

April 2022

Tenant & Leaseholder

News

thanet.gov.uk/myhome

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Improving your homes and neighbourhoods

We have been busy with our contractors, planning and carrying out improvements to your homes and neighbourhoods.

Playground refurbishments

We will be upgrading two of our children's playgrounds over the coming year -

- Swinford Gardens play area in Margate
- Surrey Close/Lancaster Close play area in Ramsgate



External decorations

We have been carrying out external redecorations to properties on the Newington Estate. Here's what some residents have said about their experience with our contractor Premier Roofing.

'Very polite and cheerful and got on with the job'

'The site manager was helpful and did a good job. He explained everything that was going to be done'

'Very polite people and worked to a very high standard and would recommend to anyone'



Kitchen and bathroom refurbishments

Our contractors DCB have replaced many kitchens and bathrooms over the past year. Here's what some residents told us about their experience of having the work done.

'Excellent workmanship, very happy with the results'

'So pleased with my new kitchen. DCB has been in contact with me throughout. All of the tradesmen have been polite, friendly, helpful and the work carried out is excellent'



Did you know?

The decent homes standard says kitchens should be 20 years old or less and bathrooms should be 30 years old or less.

- If your kitchen or bathroom is due for renewal you will hear from us.
- Report any repairs needed promptly, to help keep your kitchen and bathroom in good condition.
- If you think your kitchen or bathroom is due for renewal please contact **01843 577262** or email **myhome.thanet.gov.uk**.

Investing in our high-rise buildings

We have been carrying out lift refurbishments, replacing CCTV and fire alarm systems to improve the safety and security of the buildings for our residents.

Our Planned Maintenance Team

This team looks after a cycle of major works carried out to your homes and estates. The projects can be replacing a roof, repairing a garage block or replacing windows and doors. Within the team we have three experienced Project Surveyors who each manage various areas of work. The team works closely with specialist contractors to successfully deliver these projects.

Meet Kieran

We met up with Kieran, one of our Project Surveyors, who told us about his day to day work, what he enjoys about his job and some of the challenges faced.

“In my role as a Project Surveyor I oversee key improvements to our residents’ homes.

The contracts I look after are renewal of kitchens and bathrooms, new boiler installations, renewal of pitched roofs and flat roofs, carrying out works on our garages so these can be let and the upgrading of our high rise buildings fire alarm systems”.

“Each day I talk to residents about the work being carried out to their homes, arranging the programme of works with contractors and managing on-going projects. The part of my role I enjoy the most is seeing the end results of our hard work and when a resident is really pleased with the work we have done.”



Our biggest challenge is accessing homes on starting and completing installations

For example, checking for asbestos before work begins or an electrical safety test on completion of a new kitchen or bathroom. These must be completed to ensure the safety of our residents. Prioritising improvements against available budgets is always a challenge.

We are here to help

“There are many reasons people don’t let our contractors in, sometimes people are embarrassed about their home or have issues that they think may get them into trouble. But by engaging with us we can put steps in place to help. If anyone has any concerns before an appointment it is really important they contact us to talk about it”.

Our priority is to ensure the safety of our residents and visitors as well as ensuring that homes are well maintained.



How you can help us

If you receive a letter from us or our contractor booking an appointment which you are unable to make, or you are unsure about why you have an appointment, please make contact. We can discuss any issues with you or change appointments to a more suitable time.

Spring is here!

Our Housing Response Officers and cleaners have been busy across the district - tackling the ongoing issues of fly tipping, littering and nature itself.

Here are the differences they have made in some communities recently:

Before



After



Do you have your own garden?

The trees and flowers are budding which means it is time to think about our gardens. They are a great resource to have, but they do need looking after. If you have your own garden, please:

- Keep it tidy - lawns and hedges need to be trimmed regularly.
- Clear any rubbish and don't allow it to build up in your garden. Did you know - we may charge you the costs for clearing any rubbish not disposed of properly.
- Remember you need permission to install a greenhouse, garage, shed, fish pond, water feature, swimming pool or patio. Did you know - if you move out these may have to be removed at your expense.
- Do not plant trees such as leylandii, they grow very large and block out light, could damage the structure of your home and can cause subsidence.
- Let us know if you struggle with the maintenance of your garden so we can consider the best option for you.

If you have a communal garden - please respect your own safety and that of your neighbours. Do not install a trampoline or leave a paddling pool filled with water unattended.

The 2022 Great British Spring Clean takes place from Friday 25 March to Sunday 10 April. This year the message is simple. Join our **#BigBagChallenge** and pledge to pick up as much litter as you can during the campaign. We are supporting this event and council staff will be out across the district taking part in litter pick days. You can join the the challenge - more details found online at - keepbritaintidy.org/get-involved/support-our-campaigns/great-british-spring-clean

If you'd like to join a local litter picking group/initiative -see our website here - thanet.gov.uk/info-pages/join-a-litter-pick/

**Join the
Great British
Spring Clean**



Who is your Housing Officer?

There have been changes - here are the Housing Officers and the areas they cover. Please call **01843 577262** to contact them.

Ed Elston - Invicta House, Millmead, Dane Valley and Cliftonville.

