



# OPEN HOUSE

The newsletter for Croydon Council tenants and leaseholders

SPECIAL EDITION - APRIL 2023

## New repairs contractors for our housing services

Together with residents, we have reached a significant milestone in our drive to improve your housing services, with contracts being offered to new suppliers for our responsive repairs and heating services.

Thank you to every one of you who helped us prepare for this stage, from those who got involved in surveys and focus groups to those who helped with the selection and interviewing of the preferred bidders. Your feedback helped us to develop the customer service standards the new providers will be signing up to deliver.

Following your feedback, contracts for the repairs service have been split into three areas to reduce dependency on one contractor.

The successful bidders, Mears, Wates and PH Jones, were approved at Cabinet on 6 March and have since been notified. Contracts are set to be signed in April and start in the summer.

- Mears will carry out responsive repairs, maintenance and empty property works to council properties covering the areas of New Addington, Fieldway, Shrublands and Monks Hill.
- Wates will provide the same services to all other properties across the borough.
- The third contractor, PH Jones, will provide heating services including boiler repairs and servicing to all council homes.

Other feedback we received from residents was around reporting repairs, and a preference to report issues directly to the council rather than contractors. As a result of this, the repairs contact centre will be coming in-house from this summer.

Executive Mayor Jason Perry, said:

*“ This is an important and essential milestone for our tenants, leaseholders and housing service. When I was elected, I promised that I would raise standards in council homes and that I would listen to our residents and treat them with respect - a good repairs service is vital for that. The three successful providers submitted strong bids and each brings a wealth of experience to help us provide a better and more responsive repairs and heating service for our residents. ”*

*I am so grateful to all our tenants and leaseholders who have helped us in this process, their input has been invaluable in shaping the future service. It doesn't end here - our residents' voices will continue to help us monitor and review the new and improved repairs service. ”*

We are also improving access to housing services online which includes being able to access your statements, report repairs and track the status of the works at a time that suits you. More information about this and how to get involved is available on **page 2**.



**Housing online**  
see page 2



**Neighbourhood Voice**  
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**THIS IS CROYDON**  
underway  
see page 4

**Would you like to contribute**

to Open House?

Email us:

[residentinvolvement@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:residentinvolvement@croydon.gov.uk)



**To receive Open House**

Visit:

[www.croydon.gov.uk/openhouse](http://www.croydon.gov.uk/openhouse)

online or email:

[residentinvolvement@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:residentinvolvement@croydon.gov.uk)

or call:

020 8726 6100 ext. 44524

Large print: to receive Open House and other housing information in large print, please call 020 8726 6100 ext. 44524

# Housing online: giving you more ways to contact us

As part of our plans to improve Croydon's housing services, we are upgrading our technology to make it easier for you to access housing services online and improve how we deliver housing services to our tenants and leaseholders.

From 31 May, you will be able to visit our website to access rent statements and update your personal details all in one place.

Other improvements, which will be rolled out after the system has been launched, will include the ability to report a repair issue and track its progress at a time that suits you.

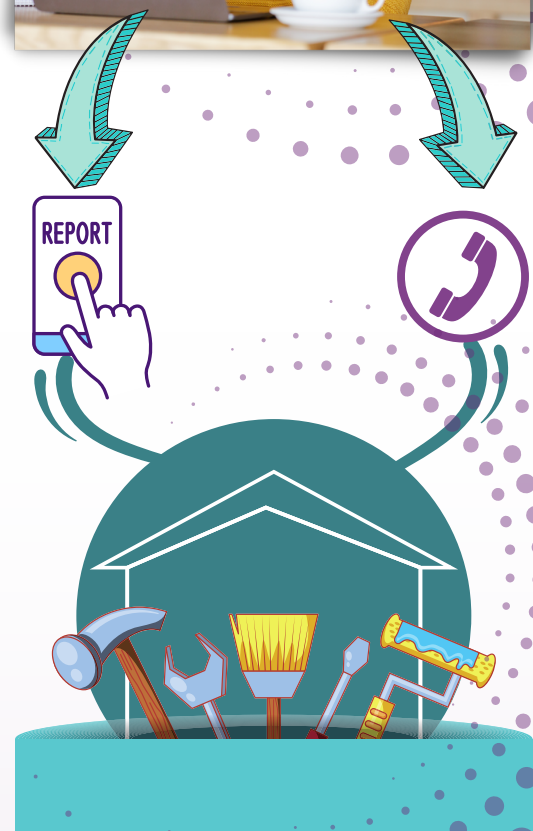
If online isn't for you, our contact centre will still be available Monday to Friday to take your calls. As part of this upgrade, we will also be making changes to the systems we use behind the scenes to manage housing service requests, making it easier for us to support our residents and provide the services they need.

This is another improvement milestone for Croydon's housing transformation programme that has been developed in line with Executive Mayor Perry's priorities to drive up standards, develop our workforce and create a responsive and effective housing service. The changes are set to start from 17 May, which might mean we take slightly longer to respond to queries during this time, and we're sorry in advance for any delays.

## Get involved and help us test online housing services!

We're looking for tenants and leaseholders to help us test the new online services, to make sure they are easy to use. Everyone is welcome to get involved and we would like to hear from residents from all backgrounds and digital abilities.

If you're interested, email us at [residentinvolvement@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:residentinvolvement@croydon.gov.uk) or call 020 8726 6100 ext. 44524



## Rent and cost of living support

In February, we notified you of an increase in rent and service charges to help the council deliver the housing services at a standard that you deserve.

