

RavenTimes

A photograph of a woman with brown hair and a young girl with glasses sitting on a grassy area. The woman is wearing a grey t-shirt and the girl is wearing a white t-shirt with a cartoon character and yellow patterned pants. They are both smiling and holding several stuffed toys, including a pink pig and a rainbow unicorn. The background is a blurred green field.

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Neighbourhood focus

Here's where you can catch up with news from our Estates team and your Housing Officers.

Summer fun and local improvements in Merstham

We had an absolutely fantastic time at our Merstham community fun day in August. It was great to see so many people come together to enjoy the outdoor space in the sunshine at Nailsworth Crescent.

There was plenty to do, with arts and crafts for the children, refreshments, a free raffle and the chance to meet up with friends and neighbours.

We also officially opened our new 'Paws in the Park', a safe, enclosed space where local residents can exercise their small dogs. To help everyone make the most of the outdoor area, we've added new picnic benches where local

residents can relax and spend time outdoors. These improvements to the communal space at Nailsworth Crescent were planned in partnership with local residents, who shared their ideas with Angela, the local Housing Officer, on how the area could be better used.

Thank you to everyone who came along and to our Housing Officers for organising such a great day!



Taking care of communal areas

Our caretakers and cleaners play an important role in keeping communal areas clean, safe and welcoming.

As part of their regular visits, they carry out checks making sure shared spaces such as hallways, stairs, entrances, bin stores, bike areas, sheds, garages and playgrounds are safe and secure. They look out for repairs, health and safety concerns, overgrown areas, litter and graffiti and log issues to be resolved.

If you see our caretakers or cleaners while they're working in your neighbourhood, do stop and say hello. And if you'd like to raise an issue in your neighbourhood, please raise an enquiry through your **MyRaven** online account or contact our Customer Hub on **0300 123 3399**.

Find out more about our Housing Officers



We've created a short video to explain more about the role of your Housing Officer and how they can support you.

Your Housing Officer is here to help with everything from tenancy support and helping you access the right services when you need them to making improvements in your community and working with local partners.

Watch our video to find out more about our Housing Officers: www.youtube.com/watch?v=ympPBiszuLk



Spotlight – The role of a Caretaker at Raven

We caught up with Stephen, one of our Caretakers, who covers Merstham, Redhill, Reigate, South Park and Woodhatch, to find out more about his role and what a typical day looks like for him. Stephen is part of our Caretaker team at Raven, with each Caretaker having their own patch to cover.

Stephen, tell us what a typical day would be for you

Honestly, every day really is different. I start each day by going through any tasks that have been assigned to me and make a plan for my day, working out where I need to be across my patch. There's often lots that pops up throughout the day that I also factor in as I go.

Q What kind of tasks do you carry out?

It's a real mix of things. I carry out small repairs that I notice to gates, fences, bin stores or entry doors. If the repair isn't a simple, quick one then I'll raise the issue with our repairs team and get that booked in. I'll check all the bin stores are being used correctly and remove small flytipping myself or report to our bulk collection team where larger items have been dumped and investigate where the flytipping has come from. We check for abandoned vehicles on Raven land and arrange to have them removed if they aren't legally roadworthy or taxed.

Then there's other tasks like cleaning or painting over graffiti, litter picking and generally checking our estates are well maintained.

Q What do you enjoy most about your job as a Caretaker?

The fact that every day is different. It keeps me busy and on my toes. I also like getting to know the customers in the areas I work. As I mostly work alone, it's nice to say hello and speak to customers when I'm out and about carrying out my work.

Q What made you want to become a Caretaker at Raven?

I previously worked in the Cleaning team at Raven and when the opportunity came up to become a Caretaker I was really interested as it was a new role that I could make my own. I like having my own patch to work on and really getting to know the different estates and customers.

Q What can customers expect from their local Caretaker?

We're approachable and here to help. It's our job to help keep blocks and estates well maintained and clean. You can stop us if you need help with communal repairs or if something isn't quite right and we'll look into it for you. We work closely with Housing Officers and other teams across Raven who we can go to if we need further support with issues or if you tell us something you need help with.

Q What's the strangest thing you've had to deal with?

It was quite recently actually, someone had left 20 tins of soup in a communal hallway! I never did get to the bottom of where the soup had come from!

Q What do you like to do when you're not working?

I play guitar. I was in bands for years, I'm not anymore but I still enjoy playing... acoustic mainly.

New rights to access information about your home and housing service



From October 2026, a new regulation called the Social Tenant Access to Information Requirements, better known as STAIRs, has been introduced. It gives tenants greater access to information about how their housing provider operates and manages their social housing. This regulation also applies to shared owners where service charges are paid.

