

Housing News

Spring 2026

The magazine for Ealing Council tenants

Homes



Neighbourhoods



Opportunities



Investing in your homes

We're improving your homes to keep them warm, safe, and ready for the future.

Find out more on page 4



Making your homes better and warmer

Councillor Louise Brett

Cabinet member for safe and genuinely affordable homes



A good standard of living begins with a home you can rely on, and we're pleased to share updates about the investment being made to improve just that.

I grew up in social housing, and I know just how important it is when our homes are safe, warm, and well maintained. When those basic needs are met, it transforms daily life. Even small improvements to conditions can make a world of difference to our comfort and happiness.

We are now making hundreds of millions of pounds worth of upgrades across many of our buildings, including new kitchens, modern bathrooms, and new roofs. These changes will make a noticeable difference to day to day life - whether that's better storage, safer fittings, or a fresher, more welcoming space.

'Retrofitting' work is also underway on some of our estates, which means we are making improvements such as better insulation, upgraded windows, and energy efficient heating systems. These upgrades will see long term benefits for years to come, including lower energy bills and warmer homes. You can read more about the upgrades and retrofitting improvements on page 4.

While major investment continues, there's also a lot you can do to help maintain safe and comfortable living conditions. If you have a balcony, please take a moment to check that you and your family are using it safely. Similarly, lithium battery fires are a major safety concern, with incidents increasing as more devices rely on rechargeable power sources. It's important to be aware of the risks and use these batteries carefully to help prevent overheating and fires. Read more on pages 8 and 9.

With the clocks going forward at the end of March, it's the perfect time to test your smoke alarms while you are changing your clocks. It only takes a minute, and working alarms save lives.

And make sure to keep an eye out for our next issue of Housing News which will come with a fresh new name and look.

Thank you for everything you do to help keep our homes safe.



Get help with your garden



Do you need a little extra help getting your garden back into shape after winter?

Free help is at hand for council tenants who receive benefits and are over 70 or living with a disability. Our gardening scheme can provide help with grass and hedge cutting,



and garden clearances for people who would struggle to do it themselves. The scheme runs between April and early October, and during this time eligible residents can apply to have their grass cut up to 5 times and their hedges cut back twice.

A tenant who uses the scheme, who lives in Ealing said: “I used to worry every time I looked out at my garden, knowing I couldn’t keep up with it anymore. Getting help through the council’s scheme has been such a relief. My garden feels safe again, and I can actually enjoy sitting outside without stressing about the work I can’t do.”

There is no charge for the grass and hedge cutting service, however capacity constraints mean not all applicants will be accepted immediately, and may be added to a waiting list. The service prioritises those with the greatest need.

You won’t qualify for the service if you have an able-bodied person aged 18 or over living with you, or if you have an able-bodied relative aged under 70 living in the borough.

To apply for the gardening scheme, please call our resident involvement team on **020 8825 9998** and select option 5, or email residentinvolvement@ealing.gov.uk.

Improving wildflowers on estates



This summer, you’ll see the wildflowers that were introduced at some of our estates in recent years come into bloom.

With the help of our contractor, Greener Ealing, a range of seeds have been planted, and you should soon see flowers starting to grow.

In 2017, we trialled the introduction of wildflowers on 6 estates where there were large areas of grass but very little shrubbery or colour for residents to enjoy. The trial was such a success that it has now been expanded so that 22,500 square metres of wildflowers now exist across 33 of our largest estates.

The mixture of flowers that we chose provide a long flowering season, with a rainbow of colours that change from month to month, and year to year.

Flowering meadows are increasingly seen as important for our towns. They allow local people to get closer to wildlife, and the pollen and nectar from flowers attract bees, butterflies, moths, and beetles. They also provide a food source for spiders, bats, shrews, and some species of birds and even a home for some insects and small mammals.

As well as the wildflower areas, we are also deliberately leaving long grass habitats under groups of trees which will benefit a variety of plants, insects, and other wildlife.

