



Spring 2026

Open Door

For the Tenants & Leaseholders of Cambridge City Council



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Samantha Shimmon

Assistant Director for
Housing & Homelessness

Welcome to your Spring edition of *Open Door*.

The page opposite tells about our *Housing Improvement Plan* which acts on your annual satisfaction survey feedback, and on feedback from the Social Housing Regulator. You can see improvements made in areas you were least satisfied with, like our handling of complaints and anti-social behaviour cases.

On page 5 you see some achievements of your resident representatives on the Housing Advisory Board. Please consider joining them! Page 14 offers three tenant rep vacancies on the Board, each with an annual allowance of up to £1,400.

The Board meets four times a year in the evenings, and you receive full support for the role. All tenants are welcome but especially the under-40s; those from ethnic minority backgrounds; those with disabilities; and those with jobs, and hence less free time. Those voices would even up representation of the community on our estates.

If the Board isn't for you, our new *Involvement Strategy* on page 14 shows the range of influence you can have easily from your own home, for instance by being an 'Armchair Reviewer' of our policies, or attending an online Residents' Focus Group, or joining a grounds maintenance 'Walkabout' on your estate.

The Social Housing Regulator wants us to keep you informed about how best to use our services. On pages 6 and 7, we explain our anti-social behaviour services: what we offer, when to take action, and who to contact. There is an article on our effective 'Neighbourhood Resolution' approach, and one showing how residents were prosecuted for disrupting neighbours with noise.

Part of our *Housing Improvement Plan* is a major drive to further improve both our repairs service, and fire safety on our estates. Page 8 explains what a 'Disrepair Claim' is around repairs. And page 9 shows the 'Zero Tolerance' action we are taking on items left in flat blocks' communal areas, as they are a fire hazard.

This edition brings you a range of different supports. On page 10 and 11 you can read about ways to protect your mental health in these stressful times. And there is an article on changes around Universal Credit. There are free local resources to get you learning about and using the internet. And have a look at our £5,000 Community Grants for community groups. On page 16, there is *Match My Project* funding for local community groups and projects.

On pages 12 and 13 we explain the Council's new *Climate Change Strategy*, our herbicide-free policy, and our new food-waste bin collection. Page 15 has important updates for leaseholders on being fully insured, and on paying for planned works.

Meanwhile, page 3, opposite, reminds you to please ensure that we have the correct contact details for you, and those of your Next of Kin. And do continue to email us your feedback or suggestions for articles at opendoor@cambridge.gov.uk

With best wishes,
Samantha Shimmon



Why not receive *Open Door* by email instead of on paper?

It's easy to read on any device with wifi, saving on paper and carbon. To receive it by email instead of by post, visit <https://camcit.co/opendooremail>

A *Residents' Editorial Panel* meets to help edit the content of every *Open Door* edition. They ensure that *Open Door* continues to reflect residents' needs and interests. To get involved, please email opendoor@cambridge.gov.uk



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Improvement Plan: You Said It, We Did It

Your Housing Service has an ongoing *Housing Improvement Plan*. It is fed by:

- your feedback on our services in your annual satisfaction surveys
- feedback from the Social Housing Regulator after their inspection of us last year
- performance monitoring of all services (as you see on page 4 of this edition)

The green box on the right here shows some of the improvements that we've put in place across 2025 as part of this *Housing Improvement Plan*. For instance, in your satisfaction survey feedback last year, most of our scores had improved over the previous two years. But how we handle complaints still scored low, and how we handle anti-social behaviour cases. You can see here that improvements to them have now been delivered in our *Improvement Plan*.

Some actions - like those improving our handling of mould and damp cases - are part of a national effort driven by new legislation.

Senior housing managers work on our *Housing Improvement Plan* quarterly to ensure its actions are moving forward, and to monitor any risks. The resident representatives and City Councillors of the Housing Advisory Board also receive quarterly updates on its progress, where they can challenge and question the *Plan*.

