

RavenTimes

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WIN!
Each month, we'll be giving away three cash prizes: one £100 prize and two £50 prizes.



Do we have up to date information about you?

As part of our three year plan, **Delivering What Matters** (see page 10 for more information), we want to deliver the services you need, in the best way for you. To do this, we need to get to know you better.

Please log into **MyRaven (myraven.ravenht.org.uk)** to check and complete the **'My Details'** section to let us know more about you. If you'd prefer, you can call us to update your details on **0300 123 3399**.

By telling us your first language, as well as letting us know about any impairments, physical health, mental health or neurodiversity information, we can make any necessary adjustments to our services to improve your experience of the service you receive.

WIN!

Everyone who checks and updates their information will be entered into a monthly prize draw in August and September. Each month, we'll be giving away three cash prizes: one £100 prize and two £50 prizes.

Why update your information?

Personalised support: by knowing your preferred language, we can arrange translation services to make sure you fully understand all important information.

Accessibility: if we know about your physical impairments, we can make reasonable adjustments. For example, if you struggle with mobility or are hard of hearing, our repairs team will know to wait longer for you to answer the door.

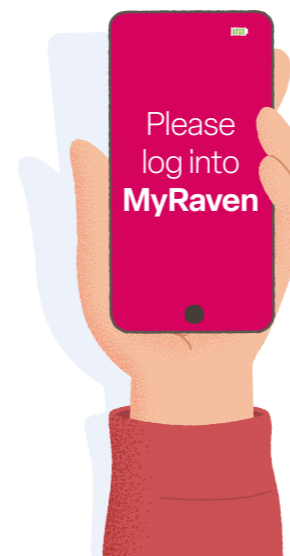
Mental health or neurodiversity considerations: understanding these needs will allow us to create a more supportive environment for you. For example, minimising disruption during repair works and other visits.

Your privacy is important to us

You can trust that all the information you provide will be kept safe and secure and only used to improve your experience with us.

Need help?

If you don't have access to **MyRaven**, signing up is easy. You'll need your tenancy number and an email address. Head to myraven.ravenht.org.uk to register. If you need help, you can call us on **0300 123 3399**.



Welcome

We hope you enjoy the summer issue of your Raven Times, it's packed with useful information and features. You might notice it's had a little refresh of design, which we hope you like.

If you have any feedback on the design or any suggestions about what you'd like to see in Raven Times then please let us know by emailing raventimes@ravenht.org.uk.

An update from our wardens

Summer is always a busy season for us, filled with community events and gardening projects. We also work tirelessly to manage the surge in litter and fly-tipping, ensuring our communities are clean and safe. We appreciate your help in using the designated bin areas correctly. **Here are some of the events we've been at lately.**



Horley Medieval Carnival – we won best dressed!



Furzefield School Fair

Improving community spaces Summer safety



We provided and built three new recycled plastic picnic benches for communal gardens at Pound Road and Shire Court.



Here's Conrad collecting flowers for customer led communal planter projects in Merstham, Tadworth and Cromwell Estate in Redhill.



Please remember to keep safe this summer. There should be no BBQs in communal areas as they cause a fire risk. Also, please supervise children and pets when using paddling pools and make sure they are emptied and tidied away at the end of each day.

Your thoughts - Reasonable Adjustments Policy

We've been running a customer consultation to help us create our Reasonable Adjustments Policy. This policy will cover the adjustments we can make to our services to meet your individual needs. We'd appreciate further feedback from you about the key points we should include in this policy. Please visit www.ravenht.org.uk/reasonable-adjustments-policy to read more and give your opinion.

Community noticeboard

Here's a round up of groups and events happening in your local community.

Is there something that you'd like us to include in the next issue? Email us raventimes@ravenht.org.uk.

