



# WOKING@HOME

## DEAR RESIDENT



In May, following the elections, I was delighted to be appointed the new Portfolio Holder for Housing. I've been a borough councillor for more than 25 years and I am looking forward to the challenge and to working with tenants, leaseholders and staff to do what we can to provide the best service.

I was brought up in rented rooms in the private sector, then in a council house until I left home to go to college. I have seen the financial stresses on families of paying the bills and today feels no different with a cost of living crisis which affects us all. In this newsletter you can find information about where to look for help.

A key issue for me is the need to increase the supply of affordable homes. Prices in Woking are so high it is very hard for ordinary people to find somewhere they can afford, and some have to leave the area just to have somewhere to live.

Housing management has been brought in-house since 1 April, with Mountjoy leading the way, catching up with repairs. The resident engagement programme will give me the opportunity to meet many of you to hear about issues first hand and to check how the new arrangements are working.

**Cllr Ian Johnson**  
Portfolio Holder for Housing  
Councillor for Mount Hermon

## NEWS IN BRIEF

We have been supporting the process of welcoming and settling people fleeing the war in the Ukraine. Housing staff have been completing DBS checks for sponsors and completing property checks once the guest from Ukraine arrives.



## USEFUL CONTACTS

General enquiries:

☎ 0300 373 0373 (24 hour)  
✉ [housing@woking.gov.uk](mailto:housing@woking.gov.uk)

To report a repair:

☎ 0300 373 0373 (24 hour)  
✉ [housingrepairs@woking.gov.uk](mailto:housingrepairs@woking.gov.uk)

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# YOUR HOUSING SERVICE

## NEW CONTRACTOR APPOINTMENT

We are pleased to announce that we have appointed T Brown Ltd to install disabled adaptations in homes where a need has been identified.

T Brown came out on top for both quality and price during the council's tender process and has been contracted to install:

- wet rooms
- stairlifts
- access ramps and paths
- dropped kerbs and vehicle crossovers
- wider doorways to accommodate wheelchairs.

These works are essential to ensure that our most vulnerable residents are provided with suitable housing to meet their needs and will be managed by our Housing Assets team.

## MEET OUR RESIDENT OPERATIONS BOARD

Our Resident Operations Board comprises tenant reps from each of our housing estates and we were delighted to meet with Dee, Alan and John (pictured), to discuss resident engagement and how we can give residents a greater say over how housing services are delivered.

As a result of the meeting, we will be increasing our proactive approach to resident engagement – with estate walkarounds, housing manager surgeries and tenant surveys being carried out over the coming months. Our tenant reps will be involved with this so if you see us out and about, please come and have a chat.

If you have some thoughts or ideas, or would like to join the board, please email [resident\\_engagement@woking.gov.uk](mailto:resident_engagement@woking.gov.uk).



Tenant reps, Dee, Alan and John

## MOUNTJOY CARRIES OUT ITS 1,000TH REPAIR

It's been a busy start for Mountjoy, which was appointed to carry out our responsive repairs service.

In the six weeks from 1 April 2022, Mountjoy:

- Carried out 1,000 repairs.
- Attended 90 out of hours callouts.
- Worked on 20 empty properties getting them ready to re-let.
- Responded to over 200 gas boiler and heating issues.

Marcus Heslop, Mountjoy's Contract Manager, said: "My aim is that we

deliver a great service regardless of the situation. Managing such a diverse stock of properties, with new staff and new systems, is not without its challenges but we have a good team in place, supported by trusted subcontractors, who are all committed to providing Woking residents with the best possible service.

"Many of my team are local to Woking and genuinely understand the needs of the residents in the local area. I will also be moving into the borough shortly and look forward to being part of our community."



## YOUR FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**What is the council doing to support tenants through the current cost of living crisis?** If you are struggling there are several ways we can help.

- We can review your benefits to check you're receiving your full entitlement. Or go to [woking.gov.uk/benefits](http://woking.gov.uk/benefits) if you think you might be eligible for financial support.
- Please call us on 0300 373 0373 if you're concerned about falling behind with your rent or council tax. We will work with you to find the best outcome.
- You might qualify for council tax support. Go to [woking.gov.uk/ctsupport](http://woking.gov.uk/ctsupport) to read the eligibility

criteria. To apply for support you must be the person whose name is on the council tax bill.

- We can support you to downsize to a smaller property. Not only will this reduce your monthly outgoings, we also offer a financial lump sum between £500 and £2,500. For more information email [housingneeds@woking.gov.uk](mailto:housingneeds@woking.gov.uk).
- We work in partnership with a number of specialist support services including The Lighthouse in Woking, which offers free and impartial money advice.

**THE LIGHTHOUSE**  
TRANSFORMING LIVES THROUGH KINDNESS, BELIEF AND HOPE

**COMMUNITY MONEY ADVICE**

Come along to our free 1:1 drop-in sessions for advice, support & help with your finances. We can help you get to grips with your money, pay off debt & build a realistic spending plan. No judgement, just step by step help using simple language.