STAIRs has been introduced to further improve transparency and accountability, making it easier for you to understand how services are delivered and how we manage our homes and services.

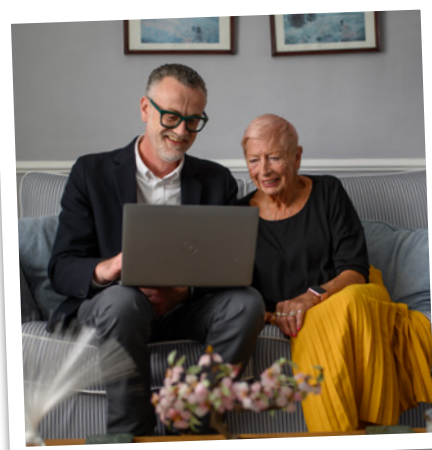
To meet the regulatory requirements, we've created a web page www.ravenht.org.uk/STAIRs where we've published more information about Raven and the services we provide.

This includes links to information such as:

- how we're governed and make decisions
- how we spend money
- our performance
- the services we provide to customers

The second stage of STAIRs will begin on 1 April 2027. From April, tenants and shared owners who pay service charges, or their representatives, will have the right to request additional, relevant information about how we manage homes and services.

We will then respond to this request within regulatory timescales. We'll share more information about this nearer the time.



Getting support from our Customer Hub



We've introduced a new 'contact us' form on our website, giving you another way to get in touch with us.

By asking a few quick questions on the contact us form, we can understand straight away what your enquiry is about and make sure it gets to the right team, helping you to get the support you need as quickly as possible.

For some enquiries, your **MyRaven** online account is the quickest

and easiest way to get help and keep track of progress. We recommend using **MyRaven** to:

- report a repair
- change an appointment
- pay your rent and charges
- tell us about anti-social behaviour (ASB)
- make a complaint

If you'd prefer to speak to someone, then you can of course still call us on **0300 123 3399**.



Have an emergency? Please call!

If you have an emergency, always call us on **0300 123 3399** rather than using the online form or **MyRaven**. This is the case at any time of day, including outside of our office opening hours. Our out of hours team is on hand day and night to deal with emergencies when the office is closed.

Do you have an idea that could make a positive difference in your community?

We're calling for applications to the next round of our Brighter Community Fund. If you've got a great idea for a project, you've got until 27th January 2027 to get your application in!

Local community groups and charities can apply to receive a grant of up to £5,000 to support community-led projects that bring local people together and brighten neighbourhoods.

What kinds of projects can be supported?

Projects must support our purpose of Building Homes, Changing Lives and fit within one of two themes:

Build stronger and more resilient communities: This could include projects that help people improve their skills, wellbeing, opportunities or circumstances. Or it could be activities that bring people together to build positive relationships and strengthen connections in communities.

Improving the local environment: This could include projects that improve shared spaces, make improvements to the local environment, or create places where people feel proud to live.

Some great examples of projects we've funded in the past include cookery classes, beach trips, youth groups, community gardens and football teams.

Could your idea be one of the next successful projects?

Find out more about how to apply by visiting - www.ravenht.org.uk/brighter-community-fund

Celebrating our Raven in Bloom winners

Congratulations to all our winners and runners-up in this year's Raven in Bloom gardening competition!

We know it was a tough year for our green fingered customers with such hot temperatures proving challenging to keep everything looking lush and growing well. Despite this, we still had some fantastic entries and our Wellbeing team and Grounds Maintenance Manager faced the challenging task of selecting the winners.

Thank you to everyone who sent in entries and shared their beautiful gardens and outdoor spaces with us.

Our winners

Best individual garden



Winner
Mandy from Salfords



Best communal garden



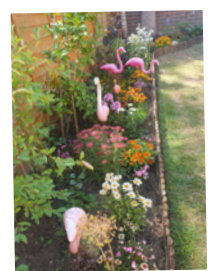
Winner
S from Horley



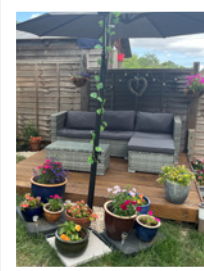
Best container garden



Winner
Sue from Redhill



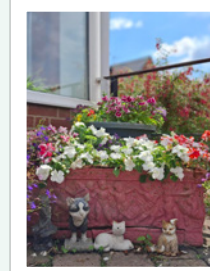
2nd place
Karen from Reigate



3rd place
Samantha from Merstham



2nd place
Linda from Crawley



3rd place
Residents at Portland House in Merstham



2nd place
Julie from Redhill



3rd place
Garrie from Redhill

Check when your next grounds maintenance visit is due

Head to our website and search by your postcode: www.ravenht.org.uk/grounds-maintenance

1st prize
£75 gardening voucher



2nd prize
£50 gardening voucher



3rd prize
£25 gardening voucher



Junior gardener

Winner
Lydia, age 5, from Merstham



Raven Garden Gang – transforming outdoor spaces



This summer we brought together the Raven Garden Gang, a group of Raven team members who volunteered their free time to help customers tackle gardens that have become difficult for them to manage.

