

The magazine for London Borough of Harrow's tenants and leaseholders



# Week of Action

JOIN THE RESIDENT COLLABORATION PROGRAMME SEE FLYER

**LAUNCHING THE REPAIRS CHARTER P4** 

KEFPING YOU SAFE P8 AND P13

**RILLDING NEW HOMES P3 AND P6** 



# Photo

Tony said, "This is Bruce, who is getting used to his new home".



when printed



YOUR MAG

anthea.watkins@harrow.gov.uk and

receive £10 shopping vouchers

**Housing Resident** Collaboration opportunity See insert

You said - we did

**Housing Perks** discounts



Hope that you have enjoyed a summer break, including the warmer weather.

This edition of Homing In has lots of news updates

- A flyer to introduce the opportunity to feedback your ideas via the Housing Resident Collaboration programme
- Our revised Repairs Charter where we have split out more clearly the emergency repairs we can 'make good' within 4 hours and the repairs that we will try and fix within 24 hours
- Helping families in need into social housing we have built using Right to Buy receipts
- Explaining how we are keeping homes safe, compliant and meeting regulatory standards
- Updating you about outcomes from our over 300 conversations with households at the end of June (week of action)
- Signposting you to support from the Citizens Advice Harrow and some training around making your money go further
- And lastly, a wonderful thank you event for those residents who volunteer their time and who help us in so many ways.

#### **Cllr Mina Parmar Portfolio Holder for Housing**

☑ mina.parmar@harrow.gov.uk

## **HOUSING MATTERS WEBINAR**

Please join us in the Housing Matters Webinar on Wednesday 17 September 2025 at 6pm - 7.30pm via MS Teams. Please note that we are unable to address individual cases in this public forum. The aim is to keep you informed and provide an opportunity to ask questions about the information presented. To get meeting details, please contact: 





# 5 new affordable houses in Charles Crescent

e will be able to house 5 larger families in need in our 5 new 3-bed houses at the end of Charles Crescent, West Harrow. The mini-reveal event held on 14 July 2025 was attended by the Mayor, Cllr Anjana Patel, Cllr Mina Parmar, Housing Portfolio Holder, Alex Dewsnap, Managing Director, David McNulty, Director of Housing, officers and residents from the Residents' Board. The road leading to the houses is to be called 'Kings Close'.

The development consists of 2 terraced three-bedroom homes, and 3 three-bedroom detached homes and each home has its own private garden (with shed and patio area), parking space and cycle and bin spaces. The homes are energy efficient, powered with air source heat pumps, solar panels and solar batteries.

The neighbourhood looks much better as the old rundown garages were demolished to make room for the homes and a new 15 vehicle car park for existing local residents, plus 8 car park spaces within the site.



cutting the ribbon on the first completed home

# Launch of the new Repairs Charter

Our Housing Services vision statement at the London Borough of Harrow (LBH) is: "Working together to deliver affordable housing and a high-quality customer experience that puts the needs and wellbeing of residents first".

ur new Repairs Charter (2025) for LBH council tenants supports the delivery of the following strategic objectives:

- Customer focused
- Provide high quality, safe homes
- Meet legal and statutory requirements

# Where can I find the Charter?

The Repairs Charter can be found on the Harrow website:

www.harrow.gov.uk/ repairscharter and in the coming months we will be rolling out a series of videos on our website to make the information as accessible as possible.





## We are listening

Big thanks to the Residents' Board members for their contribution and challenge. An example of their influence was our readjustment about repairs to wet rooms which is now a council responsibility and redecorating (painting and tiling) after repair work is completed. Another big discussion area was about how to gauge the severity of a leak – this is now defined as a bucket filling with water within 20 minutes, which is defined as an 'uncontained leak'.

The Charter is in line with our regulatory Consumer Standards, Awaab's Law, Decent Homes Standard and your tenancy agreement.

One of our commitments is to continuously adapt the repairs service to reflect changes in legislation, resident feedback, technical innovations and changes to our repairs contractors.