If you are on a low income and need help to pay your rent, you may be entitled to Housing Benefit, Universal Credit or other benefits. Please visit our website at [www.croydon.gov.uk](http://www.croydon.gov.uk) and use our benefits calculator to find out if you are eligible and for details on how to apply online. If you don't have access to a computer, you can use the computers at your local library.

Alternatively, you can contact our Welfare Rights Advisors by emailing [CouncilTenantsWBA@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:CouncilTenantsWBA@croydon.gov.uk) to make sure you are claiming the benefits you are eligible for.



[www.croydon.gov.uk/benefits/housing-benefit](http://www.croydon.gov.uk/benefits/housing-benefit)

# Have your say on Croydon housing services

If you are a Croydon Council tenant, leaseholder, or live on a council estate, we want to hear what you think about the housing services you receive from us.

Getting involved isn't just about attending meetings. You can engage with us online, in-person, over the phone or by post - whether it's joining us on an estate walkabout, a one-off focus group or spending a few minutes doing a quick survey - we love to hear from you! Here are some of the opportunities to engage with us!



## Be a voice for your neighbourhood

Get free training and support and help us monitor housing services in your area by becoming a neighbourhood voice.

As one of our neighbourhood voices, you will evaluate the estate services you receive from the council by inspecting your block and reporting your findings to us. You can give us your feedback by completing the short form we send you via post or online.

Feedback will help us to improve housing services on your estate or block and we will keep you updated on how your support has helped us to improve our service to tenants and leaseholders across the borough and in your neighbourhood.

This is a voluntary role, however, all our neighbourhood voices will be entered into a free monthly prize draw where you could win a £10 shopping voucher.

If you are interested in becoming a neighbourhood voice, contact the resident involvement team on 020 8726 6100 ext.44524 or email [residentinvolvement@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:residentinvolvement@croydon.gov.uk)



## Join a panel

We work closely with residents in planning, delivering and monitoring our services. Scan the QR code to find out more and how you can join.

[www.croydon.gov.uk/croydon-resident-panel](http://www.croydon.gov.uk/croydon-resident-panel)

## Estate walkabouts

Our estate walkabouts give residents the chance to work alongside tenancy and caretaking services to identify issues on their estate. During these inspections, officers discuss with residents and make a note of any issues residents feel need resolving and action plans are shared on the noticeboards for all residents to see.

We advertise the dates and times of our estate walkabouts in advance in communal areas on estates, so look out for one happening near you, and join us if you can.

If you would like to speak to us about an inspection in your area, contact [residentinvolvement@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:residentinvolvement@croydon.gov.uk) or call us on 020 8726 6100 ext. 44524

## Take a walk with us to improve your estate



## Have your say by completing our surveys

We are always keen to include our residents in our decision-making process. You can sign up for our mailing list to receive our surveys and have your say.

There are also opportunities to take part in focus groups on topics such as repairs, garages or building safety. You decide how and when you want to get involved! Email: [residentinvolvement@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:residentinvolvement@croydon.gov.uk) or call us on 020 8726 6100 ext. 44524



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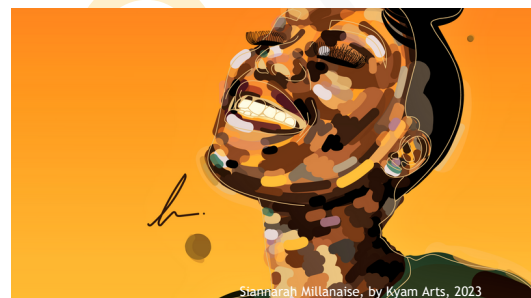
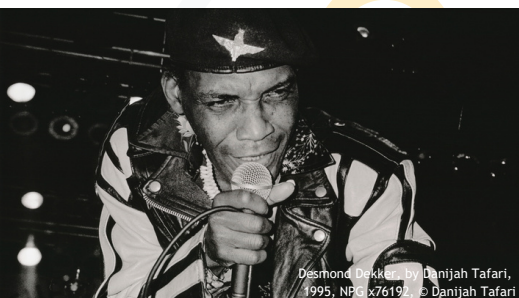


## More ways to get involved

[www.croydon.gov.uk/croydon-resident-involvement](http://www.croydon.gov.uk/croydon-resident-involvement)



# Croydon's year as London Borough of Culture is now underway



## THIS IS CROYDON

is a year of celebrations from April 2023 until March 2024, that will put our borough's unique identity, diverse communities, heritage, culture and creativity front and centre for all to see.



We are inviting all our residents to join us for a big, bold and cross-cultural celebration featuring leading artists and emerging home-grown talent, artist commissions and lots of opportunities to take part!

Find out about the events happening and how you can get involved at [culturecroydon.com](http://culturecroydon.com) or scan the QR code below to visit the website.

### Upcoming event

**Citizen UK: Croydon's Caribbean Influencers**

**When:** 14 April - 18 June

**Where:** Museum of Croydon

**Price:** free



[culturecroydon.com](http://culturecroydon.com)

Visit the Museum of Croydon between 14 April and 18 June for Caribbean Influencers, a new exhibition developed by the Museum of Croydon together with the National Portrait Gallery. This free exhibition explores the stories and influence of Croydon residents with Caribbean roots who are often not recognised for the impact they made in shaping the Croydon we know today. Visit [museumofcroydon.com](http://museumofcroydon.com) for more information and opening times.

