



Blenheim
Gardens
Residents
Management
Organisation

Rent charges – all change...

Lambeth Council have agreed an annual rent increase of 7.7% from April 2024.

The weekly rent increase ranges from £7.00 per week for a studio flat, to £12.38 for a 4-bed property.

Overall, in 2024/25 there will also be an increase in common service charges of £0.35 per week, this covers services such as estate lighting, caretaking, grounds maintenance and pest control which is in addition to the weekly rent charge.

Other changes which will impact on some residents is the additional increase in garage rental. Tenants and leaseholders will be charged an additional £1.50 per week to £20.50. Non-residents will be charged an additional £5.20 per week to £41.20. The disabled garage subsidy, where a free garage is provided to those with a Blue disabled badge, will be removed completely and replaced with a discount of £5.00 per week on the rent charge.

If you experience any difficulties paying your weekly charges, please get in touch as soon as possible by telephoning 020 7926 0158 or email blenheimgardens@lambeth.gov.uk.



Useful telephone numbers

RMO office - 020 7926 0158

Smith and Byford – gas servicing and repairs – 0800 091 2140 – do not wait until the RMO office is open to report a boiler fault

Pestokill – pest control - 01942 262 717 or online at www.pestokill.co.uk/bgrmo

Lambeth call centre - 020 7926 1000

Out of hours emergency repairs service
0800 121 6122

Out of hours emergency electrical service 07891 885 774

Housing benefit & Council Tax -
034 5302 2312 or email benefitsinfo@lambeth.gov.uk

Age UK - 0800 169 6565

Non- emergency Police service - 101

Noise nuisance 020 7926 5000

We are Investors in People!



Following a reassessment of the Investors In People standard in Jan 2024, Blenheim Garden RMO has again been deemed to be meeting the standard.

Blenheim Gardens was the first TMO to be awarded this status nationally and we have retained this position since 2005.

Investors in People is a global standard for people management, wellbeing and apprenticeships.

Performance for January 2024

KPI Description	Lambeth Results	2023/24 Target	TMO Result	TMO Target Met?	Outperformed Lambeth?
% Rent Collected in year	84.88%	98.50%	99.31%	YES	YES
% Service charges collected	107.37%	105.00%	109.32%	YES	YES
Average relet Void time	TBC	30 days	TBC	YES	YES
% Gas services completed on time	N/A	100%	100.00%	YES	YES
% Repairs completed on time	75.06%	90%	100.00%	YES	YES

Disrepair claims...

what you need to know

We are aware that residents are being actively contacted by teams of people acting for 'no win, no fee' solicitors, and being encouraged to submit claims for disrepair.

Some of the callers claim to have been authorised to do so by the RMO and or the Council – this is NOT the case!

We have neither commissioned nor authorised any third party to contact our residents on this subject. We would always warn you in advance of any such actions.

We would encourage any resident with repair issues to contact us and not engage with lawyers in the first instance. These law firms do not have your interest at heart, they are 'fee oriented'. Their legal fees will be around 20-50 times more than you will receive in compensation, so they are the real winners, not you.

If you sign a 'no win, no fee' agreement with them and there is no disrepair, the law firm may recover their costs directly from you so please be careful what you are signing!

If you have a repair issue then come and talk to us at the RMO office first. If you are experiencing disrepair, for a repair that is the RMO's responsibility, please rest assured we will resolve the issue and you will be compensated, in full, without the need to engage a solicitor or run the risk of paying any fees yourself.

If you have a repair issue, please refer it to our team:

- Call us on 020 7926 0158
- Email blenheimgardens@lambeth.gov.uk
- Visit us at 24 Prague Place, SW2 5ED
- Whatsapp us on 07903 824072, ideally with photos of the repairs



Thank You!

Permits charges

The RMO has increased parking permit charges from 1st April 2024. Please contact us for the new permit costs.

Pram shed rental

The RMO has maintained the weekly pram shed rental charge at £1.00 per week plus VAT. Invoices will be dispatched shortly.

EV charging points – update

The RMO understands that Lambeth Council will be introducing (EV) charging points on the estate later in the year.



Once more information is provided, we will be in touch.

Service charge estimated accounts for 2024/25

Blenheim Gardens RMO dispatched its service charge estimate accounts for 2024/2025 to all applicable homeowner during March. These estimates can be paid monthly, on the 1st of each month. The actual accounts, for the 2023/24 financial year, will be dispatched around September 2024. If you have any queries on your service charge estimated accounts, please contact us. We are here to help.