## **Key areas covered by the Repairs Charter**

- ✓ How to report a repair
- ✓ Tenant and council responsibilities
- ✔ Priority times for emergency and other repairs
- ✓ How we are monitoring service standards
- ✓ Damp and mould
- ✓ Alterations and improvements to the property
- ✓ Missed appointments
- ✔ Rechargeable repairs

## **Areas not covered by the Repairs Charter**

- **✗** Voids standard
- **✗** Capital works programme





# When will my repair be done?

We now have priority 1 to 5 for managing responses to repairs. These are:

#### Priority 1

 $\begin{array}{l} 4 \ hour\text{- in or out of hours emergency} \\ \text{repair} - \text{attend within } 4 \ hours \end{array}$ 

### ■ Priority 2

Urgent 24-hour repair – attend within 24 hours

#### ■ Priority 3

Routine repair – attend within 2 working days to 5 working days

#### Priority 4

Lengthy repair – attend within 6 working days to 20 working days

#### ■ Priority 5

Complex repair – attend within 21 working days or longer



**Repairs Charter** 2025



Check out the Repairs Charter online 
www.harrow.gov.uk/repairscharter

We are working on embedding the new Repairs Charter into the online Housing Account (portal) reporting process - this will happen over the next few weeks.

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Here are a few service changes we have made in the last 6 months after listening to your feedback, whether it's communicated through a conversation, a meeting, a complaint or an improvement suggestion.

#### **Resident Engagement**

You told us that it was not clear when the drop-in sessions were

✓ The information is published in Homing In magazine and on the council website –

www.harrow.gov.uk/dropins

The date, venue and time is also on the back of your rent and service charges statement

You told us that you would like to attend your Estate Inspection, but you don't know when these are

✓ The information is on the council website – search for 'estate inspections'

#### **Building Safety**

In relation to a specific block of flats in South Harrow, you told us it wasn't clear what to do if the lift broke down ✓ We put up a sign in the block lobby with a process to follow and number to call. We tested the call button in the lift to make sure that when the button is pressed, it connects to an operator 24/7 and both parties can be heard clearly

#### **Housing Investment - Asset Data**

You told us that the appointment window for stock condition surveys was too wide

✓ We made a change and now provide half day slots on request

#### **Housing Online Account**

You told us it was hard to report certain repairs on the Housing Online Account

✓ We are improving the repairs descriptions to make them easier to report on the Housing Online Account



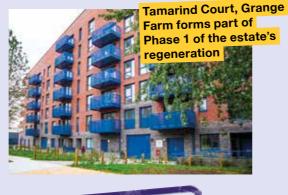
**Building new homes** 

# Next phase of Grange Farm redevelopment moves ahead

he next phase of Grange
Farm's transformation has
been approved!
When completed, this
exciting milestone will bring 45 new
homes, which will all be affordable
and include social rented homes for
secure tenants on the estate. It's one
of the council's 30 Flagship Actions
to restore pride in Harrow.

Demolition of the old blocks began this summer, with construction set to start in Spring 2026. The new homes are expected to welcome residents by Summer 2027, continuing the journey toward a vibrant, inclusive community.

We have already delivered 89 new homes, and this next phase (2a) will build on that. Overall, the redevelopment of Grange Farm will bring around 500 high-quality homes to South Harrow - along with a new community centre, green spaces, play areas, and better walking routes for everyone to enjoy.





# Landlords' Forum

e were delighted to welcome more than 40 private rent landlords who already work with the council or are thinking about it, to our annual Landlords' Forum on 1 July 2025 at our main office in Forward Drive.

Apart from officers talking about the benefits of leasing a property through Help2let, Suzanne Smith, known as The Independent Landlord, updated Forum attendees about the forthcoming changes in the Renters' Rights Bill, changes to EPCs and Making Tax Digital.

During the break, landlords were able to speak to different council teams such as licensing, enforcement, and a team which is actively purchasing Harrow properties to use as temporary accommodation. The event feedback was extremely positive.