We hope you enjoy these areas as they change through the seasons.



Investing in your homes



We are spending £425million to improve council homes across the borough.



A recent in-depth condition survey of our homes showed us which buildings and estates need work.

Although 93% already meet the national Decent Homes Standard, some require investment to bring them into the right condition. This new work will see us reach 100% compliance with the standard by 2028.

Improvements include new kitchens, bathrooms, electrics, lifts, roofs, fences, windows, and safety features. This will be done over a 5-year period, and it is estimated that the project will see approximately 600 new kitchens and 400 new bathrooms fitted each year.

If you will be affected by these improvements, we will write to you to let you know when any related works are due in your building. You will also get the chance to choose your new kitchens and bathrooms from a suite of options.

A dedicated resident liaison officer will act as the first point of contact if you have any questions about the process. For more information, you can contact kitchenandbathroom@ealing.gov.uk.

Late last year, the national Regulator of Social Housing gave the council a positive assessment after an in depth inspection, recognising progress and improvements residents asked for. These improvements will help us continue on our journey towards providing the best possible service for you.

Plan for warmer homes, lower bills



Work is under way to improve the energy performance of hundreds of our homes, by doing a 'retrofit' on them to make them warmer and cheaper for families to run.

A major upgrade programme will see 732 council homes retrofitted with energy saving improvements by 2028. Each home will receive a tailored package of improvements, which could include better insulation, energy efficient windows and doors, heating upgrades, new ventilation systems, and roof replacements where needed.

The homes selected are older properties with lower EPC ratings. If your home is included, the council or its contractors will contact you to book surveys and agree a schedule. To carry out the programme at pace, the council is working with trusted delivery partners Greyline,

R Bensons, and Durkan, alongside retrofit specialists Constructive Thinking Studio and Cotality.

Most improvements will take around 5 weeks, with resident liaison officers on hand throughout. Easy to read guides explain what to expect during works, how to give feedback, and how to get the most from new systems.

Thank you to the residents who have helped shape design choices at a series of workshops. By working with tenants and involving them in decisions, we hope the warmer, happier homes fully meet the needs of the people living in them, now and in the future.



Thinking of making changes to your home?



Under the terms of your tenancy, certain alterations require written consent from us before you start planning major changes and any work begins. Here's what you need to know.



To avoid delays, risks, or extra costs, always check with us first.

Everyday updates like wardrobes or carpets usually don't need approval. However, structural or significant changes to windows, moving kitchens or bathrooms, or any changes to walls, extensions, and lofts require consent.

Electrical or gas work must always use council arranged registered professionals.

If you're unsure whether your plans need approval, we can help. In many cases, a surveyor will inspect your home to ensure the proposed work won't affect the building's structure or neighbouring properties, and may check once the work has finished.

Because windows form part of the building structure, we are responsible for maintaining and replacing them. For

larger projects like loft conversions or extensions, you must speak to us first.

For high-rise blocks, there are extra safety rules and most alterations are restricted with written permission needed before going ahead. Among other things, this includes:

- any alterations to walls, ceilings, floors, doors, door closers, or door frames
- installing new wiring, lighting, or electrical fittings
- altering gas or heating systems
- adding internal cladding, panelling, or ceiling coverings
- blocking vents, risers, cupboards, or service access points

If you carry out work without permission, you will be in breach of your tenancy, which can have very serious consequences. You may also be required to return the property to its original condition.

Find out more by scanning the QR code.



Hitting the brakes on abandoned vehicles



We have stepped up efforts to clear abandoned and untaxed vehicles from our housing estates.

Over the winter, our enforcement officers returned to the Golf Links estate, where they removed 21 vehicles, bringing the total number taken from estates to 90 since the operation began.

The action is part of a borough wide crackdown targeting dumped cars on housing estates as well as on public streets. Since May, we have removed 13 abandoned vehicles from Copley Close in Hanwell, 43 from Southall's Havelock estate, 21 from Golf Links, and a further 13 from other estates. More operations are already being planned.



