

AUTUMN 2025

RavenTimes



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www.ravenht.org.uk

 **Raven** Housing Trust

An update from our wardens

Fun at summer community events

A big thank you to everyone who joined us this summer for our community events! There was a great turn out at Wrayfest (Wray Common School, Reigate) and the Welcare summer picnics in Memorial Park, Redhill.



Our smoothie bikes were as popular as ever – it was brilliant seeing so many people enjoying pedalling away to blend their own smoothies.



Communal health and safety

For everyone's safety we ask that you please keep communal areas clear at all times. Personal belongings such as shoe racks, bikes, prams or boxes must not be left in communal halls or corridors, as well as being a serious trip hazard they also block escape routes in the event of a fire. We carry out regular inspections of communal areas but if you see anything that concerns you, please contact us on **0300 123 3399**.



Affordable food in Banstead

Banstead Pantry is a community supermarket where, if you become a member, you can pay £5 for a weekly food shop, including fresh fruit and vegetables, meat and other family essentials to stock up the cupboard and fridge.

Not only does Banstead Pantry provide affordable, healthy groceries but it's also a hub for you to get access to financial and wellbeing advice and build a network of support.

We're very proud to support Banstead Pantry, partnered with Good Company Surrey and Reigate and Banstead Borough Council.



"I used to spend quite a lot on shopping, and my debt was just increasing more and more. Now I am so much more in control and eating better options with the pantry. Thank you so much!"

How to become a member

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. Email banstead@goodcompany.org.uk.

Updates to MyRaven – damp and mould

Reducing the risk of damp and mould in your home

As the seasons change, it's a good time to make sure your home is well-ventilated and you're doing what you can to prevent condensation to avoid damp and mould appearing.

A build-up of moisture in your home can lead to mould growth, which could impact your health. We want to help you avoid this, so here are some simple tips for preventing condensation:

- Use pan lids when cooking and turn the heat down once the water has boiled.
- Don't overfill your pans with water when cooking food like vegetables, pasta, rice or potatoes.
- When filling the bath, start with cold water and then add hot to reduce the amount of steam produced.
- Avoid drying clothes on radiators. Dry them outdoors where possible. If you do need to dry them indoors, place them in the bathroom on a drying rack with the window open or extractor fan on.
- Keep trickle vents on your windows open or leave a small window slightly open to allow air flow.

- Close the bathroom and kitchen doors when these rooms are being used, to contain moisture.
- Keep your rooms warm enough, this helps to prevent condensation from forming on cold surfaces. It's best to keep your heating on low and constant in the winter months. If you're worried about the cost of heating then our Moneywise team is here to offer free and confidential support.

Why ventilation is important

Good ventilation is key to preventing condensation, which happens when warm, moist air meets a cooler surface. Condensation can lead to damp patches on walls, windows, and ceilings, providing the ideal conditions for mould to develop. Mould can cause breathing issues, allergies, and other health problems, so it's essential to address condensation early.



Changes to the way we handle damp and mould

We've been working towards the introduction of Awaab's Law, which comes into effect from the end of October. Awaab's Law is a set of Government regulations that requires landlords to deal with damp and mould within strict time frames, for example we must investigate reports within 14 days and begin necessary repairs within 7 days of investigation where there's risk of serious harm.

You can now raise damp and mould cases separately from general home repairs on MyRaven, this helps us prioritise and makes it easier for you to see the timescales and progress.

When you raise a damp and mould case we'll:

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

If you notice any signs of damp or mould in your home, please let us know by raising a repair through your MyRaven account or giving us a call on 0300 123 3399. Please take photographs to show us then use a mould remover cleaning product to wipe away the mould.



For gas boiler repairs and annual gas safety inspections, contact Sureserve

Sureserve, previously known as Gas Call Services, works with us to carry out boiler replacements, essential repairs, and annual gas safety checks in your home. All of their engineers are Gas Safe registered and trained to the highest standards.

Now is a good time to check your boiler, to make sure it is in full working order, as the colder months are approaching. If you find any problems or have any concerns, please report these directly to Sureserve.



We appreciate your support in working with Sureserve to allow them access to your home to carry out safety checks and repairs – your safety is our priority.

You can report gas boiler repairs and discuss annual gas safety checks by calling the dedicated Raven customer Sureserve number: **0330 002 1169**.

Homeowner news

As you know we've been working through the key actions in our Homeowners' Improvement Plan and most recently we've:

- Reviewed service charge letters, which you should have now received, to provide more clarity and transparency around your charges.
- Produced a guide to what's covered by service charges to allow you to quickly check what regular inspections are carried out and the contractors you can expect to see on site.
- Created a video to explain how service charges work for current and new homeowners, you can watch this video here – www.ravenht.org.uk/paying-service-charges.
- Introduced a new process to check value for money on charges and an additional check where charges are higher than we had estimated.
- Updated the service charge estimate letter to give clear details on the charges, highlighting any changes and explaining the reasons behind them.
- Recruited an experienced Homeowner Officer and in the process of recruiting a Managing Agent Officer into the team.
- Reassessed Homeownership team workloads to align specialist tasks such as Section 20 and staircasing with teams best placed to manage them, improving our response time and quality.
- Revised Section 20 documents for greater clarity and reduced legal jargon and enhanced the information given in quotes.