MONDAYS & THURSDAYS, 10.30am-12.30pm

Term time at The Lighthouse, 8-10 High Street, Woking GU21 6BG. Just drop in, we'd love to meet with you.

Email [cma@lighthousewoking.org](mailto:cma@lighthousewoking.org) for more information.

[www.lighthousewoking.org/moneyadvice](http://www.lighthousewoking.org/moneyadvice)

## SEASONAL HOME MAINTENANCE ADVICE

Here are some tips on what maintenance is good to carry out in the summer months.

- Clean out the guttering and down pipes to get rid of the winter debris that has built up.
- Wash the windows – use hot soapy water to get your windows sparkling clean.
- Test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Clear out any unwanted clutter – maybe do a car boot sale or take items to a charity shop.
- Clean out the BBQ – don't pack it away with the remains of this summer's BBQ food still on it.

## NEIGHBOURHOOD NOTICEBOARD

- Housing manager surgeries and estate walkarounds – look out for dates on the notice boards in your area.
- Housing roadshow – coming soon, we will be bringing our housing service to you! More details in the next edition of Woking@Home.
- Phone survey – please be aware that you may get a call from our Resident Engagement team to find out what you think of our housing services and what improvements you would like to see.
- Download the new Tribe Support app - Tribe is a new digital platform which connects people needing support to caring individuals in the community and makes it easy to find local groups and activities. The pilot of Tribe in Sheerwater and Goldsworth Park is being supported by the North West Surrey Health and Care Alliance.

Download the app or visit [tribeproject.org](http://tribeproject.org) / [community-groups](http://community-groups) to start searching for:

- health and fitness activities
- sports clubs
- support groups
- parent and toddler groups
- community hubs and advice centres
- youth services
- community events.

# TELL US YOUR VIEWS

## HOW CAN WE PROVIDE MORE HOUSING IN WOKING TOWN CENTRE?

We have launched a 12-week public consultation to determine what Woking's skyline could look like by 2030. Once approved, the Woking Town Centre Masterplan will provide developers with detailed guidance relating to building heights, density, infrastructure and environmental measures.

The Masterplan covers 10 key themes including housing. The housing objectives for the town centre set out in the Masterplan are as follows:

- Ensure the delivery of the full quantity of housing in the town centre, as required by the Core Strategy (to be delivered through the SADPD allocations).
- To use all endeavours to deliver the housing ask of the Housing Infrastructure Fund project.
- Improve the delivery of affordable housing.
- Ensure that the design and location of new housing contributes to the vitality and viability of the town centre as a whole.

- Provide a mixture of housing tenures and sizes in every part of the town centre.
- Respond to the changed living patterns produced by the Coronavirus pandemic by ensuring a healthy, congenial, secure and accessible living environment for all residents.

**What do you think of these objectives?** To find out more about the Masterplan and to have your say, please go to [woking.gov.uk/masterplan](http://woking.gov.uk/masterplan), or scan the QR code.



**Consultation closes: Monday 17 October 2022**



## IMPROVING CHOICE BASED LETTINGS



Please tell us about your experience of using our Choice Based Letting service so that we can make the housing application and bidding process easier. Please go to [woking.gov.uk/cblsurvey](http://woking.gov.uk/cblsurvey) or scan the QR code to give us your feedback.



**Consultation closes: Monday 5 September 2022**

## TRANSLATION SERVICES

**Do you need help understanding this information?**

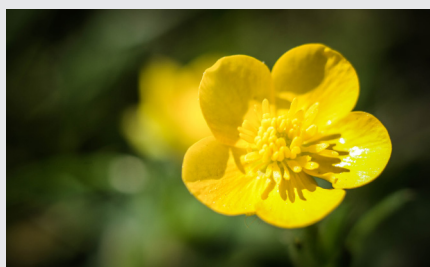
Czy potrzebujesz pomocy w zrozumieniu tych informacji?

এই তথ্যটা বুঝতে আপনার কি কোনো সাহায্য লাগবে?  
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☎ **01483 743869**  
 ✉ [catharine.okon@woking.gov.uk](mailto:catharine.okon@woking.gov.uk)

## DO YOU LIVE IN MAYBURY OR SHEERWATER?

If you live in Maybury or Sheerwater you could be in with a chance of winning a £50 ASDA voucher or a one-month Eastwood Leisure Centre membership for completing a short wellbeing survey.



The survey looks at physical and mental wellbeing and will help service providers (including the council), understand what support residents need to live happier and healthy lives.

This survey is open to all residents living in Maybury or Sheerwater aged 18 years and over. To take part go to [communityforum.woking.gov.uk](http://communityforum.woking.gov.uk) or scan the QR code.



**Survey closes: Monday 5 September 2022**