Before any vehicle is removed, officers issue warning notices and contact registered owners. If owners fail to act, the vehicles are towed. To park legally on an estate, vehicles must be taxed, insured, have a valid MOT, and be roadworthy. Off road declared vehicles and commercial garage operations are not permitted.

Once taken to the pound, owners can reclaim their vehicles but must cover towing and storage fees. Unclaimed vehicles are stripped, recycled, or scrapped. Residents are encouraged to ensure their vehicles are roadworthy and properly registered.

The council is also continuing investigations into abandoned and untaxed cars left on public roads. A total of 972 vehicles were removed in 2025 alone.

Those with unwanted cars are urged to dispose of them responsibly, such as through charity donation or licensed removal services.

If you suspect a vehicle is abandoned, you can report it on the council's website by scanning the QR code.



Are you set up on My Account?



You can use the council's online customer portal, My Account to complete a range of tasks and to report any concerns.



My Account makes it easier to manage your transactions online at your convenience. As well as paying your rent and council tax, you can also use it to manage council benefits, request repairs, and contact estate services.

Using My Account gives you more control and helps you stay informed about your personal circumstances, while reducing the need to rely on council staff, who are limited to office hours.

Creating a new online My Account is quick and easy. Sign up today at www.ealing.gov.uk/myaccount

Help improve access to housing services



Our customer access workshops give you the opportunity to co-design improvements that are needed for better access to our services.

Since May 2025, we have successfully delivered 13 workshops, working closely with a dedicated group of residents, and getting valuable feedback to make key improvements including:

- improving content and navigation on our housing web pages
- expanded staff training
- tailoring our services for vulnerable residents with a vulnerability policy
- introducing Sign Video in the contact centre supporting hard of hearing residents
- simplifying the complaints process with clear timelines and easy reporting for residents through different channels
- developing a tenant handbook, homeowner handbook, and resident support directory, to guide residents from tenancy start
- co-designing and publishing new housing service standards

Residents that attended workshops told us they valued:

- learning how the council operates
- feeling heard and knowing their input matters
- receiving quick feedback



Our ongoing workshops will continue to explore resident feedback, provide opportunities to test improvements, and consider new ideas to make housing services more accessible for everyone.

While we look forward to welcoming back previous participants, we are also eager to hear from new voices, so we meet the needs of all residents.

To join a future workshop, email residentinvolvement@ealing.gov.uk, or scan the QR code where you can also find out more.



Listening to you



In this second part of a new series, we wanted to share some examples of how we've responded to questions or concerns residents have raised with us.

YOU SAID

Residents who attend the Resident Asset Management Panel for Scrutiny (RAMPS) asked for a Q&A session with one of our repairs contractors.

WE DID

Wates staff attended to present their performance data and answer questions.

YOU SAID

We have launched a new survey for all new tenants to understand how satisfied they are with their new property and the lettings process. In their responses, new tenants said they wanted more information about what benefits they might be eligible for.

WE DID

We have created a resident support directory which includes useful contacts for advice about benefits and other financial support. The directory can be accessed online by scanning the QR code.



If you would like to get involved with helping to shape housing services, please contact residentinvolvement@ealing.gov.uk

Digital access for everyone



From accessing vital services to staying in touch with loved ones, the online world plays a central role in everyday life.

We have introduced a range of initiatives to ensure every resident can confidently and affordably access the internet.

All borough libraries now provide free use of computers, the internet, and scanning facilities. Printing is also available with a small fee charged.

For those who need extra support, trained staff at community hubs can help with using devices and online services. Free mobile data SIMs are available at the community hubs in Acton, Ealing Central, and Southall libraries. Also, residents on low incomes can benefit from low cost tariffs, helping to reduce broadband and mobile costs.

Free courses are available through Learn Ealing at www.learnealing.org.uk or explore bite sized lessons at www.learnmyway.com.