Moneywise – ask us anything!

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'm on Universal Credit and my benefit is reduced because of a "spare bedroom". My neighbour says this is the bedroom tax. I want to take in a lodger to help with the rent. Can I do this?

A The "bedroom tax" (officially known as the spare room subsidy) affects working age tenants who are considered to have more bedrooms than their family needs. It doesn't apply if you're single and over pension age, or if you're a couple who are both over pension age.

If you want to take in a lodger, you must first speak to your Tenancy Services Officer. Permission won't be unreasonably refused, but in some schemes it isn't allowed. You are responsible for your lodger's behaviour and arranging for them to leave if, and when, it's necessary. You should also make sure you are comfortable with who you are letting into your home. We're not able to help with evicting the lodger if things don't work out and you must not part with possession of the property.

Income from a lodger is not taken into consideration by the DWP when calculating Universal Credit, but your benefit will still be reduced by the bedroom tax. If the rent you receive is above the Rent a Room allowance (£7,500 a year, or £3,500 if you share the rent with someone else), you may need to pay tax. Rules differ if you're on Housing Benefit.

For more guidance or support, you can book a free, confidential appointment with our Moneywise team.

Q I've heard that the rules about Winter Fuel Payments have changed again. Will I still get it?

A You'll receive a Winter Fuel Payment if you're eligible, although you may have to pay the money back to HMRC through the tax system if your income is over the limit (see below for more information about this).

You qualify if you were born on or before 21 September 1959 and were not in hospital or prison for the whole of the week of 15-21 September 2025.

You'll also qualify if you've lived in a care home since 23 June 2025 and receive a means tested benefit.

The amount you receive depends upon your circumstances, you can check details here – <https://www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment/how-much-youll-get>

If your taxable income is above £35,000, HMRC will reclaim the money. This will be done either by adjusting your tax code in 2026-27 or adding the amount to your self-assessment tax bill. Taxable income includes state pension, private pensions, wages, and savings interest outside ISAs. Non-taxable income is ignored.

Important: Beware of scams. Fraudsters may contact people about Winter Fuel Payments. In most cases, if you're entitled, the DWP will pay you automatically. HMRC will only recover payments through the official tax system and won't contact you unexpectedly.

If you're unsure about any message, please get in touch with us for advice.

Improving your neighbourhood

We want to make sure your neighbourhood is safe, well looked after, and a place you're proud to live in.

To do that, we're creating a new Neighbourhood Agreement — a clear set of promises about what you can expect from us in your local area, including how we manage shared spaces. We want to hear

from you about your experiences and what you want to see from us in your neighbourhood.

Please look out for an email from Survey Monkey (please check your junk if you've not had it) and take five minutes to complete the short survey. Your feedback will help to shape the agreement and influence how we work with you and our partners in the future.

If you'd like a paper copy of this survey, please call us on **0300 123 3399** and we'll arrange to send this to you.



Support to get back into work or better paid work

Our Work Smart Surrey and Sussex project aims to reduce the barriers that you might be facing to get a job or better paid work. We know how hard it can be to get the right job, and through this project, we're here to help you identify what you need and support you to achieve each step.

Between September 2024 and April 2025, Work Smart worked with 63 people to support them with writing their CV, job applications, skills and training. Of these, 10 previously unemployed people are now in work, 1 person on a low income job is now in better paid work and 7 are training and improving their skills for work.

Can our employment team help you?

If you'd like to find out more about our Work Smart Surrey and Sussex project and see if we can help you, just complete the self-referral form. You can download this from our website - **www.ravenht.org.uk/work-smart**.

Here's what people we've supported have said about Work Smart Surrey and Sussex:

"I was very happy with the support I received and got me back into the work force."

"My adviser was super supportive and friendly through the whole process."

Free Merstham Movies at Portland House

We're really pleased to be supporting Merstham Movies through our Brighter Community Fund. Merstham Movies is a community cinema bringing people together to watch new and classic films.

The team will be running three film evenings at our Portland House sheltered housing scheme over the next few months FREE for Raven customers in the Merstham area.

Reserve your spot now at the Merstham Hub on Portland Drive and let them know you're a Raven customer.

Tuesday 14th October at 6pm
The Wizard of Oz (U)

Tuesday 4th November at 6pm
Driving Miss Daisy (U)

Tuesday 9th December at 6pm
It's a Wonderful Life (U)



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**.

Surrey Family Information Service – online directory

There is a free online directory you can use to find the details of local childcare, family activities, clubs and support services. It's a brilliant way to see the latest family friendly services in the local area - **www.surreycc.gov.uk/children/support-and-advice/families**



Colour wheel community café in Horley

Are you looking to meet new people or just need a friendly place to relax? If so, head to Horley Baptist Church **every Thursday from 12:30-2:30pm** for the Colour Wheel Community Café.

