

HOUSING *news*

News and information for our tenants

March 2026

INVESTING *in Your Homes and Communities*



In February 2026, the Council's Cabinet approved the budget for the 2026/27 Estate Investment Programme.

This programme is our ongoing commitment to investing in council homes and estates - making sure they are well maintained, warm, safe, and pleasant places to live in, while also managing our resources responsibly.

How We Plan and Prioritise Investment

The Social Housing Asset Management Plan sets out how we use our housing assets. Through our 'One Hounslow' approach, we focus on working together and driving innovation to create and maintain safe, high-quality homes and estates.

To do this, the Estate Investment Programme focuses on projects that meet:

- Legal and regulatory requirements
- Minimum condition standards
- The priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Plan

If new issues or priorities arise during the year, we will assess and prioritise them. Where appropriate, they will be added to the programme.

Why This Investment Matters

We remain committed to ensuring every council home meets safety and comfort standards and continues to be a place residents are proud to call home.

GET IN TOUCH

If you would like to share your ideas or report issues on your estate, visit: my.hounslow.gov.uk/service/Report_an_estate_issue_or_suggestion or simply scan the QR code.



Cllr Sue Sampson,
Cabinet Member
for Housing
Management and
Homelessness

Welcome to the first edition of Housing News of 2026.

Good housing services are built on trust, accountability and listening. Events like the recent housing conference give residents a real voice in shaping the improvements they want to see. As we continue our commitment and ongoing work to being a good landlord for our tenants, we look forward to hosting more events like this, and giving residents the space to share their experience, and shape the services that affect them.

Looking ahead, our priority is to strengthen and refine the way we deliver our services. We will complete a full review of the Anti-Social Behaviour offer to ensure it remains effective, responsive, and aligned with the needs of our communities. A key focus will be addressing the rise in higher-risk incident types, taking proactive steps to improve early intervention and reduce harm. We are also committed to increasing participation in mediation, promoting constructive resolutions wherever possible. Alongside this, we will work to ensure consistent, accurate case management across all teams, driving quality, accountability, and better outcomes for residents.

Together, these actions will support safer estates, stronger communities, and a more resilient approach to Anti-Social Behaviour management.

Cllr Sue Sampson
Cabinet Member for Housing
Management and Homelessness

FAQs

FOR HRA TENANTS AND LEASEHOLDERS



We understand that changes to rent and service charges can be concerning, and you may have questions about why increases happen and how they are calculated. This FAQ page has been created to provide clear, straightforward information about how rent and service charges are reviewed, what factors influence any changes, and what support is available if you need it.

How much is my rent increasing by?

From Monday, 6 April, your rent will increase by 4.8 per cent.

The average rent for a council home in the borough will increase from £133.79 to £140.21 per week – a weekly increase of £6.42.

Still low for London compared to similar areas for the country. Overall rent levels remain below inflation over the last decade.

Why are rents being increased?

Every year, we must set the level of rent that tenants and leaseholders pay, to ensure this increases with cost inflation, increased interest rates, and government rents policy and will cover the cost of maintaining and improving your homes and neighbourhoods and providing your housing service.

The increase to rents sets a balanced budget in our Housing Revenue Account (HRA). This is a ring-fenced pot of money that is used to provide services to our tenants. All rent and service charge income goes into it, and all expenditure (repairs, management, and maintenance) comes out of it. 79 per cent of the money in the HRA is generated from rents.

How are rent increases calculated?

Current government policy allows us to make rent increases calculated by combining a 'cost of living' increase, which is set using the Consumer Price Index (CPI) measure of inflation, plus an additional 1 per cent.

CPI is a figure used to measure inflation. It measures the change in prices for everyday goods and services, like groceries, fuel, and clothing across the UK. CPI changes each month, so we used the CPI for September 2025 to calculate rent increases from April 2026. At this point, the CPI was 3.8 per cent.

I pay service charges. Are these being increased?

From Monday 7 April 2026, service charges will be increased by an amount that depends on the cost of the services you receive.

Service charges cover a range of communal facilities including caretaking and cleaning, estate and grounds maintenance, and communal utilities such as communal electricity. The cost of delivering these services is reviewed each year to determine the increase to be applied. Increases to fly tipping activity can also affect the level of service charge.

Every year we adjust the charges based on the actual costs of providing the services. Where savings are possible, we are passing them on.

Will Housing benefit cover the increase in charges?

