

# RavenTimes



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# Welcome

Spring is here and we're excited to bring you the latest updates from Raven. In this issue, we introduce our new Welfare team, share updates from our Wardens, and provide important information about the upcoming rent increase. We're also preparing for

the new damp and mould law and have launched our Raven in Bloom gardening competition for 2025.

We hope you enjoy this issue. If you have any suggestions on how we can improve Raven Times, let us know by emailing [raventimes@ravenht.org.uk](mailto:raventimes@ravenht.org.uk).

## An update from our wardens








### Signs of spring

It's fantastic to see little signs of spring popping up in and around our communities. Back in the autumn we were pleased to help Timperley Church and their Community Outreach Worker, Claire, with finding a perfect spot for members of the community to plant daffodil bulbs. They're bringing some fantastic spring colour to the area. If you have any planting projects or suggestions for our green spaces, please get in touch.



### Getting to know your wardens

You'll often see us in and around your community, keeping you safe and working hard with local groups supporting special events. We each have different geographical areas that we're responsible for, you can see which of us works in your area here:

 <p><b>Neil - Team Leader</b> Burgess Hill East Grinstead Haywards Heath Lewes Lindfield Turner's Hill</p>	 <p><b>Dee</b> Sheltered housing</p>	 <p><b>Glyn</b> Banstead Hurst Green Lingfield Oxted</p>	 <p><b>Graham</b> Crawley Merstham Redhill</p>
 <p><b>Steve</b> Faygate Handcross Reigate Woodhatch</p>	 <p><b>Conrad</b> Court Lodge Earlswood Horley</p>	 <p><b>Stevie</b> Billingshurst Dorking Redhill Tadworth</p>	

### What you can expect from us

We attend our blocks of flats once a week for fire and safety checks and to make sure the areas are clean and clear. If you live in a Raven house, checks to your area won't be as frequent but we're still able to help with any issues or concerns that arise if you get in touch.

We also:

- check communal spaces for repairs
- report and remove abandoned vehicles
- carry out regular safety checks of playgrounds on our land
- check communal bin and store areas regularly to make sure they're being kept clear and tidy
- carry out litter picking where needed
- report any overgrown communal areas
- organise and attend local community events
- work with other agencies such as local authorities, to improve areas



## A spotlight on our new Welfare team

**Our new Welfare team is here to make sure you have the support you need if you or your family are facing difficult situations, such as mental health struggles, addiction, abuse (whether physical or financial), exploitation (including the dangerous issue of cuckooing), and hoarding.**

Charlotte, one of our Welfare Officers said: "We understand these situations can often be complex and hard to find your own way through. Our job is to support you and get you the help you need by connecting you to local services. We'll be on your side and be the first step to getting you the

help you need if you're impacted by one of these situations."

Charlotte and the Welfare team are here to help you access important public services that can make a difference. This might include working with other support services or connecting you with social care teams in Surrey and West Sussex.



If you, or someone you know, could benefit from the help of our Welfare team, you can get in touch by calling **0300 123 3399**.

### What's cuckooing?

Cuckooing is where criminals take over the home of a vulnerable person, often by manipulation. Once criminals take control, they may use the home for illegal activities like drug dealing or storing stolen goods. It's a serious issue, and our Welfare team can support customers who are at risk, or already experiencing this type of exploitation.



# Community noticeboard

If there's something that you'd like to see included in the community noticeboard next issue please email us [raventimes@ravenht.org.uk](mailto:raventimes@ravenht.org.uk).

**This issue we've got a spotlight on local groups supporting mental health, encouraging relationships and bringing people together.**

## Men's pitstop at Merstham Football Club

A welcoming group for men to connect and support each other through life's challenges. They meet every Wednesday from 6:30-7:30pm, offering a chance to talk openly in a friendly community.



## Women's Support Groups by The Lucy Raynor Foundation

These supportive sessions take place every Wednesday, both online and in person. They provide a safe, non-judgemental environment where women can share their thoughts and experiences. The in person group also includes some physical exercise to help mental wellbeing. To book your place, call **01737 910 907**.



## WAVES (Wellbeing, Awareness and Voice for East Surrey)

Designed for young people aged 13-19, WAVES offers relaxed drop-in sessions where teenagers can talk about some of the challenges they're facing, such as school stress, friendships, and family life. These free sessions run in term time in Reigate, Oxted, Tadworth, Horley and Redhill. For more information email [waves@ymcaeast Surrey.org.uk](mailto:waves@ymcaeast Surrey.org.uk).