Enjoy a warm welcome in a relaxed environment, where you can chat over a tea or coffee, and spend some time doing arts and crafts. There's also a small menu of hot and cold drinks and simple snacks, all free of charge!

No need to book – just pop along and see what it's all about.



Walking football at YMCA Redhill

Ideal for those aged 50+, Walking Football is a great way to get enjoyment from football without the running or slide tackles! All the fun, just at a slower pace. You can join in for £4.30 per session (free for premium members) at YMCA Redhill on Fridays from 10:15-11:15am. For more information call **01737 779979**.



Fire safety starts at home

63% of house fires in England are preventable accidents*

Cooking appliances are the leading cause of house fires*

House fires can start quickly and spread fast, but by taking a few simple precautions, you can help protect yourself, your loved ones and your neighbours.



Most house fires start from every-day things, like:

- **Cooking:** don't leave pans unattended, keep an eye on oil so it doesn't overheat or leave items too close to the hob.
- **Electrical:** don't overload sockets, check for damaged cables or faulty appliances.
- **Candles and smoking:** ensure candles and cigarettes are properly put out after use and when in use make sure they're not too close to flammable materials.
- **Heating appliances:** don't put portable heaters too close to furniture or curtains and don't dry clothes on heaters.



It's also important to know what to do in the unlikely event of a fire:

- Make sure everyone in your home knows the quickest way out.
- Keep exits clear from clutter (this includes communal areas and hallways).
- If your building has a fire evacuation plan, follow it carefully.

We recommend that you test your smoke alarm at least once a month and report any problems with it as soon as possible through your MyRaven online account or by calling 0300 123 3399.

*data taken from Morgan Clark, December 2024

Making our services work for you

We understand that everyone's needs are different and the way we provide our services shouldn't be "one size fits all".

You may have a hearing or mobility difficulty, experience anxiety or be neurodivergent. These things can affect how we carry out repairs or support you through our services – but that's ok as we can make adjustments to make it easier for you.

Simple adjustments can make a big difference. For example you might need us to:

- Wait a little longer at the door so you have time to answer
- Call ahead to let you know when we're on our way
- Clearly explain any work we're carrying out

These are all reasonable adjustments we're happy to do to make sure you feel comfortable and supported.

If you haven't yet told us about any health conditions, access needs or support requirements, you can update this information on your MyRaven online account or call us on **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 wellbeing team faced the challenge task of selecting the winners.

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!

Best individual garden

- 1st place**
Mr H from Horley
2nd place
Patricia from Horley
3rd place
Glyn from Merstham



Best container garden

- 1st place**
Stephen and Lynne from Tadworth
2nd place
Lisa from Merstham
3rd place
Sue from Redhill

Best individual garden
1st place - Mr H from Horley

Best container garden
1st place - Stephen and Lynne from Tadworth

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

Best communal garden

- 1st place**
Linda from Crawley
2nd place
Mr H from Horley
3rd place
Valerie from Merstham



Best communal garden
1st place - Linda from Crawley



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: You wanted the opportunity to give feedback on your new home and the lettings process.

We did: We now have a survey that we send to customers after the sign-up process is complete, so we can get a better understanding of how it went.

You said: You wanted us to carry out a more in-depth inspection of windows and doors at mutual exchange to identify any repairs and agree responsibilities to carry these out.

We did: We've amended the mutual exchange survey so that windows and doors are now inspected as part of this.



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

You said: Homeowners wanted more opportunities to meet face to face.

We did: We now have homeowner meetings twice a year and will be introducing video communication to share updates and information.



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.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures – results for April – June 2025

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, we also share our year-to-date results with you, so you can see how we're doing throughout the year.

These TSM results are for April – June 2025

(quarter one of the 2025-26 financial year).

89.2%
Overall satisfaction



84.9%
Satisfaction with repairs



85.9%
Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair



85%
Satisfaction that the home is well maintained



90%
Satisfaction that the home is safe



78.5%
Satisfaction that we listen to views and act upon them



82.2%
Satisfaction that we keep customers informed about things that matter to them



89.3%
Agreement treated fairly and with respect



60.2%
Satisfaction with the approach to handling complaints



80.2%
Satisfaction that we keep communal areas clean, safe and well maintained



82.9%
Satisfaction that we make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods



72.4%
Satisfaction with the approach to handling ASB (anti-social behaviour)



Please note: In the Summer issue of Raven Times, there was a human error in reporting some of the figures for complaints and ASB cases for the 2024-25 financial year.

- Number of Stage 1 Complaints per 1,000 properties is now **113.3** instead of 112.6
- Number of Stage 2 Complaints per 1,000 properties is now **22.3** instead of 22.2
- Number of ASB cases relative to the size of the landlord is now **108.5** instead of 107.9

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 January – March 2025 on our website – www.ravenht.org.uk/delivering-what-matters-performance.

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!

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