If you receive Housing Benefit payments, as long as your own personal circumstances haven't changed, then any increase in rent and eligible service charges will be covered.

You will need to let our Housing Benefit team know of the new charges to make sure that the correct level of housing benefit is paid.

Will Universal Credit cover the increase in charges?

If you receive Universal Credit (UC) payments, as long as your own personal circumstances haven't changed, then any increase in rent will be covered.

You will need to let UC know of any new amount by selecting 'report a change' on your online UC account.

For further information scan the QR code or visit www.hounslow.gov.uk/rent-increase-FAQ



Between April and December 2025, the Housing & Tenancy Management team, together with the dedicated Housing Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) team, recorded significant developments in tackling ASB across our communities.

The data from this period highlights both encouraging improvements and areas where renewed focus will be essential moving into 2026.

Several types of ASB showed notable reductions compared with previous

years. Reports of noise nuisance, intimidation, drug-related activity and harassment, all decreased substantially.

These improvements reflect our strengthened approach to early intervention, more effective triaging, and better categorisation of cases. Working alongside residents, officers have been able to respond quicker, identify risks earlier and support residents with greater accuracy and consistency.

HAVE YOU CONSIDERED MOVING TO SHELTERED ACCOMMODATION?

Do you want to move to sheltered accommodation but are worried that you would have to give up your pet?

We realise a much loved pet is a family member. We would no longer expect residents to forfeit their fur babies. The Council will be consulting on allowing domestic pets into sheltered homes, so residents can move to warden assisted accommodation with their much-loved pet. Is this of interest to you?

The Council would like your views on whether bringing your pet would make you consider a move.

Share your thoughts via engage@hounslow.gov.uk or write to Engagement Team, Hounslow House, 7 Bath Road, Hounslow TW3 3EB.

UPSCALING HOUNSLOW'S DOWNSIZING POLICY

With larger properties in high demand for families, downsizing to a smaller home means your property becomes available to a family that needs it. This scheme provides practical support and prioritisation to tenants who wish to transfer to smaller, manageable and more affordable homes.

The recent change to the voluntary scheme now increases the incentives available. For each bedroom given up council tenants will receive £2000, with an additional £300 paid towards removal costs. The council will also help reconnect appliances in your new home.

You may be eligible if you live in a two, three or more-bedroom council property and have a satisfactory tenancy report. If you have rent arrears, you should seek help to pay your rent at www.hounslow.gov.uk/paying-rent/problems-paying-rent before applying to downsize.

Once you have applied a housing officer will be available to support your application, answer any further questions, and discuss the types of homes you could downsize to. Downsizees are automatically placed into band one and are given the highest priority on the council's housing waiting list.

If you'd like to discuss options, please contact downsizing@hounslow.gov.uk. You can apply online at www.hounslow.gov.uk/council-tenants/downsizing-council-home



LITHIUM BATTERY FIRE RISK:

Stay Safe When Charging E-Bikes and E-Scooters

Lithium battery fires are increasing, especially when e-bikes and e-scooters are charged at home. Most incidents start while the battery is on charge.

- Let batteries cool after use and check they're not damaged before charging.
- Use the correct charger from a reputable seller — never mix and match chargers.
- Charge on a hard, flat surface, away from sofas or anything that could burn.
- Never leave batteries charging unattended or while asleep.
- Keep escape routes clear — don't store or charge e-bikes or e-scooters in hallways or communal areas.
- Stop using a battery immediately if you notice excessive heat, bulging, hissing, unusual smells, slow charging, or smoke.

Lithium battery fires burn quickly and at very high temperatures, releasing dangerous gases that can look like harmless steam. This can make the danger less obvious.

If a fire starts in your home: get out, stay out, and call 999.



SUPPORTING TENANTS TO STAY SECURE AT HOME

Between April and December 2025, our Tenancy Sustainment Team continued to make a meaningful difference to the lives of residents across the borough.

By working directly with tenants in their homes and collaborating closely with partners across health, social care and the voluntary sector, the team has helped residents access tailored support, build independence, and successfully sustain their tenancies.

As of 31 December 2025, the team was actively supporting 496 open cases, reflecting the increasing demand for early intervention and holistic assistance for vulnerable households.

The team's work demonstrates the power of prevention focused support and strong multi-agency collaboration. By addressing challenges early whether financial difficulties, health needs, or

safeguarding concerns we help reduce crisis situations, prevent homelessness, and promote long-term wellbeing and safe homes for our tenants.