Age UK runs drop in sessions and 6 week programmes to help older people feel safe when using technology and be able to benefit from using the internet. The Middlesex Association for the Blind offers free home visits to help visually impaired residents improve IT skills. A community



support directory is also available to help find local training opportunities, and guidance is available to help everyone stay secure while browsing.

You can find out more about all of these programmes by visiting www.ealing.gov.uk/getonline.

Be safe on your balcony



With spring on our doorstep, we want to remind you to be safety conscious when using your balcony, if you have one.

Balcony fires are more common during the warmer months and can be devastating, as they can easily spread to adjoining properties - potentially leaving many people homeless.



You must never light a barbecue on your balcony. All barbecues, including disposable ones, are a serious fire risk when used so close to homes, like on your balcony. Barbeques can stay hot for hours, and smouldering debris can easily spit off the surface and land on another level of the building. Several fires have started this way in recent years.

Another leading cause of fires is lit cigarettes being thrown from balconies and igniting flammable materials on a lower balcony. Smokers can stay safe on their balconies by putting out cigarettes completely and disposing of them carefully. Never throw lit cigarettes or butts over your balcony. For help giving up smoking, go to www.nhs.uk/smokefree.

For more information about fire safety within your home, visit www.london-fire.gov.uk.

Damp and mould law: what it means for you and your home



New legislation known as Awaab's Law brings stronger protections for residents living with damp and mould.

The law is named in memory of Awaab Ishak, a 2 year old boy who tragically died as a result of prolonged exposure to damp and mould in his home in Rochdale. His story prompted a national call for change to ensure landlords act quickly when these issues pose a risk to health.

Under Awaab's Law, landlords must meet strict response times. Any emergency hazard caused by damp or mould must be made safe within 24 hours. If the problem cannot be fixed immediately, residents must be moved to safe temporary accommodation while repairs are carried out.

Teams across housing services have been preparing for these changes by updating repair processes, improving case management systems, and strengthening how issues are reported and tracked. This work ensures that when you report damp or mould, your case is handled swiftly and in line with the new legal standards.

As we continue to embed Awaab's Law into everyday practice, our teams will be working together to improve how we respond. This includes better triage of reports, clearer updates for residents, quicker access to temporary accommodation when needed, and close monitoring of response times.

By working together, we're maintaining safer homes for everyone.



Urgent safety check for 85,000 tumble dryers



A major product recall is under way for specific tumble dryers manufactured by Haier, because of a risk that they could catch fire.

Households with Haier-produced tumble dryers must check if their machine needs an urgent safety repair. Affected brands include Baumatic, Candy, Caple, Haier, Hoover, Lamona, Iberna, and Montpellier.



Anyone with one of the machines must stop using it immediately.

An internal short circuit can occur during normal use, causing the tumble dryer to ignite.

Owners should check their model number and serial number online to see if their appliance is affected and contact the manufacturer to arrange a repair.

Affected appliances must not be used until the repair has been completed. If the plug is accessible, owners should switch off and unplug the appliance.

Haier is running a repair programme for the 103,000 affected machines and has begun contacting customers to arrange repairs. However, it can only contact the owners that it has details for, so you may need to get in touch with them.

Check if your tumble dryer is affected and find out how to contact the manufacturer if it is, by scanning the QR code.

Even if it is in perfect working order and not affected by this recall, advice from the London Fire Brigade is to never leave your home if your tumble dryer is on. You should stay nearby to keep an eye on it.



Lithium batteries can cause fires



On average, there is a fire from a lithium battery in an e-bike or e-scooter every 2 days in London.

Fires involving lithium batteries are the fastest growing fire risk in London, and sadly there have been many cases in our borough too. While lithium batteries are used to safely power millions of devices every day, they can present a significant fire risk when overcharged, tampered with, submerged in water, or damaged in any way. They are susceptible to failure if incorrect chargers are used.



In 2025, London Fire Brigade attended 171 e-bike fires, 35 e-scooter fires, 10 e-cigarette fires, and 99 other lithium battery-related fires.