# Welcare – Encouraging English group

**We're really pleased to be supporting the Welcare centre's Encouraging English weekly group in Redhill, through our Brighter Community Fund. The weekly group is for children aged 1-5 years and their carers who speak English as an additional language.**

Each week there's a selection of indoor and outdoor activities and toys to play with, to help the children develop their English language

skills and social interaction through play. They especially enjoy singing songs at circle time and playing with bubbles, which encourages them to learn new words like 'pop', 'catch', 'up', 'down', 'big' and 'small'. The parents enjoy the opportunity to chat with other parents in their community and making friends. One of the mums said: "this group is a blessing for us and our children, as we find it very home like and children love playing here."

The group meets on Wednesdays from 12:30-2pm at Welcare, 24 Warwick Road, Redhill. To find out more and book your space email [redhill@welcare.org](mailto:redhill@welcare.org) or call **01737 780 884**.



# Rent increase 2025 – what you need to know

**You should now have received your individual rent letter, detailing your new rent and charges from April 2025 and what steps you need to take.**



## What you need to do next

**If you pay by Direct Debit:** You don't need to do anything. Your payment amount will be automatically updated from April 2025.

**If you receive Universal Credit:** You must update your online journal with your new rent and charges from the date your rent increases. Universal Credit won't accept any updates in advance, so don't update your online journal before these dates:

- If you're charged monthly, update your online journal from **1st April**.
- If you're charged weekly, update your online journal from **7th April**.

If you don't update your online journal on time, you could miss out on money you're entitled to.

## If you receive Housing Benefit:

Let your local authority know your new rent amount as soon as possible. If you're with Reigate and Banstead Borough Council and your Housing Benefit is paid directly to us, we will let them know for you.

## If you pay in another way:

Please update the amount you pay accordingly.

## Get in touch

If you have any questions about your rent increase, please contact us:

- Call: **0300 123 3399**
- Email: [raven@ravenht.org.uk](mailto:raven@ravenht.org.uk)
- Message through your **MyRaven** online account

# What if I'm struggling to pay my rent?

## Talk to your Income Officer

If you're struggling to keep up with rent payments, let us know. We understand that circumstances can be difficult and we're here to help.

## Moneywise team

Get free and confidential help and advice with budgeting, benefits, appeals, or bill reduction from our Moneywise team.

# Your invitation to claim Universal Credit

If you currently receive Housing Benefit, you may soon receive a letter from the Department for Work and Pensions inviting you to claim Universal Credit. This letter will include a deadline for your application – missing it could stop your existing benefits.

If you've received your invitation and are unsure how to make your claim, don't worry as our Moneywise team is here to help. Get in touch for support to make your move to Universal Credit a smooth transition.



# Moneywise – ask us anything!

Send your questions to our Moneywise team for expert advice answered here in this new regular feature.

If you have a money question for the next issue, email it to [raventimes@ravenht.org.uk](mailto: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.



## Stricter rules for landlords around damp and mould



You may have seen in the news recently that the Government is introducing Awaab's Law this October, setting stricter rules for social housing landlords, like Raven, on tackling damp and mould.

While the details of this law are still being finalised, we fully support these changes and we've been busy working on how we handle damp and mould issues in your home.

It's incredibly important to us to ensure your home provides you with a safe and healthy environment.

Some of the improvements that you'll see include:

- working together as tenant and landlord to look at options and agree an action plan
- produce a clear schedule of works for remedial action
- provide real-time updates through your MyRaven online account (this feature will be launching in the coming months)

- ensure long-term results by carrying out follow up checks at six weeks and 12 months after any remedial work has taken place

We'll be letting you know about further updates to our processes once Awaab's Law is finalised later this year.

If you notice damp, mould, or condensation problems in your home, please report it through your MyRaven online account or by calling us.

**Q** We're a few months into the year and I haven't made a start on my new year's resolution, which was to make the most of my money. Where do I start?

**A** Spring is a good time to look at your finances, as the new financial year starts in April and can bring changes that could boost your monthly income. For example, there will be a change to some benefit rates as well as changes to the national minimum wage and national living wage rates. Some employers may offer pay rises around this time too.

Not sure you're getting all the benefits you're entitled to? Get in touch as we can check this for you quickly and easily. This can make a significant difference to your monthly income.