The following highlights showcase the impact of our joint-working practices and the dedication of the Tenancy Sustainment Team:

232 CASES SUCCESSFULLY CLOSED,

with vulnerable residents receiving tailored support to meet their individual needs and maintain stable housing.

5 SAFER HOMES INTERVENTIONS COMPLETED,

providing robust safety installations for survivors of domestic abuse within their homes.

10 OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSESSMENTS COMPLETED,

with vulnerable residents receiving tailored support to meet their individual needs and maintain stable housing.

170 REFERRALS MADE TO EXTERNAL PARTNER AGENCIES,

ensuring residents received the right help at the right time.

Of these, 44 referrals were made to Adult Social Care for additional care and support planning.

8 DOMESTIC ABUSE SURVIVORS,

supported to secure safe and stable accommodation.

Ensuring Housing Quality Standards

The Regulator of Social Housing recently assessed how well the Council understands the condition of the homes it manages.

This falls under the Safety and Quality Standard, which requires landlords to maintain an accurate, up-to-date, and evidenced understanding of the condition of every home, based on physical inspections. The Regulator found that Hounslow had surveyed around 50% of its homes in the past five years and had commissioned a new contract to achieve 100% coverage in the coming years.

A stock condition survey is simply a detailed inspection of your home, carried out by a qualified surveyor. They will look at different parts of the

property to understand how old they are, what condition they're in, and when they might need maintenance or replacement. Having accurate, up-to-date information about our homes helps the Council:

- Improve the quality and safety of our housing
- Plan future works more proactively
- Increase customer satisfaction
- Make sure we invest in the right areas at the right time

We combine the results of these surveys with information from repairs, complaints, and safety checks to build a clear picture of what each home needs.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

When our trusted partner, Property Tectonics, contacts you to arrange a survey, we kindly ask for your cooperation in providing access. These surveys are relatively quick, non-intrusive, and play an important role in shaping future improvements. Thank you for your support in helping us maintain safe, comfortable homes for all our residents.



For more information. Visit www.hounslow.gov.uk/housing/housing-stock-condition-surveys

TENANCY FRAUD

Our Housing Fraud Investigation Services team worked hard throughout 2025 to support residents and ensure our homes remain safe, secure, and well managed. Between January and November, the team investigated 281 tenancy-related cases, ranging from routine checks to more complex investigations.

Of these, 80 were occupancy-related checks and 43 involved concerns about potential subletting, reflecting our continued focus on safeguarding council homes. This also highlights the ongoing importance of our Housing and Tenancy Officers carrying out unannounced tenancy audits, demonstrating our commitment to thorough checks where needed.

We would like to thank all residents who continue to engage with us, follow their tenancy conditions, and report concerns when they arise. Your cooperation plays a vital role in helping us maintain safe, fair, and well-run communities.

READY TO QUIT SMOKING?



Hounslow Council is offering residents a **free 6-week Swap to Stop programme** to help you move from smoking tobacco to vaping - a much less harmful alternative.

You'll get:

- A free vape starter kit delivered straight to your home
- Free top-ups for 6 weeks
- Simple step-by-step support

Make the change to protect your health. Join Swap to Stop today.



www.hounslow.gov.uk/health-wellbeing/swap-stop

RECENT PROJECTS DELIVERED INCLUDE:

- ✓ Greenspace at Haverfield Community Centre
- ✓ Murals at Bolton Road and Haverfield Estate

By the end of this financial year, the team plans to deliver the following improvements:

Greenspace Projects

- Star Road
- Hogarth Estate
- Oxford Way
- Barrowgate House
- Staveley Gardens
- Bolton Road

Murals

- Harlech
- Cranford
- Clayponds
- Wilson House
- Sandalwood
- The Oriel Community Centre

In addition, through ongoing consultation with residents and Asset Management, the team is working on delivering new bin stores at:

- Sandalwood
- Nursery Close
- Benson Close
- Redwood

These are expected to be completed by the end of March 2026.

ESTATE IMPROVEMENTS

The Estate Improvement Team is a dedicated service focused on raising standards across our estates and communal areas and on building a stronger sense of community by bringing residents together to enjoy their neighbourhoods.

Between April 2025 and December 2025, the team worked closely with residents and our Asset Management colleagues to deliver seven Green Spaces projects, including five new community gardens and an extension to an existing gardening area.

We've listened...

