

Resident involvement options

Housing services inspectors

Croydon Council needs housing services inspectors to monitor the services we provide for you and your neighbours.

Becoming a housing services inspector is a great way for you to help the council improve services. Housing services inspectors are local residents like you, who have volunteered to monitor the housing services they receive on a day to day basis.

Housing services inspectors are not tied to going to regular meetings, they undertake their work when the need arises. The detail of what you do and the amount of time you put in for each inspection will vary according to what needs to be done.



David Palmer from Upper Norwood is a housing services inspector.

He says: *"This is hard work, but really enjoyable and working alongside council staff has been a good and worthwhile experience. We work as a team..."*

I'm interested in becoming a housing services inspector, tell me more...

We provide training to residents who want to join the scheme, to help you understand how the council works and make sure you know what to do as a housing services inspector. You will also have support from the other residents on the scheme, some of whom have been doing this type of work for a while.

So, what will I do as a housing services inspector?

1

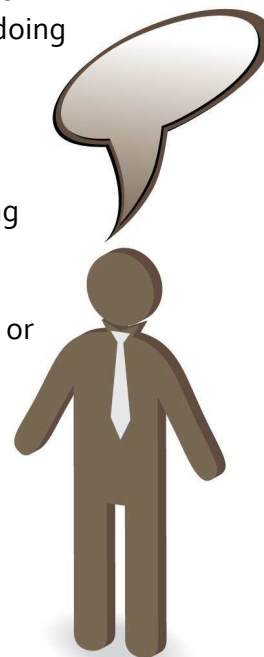
The housing services inspectors work in close partnership with the housing scrutiny panel, who are also council residents and who carry out detailed and comprehensive reviews of council services. The inspectors and the scrutiny panel agree a shared work plan and will look through procedures or talk with managers to find out more about the service.

2

The work involved will vary in each case but could involve inspectors visiting council estates to check that the service is being carried out in the way it should be. Or they might talk to other residents and interview staff to help discover where things are going well and where they could be improved.

3

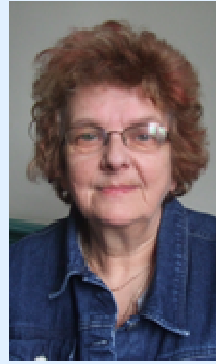
The inspectors report their findings back to the scrutiny panel and will suggest areas for improvement as well as highlighting areas of good service. The findings will be included within the scrutiny panel report which is presented to senior managers, who will be responsible for implementing recommended changes to the service.



What's in it for me?

The main reason most people join this scheme is because they want to improve the services that they and their neighbours receive on their estates. Improvements are already being made to income (rent collection), caretaking and the neighbourhood warden services, as a direct result of previous inspection work.

The amount of time you put in is flexible and being part of the scheme is interesting as you will be involved in a range of different activities.



Marilyn Smithies from Fieldway is a housing services inspector.

She says: *"Many suggestions for improvements to council services have been put forward and some have already been put into practice following these inspections."*

As a housing services inspector, you will also develop and practice essential life and work skills:

- A 2009 survey commissioned by TimeBank through Reed Executive, showed that 94% of employers believe that volunteering can add to a persons work skills
- You will work as part of a team and so will learn effective team-working skills
- Inspectors develop their communication skills, through meeting and speaking with lots of different people, getting involved in discussion groups and presenting information
- The experience will help you improve your organisational skills and the ability to meet deadlines
- Volunteering in schemes like this, can help people to gain the skills, experience and confidence they need to improve their employment prospects, or help them get back into work
- And you will meet other people who share similar goals and we are sure you will enjoy yourself

Residents are paid for any out of pocket expenses, such as travel, parking and use of their home phone upon producing valid receipts.

If you would like to become a housing services inspector, you must :

- be a council tenant/leaseholder;
- be committed to improving services in the area where you live;
- be able to work as part of a small team, where everyone takes an active part in planning and carrying out the work;
- be able to commit to attending meetings and carrying out visits;
- be able to read and understand detailed information about services and policies;
- be able to help produce or write reports; and
- be able to identify how the council could improve your services.

If you are interested in finding out more about the scheme, or if you would like to become a housing services inspector, please contact the resident involvement team on ☎ 020 8726 6100 or email ✉ housing@croydon.gov.uk