Linda Stump - Staner Court, Newington, Whitehall, Minster and Manston.

Mandy Gibbens - Margate, Westgate, Birchington and St Peters.

Jessica Dolton - Trove Court and Kennedy House, Harbour Towers, Ramsgate.

Zero tolerance on storing items in communal areas

Please don't leave items in communal areas.

Our Housing Teams are inspecting to ensure that communal areas, including under stairwells, are kept free from personal items such as bikes, buggies, furniture etc. Items in communal areas are a fire hazard and a trip hazard. To keep you safe we have a zero tolerance approach to the storage of any items in communal areas. If we find items being stored in communal areas we will serve a TORT notice, giving seven days for residents to remove them.

If items are not removed we will remove the items and place them in storage.

There will be a charge for any resident that wishes to collect items from storage. Items will only be stored for a set period of three months.



Residents missed over 2,000 appointments last year

We are committed to providing all our residents with a safe home and environment to live in.

This includes checking your electrics, gas appliances, whether there is asbestos in your property and if your property is supplied with water from a communal water tank.

This is a legal requirement and ensures the safety of you and your family. It's important that safety tests and inspections are completed on time.

Last year, residents missed over **2,000** appointments booked with our contractors to carry out safety checks in their home, this cost the council approximately **£200,000**.

As this cost is so high, we are now changing the way we manage missed appointments. If you miss an appointment, you will receive an invoice for the cost of this and the charge will be put against your rent account. The average cost of an appointment for a safety check is **£100** but can be up to **£300**.

Please let the contractors know if you are unable to make an appointment you have been given, with as much notice as possible. Contractors will always work with you to arrange a suitable appointment if you contact them.

If you need any further information please call **01843 577262** or email **myhome@thanet.gov.uk**

Important Council Tax information

A new online portal has been launched on Thanet District Council's website. Sign up at **thanet.gov.uk/openportal** to see your Council Tax, Business Rates, benefits, payment history and notification letters.

You will need your Council Tax account number to register for an account and you can also change the way you pay by moving to Direct Debit.

Reviewing our policies with residents

A big thank you to the Thanet Tenant and Leaseholder Group (TTLG) who have helped us to review some of our Policies. Here are the reviewed Policies that have been adopted so far:

Aids and Adaptation Policy - enables us to provide housing which best meets the assessed needs of tenants with disabilities.

Rechargeable Works Policy - enables us to be transparent and to fairly and responsibly recharge and collect debt for works that we carry out which is the responsibility of a tenant, as per the tenancy agreement. This includes:

- Work that we must carry out for health and safety reasons.
- Work we must do to ensure a property is suitable to be re-let.
- Where a tenant has caused damage that is beyond normal wear and tear. This includes damage caused by members of the tenant's household, family members, friends or other visitors, including pets.

Antisocial Behaviour (ASB) Policy - It outlines the measures we will take to investigate reports of ASB. It provides clear Information to those affected by ASB and the people carrying out ASB. As well as actions we will take to stop ASB by prevention, early intervention and where we will take legal action.

Income Recovery, including Evictions and Enforcement Policy

- To empower tenants and leaseholders to manage their own accounts and the collection of arrears, working to clear debt in an affordable way. Plus the collection of former tenant arrears.

For more information and to download the full policies
visit: thanet.gov.uk/myhome



Children's drawing competition - win an art set!

Is your child a budding artist?
We would love some really eye catching posters to encourage people to think twice about littering and fly tipping.

How to enter:
Send the drawing (preferably on A4 paper) with your child's first name and your address on the back (your address will not be published) to

Resident Involvement Team, Cecil Street, Margate, CT9 1XZ, by 29 April 2022.

There will be prizes for the drawings used and you will see your child's artwork displayed around the district



Queen's Jubilee Celebrations

The Queen is celebrating 70 years on the throne this year as part of the celebrations, communities are being encouraged to hold a street party. If you are interested in arranging your own street party here is some information to help you:-

thanet.gov.uk/street-parties-jubilee-2022/



Apply for a road closure order at
kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-permits-and-licences/apply-to-close-a-road/arrange-a-street-party-for-the-queens-platinum-jubilee

For more information and resources visit - **streetparty.org.uk/**
There are no charges payable to Thanet District Council and Kent County Council to hold a street party.

Let us know if you are planning a street party, we would love to feature these in the next newsletter!
Contact
residentinvolvement@thanet.gov.uk
or **01843 577090**.

Spring recipe

Easy Spring Nests - Melt chocolate in a bowl over a simmering pan of water until it has melted. Pour the chocolate over crushed shredded wheat and mix. Spoon into cupcake cases and press the back of the spoon in the middle to create a nest shape and pop 3 mini eggs into their nest!



Contact the Tenant and Leaseholder Service

Housing enquiries - to discuss your current housing arrangements

Call: 01843 577 262

Email: myhome@thanet.gov.uk

Household and communal repairs

Mears: 0800 023 4320

Gas, hot water and heating

Gas Call Services: 0800 012 9958

Visit thanet.gov.uk/myhome for more information.

For all other Thanet District Council services

Call: 01843 577 000

Email: thanet.gov.uk



If you need this publication in a different format please get in touch by calling 01843 577090.