To view the *Housing Improvement Plan* and their discussion of it at their February meeting (Agenda item 7),

Some Housing Improvement Plan actions in 2025

For the Transparency, Influence & Accountability Standard, we:

- made the lead the Cabinet Member for Housing also the person responsible for complaints
- ensured our *Complaints Casetracker* system gives robust reporting to the Social Housing Regulator
- methodically shared performance information about our housing, health and safety, and compliance
- developed the Housing Advisory Board to strengthen tenant representation at strategic levels
- reviewed and improved the content of our housing webpages



For the Tenancy Standard, we:

- planned for a 'census' survey of tenants to improve our understanding of their household needs

For the Neighbourhood and Community Standard, we:

- improved the handling of anti-social behaviour cases between City Homes and our partners, the Public Safety teams

For the Safety and Quality Standard, we:

- created a five-year cyclical stock condition survey of our homes
- reviewed damp, condensation and mould processes in preparation for new law
- created a new reporting solution for damp, condensation and mould cases
- also improved reporting mechanisms for fire-safety actions on estates

visit www.cambridge.gov.uk and enter 'Housing Advisory Board February 2026' in the Search box.

The next phase of the *Plan* over the coming months will focus on actions like:

- organising a large-scale survey of the maintenance condition of all our homes
- strengthening the performance of the Council's contractors on our estates
- implementing our new *Tenant & Leaseholder Involvement Strategy*

- organising a census of all our tenants so we can better understand the profiles and needs of the households in our council homes

Open Door will keep you updated on the progress of the *Improvement Plan*, and will show how new rounds of feedback from you in your *2026 Tenant and Leaseholder Satisfaction Survey* will shape its next round of actions.

Rent convergence is coming: what it will mean

What is rent convergence?

Rent convergence is a national policy that allows Councils to gradually adjust some tenants' rent so that, over time, similar council homes have similar rent levels.

Historically, rents for council homes have not always increased at the same rate. This means that some tenants in similar properties may currently pay slightly different rents. Rent convergence allows councils to make small adjustments over a number of years to even up rents for similar properties.

What changes are planned?

Under the future budget agreed by Councillors, the Council is planning the following adjustments where needed. These will be in addition to the standard annual rent increase set by government.

- From April 2027: up to £1 per week additional rent increase
- From April 2028: up to £2 per week additional rent increase.

Why is the Council doing this?

Introducing rent convergence will help

the Council to:

- make rents fairer and more consistent across similar council homes
- ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the Housing budget
- continue investing in repairs, maintenance, safety work and improvements to council housing
- continue to build new council housing

When will tenants hear more?

The first potential rent convergence increase is planned for April 2027. Before then, tenants will receive more information in their annual rent letters next year. And the Council will keep residents informed about any changes.

Need support or advice?

If you ever have concerns about paying your rent, support is available. The Council's Tenancy Sustainment Team can provide advice about benefits, budgeting and financial support. You can email them at tenancy.sustainment@cambridge.gov.uk or phone 01223-457000 and ask for the Tenancy Sustainment Team.

Your contact details

The Council is asking all tenants to please ensure that we have up to date contact information for you, and for anyone named on your Tenancy Agreement.

Over the years, your phone number or email address (if you use email) may have changed. The people who make up your household may also have changed. Please ensure that we have all this information correctly.

Please ensure too that you have given us the contact details of your Next of Kin, and the Next of Kin for anyone named on your tenancy. This is crucial for ensuring your wishes are respected for how you want your home's contents dealt with on your death.

To update your information with us, please phone 01223-457000 or visit <https://forms.cambridge.gov.uk/contactus/launch>

You monitoring us

Rate our performance

The 'traffic-light' colours below show how some of your housing services performed in the last three months of 2025. Several times a year, your resident representatives on the Housing Advisory Board (see page opposite) monitor and challenge a much wider set of performance results like these. Each *Open Door* edition gives you snapshots from those ratings.