Many service providers raise their prices in April, so it's worth shopping around for better deals on your mobile phone, broadband, TV package, or utilities – but remember to check any exit fees if you're in a contract.

If you receive Universal Credit, you may qualify for the Help to Save scheme, which gives you a bonus of 50p for every £1 saved. If you're on means tested benefits, having savings above £6,000 if you're of working age, or £10,000 if you're over pension age can affect the amount of benefit you'll get. Find out more - [www.gov.uk/get-help-savings-low-income](http://www.gov.uk/get-help-savings-low-income).



**Q** My gas supplier has sent me a bill covering the period from 1 March 2022 to the end of last month. I can't afford the bill, is there anything I can do?

**A** OFGEM rules say that utility companies, in most cases, shouldn't bill customers for energy used more than a year ago – this is called back billing. However, if you prevented meter readings, tampered with the supply, or ignored previous bills, this rule won't apply.

If you haven't acted unreasonably, you should only be charged for the last 12 months of usage. If the bill is still unaffordable, speak to your supplier about a payment plan to spread the cost. Some suppliers also offer grants to help with energy debt.

As a Raven customer, you can access debt support from Reigate and Banstead Citizens Advice, even if you don't live in the borough.

## Enhanced security coming soon to MyRaven

**In the coming weeks, we'll be making some changes to how you access your online account. To help keep your personal information safe and secure, we're introducing two-factor authentication to MyRaven.**

This means that each time you log in to MyRaven, you'll receive a one-time access code to the same email address you use to log in to your account. You'll need to enter that code into the log in screen.

In addition to this, you'll be asked to update your password the first time you log in after we make this change.

These changes are coming to help keep your personal information safer. We'll send you an email when the update goes live, so keep an eye out on your inbox for further details.

If you need support for this or any aspect of MyRaven, please call us on **0300 123 3399**.







# Providing the service you need – adjusting for you

**We want to make sure all our customers can access our services fairly and without barriers. Thank you to those of you who've already updated your first language as well as any impairments, physical health, mental health or neurodiversity information. By letting us know about the personal challenges you face, it allows us to make reasonable adjustments to better support you.**

## How we can support you

By letting us know more about you, and your family, we can adjust our services to better meet your needs. Here are a few examples of things we can do:

- **If you have mobility issues:** our teams will wait longer at your door, to give you time to answer, and we can also call ahead so you know when to expect us.
- **If you don't speak English as your first language:** we offer a phone translation service called Language Line, so you can communicate with us more easily. Plus, our website has a translation feature, helping you to access important information in your preferred language. Just click the person in the orange circle icon on any page.
- **If you're hard of hearing:** we can call or message you to let you know we've arrived.

## Tell us what you need

If you have any physical (for example mobility issues, hard of hearing or visually impaired) or mental health and neurodiversity vulnerabilities or language requirements, please let us know so we can tailor our services to you.

You can update your information through your MyRaven online account, or by calling us on **0300 123 3399**.

**We're here to help. We want to make sure you receive the best possible service that fits your needs.**

You can read our Reasonable Adjustments Policy on our website here – [www.ravenht.org.uk/our-policies/customer-polices](http://www.ravenht.org.uk/our-policies/customer-polices)



## Raven in Bloom – our gardening competition is back!

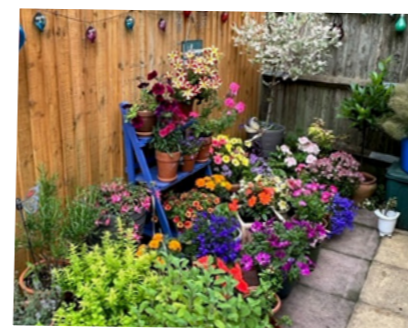
With spring in the air and summer on the horizon, it's the perfect time to bring your outdoor spaces to life! We're excited to announce the return of the Raven in Bloom gardening competition for 2025, celebrating the hard work and creativity of our green fingered customers.

Whether you have a communal or individual garden, or you've transformed a patio or balcony with container plants, we'd love to see how you've made your outdoor space beautiful.

If you're proud of your garden, why not enter for a chance to win a gardening gift voucher worth up to £75?