To prevent these fires happening in your homes, and to keep you safe, please follow these tips:

- never attempt to modify or tamper with your battery
- always use the correct charger. Buy an official one from a reputable seller which meets UK safety standards. Batteries that have been purchased online may not meet the correct safety standards
- batteries can get warm during their use - allow them to cool down before attempting to re-charge
- unplug your charger once you have finished using it. Always follow manufacturers' instructions when charging and try not to leave it unattended or while asleep

Find out more, and access the home fire safety checker at

www.london-fire.gov.uk/safety/lithium-batteries

Helping residents in our sheltered homes



One of our sheltered housing officers has been a big hit with the residents that she helps, who have had lots of lovely things to say about her.



Since 2021, Sadia Mahmood has worked in a number of sheltered sites and currently works at locations in Southall managing the day-to-day running of the buildings.

Sheltered housing is a type of affordable and supported housing for older people or people with a disability who want to live independently. The residents have a range of abilities, are at different stages of life, and come from diverse backgrounds.

Sadia provides a 'person-centred', tailored approach to each resident. As well as ensuring their health and happiness, she also makes sure the environment around them is safe and secure.

She tends to day-to-day emergencies, liaises with healthcare providers, reports repairs, creates support plans, meets with family members and carers, arranges activities, and much more. Recently, Sadia has been

planning more community activities for the residents including English lessons, day trips, and tea and coffee mornings.

Residents have noticed that Sadia goes above and beyond for them. Some of them told us:

“She gives us support and makes our lives comfortable and liveable.”

“Because of her presence I feel less isolated, helpless, and lonely.”

“In sheltered housing I may be alone but I’m never lonely.”

Sadia said: “I love and I am passionate about the work that I do. It helps people in lots of ways and I feel that I am making a difference and improving their lives. It’s my job to make sure that the tenants get sign posted to the right people so services can be delivered to them in their homes, and their tenancies become a home for life.”

Celebrating more than 100 years of life



Meet 101 year old Bakshish, who was born in April 1924 - over 100 years ago - making her one of the oldest tenants living in our sheltered housing.

Bakshish was born in Punjab, India, and moved to West Ealing in 1979 to be with her family and work in catering. Over her long life, she has had 4 children, 10 grandchildren, and 8 great-grandchildren. Some of her family live locally in Greenford and Northolt.

Bakshish has lived at Charter Court, a council sheltered scheme, for 20 years. She said: “I’m very happy here and wouldn’t want to live anywhere else. Although I’m getting frail and my mobility is limited, mentally I’m still as sharp as a tack. I know my neighbours and feel part of a community. “I have a wonderful, clean flat thanks to the exceptional care provided. My carer, Ms Akif visits every day to prepare my lunch, and help me eat it. Sadia, my sheltered housing officer pops in most days to make sure I’m okay and have everything I need.”

When asked about what tips Bakshish would give to live a long, happy life, she said: “All my life, I’ve woken up at the crack of dawn, eaten the same nutritious meals (except on



Bakshish with her telegram from the King.

special occasions), and taken a daily walk. I have everything I need with the love of family and community, staying active, and having a safe and secure home. I’m living proof that when the council provide ‘a home for life’, they truly mean it.”

Bringing communal spaces back to life



We have upgraded furniture across several of our sheltered housing buildings.

Over time, worn or outdated furniture has made communal rooms or lounges less inviting, discouraging residents from coming together.

Over the past year, we have been updating the furniture across 18 sheltered housing locations. The new furniture was carefully selected with residents shaping and designing the way they wanted the communal rooms to look like. A consultation gave residents the opportunity to have a direct say in the type of furniture chosen, as well as the style and colour themes for their common rooms.

A positive impact has already been felt across the schemes. Sandra Knight, resident of Evergreen Court in Hanwell said: “The furniture has brought the common room back to life. We have really come together and will now be having fortnightly coffee mornings and even movie evenings.”