Repairs completed in one visit 86.9% Target: 85%	Satisfied with most recent repair 73.6% Target: 80%	Homes with valid gas certificate 99.9% Target: 100%
Emergency repairs done on time 96.1% Target: 97%	Non-emergency repairs on time 98.9% Target: 85%	Repair appointments kept 95.7% Target: 90%

But it's also out on your estates that volunteer tenants and leaseholders monitor these performance trends. They act as resident inspectors, scrutinising the quality of work done on estates, from the standards of grass-cutting to that of the repairs done on vacated homes before they are re-let. See page 14 for ways to join them.



An easy *Complaints* process

If you are ever unhappy with a service or response from your council landlord, please try first to resolve it with the staff involved. But if you are still unhappy with our service, please use our simple Complaints Process, so we can put things right for you.

It's quick and easy to make an official complaint, either on our website at www.cambridge.gov.uk/compliments-complaints-and-suggestions or by phoning us at 01223-457000 and asking for Complaints.

You'll just need to tell us...

- your name, contact details and the details of your complaint
- what you would like us to do to put things right
- whether you have raised this issue with us before and if so, who was dealing with it

We will tell you who is dealing with your complaint, and we will aim to give you a response within 10 working days. If we need longer, we will say why.

If unhappy with the Council's response to a complaint, customers can escalate it to 'Stage 2'. Escalated cases tend to be more complex, and can require more time to resolve. For instance, in the three

months up to December 2025, 68.4% of these Stage 2 complaints were resolved within the target time of 10 working days.

If you are ever unhappy with the final outcome of a formal complaint to us, you could then take your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman. They are an independent, impartial service aiming to improve residents' lives and landlords' services by investigating unresolved complaints. For support in using them, please visit <https://socialhousingcomplaints.campaign.gov.uk>

Performance on complaints

In the last three months of 2025, your housing service resolved 78.4% of 'Stage 1' complaints within the target time of 10 days. (The average at similar Councils is 60.5%).

68.4% of 'Stage 2' complaints were resolved within the 10 days target. (The average at similar Councils is 64.5%).

As in the article further above, our performance trends on complaints too are monitored regularly by your resident representatives.

Influencing the Council

Resident reps want you to join them



Decision-making at the heart of the City Council is influenced by five tenants and one leaseholder from our estates.

These roles are reserved for you, our residents, on the Council's Housing Advisory Board, where you can sit with equal powers alongside City Councillors.

Three of these positions are currently occupied by, from left above: tenants Diana Minns and Mandy Powell-Hardy, and leaseholder Diane Best.

There are currently vacancies for three further tenants, with allowances of up to £1,400 per year.

Every four years, all city council tenants and leaseholders receive a voting pack, to elect your chosen residents onto the Board. Since 2006, one seat has been reserved for a leasehold representative.

The next elections won't be until 2028. But three vacancies have arisen that can be filled by eligible tenants without waiting for an election. See page 14 for details.

As current tenant rep Diana Minns, first above on the left, has put it:

'Do you care about where you live? Do you want to make things better? Do you think council tenants should be heard loud and clear by the City Council? Would you like to be involved in deciding how our services should be run?'

If yes is your answer to even some of these questions, please consider becoming a resident representative with us on the Housing Advisory Board.

I've been one for some time and I enjoy every minute of it! It gives me the chance to convey what tenants want and need.

When council policies and procedures are being set, we bring in our first-hand experience of actually receiving council services - the day to day realities of living in a council home.

We get lots of support for our role, including training on how the Council works, how the finances of the housing service work, and visits to new-built housing sites. We'd love you to join us on the Housing Advisory Board.'

To register your interest for a seat on the Housing Advisory Board, visit www.cambridge.gov.uk/housing-advisory-board-representatives or use this QR code.



Or for more information, email resident-involvement@cambridge.gov.uk or phone us at 01223-458323.

What do resident reps on the Board do?

The Housing Advisory Board meets four times a year to debate and discuss major decisions about your council housing in the city. Board members first read the background papers and reports at home.