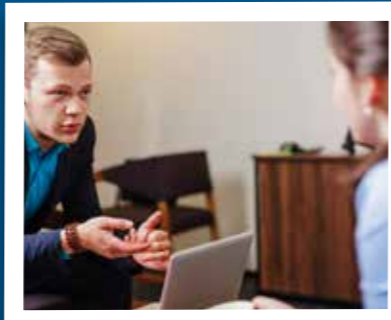


Healthy eating course

There is a 10-week healthy eating and weight management course starting at the Merstham Community Hub on 17th September 2024. Held each Tuesday from 6-7:30pm, the course will give you the skills and motivation you need to make healthy changes to your diet. The course is £30 and can be booked by emailing healthymeasures@ymcaeastssurrey.org.uk

Advice Café in Tadworth

Merland Rise Church in Tadworth runs a weekly drop in advice café every Wednesday from 10am – 2pm. Each week they have different organisations attending offering expert advice - from accessing affordable food, money advice, employment support and much more. We also regularly attend to give employment advice and general tenancy support.



New - Banstead Pantry

We're really pleased to announce there is a brand-new Pantry opening on Banstead High Street in early September. Banstead Pantry is a community supermarket offering affordable and healthy groceries.

We've partnered with Good Company Surrey and Reigate and Banstead Borough Council to fund this initiative, as part of our community investment.

How to shop at Banstead Pantry

You'll need to become a member, which is free, then you'll pay £5 for a shop. Members can shop once a week, usually on the same day and time each week. For just £5 per shop, you can choose a basket of food worth around £30-35.

You can use Banstead Pantry like you would any other shop and choose from available food items including fresh meat, dairy and vegetables.

Membership and registration

You don't need to prove financial hardship, it's not means-tested; you'll just need to fill in a membership form about the support you need.

You need to live in SM7, KT18 or KT20 postcode areas to be eligible, as spaces are limited. Banstead Pantry can serve 170 members at a time, so register quickly. Keep an eye on our Facebook page, where we'll announce when applications are open but in the meantime, please contact our Moneywise team to register your interest by raising an enquiry on **MyRaven** or calling **0300 123 3399**.

Additional support

Banstead Pantry staff and partners also offer support with money management, benefits, cooking advice, and job support.

We look forward to welcoming you to Banstead Pantry and seeing the positive impact it will have on our community!



Moneywise – ask us anything!

Welcome to our new feature where you can send your questions to our Moneywise team for expert advice.

If you have a money question for the next issue, email it to raventimes@ravenht.org.uk. Remember, all customers - whether you're a rented tenant or homeowner - can receive **FREE** personalised **Moneywise** support. Raise an enquiry on **MyRaven** or call **0300 123 3399** for an initial chat.



Q I've been receiving housing benefit and tax credits to top up my low income but have had a letter from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) telling me I need to claim universal credit. What do I need to do? And how will I manage whilst the change happens?

A The letter you've received from the DWP will specify the date by which you need to claim Universal Credit. Missing this date could stop your existing benefits. Universal Credit is usually claimed online; if you have a partner, you both need to complete separate claims then link them with a DWP code. Universal Credit is paid monthly in arrears, and rent support is paid to you, so you'll need to set up a payment arrangement with your Income Officer. You can request an advance payment from the DWP if you'll struggle without benefits for a month. Contact us for help with your claim.

Q I've been out of work for the past few months after having a baby, I want to get back to work but, how will I afford to pay for childcare?

A Eligible working parents of children aged 3 or 4 can get 30 hours per week of free childcare if they earn between £9,518 and £100,000 per financial year. Parents of 2-year-olds can receive 15 hours free childcare per week. From September 2024, eligible parents can get 15 hours of free childcare for children from 9 months old, increasing to 30 hours from September 2025. Contact us if you have any questions about your circumstances.

Find out more about how we can support you to get back to work on page 7.

Back to school costs

We know it's a costly time with new school uniforms and equipment to buy. Contact Moneywise if you need help with these costs – raise an enquiry on **MyRaven** or call **0300 123 3399**.



Celebrating our Raven in Bloom winners

Congratulations to all our winners and runners-up in this year's Raven in Bloom gardening competition! We had some fantastic entries this year, and our Customer Voice Panel faced the challenging task of selecting the winners.