This year, there are four categories to choose from:

- Best individual garden
- Best communal garden
- Best container garden (perfect for patios or balconies)
- Best junior gardener (12 years old or younger)



### How to enter

**Simply email three photographs of your entry to [raveninbloom@ravenht.org.uk](mailto:raveninbloom@ravenht.org.uk) by Monday 1st September 2025.**

The competition is open to all Raven customers, including rented tenants and homeowners. For full details and rules of entry visit [www.ravenht.org.uk/raven-in-bloom](http://www.ravenht.org.uk/raven-in-bloom).

### Good luck!

Here are some of our previous entries for inspiration:



## Homeowner news

**If you're a homeowner, we've recently sent you our Homeowners' Improvement Plan by post – we hope you've found this interesting and useful. It details our aims to improve your experience as a Raven homeowner, as we know from our satisfaction surveys that there are changes needed. We'd really appreciate your feedback on this.**

For shared owners, you will now have received your individual rent and service charges review letter. And if you're a leaseholder, we have sent your service charge estimate for the next financial year. Please take time to read these letters to check what you need to do next. We've made improvements to these letters to make things clearer – let us know if they've been helpful or if there are further improvements we can make for next year.

We're also planning a homeownership webinar this summer. We'll be covering all the basics about being a Raven homeowner and what you can expect from our Homeownership team. If there are specific questions, or topics you would like us to cover, please let us know. Keep an eye out for your invite.

Your feedback is welcome on any of the above to [homeownership@ravenht.org.uk](mailto:homeownership@ravenht.org.uk).




# Tenant Satisfaction Measures – this year’s results to date

The Regulator of Social Housing requires all social housing landlords like us to collect Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) and report them annually. These show how well we’re doing at providing good quality homes and services.

As well as reporting TSMs annually, as we’re required to do, we choose to share our year-to-date results with you, so you can see how we’re doing throughout the year. We publish these every three months on our website, but from now on we’re also going to include them here, in Raven Times.

These TSMs are year-to-date results (April – December) for the current financial year 2024-25.

 **83.9% Overall satisfaction**

 **84.8% Satisfaction with repairs**

 **82.3% Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair**

 **81.7% Satisfaction that the home is well maintained**

 **86.6% Satisfaction that the home is safe**


 **75.8% Satisfaction that we listen to views and act upon them**

 **81.4% Satisfaction that we keep customers informed about things that matter to them**

 **84.7% Agreement treated fairly and with respect**

 **51.7% Satisfaction with the approach to handling complaints**

 **78.9% Satisfaction that we keep communal areas clean, safe and well maintained**

 **78.6% Satisfaction that we make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods**

 **69.9% Satisfaction with the approach to handling ASB (anti-social behaviour)**

## Delivering What Matters – How we’re performing

You can find the latest information about our three year plan, Delivering What Matters, including performance figures for October – December 2024 on our website – [www.ravenht.org.uk/delivering-what-matters-performance](http://www.ravenht.org.uk/delivering-what-matters-performance).

# We Hear You – making improvements to our services

When you give us feedback – both the positives and the areas where we can improve – it allows us to make our services better for you. What you tell us through complaints and other feedback routes influences our decision making, helping to make sure we keep you, and what matters to you, at the heart of everything we do.

### Here are some recent examples:

**You said:** Homeowners wanted to have greater transparency of service charges, particularly where there had been an increase.

**We did:** We’ve updated the homeowner service charge estimate letters to provide clearer information about expected cost changes, upcoming contract consultations, and support available.



**You said:** You wanted to make sure that when you call the call centre, you have an appointment confirmed on that call.

**We did:** If there’s not an appointment available when you call, rather than having to wait for a call back, we’ll transfer you to our scheduling team to arrange an appointment for you.



### How to provide feedback:

**MyRaven:** use your online account to make a complaint or raise an enquiry.

**Call us:** 0300 123 3399

**Email:** [raven@ravenht.org.uk](mailto:raven@ravenht.org.uk)

**You said:** You wanted improved information and better co-ordination of damp and mould works.

**We did:** We’ve developed and implemented new features in our internal system to improve scheduling and coordination of appointments for damp and mould issues. This update also enables our staff to consider any recorded vulnerabilities or impairments you’ve told us about, so we can better support you.



## If you’re not happy with an aspect of our service – we encourage you to make a complaint

Complaints give us the opportunity to correct issues and learn. 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 to let us know.

You can make a complaint by reporting it through 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 our complaints process – [www.ravenht.org.uk/making-a-complaint](http://www.ravenht.org.uk/making-a-complaint).

# 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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