- During April 2025 to December 2025 based on the feedback and suggestion made by the residents via E-form the Estate Improvement team addressed the fly tipping Hogarth Estate and delivered a community garden space for residents.
- Through engagement with residents voice and the Estate Enforcement team, the Estate Improvement Team redesigned a designated area on Ivybridge Estate, Isleworth to discourage Anti-Social Behaviour.

BEFORE



AFTER



BEFORE



AFTER



HAVE YOUR SAY

If you would like to make a suggestion on how the Estate Improvement Team can support improvements on your estate, please contact the team via the QR code provided and complete the e-form or follow this link:

my.hounslow.gov.uk/service/Report_an_estate_issue_or_suggestion



HIGHLIGHTS

Listening, Learning and Working Together

Hounslow's HOUSING CONFERENCE 2026

Tenants, leaseholders, councillors and housing officers came together at the Housing Conference on Saturday, 31 January, for an open and honest conversation about council housing in Hounslow and the future of local services.

The event placed residents firmly at the centre, recognising that the people who live in council homes every day are best placed to shape how services improve.

Residents were encouraged to share what is working, what is not, and to take part in shaping solutions.

The conference closed with a clear message: resident involvement matters. Attendees were encouraged to stay engaged through tenant-led scrutiny, local groups and future events, helping to ensure housing services continue to improve for everyone in Hounslow.

Visit our webpage on the conference to find out more about what was discussed and films from the day.

talk.hounslow.gov.uk/housing-conference



Unsung heroes

At our Housing Conference, we celebrated our local residents, who go above and beyond for our estate communities, these were:

- Heston Farm Tenant and Resident association
- Brindar Mann
- David Squire
- Jenny Samuel
- Michelle Odell
- Sue and Ray Maynard
- Zara and Jenny Bains
- Tony Smith
- Peter Harmes
- Julie Brooker and Janette Odey
- Niina Kaseba
- Anthony Stokoe

A Positive Start to Partnership at the **HOUNSLOW HOUSING CONFERENCE**

**RESIDENTS
VOICE**

The Residents Voice Board marked an encouraging start to its new partnership with Hounslow Council at the housing conference. Residents Voice gives tenants the power to review housing services and make recommendations for change.

The conference was well attended by our members, including our disabled and leaseholder representatives, the vice chair, secretary, and chair. It was a proud moment for us as both the chair and the secretary were also recognised with Unsung Hero awards.

Chair, Anthony Stokoe addressed attendees, outlining why Residents Voice was established. He emphasised the importance of tenant-led engagement in strengthening transparency, accountability, and trust between tenants and the Council. The secretary further explained the board's role, clearly setting out how the Residents Voice operates as a critical friend to the Council—working collaboratively to support improvement, not to undermine work being done.

Residents Voice wants to recruit more tenants who are passionate about shaping housing services and policies. We welcome interest from tenants who would like to join the board or contribute to housing scrutiny topics.

Over the next few months we will look closely at the services tenants receive around Housing Engagement, management of complaints and safety compliance in our homes. Are you interested in taking a close look at these services to see if we should make any recommendations for change?

There is no specific skill required apart from being a council tenant. Contact engage@hounslow.gov.uk

We look forward to welcoming new members to our friendly and inclusive board as we continue working together to help shape a better future for tenants.

Niina Kabesa,
Secretary, Residents Voice Board



Chair of Residents Voice, Anthony Stokoe chaired a Q and A session for residents at Hounslow's housing conference



Secretary of Residents Voice, Niina Kabesa accepts unsung hero award from Councillor Sue Sampson

GET INVOLVED

Building Safety Group – tenants working with officers to shape safety measures in and around homes and improve how these are communicated to residents.

Block representatives – for residents in blocks of flats willing to share local issues and safety suggestions from the Building Safety Group with neighbours.

There are opportunities to meet with officers and fellow tenants to discuss improving the services you receive. Current opportunities include:

Developing a new tenant handbook – share what you would find useful in an updated handbook and your preferred format.

If any of the above opportunities are of interest to you, if you have some ideas about an issue tenants can explore, or you would like to start a local tenant and resident association, contact contact.engage@hounslow.gov.uk.

CONTACT THE HOUSING ENGAGEMENT TEAM

Have questions or ideas about how to be involved in housing in Hounslow? Get in touch with our Housing Engagement team.

Email engage@hounslow.gov.uk

Call **020 8583 4000**

Visit www.hounslow.gov.uk/housing