For many residents, these improvements have provided reassurance, companionship, and opportunities to



reconnect - particularly important for those who might otherwise spend long periods alone. They have given residents more reasons to engage with their neighbours.

By investing in shared spaces, we are investing in people - supporting mental health, strengthening community bonds, and helping residents feel at home.

Benefit from your local resident association



From social events to gardening, Hawthorne Court’s resident association shows how local people can shape a thriving neighbourhood together.

One of the most effective ways to have a real say in what happens where you live is to join a residents association – or to start one if it doesn’t already exist.

The residents association at Hawthorne Court in Ealing is a shining example of how collective action can strengthen community life.



Over the past year, they have been busy organising a wide range of activities to bring residents together, including barbecues, trips to the circus, and afternoon teas. Each event helped foster connections and create a welcoming, inclusive atmosphere for all residents.

The resident association also launched a gardening club, where they grew their own vegetables and produce was even shared among residents. Alongside this, the members have been working hard to maintain the lawns and communal gardens.

The committee members include Mrs Farah Abbassi, Mr Martin Shippey, Mr Peter Wheatley, and Ms Geraldine Creed, who has recently retired as chair.

If you are interested in setting up or joining a resident association and would like more information, contact our resident engagement team by emailing residentinvolvement@ealing.gov.uk.

Get yourself a garage



Council garages are available to hire all over the borough, offering a convenient parking or storage option at competitive prices.

Our contractors Secure Parking and Storage (SPS) look after around 1,200 of our garages around the borough.



The monthly cost of renting a garage varies depending on its location, but wherever they are, our garages continue to be by far the cheapest way to hire storage space in the borough. Discounts are available for blue badge holders.

As well as ensuring you have somewhere safe to park, renting a garage could also bring your insurance premiums down by giving you a secure, off-street space to store your car. We have secured £300,000 of funding to make improvements to 135 garages across 5 sites by giving them new doors, roofs, lighting, and paint.

To find available garages nearest to you and the latest prices, please contact SPS on **020 8035 0315** or email ealing.garages@secureparkingandstorage.co.uk

Useful contacts

For tenancy management or rent queries, you can visit your local housing hub (open on Mondays and Thursdays from 9am to 5pm) or the Havelock Advice Venue:

Acton and Ealing hub

Acton Resource Centre (inside Everyone Active), W3 6NE (appointments must be prebooked)

Greenford, Northolt, and Southall hub

Gainsborough Tower, Academy Gardens, UB5 5PF

Hanwell hub

2 Ipswich Court, Copley Close, Hanwell, W7 1DX

Havelock Advice Venue

33 Hunt Road, UB2 4QB

Drop in Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9am to 5pm

Alternatively, you can call or email depending on your query:

Paying your rent

Phone: 020 8825 8346 (24-hour payment line)

Tenancy management and queries

Phone: 020 8825 9998 and select option 1

Email: tenancymanagement@ealing.gov.uk

Rent queries

Phone: 020 8825 9998 and select option 2

Email: housingrents@ealing.gov.uk

Home ownership

Right To Buy enquiries:

Phone: 020 8825 9998 and select option 3

Email: homeownership@ealing.gov.uk

Repairs and maintenance

Phone: 020 8825 9998 and select option 4

Resident involvement team

Phone: 020 8825 9998 and select option 5

Email: residentinvolvement@ealing.gov.uk

Caretaking services

Phone: 020 8574 7385

Email: estateservices@ealing.gov.uk

Safer communities (antisocial behaviour)

Phone: 020 8825 5994

For noise nuisance: 020 8825 8111

Email: safercommunities@ealing.gov.uk

Downsize to a smaller home

Phone: 020 8825 8317

Email: housinginitiatives@ealing.gov.uk

Compliments, complaints, and suggestions

Phone: 020 8825 5000

Email: housing.environ.complaints@ealing.gov.uk

We want to ensure everyone can access and understand the information in this magazine. If you require this document in a different format - such as large print, Braille, audio - or in another language, please contact the resident involvement team who will be happy to provide it in a way that suits your needs.