Our winners

Best Balcony or Small Garden

- 1st place – Diana from Lindfield
- 2nd place – Patricia from Merstham
- 3rd place – Lisa from Merstham

Best Flower Display

- 1st place – Patricia from Horley
- 2nd place – Sue from Redhill
- 3rd place – Stuart from Horley

Best Young Gardener

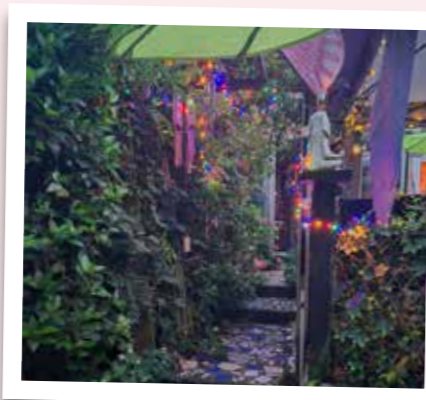
- 1st place – Louie from Earlswood
- 2nd place – Marlis from Merstham

Best Community / Communal Garden

- 1st place – Stuart from Horley
- 2nd place – Friends of Merstham Parks and Greens
- 3rd place – M from Redhill

Best Overall Garden

- 1st place – Diana from Lindfield – small garden
- 2nd place – Stuart from Horley – communal garden



Best Balcony or Small Garden
1st place – Diana from Lindfield



Best Flower Display
1st place – Patricia from Horley



Best Young Gardener
1st place – Louie from Earlswood



Best Community or Communal Garden
1st place – Stuart from Horley

Thank you to our grounds maintenance contractor, Groundscapes, for funding the prizes:

- First place:** £75 gardening voucher
- Second place:** £50 gardening voucher
- Third place:** £25 gardening voucher

Thank you to everyone who sent in entries and shared their beautiful gardens and outdoor spaces with us. Your efforts have helped make our communities bloom!

Did you know?

You can check when your next grounds maintenance visit is due? Simply head to our website and search by your postcode - www.ravenht.org.uk/grounds-maintenance

Help with getting into work

We're really pleased to announce that we have won National Lottery funding for a new five-year employment support project called 'Work Smart Surrey & Sussex'.

We're running the project with partners – Saxon Weald, Rosebery, Reigate and Banstead Borough Council, Surrey County Council, East Surrey College and the charity Good Company Surrey.

The aim of the project is to reduce the barriers that you might be facing to get a job or better paid work.



How we can help you

Our employment support services include:

- **Expert advice:** you'll get professional help with finding the right job for you, support with challenges, writing your CV, job applications, skills and training.
- **Additional help:** you'll receive financial support where needed with childcare costs, travel expenses and training course fees.

How to get started

If you think you could benefit from help from the Work Smart Surrey & Sussex programme, you can get in touch by emailing employment@ravenht.org.uk or raising an enquiry through **MyRaven**.

Our employment support team will get in touch to talk through how it works and check you meet the criteria - you must be currently unemployed or on a low income.

Homeowner news

Welcome to our new column dedicated to Homeowners, where we bring you the latest updates and essential information just for you.

Homeowner Improvement Plan

We've developed a Homeowner Improvement Plan based on your feedback from surveys, our Customer Voice Panel and learnings from complaints.

What we've done already:

- **New Customer Co-ordinator:** we've hired a Customer Co-ordinator to prioritise your queries and improve communication with

Homeowners, including revising our letters and emails to make them clearer and more helpful.

- **Policy updates:** we've updated some of our policies to make sure Homeowners receive the same level of service as tenants, especially when it comes to recognising vulnerabilities and the support we offer.

What's still to do:

- **Improved communication:** we know that clear communication is crucial. We're working on making all our communications more engaging and easier to understand. We've also introduced this regular column for Homeowners to Raven Times.

- **Website enhancements:** we're planning to improve the Homeownership section of our website for better transparency and to update our supporting materials.

- **Residents' meetings:** we'd like to start in-person and/or online meetings with Homeowners to understand what matters to you and your needs better. If you're interested in getting involved, please let us know.

We value your feedback as a Homeowner. If you have any suggestions for improvements, please email the Homeownership team on homeownership@ravenht.org.uk.



Your experience matters: how we handle complaints

Encouraging you to make complaints might seem unusual, but complaints give us the opportunity to correct issues and learn, and most importantly, help us improve our service to you.

Whilst our teams do their best to get things right for you first time, we know that sometimes things go wrong. When this happens, it's important you let us know so we can address and resolve the issues for you.

