



Panto fun comes to sheltered housing schemes.



We're here for you this Christmas

We're bringing free Christmas pantos and parties to our sheltered housing schemes this festive season.

More than 20 pantomime shows and Christmas parties will be held across our sheltered housing schemes in December. Rah Rah Theatre Company is performing Little Red Riding Hood filled with toe-tapping, singalong songs and laugh-out-loud comedy for all. There will also be a free Christmas party for residents too at each scheme across the borough. We've worked with our contractor, security company, OpenView, who will be funding the festively

entertaining parties and shows at all our schemes.

H&F Council is also running its annual free Big Christmas Day Lunch for older residents on 25 December. Last year, film star Hugh Grant paid a visit. Who will turn up this year? Find out more at www.lbhf.gov.uk/events/big-hf-christmas-day-lunch

And if you need support from the housing service during the festive season, find out how to get in touch on [page 4](#).

PRIZE DRAW

Fancy winning £50?

Answer the question below to have the chance to win a £50 high street shopping voucher.

The answer can be found inside this month's newsletter.

Question: Which rugby team did the London Fire Brigade Borough Commander play for?

Please send your answer to getinvolved@lbhf.gov.uk by 6 January.

Inside

Free building upgrades and jobs for local people [PAGE 2](#)

Meet the new H&F fire chief [PAGE 3](#)

Cost-of-living support [PAGE 4](#)

Making homes safer and stronger [PAGE 4](#)



Giving back to H&F

An update from Cllr Frances Umeh, Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness

As a council we're committed to investing in and building a legacy of homes for our communities and future generations. During a recent visit, I was delighted to see the progress at one of our housing developments on the Aintree Estate in Fulham where we're investing £61 million to build 134 new energy-efficient homes. Eighty-four per cent of these will be affordable and prioritised for local residents.

The contractor, Higgins Partnership, has also funded a £20,000 planting scheme at the nearby Sir John Lillie Primary School with 450 vibrant new plants and flowers. It's an initiative which is set to transform the school's playground and increase biodiversity. This development is enhancing the environment and is one of the many ways our contractors are giving back to the borough.

As we look to the year ahead, we remain committed to delivering high-quality affordable housing, well-maintained homes and enhancing our community. Have an enjoyable festive season with a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Contractors contribute to our community

We're getting contractors to give back to local people.



Little Red Riding Hood pantomime show at Waterhouse Close.

Funding building upgrades, creating local job opportunities, providing Christmas parties and winter warmer packs are just some of the ways our contractors are giving back to our community.

These initiatives are all part of the 'social value commitments' we insist companies make as part of our procurement process. Through these commitments contractors like adaptation specialist Effectables and MCP property services are helping to provide full-time jobs, apprenticeships, school career talks and building upgrades.

The building upgrades provided by Effectables include renovations to a supported accommodation for care leavers and young people in

need. MCP property services are also in the process of providing four kitchenettes to a semi-independent living accommodation and Kier Group are offering kitchenettes to a domestic refuge as part of their social value commitment.

Security company OpenView which has worked with us for three years is making Christmas special for our residents in sheltered housing. They are funding 21 Christmas pantomimes and parties at each of the schemes.

Other contributions include 25 winter warmer packs of fleece blankets, thermoses, thermal socks, hats, scarves and gloves from housing maintenance provider, Mears.

Our improvement record



We're continuing to make improvements to our housing service to meet your needs. Here are some of our latest performance figures:



Meet your new Fire Brigade Chief

We sat down with the new Borough Commander Helen Christmas to talk fire safety

How does it feel to be the new Borough Commander?

I'm incredibly proud to lead my dedicated team in protecting residents, businesses and visitors. I look forward to working closely with the council, partners and community to make the borough safer.

How did you get involved with the London Fire Brigade (LFB)?

In 2000, after finishing education and working as a personal trainer, I was a little bit stuck on which career direction to take in life. It wasn't until a conversation with a friend who I played rugby with at Wasps recommended the LFB. At that time, there were few visible female firefighters and it wasn't something I had considered. I attended a recruitment day and immediately knew this was for me.

How are you working with the council to keep residents safe?

We have an important relationship with the council and work hard to support each other when it comes to specific risk, prevention and intervention in H&F. Some of the important collaborative work we do with the council includes the Charge Safe campaign [an initiative to help people charge

London Fire Brigade local chief Helen Christmas is helping us keep residents safe.

and store e-bikes and e-scooters safely], electronic information boards in all high-rise buildings to inform residents about safety campaigns and installing public safety water rescue boards along the river with training for businesses and residents.

"Fires involving lithium-ion batteries are one of the fastest growing fire risks in London."



What is one of your biggest fire safety concerns?

Fires involving lithium-ion batteries are one of the fastest growing fire risks in London and a significant proportion of these incidents involve an e-bike or e-scooter. Fires involving e-bikes rose from three in 2020 to 143 in 2023. Damaged and faulty batteries are the real risk and can start incredibly ferocious fires which can spread dangerously out of control within minutes.

What is your advice for residents to stay safe in their homes?

One of the most effective firefighting tools is prevention. The best way to protect you and your family from fire is to understand and reduce common risks in your home including smoking, cooking, electrical and portable heating safety.

For more information on fire safety, please visit www.lbhf.gov.uk/firesafety

Cost-of-living support

Need help with your bills or food? Our dedicated cost-of-living team is here to help everyone get the support they need.



☎ 0800 917 6994

@ costoflivingteam@lbhf.gov.uk

The cost-of-living helpline will be closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

Opening hours on other days over the holiday are **9am to 5pm on 24, 27, 30, 31 December and 2, 3 January 2025.**

Here for you during the holidays

Our housing offices (South area – Cobbs Hall, 226 Fulham Palace Road, SW6 6LL and North area office in New Zealand Way, White City Estate, W12 7DE) will be closed for the holidays from 5pm on 24 December.

Housing officers will be available to support residents across H&F at the North area office from 9am to 5pm on 27, 30 and 31 December.

Both offices will reopen with normal opening times on 2 January 2025.

If you need emergency support during the festive season, please contact us using the numbers below:

- Repairs: 0800 023 4499
- Homelessness: 020 8753 4200

For more information, please visit www.lbhf.gov.uk/housing



Need a different format?

If you would like any of this information in large print, braille, or a different language, please call 020 8753 6652 or email getinvolved@lbhf.gov.uk

Making homes safer and stronger



Structural repairs and fire safety enhancements have just been completed for homes at Askham Court and Aldine Court in Shepherd's Bush. These upgrades are part of our work to improve council homes across Hammersmith and Fulham which involves investing more than £1m-a-week into residents' homes. We're currently delivering improvements including window, roof and fire safety upgrades for more than 2,000 homes borough-wide.

Handling your complaints well

How we handle our residents' complaints has been highlighted for good practice by the Housing Ombudsman in their recent report. The quarterly Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Failure Order report examines how social housing landlords respond to complaints. Since April, we've answered 95 per cent of our Stage One and Stage Two complaints on time. We are committed to following the complaint handling code, make sure our teams are well trained and regularly monitor how we follow the code and fulfil our duties as a landlord.