Through our Welfare team, we know of customers where health issues, low income or a lack of local support has made maintaining their garden overwhelming. We see this quickly impacting wellbeing, independence and the enjoyment these people can get from their home.

Angela Ellis, Head of our Thriving Communities team, said:
“It has been brilliant to get together volunteers from completely different teams across Raven, all coming together to support customers through these gardening sessions. We’ve done everything from cutting back overgrowth and complete garden clearance through to weeding and tidying up pathways. We’re so thankful to the volunteers for giving up their time over the weekend to help make these outdoor spaces welcoming again for customers.”

One customer said:

“Thank you so much - I appreciate it so much and I’m so pleased.”



Homeowner news

Service charge letters

You should be receiving your service charge reconciliation letter in the post, if you haven't done already. This letter includes a statement of the actual costs of the services you received for the financial year from April 2025 – March 2026. If you have any queries regarding your reconciliation, then please contact the Homeownership team on 0300 123 3399.



Update on our Homeowners' Improvement Plan

One of the big changes we've recently made is the expansion of our Homeownership team, with specialist roles in place to improve how we respond to your queries and improve your overall experience of dealing with us.

This bigger team has allowed us to implement improvements as part of our improvement plan including:

- Earlier notification of planned works, giving you more time to understand proposals and raise concerns.
- Improved online access to current contracts, tender documents and major works information. Which has led to a clearer and more accessible Section 20 information.
- Clearer communication about costs, exclusions and potential changes, and providing regular updates during works, particularly where delays or cost changes occur.
- Wider engagement with shared owners and leaseholders, identifying trends within the customer feedback to gain a greater understanding of the pain points for homeowners.
- Stronger service standards and more consistent advice through improved training and clearer ownership of enquiries.
- Introduction of estate visits to gain better knowledge of the estate and services provided.
- Stronger onboarding, welcome information and follow-up support for new homeowners.



You can see a full update on where we are with our Homeowners' Improvement Plan on our website - www.ravenht.org.uk/homeowner-improvement-plan



Moneywise – ask us anything!

Send your questions to our Moneywise team for expert advice answered here in this regular feature. If you have a money question for the next issue, email it to raventimes@ravenht.org.uk



Q I receive Universal Credit to top up my earnings but am still struggling to afford to pay for my children to have school dinners. Is there any help I can get?

A Yes, there is help available. From September 2026, free school meals eligibility in England has increased, so any child attending a maintained school, academy, free school or non-maintained special school will be entitled to a free school meal if their household receives Universal Credit. Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 will also continue to receive free school meals, whatever their household income. Speak to your child's school directly to check the process for getting the free school meals.

Q My child has been struggling at school for the past few years because of their disability. The school have told me I should apply for the EHCP but I don't know what that is or how to go about it.

A An EHCP is an education, health and care plan. These are plans to set out the additional help that a child or young person

needs in relation to education, health and/or care to meet their needs.

A child or young person with an EHCP will have tailored support depending on their needs, this might include:

- Extra help from a teaching assistant or support worker
- Small group or one-to-one support
- Speech and language therapy, occupational therapy or other specialist input
- Adapted learning materials or equipment
- Support with communication, behaviour, personal care or emotional wellbeing
- Help moving between lessons and during breaks.

Either a parent, or the child's nursery, school or college can ask the council to assess whether the child's needs meet the criteria for an EHCP, and if so to provide a plan. Once a council receives a request for an EHCP assessment they have 6 weeks to decide whether the child has or may

have special educational needs and whether they may need a EHCP as a result. If they decide not to assess a child or young person their decision can be challenged. There are a number of charities who can provide more information about EHCPs, applying for one and challenging a decision, visit

www.ipsea.org.uk and www.sossen.org.uk/help-centre/.



Need more support?

Remember, all customers - whether you're a rented tenant or homeowner - can receive FREE personalised help from Moneywise.

You can raise an enquiry on MyRaven or call 0300 123 3399 for an initial chat.