Housing Ombudsman

The Housing Ombudsman has published its new Complaint Handling Code which comes into effect from 1st April 2024 and all landlords must comply with it.

What does the housing Ombudsman do?

The Ombudsman investigate complaints and resolve disputes involving the tenants and leaseholders of social landlords (housing associations and local authorities), as well as for the voluntary members (private landlords and letting agents). These can include issues surrounding outstanding repairs, poor services being received and or complaints that are not resolved or investigated.

Investigating these complaints is free & independent.

How do I contact the Housing Ombudsman?

Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk
Phone: 0300 111 3000

Voter ID is here...

Polling station voters will now need to show photographic ID at elections in Lambeth.

What you need to know...

What is voter ID?

As part of the new Elections Act, the UK government has introduced Voter ID to make polling station voting more secure at elections.

How will it work?

Everyone voting in person at a polling station will need to show an accepted form of photographic ID to receive their ballot paper.

When did Voter ID start?

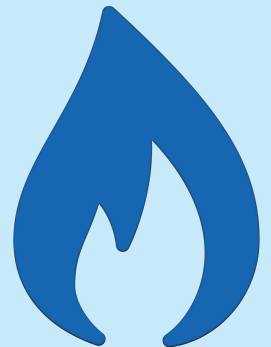
From May 2023 (October 2023 for UK Parliamentary general elections)

The next elections to take place in Lambeth will be for the Mayor of London and London Assembly which is scheduled for 2 May 2024, however a by-election or snap general election can be called at short notice



For more information about Voter ID and the Elections Act visit: lambeth.gov.uk/vote

Blenheim Gardens RMO has extended its contract with our Gas contractor, Smith & Byford for a further 12 months from April 24.



If you have a heating or hot water issue, please DO NOT wait until the RMO is open to report it; Smith & Byford provide a 24/7 service and so you can contact them directly on 020 8722 3436

If you are experiencing delays in getting your heating and or hot water systems reinstated by Smith & Byford, please get in touch with us on 020 7926 0158 or email blenheimgardens@lambeth.gov.uk and we will investigate the issues you are experiencing.

Do you have a pre-payment utility meter?

Many residents have 'Pre-payment or Pay as you go' utility meters' and the RMO are urging residents with these types of meters to contact us.

If you have one of these meters installed for your gas, electricity or both, please let us know. The RMO is seeking some financial support to help residents with utility costs but need to have an understanding of meter numbers on the estate - Please let us know – thank you.



Fire safety - Information for Disabled residents



The RMO recognise that disabled residents may be particularly vulnerable in the case of fire, and we are committed to helping to plan for the safety of all our residents.

Some residents may have difficulty physically trying to escape from a fire within their flat. Other residents may have hearing impairments that mean that they may not hear their alarms.

For anyone that needs help or support, the RMO will arrange to:

- Carry out a personal risk assessment; where we will discuss your needs with you and decide how best to help you keep safe from fire.
- Provide you with a personal emergency evacuation plan. This is a plan for keeping you safe in an emergency. This will be either by allowing you to evacuate safely yourself with the aid of specific equipment or information or by establishing a process whereby you receive assistance from the London Fire Brigade.

We are here to help. Please let us know if you have a medical condition, you are disabled and if this changes or you need additional support. Speak to the RMO if you are concerned about fire safety in your home.

To help us to help you, contact us:
T: 020 7926 0158
E: blenheimgardens@lambeth.gov.uk

The RMO is run by residents for residents...

As a member of this community, you can volunteer to get involved with the RMO and have your say on how we are run. One of the ways you can do this is by joining the RMOs governance board or becoming a member of our finance sub-committee, which is open to all residents. The RMO is also keen to implement a planning sub-committee to review planning applications on the estate and around the area, as well as support the RMOs conservation area project. If you are interested in finding out how you can get involved, please get in touch.

Stay Safe: Watch Out for QR Code Scams



Lately, we've seen more scams using QR codes, which a few of you have been victims of. These scams trick you into visiting fake websites by scanning a QR code, which might look harmless but can be dangerous.

Why QR Code Scams Are a Big Deal

QR codes are everywhere, making things easier to access online. But, scammers use these codes to trick you into giving away your login details by directing you to fake websites that look real.

How to Avoid QR Code Scams

Be Careful: If you get a QR code you weren't expecting, think twice before scanning it.

Know Where It's From: Don't scan QR codes that come from people you don't know or find in places that don't seem right.

Use a Safe QR Scanner: Some apps check if a QR code is safe before you visit the site.

Keep Your Apps Updated: Having the latest updates means you're more protected against scams.