What to do if you're unhappy with our service

If you're not satisfied with any aspect of our service, please contact us first. We'll do our best to resolve your issue. If you're still not happy after we've had a chance to fix the problem, we encourage you to make a formal complaint.

The complaints process

Stage 1: we'll acknowledge your complaint within five working days, then investigate with the relevant teams. We'll aim to respond to your complaint within 10 working days, explaining the outcome and

any actions we'll take. If you're not happy with our response, you can take your complaint to Stage 2.

Stage 2: if you'd like to escalate your complaint, you must do so in writing within four weeks of our initial response. A manager will do a deeper investigation and respond within 20 working days. If you're still unhappy with our response, you can contact the Housing Ombudsman Service for an impartial review.

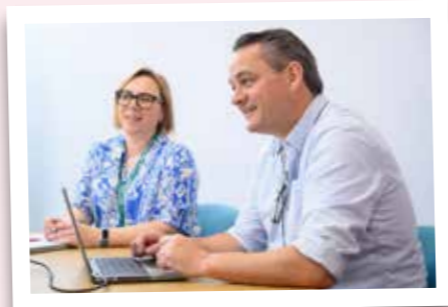
Following the Complaint Handling Code

We're committed to a positive complaints handling culture in line with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. Each year we do a self-assessment to check we're following best practices. You can read our 2024 self-assessment here – www.ravenht.org.uk/complaints-handling-code

Learning from complaints

Complaints are an opportunity for us to learn and improve our services. Here are some recent improvements based on complaints learnings:

Customer Services Training: we've improved our internal training and monitoring to make sure our Customer Services Team correctly diagnoses and records repairs accurately when first reported.



Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Policy: we've consulted with customers and re-written our ASB policy to better address and manage these issues.

Gas Contract: we re-tendered our gas contract and appointed a new gas contractor, Gas Call Services, to improve the quality and reliability of our gas services.



How to make a complaint

You can make a complaint by reporting it on your **MyRaven** online account or by calling us on **0300 123 3399**. Please provide as much information as possible to help us investigate the issue thoroughly.

Find out more about making a complaint – www.ravenht.org.uk/making-a-complaint

Anti-social behaviour support

We're dedicated to promoting safe and peaceful communities where everyone can enjoy their home and neighbourhood. We understand that anti-social behaviour (ASB) can significantly impact your quality of life, and we're here to help.



Understanding ASB

ASB is behaviour that causes harassment, nuisance or distress to another person. This can range from noise disturbances and vandalism, to drug dealing and domestic abuse, leaving you feeling unsafe and powerless.

Visit www.ravenht.org.uk/asb for a list of what is considered as ASB and what isn't.

Steps to take if you're experiencing ASB

If your neighbours are causing ASB, it's important to report incidents to us quickly. Taking notes of times, locations and other details is helpful for our investigation. You can report ASB through your MyRaven online account, by calling **0300 123 3399**, or email raven@ravenht.org.uk. Once reported, you can track progress and upload supporting documents through **MyRaven**.

If you feel threatened or in danger and need immediate help, please call 999 straight away. For non-emergencies or after an incident has happened, call 101.

What happens when you report ASB

When you report ASB to us, we'll work with you to agree a plan of action. This may include speaking to the person causing the problem and working with partners (like the police) to resolve the situation.

Support for domestic abuse

If you're affected by domestic abuse, or know someone who is, please contact us as soon as possible. If you're in immediate danger, call 999. We partner with specialists like East Surrey Domestic Abuse Service or Worth Outreach Services to provide support and protection.

We're here to help

Your safety and well-being are our top priorities. By reporting ASB and getting support, you can help us to eliminate ASB in our communities.

For more information about ASB and resources to handle disruption from neighbours, visit our website – www.ravenht.org.uk/asb

Report it!

Call **0300 123 3399**, email raven@ravenht.org.uk or report through **MyRaven**.

Need local storage or parking space?

Struggling to park at home or work or need extra storage?



We offer lockable garages and parking spaces across Surrey and Sussex at competitive rates. These are available for both customers and non-customers.

For more information on pricing and locations, visit www.ravenht.org.uk/garages

Raven's three year plan – Delivering What Matters

In May we sent you information about our new three year plan, telling you more about how we will be **Delivering What Matters**.