# We're here to help and keep you safe

**London Borough of Harrow is** committed to keeping you safe in your home. This means we need to **conduct regular safety inspections** in your home and the communal areas. We'd like to remind you that it is very important to provide access to our approved contractors, who carry out essential safety **inspections in your home. Refusing** access not only puts your safety - and that of your neighbours - at risk, but it is also a breach of your tenancy agreement.

Occasionally, we may also need to access a water tank located in the roof space via your property. We would be very grateful for your cooperation, as this allows us to carry out important safety checks that protect you and your neighbours.

**You can find our Health and Safety** policies on the website: www.harrow.gov.uk/ housingpolicies



## **Asbestos – what you** need to know

Asbestos is a group of natural minerals once widely used in buildings. If disturbed, it can release tiny fibres that may lead to serious health conditions over

We are legally and morally responsible for managing asbestos safely - by identifying it, assessing risk and ensuring only trained professionals handle it. If left undisturbed and in good condition, it poses no risk. We manage asbestos through monitoring and generally leave it untouched.

If you have a concern, please do report it and we will investigate. We keep a detailed register.

For asbestos queries or to check before you start any DIY in the home, you can contact:

• building.safety@harrow.gov.uk

some years. Ching heads up a team with in-house experts in fire safety and asbestos as well as working with well known building safety and compliance companies.

Management (PCM) (audit consultancy)

■ Thermoserv (Gas and Heating – for communal boilers)

■ (WG) Wigginton (Electrical)

# Housing Week of Action

The conversations with tenants have been extremely helpful and we have dealt with many service requests

he Housing Week of Action took place from 23 to 27 June 2025, for the second year.

Around 150 housing staff visited 9 estate areas across the borough over 5 days and held 2 drop-in sessions at Kenmore Park and Churchill Place.

Tenants and leaseholders received a

letter about it in the post and posters were displayed in blocks. Housing staff knocked on 1,235 door and spoke to 294 tenant households and 34 leaseholders. If no one was home, a calling card was left.

The Housing Service worked with Housemark to design a survey using the Photobook platform.

### **Aims of the Housing Week of Action**

- Make the housing service visible to tenants and leaseholders
- ✓ Give all housing staff the opportunity to meet our tenants and leaseholders and work with housing colleagues they wouldn't normally work with
- ✓ Offer an opportunity for tenants and leaseholders to share their views
- ✓ Check and collect important tenant information including contact details
- ✓ Identify safeguarding concerns, support needs, under-occupiers, potential sub-letting, abandonment and fraud
- ✓ Promote the Housing Perks discount scheme and the Housing Online Account (portal).

## Some insights gained and outcomes achieved

- 29 households with support needs identified
- 39% of tenants that we spoke to had one or more disabilities or long-term health condition
- 11% of tenants that we spoke to regularly receive care from a carer often a family member
- Feedback about what support tenants need in order to set up and use their Housing Online Account
- Service requests and feedback about communication, repairs, damp and mould, and estate improvements
- 4 possible 'downsizing' opportunities for under-occupiers
- Identified potential sub-letting, abandonment and fraud to investigate

Overall, out of the 328 conversations we had, three main themes stood out from the Week of Action:

- 1. Improve communication including emails and letters
- 2. Improve accessibility and face to face contact to raise issues
- 3. Keep you informed about the status of repairs to your home and communal areas.

Listening to you means we can take these views and make improvements to the services you reply on. We will be bringing forward improvements to respond to each of these themes in the coming months.





# Leasehold news New IT system

he functions that the
Leasehold team undertake
are in the process of being
amalgamated into a new IT
Management system. This
system is called Civica Cx and the
aim is for this work to be completed
by the end of September 2025.

As part of this process, we have been focussing on ensuring that all the information we have stored in the various systems we have been using are being transferred correctly. This includes estate and block apportionments for service charge calculations, forwarding addresses for properties that have been sublet and current balances

for service charge and major works accounts.