Tell Us If Something Seems Off: If you scan a QR code and something doesn't feel right, let us know right away. It helps us keep everyone safe.

Real Examples of Scams

Example 1: A fake email pretending to be from Microsoft asks you to scan a QR code to set up something important.

Example 2: An email that looks like it's sending you an important document with a QR code to scan.

Example 3: A scam email about salary or benefits, asking you to scan a QR code.

Tips for Dealing with QR Codes

Think about whether you trust the person sending you the QR code.

If an email with a QR code asks you to do something urgently, it might be a scam.

You can sometimes see where a QR code will take you before you go there. This helps you know if it's safe.

Alarmingly the estate has experienced several thefts from vehicle incidents which we are working with police to resolve.

The vehicles have generally been entered from the small rear window being smashed.

If you are a car owner, please remember to:

- Always lock your vehicle, even when leaving it for a moment.
- Lease a garage from the RMO to protect your vehicle.
- Don't leave valuable items visible inside your vehicle.
- Park responsibly, it maybe worth parking 'front first' so the rear of the vehicle is on show,
- Secure your number plates with one-way security screws.
- Use steering wheel or gear lever locks for added security.
- Double-check the vehicle is locked.
- Install a vehicle tracker to monitor your vehicle's activity.

Suspicious person

We have had reports that an individual keeps knocking our resident's doors. He is requesting payment regarding a window cleaning service.

The individual has been using RMO team members names to gain access.

This person is not known to the RMO and if he attend your address, please do not allow access, pay money and always contact the police.

If you have any information on the recent incidents, please get in touch, in confidence:

RMO - blenheimgardens@lambeth.gov.uk

SNT - asmailbox-.brixtonacrelane@met.police.uk

Community support officer: Jay.Keller-

Smith@met.police.uk

In an emergency always dial 999

Responding to urgent need..

There are various schemes offered to residents in need and some are listed below:

Emergency Support Scheme - can support residents who are facing hardship, a crisis, emergency or disaster or have community care and/or resettlement needs. This includes residents struggling to pay bills or afford food. Visit www.lambeth.gov.uk/ess for more information.

The Green Doctor - Offers free advice to residents in improving energy efficiency and reducing their energy bills. More information on the Green Doctor can be found at <https://www.groundwork.org.uk/greendoctor/> and apply on: www.london.greendoctors.org.uk

The RMO operates its own hardship fund, to support estate residents in need. Residents can claim up to £150 as an emergency payment to help with a crisis. For more information on this scheme, please contact us.

The RMO facilitates a weekly **foodbank** from the community hub, 23 Prague Place, SW2. This operates each Weds.

The RMO have a service level agreement with Christians Against Poverty (CAP) to provide residents with free **debt and welfare advice** – 0800 328 0006

Financial Support for Energy Bills - residents can access grants from their supplier usually on their websites.

If this is unavailable, they might be able to get a grant from the British Gas Energy Trust (you don't have to be a British Gas customer) but they will need to get debt advice before applying. Residents can check if they are eligible for a grant from the British Gas Energy trust here: <https://britishgasenergytrust.org.uk/grants-available/>

Grant Finding and help with income increase - there are several websites that can support residents with finding appropriate grants and maximising their income to help with increases in food and energy bills, as well as with training and employment support. The websites below all include a directory of grants residents can apply to:

Turn2Us:

<https://grants-search.turn2us.org.uk/>

EntitledTo:

<https://bit.ly/3VDcY7s>

LightningReach

<https://www.lightningreach.org/application-portal>

MYcommunity Gateway - Lambeth Council commissions Age UK's MYcommunity Gateway for all residents over the age of 18. The service can help residents requiring food, medication, befriending or other support. They can also issue food bank vouchers. Residents can contact the team in the following ways:

Telephone: 0333 360 3700,

Website: connectlambeth.org,

Email: mycommunity@ageuklambeth.org

What causes condensation?

(And our 7 tips to prevent it...!)

What is condensation?

Condensation is drops of water collecting on windows and walls, damp or wet window frames, peeling wallpaper and a damp smell. It is generated from moisture in the air.

What causes condensation on windows and walls?

Condensation happens when your home is too humid and the warm air hits cold surfaces. This leads to the air cooling quickly and forming droplets on nearby surfaces such as walls/windows. There are lots of different causes of condensation. These can include the weather and activities that take place within your home.

When does condensation happen?

Condensation most commonly happens in the colder months. To help you understand, it can happen whenever the air in your home touches a surface which is cooler than the air's 'dew point'.

Can condensation lead to mould?