At the official Board meeting, everyone has the chance to question and debate each topic in turn before voting on it. Agendas and minutes are always published online at <https://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx>

For instance, at their February meeting they debated topics like:

- the Finance Budget for the Housing Service for the year ahead, and the 30-year Business Plan
- a quarterly report on the performance of Housing services (a more detailed version of the one on page 4 of this edition)
- a report on progress of the *Housing Improvement Plan* (described on page 3 of this edition)
- a report on lifts on council estates - maintenance programmes, safety inspections, plans for dealing with breakdowns, etc.

- the Council's *Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement Strategy, 2026-2028* (described on page 14 of this edition)
- the schedule of the Board's meetings ahead, and those of related Scrutiny Committees at the Council

The Board's resident reps also play an important role in helping to maintain standards in your Housing service. From the estates, they receive feedback from other residents who monitor the quality of work done out there on homes and estates.

And internally within council services, they also scrutinise performance information on every service area that affects your housing and estate across the year.

To contact your resident representatives at any time, please email hsc.residents@gmail.com or phone 01223-458323 to leave them a message.

Or have a look online at www.cambridge.gov.uk/housing-scrutiny-committee-elected-tenant-and-leaseholder-representatives

The Board's journey so far...

Created in 2002, the Board was the first in the country where residents have equal voting rights alongside Councillors. It's still the only one where resident reps are elected by all tenants and leaseholders.

Now on its third name change, its early resident representatives included:

- the popular, dedicated tenant activist John Marais, who passed away last year
- Terry Sweeney, a former Mayor of Cambridge, who's now enjoying retirement in our sheltered housing
- the expert, experienced leaseholder rep Diane Best (pictured above), constantly re-elected to the Board over the past 20 years!

We are proud to have seen elected onto the Board five Black residents, several openly gay residents, survivors of domestic abuse, residents with disabilities... The least represented to date have been younger residents: sadly, we've only had three so far.

What perspective could you bring to the mix, on this ongoing journey?



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www.facebook.com/getmovingcam



cambridge.gov.uk/resident-involvement

Keeping your estate safe

Recognise and report anti-social behaviour

What is antisocial behaviour?

Antisocial behaviour is behaviour that makes people feel harassed, alarmed or distressed, such as:



Being aggressive or using threatening language



Intimidation or harassment



Graffiti



Noise from neighbours, including music or shouting if it causes a disturbance



Vandalism and damage to property



Misuse of an area

When surveyed, over 50% of people say 'More needs to be done' to tackle anti-social behaviour. Yet 57% of people who either experience or witness anti-social behaviour don't report it! To protect us all - both as individuals and communities - this needs to change.

Enduring anti-social behaviour is bad for our health and bad for the community. So please have a look at the six kinds of anti-social behaviour shown here on the left.

Do you recognise any of them as happening on your estate? The Council doesn't tolerate any of these forms of anti-social behaviour on our estates.

So please do contact the Council to report any that you see, hear or experience.

To report anti-social behaviour on your estate, phone the City Council at 01223-457950 or email asbsection@cambridge.gov.uk

But if a crime is being committed or someone is in immediate danger, always call the police at:

- 101 for non-emergencies
- 999 for emergencies
- email www.cambs.police.uk

What is Neighbourhood Resolution?

It's a simple, community-led way to solve local disputes and problems. When tensions arise between neighbours, it can affect far more than just the people directly involved.

Conflicts - for instance about noise, boundaries, parking, pets, or communication breakdowns - can ripple through a street or block, leaving everyone feeling uncomfortable in their own community.

That's where *Neighbourhood Resolution* comes in. It's a calm, constructive, community-focused way to tackle problems early, before they escalate. This informal, voluntary process helps neighbours work through disagreements in a safe, structured way.

Instead of formal enforcement or legal action, it supports residents with the chance to talk openly, listen to each other's perspectives, and agree on practical, workable solutions. At its heart, it's about restoring relationships, not assigning blame.

