We are excited to announce we are holding the Wandsworth Council Annual Residents' Conference

The Residents' Conference is for council tenants and leaseholders who are or would like to be actively involved in the departments formal and informal resident participation structures. This includes:

- Housing Community Champions
- Residents involved in a Residents Association or Resident Management Organisation
- Residents who are just interested in getting involved

#### **Professional led training**

Residents will be able to explore the different engagement options that the Council offers and attend workshops on common themes such as reducing damp and mould, accessing small improvement budgets and making the best use of community clubrooms.

#### **Community groups**

Voluntary and community groups will be holding stalls at the conference to give residents the opportunity to discuss the work they do and to give residents advice on accessing their services. In previous years, stall holders included the Community Safety team, Chelsea Kicks, London Fire Brigade and charities focused on providing financial and fuel poverty support.







If you are interested in attending the conference, please contact your Resident Participation Officer or you can email conference@wandsworth.gov.uk.

You can review the training offered from last year's conference on our Residents' Conference webpage here: www.wandsworth.gov.uk/residents-conference.

Refreshments and lunch are provided to all.



Scan for webpage