Yes it can. After the formation of the droplets and dampening of surrounding walls caused by condensation, mould can start growing as small black dots.

These dots of mould can be easily (and carefully) cleaned and removed with mould remover spray.

How to prevent condensation

Keep your home's temperature consistent - This will warm the surfaces of your home and assist in reducing condensation.

Increase ventilation - Leave windows open, ensure your window 'trickle vents' are always open since these will naturally allow air to transfer outdoors.

Carefully place furniture - Try and avoid placing furniture against an external wall and ensure to leave a gap between furniture and walls since these impacts on the air flow within the property. Never place furniture in front of radiators.

Try not to dry your clothes indoors or on radiators – this increases the level of water in the property

Purchase a dehumidifier – this will help to control moisture in the property.

Make sure extractor fans are switched on – they cost pennies to run each year and can make a tremendous difference to the moisture inside your home. Also ensure that if you have a skylight in your bathroom, that this is kept open at all times.

Drying your cloths – purchase a condensing dryer to reduce moisture in your home

How much moisture do you produce?

- 2 active people in 1 day = 3 pints of moisture produced
- Cooking/using the kettle = 6 pints of moisture produced
- Bathing/showering = 2 pints of moisture produced
- Washing clothes = 1 pint of moisture produced
- Drying clothes = 9 pints of moisture produced

Total amount of moisture in one day = 21 pints per day!

RMO is actively identifying repair issues in residents' homes, and we need your support. The RMO has provided each directly managed property a self-certification repairs form which we are requesting you complete and return to us to notify us of any repairs required in your home. If you are experiencing condensation in your home, please get in touch.

Thank You!



EASTER BREEZE 2024

THE EASTER Holiday BootCamp

From, Tuesday, 02nd to Friday, 12th April (10am to 4pm)
9 Days of PURE Activities, Fun Learning & Food BootCamp

Age 7 to 16 and also, Volunteering/Work Experience Opportunities For 16 +++++

● Arts & Crafts, Music, Dance, Workshop

● Multi Sports/Games Boot Camp

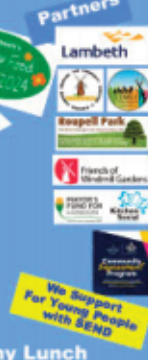
● Youth Leadership & Opportunity Workshops

● The Bicycle Workshop Maintenance & Riding

● A Healthy Lunch Every Day

This is a COVID-19 Safety Compliant Camp and it is taking place at the Windmill Gardens (Park), Blenheim Gardens SW2 5DA with LIMITED PLACES allocated on first-come-first-served basis
Registration is NOW OPEN ONLINE!! To Register, Scan QR Code or GO To: <http://cefl.org.uk/our-sharp-offer>
For More Enquiries, contact: Or Christian on 07706 179 851 or email: community2@CEFL.org.uk

Partners



Brixton Windmill

Spring Baking workshop for families

- Sunday 14 April 10.30am to 12noon

A Spring baking workshop for families with children aged 6 to 12. Learn new baking skills with our Italian baker and take home some delicious bakes. Workshops must be pre-booked



Adult & child £15 | Additional child £5

Organised by Friends of Windmill Gardens
Go to brixtonwindmill.org or scan the QR code for more info. Places are limited

Brixton Windmill

020 3651 7042 | info@brixtonwindmill.org | brixtonwindmill.org | @brixtonwindmill

Blenheim Gardens RMO address and contacts

Blenheim Gardens RMO

24 Prague Place
Blenheim Gardens Estate
Brixton
SW2 5ED

Main contacts:

Office: 020 7926 0158
Repairs: 020 7926 0159
Rent, service charge and tenancy: 020 7926 0161
Fax: 0208 678 7021
Estate Emergencies: 0790 382 4072

Email: blenheimgardens@lambeth.gov.uk
W: www.bgrmo.org.uk
Twitter: @DannyBgrmo1
Facebook: Blenheim Gardens RMO

Diversity and accessibility

If you would like this information in large print, in Braille, or in another format or language, please contact us on 020 7926 0158.

Español: Si desea esta información en otro idioma, rogamos nos llame al 020 7926 0158.

Français: Si vous souhaitez ces informations dans une autre langue veuillez nous contacter au 020 7926 0158.

Português: Se desejar esta informação noutro idioma é favor telefonar para 020 7926 0158

Twi: Se wope saa nkaeboy yi wo kasa foforo mu a fre 020 7926 0158.

Yoruba: Ti ẹ ba fẹ ìmóràn yíí, ní èdè Òmíràn, ẹjọ, ẹ kàn wà l'ágogo 020 7926 0158.