Many residents who have experienced it say they would recommend the scheme to others. Their feedback comments include:

- 'Keep up the good work, it changes peoples lives.'
- 'We were pleased with the way the volunteers handled the meeting.'
- 'I can't thank the volunteers enough for what they did. The outcome couldn't have been any better. To think they volunteer to do this is amazing.'

How does it work?

1. A Trained Facilitator Gets in Touch

The coordinator of the scheme will contact each person and visit them separately. This gives everyone the opportunity to share their experience, express how the situation affects them, and explore what they would like to see happen.

Trained volunteer facilitators will then make contact and work with all parties to discuss the issues and possible ways forward to resolve them.

2. A Voluntary Meeting Is Offered

If all parties agree, a face-to-face meeting - sometimes called a Resolution Panel or Restorative Meeting - is arranged. This is completely voluntary and takes place in a neutral, private and supportive environment.

3. A Respectful Conversation Takes Place

During the meeting, trained facilitators guide the conversation so that everyone is calmly heard. The aim is to build understanding: often, neighbours simply haven't had the chance to explain their situation or hear the other side calmly.

4. A Shared Agreement Is Reached

During the meeting, the parties will make suggestions from which they will draw up a shared agreement, tailored to their situation.

These can be as simple as new communication approaches, or as specific as changes in people's routines. Though the agreement is not legally binding, it is often respected by all parties.

The coordinator and facilitators will be there to help and guide you through the entire process. You can also invite someone to accompany you for extra support, such as a partner, friend or neighbour.

If you would like to know more, please contact the *Neighbourhood Resolution Panel Coordinator* at 01223-457836 or email Carole.Langton@cambridge.gov.uk Or visit www.cambridge.gov.uk/neighbourhood-resolution-panel-scheme

If needed, report it

Tenants prosecuted for noise

Last year Cambridge City Council prosecuted several noisy neighbours for causing ongoing noise nuisance in their communities.

First, the Council visited and warned the noise-makers in person multiple times. At the home of one of these residents, the Council went on to seize their stereo equipment on five different occasions.

The Council then issued Noise Abatement Notices against these residents, who lived in Abbey, Arbury and Trumpington. These notices legally require the person to take immediate action to reduce their noise levels.

When the residents failed to do so, the Council took them to court and got them prosecuted. In court, they were found guilty of breaching their Noise Abatement Notices on multiple occasions. They all received heavy fines, with any stereo equipment being seized.

The Council also applied for a Criminal Behaviour Order, which the court granted. This is done if a perpetrator may still fail to correct their behaviour

even after prosecution, so that a stronger enforcement is required. Failure to comply with a Criminal Behaviour Order can result in an unlimited fine or five years in prison.

The lead Councillor for the Environment said on behalf of the Council: 'Everyone deserves to live in a community where neighbours are respectful and considerate towards each other.

Living with constant noise nuisance can be intolerable, and the impact it has on others is awful.

If residents don't feel comfortable talking to their neighbours who are causing the issues, or if there are no improvements after attempting to talk to them, then it is important that reports are made to the Council. The Council can mediate and where necessary take action to stop it.'

If you need to report neighbour noise, please phone the City Council at 01223-457950 or email asbsection@cambridge.gov.uk, or report it online at www.cambridge.gov.uk/reporting-antisocial-behaviour

How the Council responds

Our *Anti-Social Behaviour Policy* defines how we categorise reported incidents, using risk assessment so we can respond appropriately.

For high level issues we aim to respond within one working day. All other reports are responded to within five working days.

If the issue isn't urgent, we may ask you to keep an anti-social behaviour diary for up to two weeks, to help us understand what's happening. The lead officer will carry out further investigations, and we'll keep you updated so you always know what's happening.

Depending on the nature of the reports and the evidence we receive we may:

- speak with or write to the person causing the problem
- gather more evidence
- refer the case to a *Neighbourhood Resolution Panel* (see page opposite)
- use formal tools such as Community Protection Notices
- apply to the court for an Injunction or, if all other options have failed, apply to the court for possession of the property

Our aim is always to resolve issues early and fairly, but we will take firm action when needed to protect the community.