The change to this new system will provide some big advantages for the service we provide. For example, for the first time, all customer information, whether it be rent accounts, property description details, correspondence or service charge account payment agreements

will be stored in one location. This will enable the Leasehold team to deal with leaseholder queries in a much easier and more efficient way.

Harrow will also now be using Cx to produce the end of year service charge statements. The next statements (for the 2024/25 financial year) are due to be issued in September 2025.

Please bear with us as we adapt the way we store and process leasehold data, including issuing service charge letters in September



# How to be safe when charging e-bikes and e-scooters



-bikes and e-scooters are a great way to get
 around. But if they are not charged safely,
 they can cause fires that put lives and
 homes at risk.

#### The danger is real.

There have been serious fires in homes across the UK caused by e-bike and e-scooter batteries. These fires can spread quickly, giving people very little time to escape.

The batteries used in these vehicles are powerful. If they are damaged, faulty, or overcharged, they can overheat and catch fire.

# To stay safe, follow these simple tips:

- Always use the charger that came with your e-bike or scooter. Don't buy cheap or fake chargers online.
- Don't charge your battery overnight or when you're out. You should always be awake and nearby when it's charging.
- Charge it on a hard surface, away from anything that can burn, like beds, sofas, carpets, or curtains.
- Don't charge it in hallways or on staircases. These are your escape routes in a fire. Keep them clear.
- If the battery is damaged, swollen, or leaking don't use it. Get it checked by a professional or contact the manufacturer.
- Never tamper with or try to repair a battery yourself.

If a fire starts, get out, stay out, and call 999. Do not try to put the fire out yourself.
Protect yourself, your family, and your

neighbours. Charge safely.

# For more fire safety advice, visit your local fire service website.

www.london-fire.gov.uk/community/harrow

Please give us access to carry out the annual gas safety check on your home. We have noticed an increase in the number of homes not giving us access. This is one of your tenancy conditions and we have to do this safety check by law.

Be a good neighbour...
Don't put your neighbours at risk

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# What is Awaab's Law and how will this impact me?



waab's Law starts on 27
October 2025 and aims to improve housing conditions for council and housing association tenants in England.

The new law brings in stricter repair timeframes.

Social landlords will have to:

■ Investigate emergency hazards within 24 hours and carry out safety work as soon as reasonably practicable

- Investigate significant hazards (like damp and mould) within 10 working days
- Complete safety work within 5 working days of confirming a significant hazard
- Start any further required work within 12 weeks
- Keep tenants informed throughout the process, including written summaries of investigations.

# Information about damp and mould is available on the council website.

www.harrow.gov.uk/housing-property/damp-mould

# You can report repairs, including damp and mould:

www.harrow.gov.uk/housing © 020 8901 2630





# Money Advice Referral Project

## Citizens Advice Harrow helping council tenants out of debt

t the Housing Matters online webinar in May, Citizens Advice Harrow gave a presentation about the Money Advice Referral Project for council tenants.

Your Rent Officer team can refer you to Citizens Advice Harrow for money advice if you are facing rent arrears or other debt and you may be at risk of becoming homeless.

Citizens Advice Harrow will help you to prioritise your debts, maximise your income and minimise your living costs.

Citizens Advice Harrow can also help you with:

- General information and advice
- More complicated debt options like Breathing Space and Debt Relief Orders
- Tailored energy advice to help people struggling to afford their energy bills
- Macmillan Benefits Advice Service for residents who are affected by cancer.



Citizens Advice Harrow is a local charity which provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone who lives in the borough of Harrow. Citizens Advice Harrow does not have a drop-in service. All appointments are pre-booked.

www.citizensadviceharrow.org.uk © 0808 250 5705

# FREE money management workshops and 1:1 sessions

Come along and spend some time with us exploring personal finance and spending at this free workshop. You'll also have the chance to attend a free one-to-one session and take away a simple budget plan to help you feel more confident with your money! Open to all Harrow residents aged 18 and over.