Damp and mould – Don't ignore it. Don't try to cover it up. Report it straight away.

As we move from summer to autumn, we can see an increased risk of damp and mould building up in homes. Cases of damp and mould are serious and we want to act quickly to fix any issues you may have.

If you see it, smell it or suspect it, then please report it to us straight away. The sooner we know, the faster we can fix it.

What are the signs to look out for?

You might notice:

- Black, green or white patches on walls or ceilings

- Peeling wallpaper or bubbling paint
- Musty smell
- Excess condensation on windows
- Damp patches

Don't ignore any of these signs. Report it to us straight away.

What happens when you report damp and mould?

Awaab's Law requires landlords to investigate and fix reports of health and safety hazards, like damp and mould in your home, within strict timescales.

When you report instances of damp and mould to us we will:

- Investigate your report within 14 days
- Begin necessary repairs within 7 days of the investigation, where there's risk of serious harm
- Agree next steps with you and produce a clear schedule of works
- Carry out follow up checks at six weeks and 12 months after the work is carried out.

You can track your damp and mould case through **MyRaven**, at any time, to see progress.



Tips for reducing the risk of damp and mould

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.

We want to help you avoid this, so here are some simple tips for preventing condensation:

-  **Dry clothes outside**, where possible
-  **Use the extractor fan** when using the bath or shower
-  **Cover pans when cooking** and use the kitchen extractor fan



Regularly **wipe condensation** from windows



Keep a gap between walls and furniture



Ventilate rooms by opening the windows daily



Keep trickle vents open or **leave a small window slightly open**, while you're at home



Keep living areas between **18°C - 21°C**

Need help with your boiler, heating or hot water? Sureserve are our gas experts.

Sureserve is our gas contractor and carries out boiler repairs, servicing and other gas related work in our homes.

Now is a good time to check if your boiler is working as it should, before we get into the winter months. If your boiler isn't working, your heating isn't coming on, or you've got a problem with your hot water, contact Sureserve to report the issue and arrange an appointment.

Please don't ever try to fix your boiler yourself or arrange gas work through another contractor.



Boiler or heating not working?

Contact Sureserve on 0330 002 1169 to report the repair.

Boiler service due?

Sureserve will be in touch with you when your annual service is due to arrange an appointment.

Making improvements to your home

We know how important it is to make your home feel like your own. Whether it's small changes or bigger projects, you may be able to carry out improvements and alterations to your home but you need to check with us before you start.

Simple touches such as painting walls, putting up shelves, fitting curtain rails or blinds, laying carpet, or creating flower beds usually do not need prior permission from us. But if you are planning bigger changes, such as laminate or hard wood flooring, CCTV, sheds,

kitchen or bathroom changes, driveways, walls, heating, plumbing, electrics or adaptations, then you do need to get our approval before you start any work.



How to apply

If you do want to make any improvements and alterations to your home then you need to have written permission from us in place. Complete a Tenant Dwelling Improvement application through your **MyRaven** online account or call us on **0300 123 3399**.

Please wait until you have written permission before booking or starting any work and if you're in the first year of your tenancy, you cannot make alterations to your home.

If you're not sure whether you need permission, please check with us before starting any work - www.ravenht.org.uk/improving-my-home



Thinking about plug-in solar panels? You need permission first

Plug-in solar panels are now available to be sold in the UK through DIY retailers and high street stores but consider them with caution.

They are usually cheaper than the traditional roof mounted systems and can be installed in gardens or on patios before being connected to a household electrical socket.

If you're thinking of installing plug-in solar panels, you must get our written consent before you start. If you install equipment without our permission then this may be a breach of your tenancy agreement and you may be required to remove the installation at your own expense.



Why do you need permission?

Although plug-in solar panels may look simple to install, we need to make sure that plug-in solar panels meet our safety and compliance requirements.

We need to check that your electrical points are suitable for plug-in solar panels. If they aren't, there could be a risk of overloading circuits, damage to electrical items or fire.

We also need to consider where the panels, batteries, cabling and mounting equipment will be placed, as they could impact fire safety escape routes, access for maintenance and the structure of the building.



Please note: If you live in a flat, we will not give permission for panels on balconies, windows, outside walls, or in any shared or communal areas such as gardens, walkways or access routes.



Please contact us before buying or installing plug-in solar panels so we can advise you on the next steps. Call us on 0300 123 3399 or raise an enquiry through MyRaven.



Your guide to making a complaint

If you've been unhappy with an aspect of our service, we want to know. Complaints give us the opportunity to correct where we've gone wrong and improve our services for you. Whilst we do our best to get things right for you first time, we know that sometimes things go wrong and when this happens we do want you to let us know.