Fancy 'Coffee with a Cop'?

Did you know that Cambridge Police host local **Coffee with a Cop** sessions? It's an informal catch-up where residents can discuss any concerns with community police.

Recent topics raised have included anti-social driving, noise, fly tipping, graffiti and general anti-social behaviour from some local residents or from people visiting the neighbourhood.

Both the police and the Council are committed to addressing anti-social behaviour. We encourage residents to speak out and seek help if you experience it. You are not alone and shouldn't suffer in silence.

So either report it to the Council at 01223-457950 or email asbsection@cambridge.gov.uk or visit www.cambridge.gov.uk/reporting-antisocial-behaviour

Or visit the 'Policing Cambridge City' page on Facebook, to see where and when the next **Coffee with a Cop** session will be.



Homes in good repair

What is a 'Disrepair Claim'?

Cambridge City Council is committed to keeping your home safe, comfortable, and well maintained. Most repair issues are resolved quickly when tenants report them through our usual channels.

But sometimes repair situations can feel more complicated. This article explains what a 'disrepair claim' is, and how we can work with you to resolve it as quickly as possible.

A disrepair claim is a legal action when a council tenant feels that repairs have not been completed within a reasonable time, or that the work done has not resolved the issue.

Some legal firms offer 'No win, no fee' terms, even encouraging tenants to start a claim while our repairs are already in progress. You have the right to do that, but contacting us first is the quickest and safest way to get your home repaired.

If you start a disrepair claim, there are significant delays, as solicitors must handle all communication. They may decide that they need additional assessments or reports done. And strict legal timelines slow down the progress of any practical repair work on your home.

Because of this, the Housing Ombudsman and national guidance recommend that tenants always report issues directly to their landlord first and allow time for investigation and repairs to be carried out, before considering proceeding to launch any disrepair claim.

Why it's better to come to us first

When you report directly to the City Council any repairs that you need:

- we can arrange inspections quickly, identifying causes and booking repairs without delay
- you'll receive regular updates
- we can support you if repairs affect your day-to-day life
- we can put temporary measures in place for complex cases

If major works are needed and you have to move out temporarily, we help with temporary accommodation, and ensure your right to return home.

But if a legal claim is made too early, your whole process can take significantly longer. All your communication with us must then go through solicitors, which is slow and costly. Repair works may not begin until diverse legal matters are clarified. And additional surveys may be required.

Before considering making a disrepair claim, it's important to understand both the benefits and drawbacks.

Potential benefits:

- may include an independent expert survey
- may reach a legally binding outcome
- potential for higher compensation
- solicitors are motivated to win the case

Drawbacks:

- process takes 3 months to 2 years, further delaying your repair work
- legal processes can be stressful and may require you attending court
- you may still owe money, even under 'No win, no fee' arrangements
- some claims are dropped with no outcome

The Housing Ombudsman - a safer alternative

The Housing Ombudsman Service is:

- free, independent, impartial and fair
- has the powers to order repairs, apologies, compensation, or service improvements for the tenant
- typically takes 6-12 months, but carries no cost or financial risk, and will always give you a final decision

To contact them phone 0300-111-3000 or visit www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/contact-us

Or visit www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/centre-for-learning/key-topics/repairs

Reporting to us is your fastest route

Our goal is always to fix your issue as soon as possible. You coming to us first helps us achieve that.

The quickest way to resolve any repair issue is to report the problem to the City Council directly. We will:

- investigate the issue promptly
- send out contractors quickly
- keep you updated throughout
- support you if the issue is complex or disruptive
- ensure you can return home if works mean you have to move out temporarily

We are here to help, and we want to resolve issues as smoothly and quickly as possible. If you're unsure about a repair, or thinking about making a disrepair claim, or you have received advice from a legal firm, please get in touch with us before making any further decisions.