- Tuesday 30 Sep, Kenton Learning Centre, 10am 1pm
- Wednesday 22 Oct, Kenton Learning Centre, 10am 1pm

### To register for the workshop

www.learnharrow.ac.uk

For one-to-one enquiries, please contact Daniel Gilson (facilitator): WhatsApp or text: 07983 573110, ⊠ trainingforlondon@gmail.com



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**14. H@min** 



Thank you to our volunteers

olunteers' Week is a campaign that started in 1984 to recognise, celebrate and thank volunteers throughout the UK.

We celebrated Volunteers' Week in June with some of our most involved residents at a thank you event at Northolt Road Community Centre.

Volunteers' Week is a chance to recognise the fantastic contribution and incredible difference volunteers make to our communities and to say thank you.

We have many volunteers and involved residents linked to the Housing service including:

- The Residents' Board
- The Estate Champions
- The Grange Farm Steering Group
- The Leasehold Improvement Group
- Volunteers from My Yard
- Tenant and Resident Association Committee Members, such as ELTRA

■ Groups and residents who have applied for Flying Start grants to improve their Housing estate or local neighbourhood.

Many volunteers participate in multiple groups and meetings, linked to the Housing service and more widely in the Harrow community.

The Housing service is very grateful for their contribution and hard work, and we thank them for their time, energy, and support.

Attendees enjoyed networking, refreshments, and certificates, and had the opportunity to participate in a creative art activity. The volunteers were thanked by our former Mayor Councillor Chowdury, Meghan Zinkewich-Peotti (Head of Insight & Housing Strategy) and Kinnari Patel (Head of Residents First). Thank you to the Resident Engagement Team for organising the event.

# Tenant satisfaction survey

Thank you to everyone who completed the Tenant Satisfaction Survey in July. This year we want to capture views at different points in the year and to use the insight for in-year improvements, so the 2nd half of the survey will be carried out this Autumn. We will feedback results and outcomes in future editions of Homing In.

The 2025 Complaints
Annual Report will
be published on the website
by September 2025, this is a
regulatory requirement.

# Flying Start community grants

o you or your neighbours have ideas or plans to improve your Harrow housing estate or local neighbourhood?

Flying Start could be the helping hand you need to get going.

We want to support you to make your neighbourhood a better place to live. We can help you get started in many ways. For example, we can provide:

- Venues: we have council community halls and green spaces across Harrow
- Expert advice from our staff, or a buddy system, matching you with experienced residents
- Promoting your event: we can help with designing and printing as well as publicising events
   Funding for activities: small grants are available,
- for example:

   for gardening materials (topsoil, compost, free
- plants, tools)
- physical activity equipment
- refreshments

Please note that one of the criteria is you must be either a council tenant or leaseholder or must be living on a Harrow housing estate.

#### For more information:

# VE Day celebration

Thank you to everyone who helped make the VE Day Celebration a success at Harrow Weald Park Sheltered Scheme on 8 May 2025. Sheltered housing residents from John Lamb Court and Sinclair House also joined in the celebrations, enjoying a wonderful cake and buffet.



# **Resident meetings**

# Drop-in sessions

You are invited to come and talk one to one with a Housing Officer or Repairs Officer at one of six locations across the borough, at a resident drop-in session. These are open to all council tenants and leaseholders and no appointment is required. If an estate inspection is planned at the same time, you are very welcome to attend this too.

Northolt Road Hall, Northolt Road, South Harrow, HA2 0LS

- Tuesday 16 September at 4pm 6.30pm
- Wednesday 3 December at 10am – 12.30pm

Bede Anandappa Hall, Binyon Crescent, Stanmore, HA7 3NF

■ Wednesday 24 September at 4pm – 6.30pm and an estate inspection at 9.30am

Churchill Place Hall, Barons Mead, HA1 1YB

■ Wednesday 8 October at 10am – 12.30pm and an estate inspection

Julie Cook Hall, Augustine Road, Harrow, HA3 5NW

■ Tuesday 4 November at 4pm – 6.30pm

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# **Brookside Close Hall,** HA2 9AW