We've listened to your comments and feedback and we've used this to help us create our new three year plan - a plan that prioritises the services and areas that matter most to you.

You told us you want Raven to:

- Build more affordable homes. And where we can, you'd like us to make better use of the homes that we have.
- Invest more in our existing homes, and do routine repairs faster.
- Help to reduce carbon emissions, and make homes warmer and more energy efficient.
- Improve our green and public spaces, improve activities for young people, and work with the wider community to make neighbourhoods clean and safe.

So, this is what we're going to do. Over the next three years we will be Delivering What Matters to you.

Our commitment to you is that we will:



Know our customers and consistently deliver what matters to you.

We want to deliver the services you need, in the way you need them.

We will gather a better understanding of you, and the home you're living in, so we are able to design and consistently deliver the services that meet your individual needs.



We invest in everyday improvements and transformational regeneration to provide good quality homes, fit for the future in neighbourhoods that are safe, secure, and clean.

We will be investing in your homes, working towards ensuring they are not only well maintained and fit for today, but that they are sustainable and fit for the future.

This means that if it's not right to invest in repairing properties, we'll redevelop homes and, where possible neighbourhoods too, creating homes and communities to last for decades to come. And we will be installing energy saving, green technologies, making your homes warmer, helping to reduce your energy costs, and helping to improve our planet.



We provide more affordable homes, and make sure the homes we have best match the needs of our customers.

We want to provide more homes for more people. We will play our part to help to solve the housing crisis by building more new homes, and partnering with other housing providers to manage homes on their behalf. We will work with you to try and find a home that best meets your changing needs.



What are we starting with?

We're starting by focusing on the two areas that we think will have the greatest impact for you: redesigning our repairs service and improving our customer data.

Redesigning our repairs service

You told us

You want us to improve our repairs service, to reduce the time it takes to carry our repairs, and improve our responsiveness to queries.

What we're doing

We are redesigning our repairs service. We'll be making improvements so you don't need to contact us multiple times about the same repair. We'll be improving the lead time for repairs appointments, and most importantly, making sure when we come to your homes we get it right first time.



Improving our customer data

You told us

You want the services you receive from Raven to meet your individual needs.

What we're doing

To enable every Raven staff member to deliver a reliable and consistent service to you, and to make sure we match the right customers to the right homes, we are improving the quality of information we hold about you. If you, or a member of your household, needs additional support due to a physical or mental health condition, by letting us know we can put improvements in place.

See page 3 for more information on how to update your records.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures – the results are in!

The Regulator of Social Housing created a new set of Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) from the financial year 2023-24. These show how well we're doing at providing good quality homes and services. We use an independent company called Explain, who call a monthly sample of customers to ask for feedback on our services.

Here are some highlights:



You can see our full results here - www.ravenht.org.uk/tsms

Our Performance

The launch of our new three year plan, saw the end of our Making the Difference plan. You can find out how we performed against this plan, what we achieved, and what we could have done better, on our website www.ravenht.org.uk/our-performance

And look out next month for our annual report where we'll cover this, and more about what we've been working on in detail.

Provide feedback

We welcome your feedback about our services. We want to know what we're doing well and where you think we can improve.

Report it!:

if you have a repair that needs fixing or need to report anti-social behaviour then get in touch through your MyRaven online account, by calling **0300 123 3399** or emailing **raven@ravenht.org.uk**.



General feedback:

if you have an idea or suggestion about our services then please contact us on **0300 123 3399** or email **raven@ravenht.org.uk**.



I have a complaint:

call us on **0300 123 3399**, email **raven@ravenht.org.uk** or raise it through **MyRaven**.



Compliments:

if you have a compliment about a member of our team or our service then we'd love to hear from you. You can call us on **0300 123 3399** or email **raven@ravenht.org.uk**.






What do you want to see in Raven Times?

This is **your** quarterly magazine to show you what's going on at Raven and in our communities. We'd love to know what you'd like to see more and less of to make this something you find informative and useful.

Drop us an email **raventimes@ravenht.org.uk** with any feedback – thank you!

Follow us:

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Call: 0300 123 3399 Facebook messenger: RavenHousingTrust

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