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.

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 making a complaint – www.ravenht.org.uk/making-a-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 of the date of acknowledgement, 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 within four weeks of our initial response. A manager who was not involved at Stage 1 will do a review of the investigation and respond within 20 working days.

If we uphold your complaint and agree we've not acted as we should, we will put things right and you may receive compensation.

If you're still unhappy with our response, you can contact the Housing Ombudsman Service for an impartial review – www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk



What information to include in your complaint

We appreciate as much information as possible to help us investigate your complaint. This can be bullet points of information to keep it simple and to the point.

Make sure you include:

- What happened
- When it happened
- Where it happened
- Who was involved (if known)
- Screenshots, photos or documents
- Previous contact regarding the issue



Using AI to help write a complaint

With the increase in readily available AI tools, we've noticed more customers using AI to help them put together complaints. Whilst AI can be a useful tool, as it can help you to structure what you want to say and improve clarity of your complaint, it's important that you use it safely.

What to be careful of

- We always recommend not putting personal or sensitive information into AI tools, like Chat GPT or Google Gemini.
- AI often uses legal jargon and references policies. This information may not always be completely accurate and up to date, so only include references if you understand them and know they're relevant to your complaint.
- Sometimes AI platforms create overly long explanations, which make it difficult for us to single out the main issue and area you're unhappy with. It's best to keep it simple and get to the point of your complaint quickly.
- Make sure you check what's been written as AI may misunderstand your situation.

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 felt that recurring damp and mould issues were not escalated quickly enough.



We did:

We have introduced earlier specialist surveys and reviews by senior members of the team where problems persist or recur so we can get to the root of the issue and put a plan in place.



You said:

Information about rent account credits and customer preferences wasn't clear enough.



We did:

We have updated our standard letter and emails and reinforced the importance of team members recording customers' account management preferences.



You said:

You wanted to see vulnerable residents receiving more personalised support to meet their needs.



We did:

Our Housing Officers carry out a living well in your home visit annually, during which we aim to understand customers' needs and what personalised support they might find useful. Our Welfare team also support customers so we can act earlier with tailored support, organising flexible access arrangements and safeguarding support.



How to provide feedback

MyRaven: use your online account to make a complaint or raise an enquiry. **Call us: 0300 123 3399**

Recent compliments

Whilst we encourage you to make a complaint if you've been unhappy with an aspect of our service, it's also brilliant when you feedback to us, and let us know about the positive experiences you've had from us.

Here's some recent positive comments we've heard:

"They were extremely polite and quick working."

"They got the job done and there's no problems now."

"Electrician came out quick and was very professional and changed the light switch carefully."

If you'd like to share a positive experience, you can let us know here - www.ravenht.org.uk/provide-feedback



Tenant Satisfaction Measures – results for April – June 2026

The Regulator of Social Housing requires all social housing landlords, like us, to collect Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) and report them annually.

These results show how well we're doing at providing good quality homes and services, based on customer answers to a telephone survey.

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 2026 (quarter one of the 2026-27 financial year).

87.6%
Overall satisfaction



87%
Satisfaction with repairs



86.9%
Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair



89.9%
Satisfaction that the home is well maintained



91.6%
Satisfaction that the home is safe



82.5%
Satisfaction that we listen to views and act upon them



85%
Satisfaction that we keep customers informed about things that matter to them



89.3%
Agreement treated fairly and with respect



58.2%
Satisfaction with the approach to handling complaints



100%
Stage 1 complaints handled within timescales



100%
Stage 2 complaints handled within timescales



85.2%
Satisfaction that we keep communal areas clean, safe and well maintained



85.8%
Satisfaction that we make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods



76.6%
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 plan, Delivering What Matters, including performance figures for April – June 2026 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.

I have a complaint:

call us on **0300 123 3399** or raise it through **MyRaven**.

Our Board has a dedicated member with specific responsibility for complaints, Joanne Stewart, ensuring we are held to account and demonstrating our clear commitment to resolving complaints fairly, transparently, and promptly for our customers.



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 or by calling **0300 123 3399**.



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**.



General feedback:

if you have an idea or suggestion about our services then please contact us on **0300 123 3399**.

Got an emergency?

Our out of hours service deals with emergencies outside of our normal office hours (9am – 5pm, Monday to Friday). Call **0300 123 3399** for emergency support for something that is putting you or others at risk, could cause serious damage to your home or makes your home unsafe.

If your issue can safely wait until the next working day, it should not be reported through our out of hours service.

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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