■ Wednesday 10 December at 10am – 12.30pm and an estate inspection

Pinner Hill Hall, Welch
Place, Pinner, HA5 3TA
■ Wednesday 14 January
at 9.30pm – 12.30pm
and an estate inspection

Residents' Board monthly meetings 6.30pm – 8pm

- Thursday 25 September
- Thursday 23 October
- Thursday 20 November

# Online Resident Group Meetings

# Housing Matters webinars

6pm – 7.30pm Open to all tenants and leaseholders

- Wednesday 17
  September
- Wednesday 26
  November

#### Leasehold Improvement Group 6pm – 7pm

- Tuesday 23 September
- Tuesday 11 November

  Estate Champions

**Meetings** 6pm – 7pm

- Thursday 9 October
- Thursday 11 December

For further details please contact:

☑ rinvolve@harrow.gov.uk

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# Hornbuckle Close gardens

Following the installation of two ground source heat pumps for Alma Court and Mead Field Sheltered Schemes by the end of 2024, the contractor Cynergist, as part of their social value programme, installed a defibrillator outside Alma Court and offered to create a couple of flower beds in the Hornbuckle Close open space area. This was put to the vote to 125 residents over the summer. and the majority of residents who responded voted to keep the open space as grass, so these areas will be resown with grass seed in the Autumn.

# More support for women and girls with seven new Safe Havens

afe Havens are helping keep Harrow safe. Originally launched to support women and girls, we've expanded from 14 to 21 venues across Harrow. These spaces help anyone feeling scared, harassed or threatened. Whether someone needs to call a taxi, charge their phone, or simply take a moment to feel safe, these spaces are here to help. They are free, confidential spaces and the venues include voluntary groups, libraries, and community hubs ready to offer temporary support.

The Safe Havens are clearly marked with window stickers

and offer a welcoming environment to anyone in need, regardless of gender or background. Trained staff can assist with providing a safe space, contacting emergency services or friends/family, or signposting people to local support services. The initiative is part of a broader commitment to tackle harassment and improve public safety, especially for women and girls.

# The full list of Safe Haven locations can be found online

www.harrow.gov.uk/safehavens





or the last 12 months Mountside estate
has been undergoing major works
improvements:

Maria

■ New windows

■ New roof

■ Making good one structural building including removing trees

- New video entry door entry system, with new doors at the front and back
- New vinyl communal flooring
- Additional external lights for security
- And after resident consultation it was agreed to revamp the clothes drying area, to fill in the pond and to redo the fencing at the back to reduce vandalism, to install a new bike storage shed and create a central seating area

Greyline is proud to have employed Jamie Logan, a Harrow resident, as a Level 4 Apprentice – site management.



## Maria Tellis, Resident Liaison Officer for Greyline

Maria, a Harrow resident said, "I started working with Greyline in October 2024 through Xcite on the Mountside estate project. I work as a Resident Liaison Officer on the Mountside Estate and Amy Johnson Court projects.

# What qualification are you studying – is it paid by Greyline?

"I recently completed a Level 1 Digital Skills course. Greyline supported me by allowing the time during the working week to attend college once a week for half a day, which made it possible to me to

successfully complete the course.

#### My role at Mountside

"I'm the main point of contact between residents and the project team. My role involves arranging access appointments, supporting vulnerable residents, resolving queries or concerns, and ensuring everyone feels informed and supported during the improvement works. I've also gained experience coordinating with contractors, managing communications, and supporting community engagement on-site".

**18 Hømir** 





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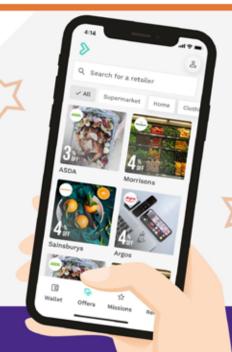
## **HOW IT WORKS**

- Download the app for free to your device available from
- Buy a voucher with up to 20% discount
- Voucher appears in app within seconds ready for you to use



## **HOW TO SIGN UP**

- When you download the app, select Harrow Council
- Your account will be registered to your Harrow Council address, so keep your tenancy reference handy.





Start saving today!