Just phone 01223-457000 and ask for the repairs team, or email housing.repairs@cambridge.gov.uk



Keeping everyone safe

Fire risk: Zero Tolerance on left items

Your *Tenancy or Lease Agreement* states that you must never leave anything in communal areas - indoors or outdoors - however briefly. The Council takes a strict **Zero Tolerance approach**, with powers to remove items and charge offenders £95 in costs, plus fines of up to £400.



of the dangers. Two show communal corridors that should, for the safety of everyone, be completely empty, with no objects of any sort. Instead, you see that these are obstructed with bicycles, scooters, toys, bags, benches...!

The other two photos show the amount of flytipping and abandoned items that we had to clear out of bin stores. Again, there should be absolutely nothing in bin stores but fully closed bins.



Items posing a potential fire risk in communal areas will be **removed immediately by the Council**. Any other items must be removed by the resident within 5 working days, or the Council will take them. Leaseholders who let out their property must ensure their tenants are fully aware of this policy.



Open Door met with Jamie Lambert, the council officer implementing these rules on your estates.

Jamie, what's your main message?

'It's quite simple really. Anything left in a communal area:

- increases the risk of a fire
- increases the risk of a fire spreading
- obstructs residents getting out in an emergency, especially those with reduced mobility or small children
- and obstructs emergency services trying to get in

Any nightmare scenarios out on the estates?

Unfortunately, yes! I've attended several incidents where, as in the photos here,

bin stores and storage cupboards had items dumped in them, or we found items abandoned in communal corridors.

The recent photos on this page show the sheer extent



All these obstructions cause a huge fire risk. First, they risk catching and spreading fire themselves. And they can obstruct residents trying to escape a fire, as well as the fire services trying to get in.

Mis-use of these communal spaces increases fire risk, and can be an increased risk for arson too. That's why we impose such big fines when residents show so much disregard for the safety of their neighbours.

So please do report these issues to the Council as soon as you see them. Report them anonymously if you wish. The sooner issues are reported, the better, and the safer your homes and communities will be.

Any advice for newer residents?

In new-built flats and for new tenants, I urge you to ensure you really do know all the rules against storing items in communal areas. And ensure you're familiar with the fire safety information for your building. It takes five minutes to check it, but it could save your life, and your family's lives.



Any other tips for fire safety?

We run **Community Clean Up Days** in local neighbourhoods. These enable residents to dispose of unwanted items, big or small, for free.

And if you own an electric bike or scooter, ensure you read carefully the product guidance on charging and storing them. Mobility scooters must be stored inside the resident's home, or well away from communal areas. Residents must not store or recharge electric bikes or scooters in communal areas other than those designated by the Council.' Also, read the guidance on e-batteries at www.cambsfire.gov.uk/community-safety/take-charge-and-be-safe/e-bikes-and-e-scooters

For safety reminders that could save your family's lives, see www.cambsfire.gov.uk/home-safety

Jamie, how can residents get rid of waste items legally?

'If they fit, place them in your estate's waste or recycling bins. Or take them to Milton Recycling Centre for free. For items you can't transport, the Council will remove up to 3 items for £38 (plus £6.20 each for up to 6 extra items). Request it at www.cambridge.gov.uk/arrange-a-bulky-waste-collection or phone 01223-457000.

One final question for now: how to report left items?

To report items left in indoor communal areas, please email me at Jamie.Lambert@cambridge.gov.uk or phone 01223-457000. For flytipping or items left in estates' outdoor communal areas, please report them online at www.cambridge.gov.uk/reportflytipping or phone 01223-457000.'

Free support in difficult times...

Protect your mental health

Mental Health Awareness Week

is coming up on 11-17th of May. It's a welcome chance for us all to focus on building and protecting our mental health, especially in these times when the wider world seems so unstable. For details, visit www.mentalhealth.org.uk/our-work/public-engagement/mental-health-awareness-week

Negative news overload?

Studies show that constantly hearing negative news from around the world can overwhelm us and damage our mental health. We feel empathy for people suffering in wars and climate disasters. But we also feel powerless to help. So the sheer amount of this news can depress and deplete us. We feel emotionally drained, anxious and guilty.

With smartphones and other devices on round the clock, it can feel hard to limit how much information and news we are exposed to. But it is crucial to take back control, setting limits to the amount of bad news flowing into your life. Letting it take away your wellbeing is of no help to anyone else.

Overwhelm and 'Doomscrolling'

Otherwise, it can feel like the world is in constant crisis. We've been living through a pandemic, a growing climate crisis,

wars in Europe and the Middle East, economic instability and political unrest. Smartphones and media plug us into this round-the-clock. We may 'doomscroll', compulsively watching material or comments about all this on media or online, even though it leaves us feeling ever more anxious, low or frustrated.

Experts' advice for wellbeing

You can greatly reduce this overwhelm with the following simple steps. First, turn off 'Push Notifications' on your phone's settings. Then prune your social media, unfollowing negative sources for a while. Follow some 'Positive News' sources instead.

Next, turn private spaces like your bedroom, bathroom and couch into 'Phone-Free Zones' where your mind knows it has a haven to relax, rest, unwind and enjoy more positive times. (Use an alarm clock to wake up, instead of your phone.)

Then choose a week where you set limits for checking news or scrolling social media, like '10 minutes a day, at 6pm'. Set times when your phone is switched off and put away, like 'After 7pm each evening'. Try writing these 'Time Off From Negativity' limits on notes stuck to your fridge door and bathroom mirror.

Free mental health supports for you

If things start feeling a bit too much even after trying the tips on the left here, there is lots of free support available locally:

- **Mind** in Cambridge provide community-based well-being support, Good Mood Cafés, peer groups and help for anyone experiencing mental health challenges. Visit them at www.cpslmind.org.uk

- **NHS Talking Therapies** in Cambridge provide psychological support for issues like anxiety and depression. Visit them at www.cpft.nhs.uk/talkingtherapies

- **How Are You? (HAY)** offers local activities and services to support your well-being. Find something new to try with them this Spring, at www.haycambridge.co.uk

For the full local picture of mental health helplines and support services, see **Cambridge's Mental Health Information Directory**. Just visit www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk and type 'mental health directory' in the Search box.

Important changes to Universal Credit

The government is ending benefits like:

- Income-related ESA
- Income Support
- Income-based JSA
- Some Housing Benefit claims

Everyone still receiving them will receive a 'Migration Notice' letter saying they must now apply for Universal Credit instead, if they are not already receiving it. Crucially, the letter gives you a deadline for making your Universal Credit claim.

You must actively apply for Universal Credit - you will not receive it automatically. So don't delay in making your claim: you could miss out on money you're entitled to. Support is available below if you need help in making or checking your claim.

Where to get help

- Citizens Advice *Help to Claim* service: free support from trained advisers at tel. 0800-144-8444
- City Council: 1-1 support at tel. 01223-457000 (ask for the Tenancy Sustainment Team).

Universal Credit is increasing

Universal Credit payments are rising above inflation from April. So it's a good time to make your claim, or check your existing one. It could give your household a significant income boost. It could also make you eligible for:

- cheaper phone and internet deals
- reduced water bills
- extra help if you are working, caring, or have a disability

Having more money coming in (or even staying the same while costs rise) is a good time to review your budget. You can receive free help to:

- set up payment plans for debts
- reduce your bills
- plan ahead for larger expenses
- start saving a little each week

Check how much you could get

Use the benefits calculator on the Council's website to find out what you may be entitled to, at <https://cambridge.entitledto.co.uk> If you're already on Universal Credit and want free help to make the most of your income, visit

www.makingmoneycount.org.uk Or for 1-1 support at the Council, phone 01223-457000 and ask to be put through to our Tenancy Sustainment Team.

Pension Credit: Are you missing out?

The State Pension recently increased by 4.8%, but many older residents don't realise they could also get extra income through Pension Credit. You may qualify if your weekly income is below:

- £227.10 if you're single
- £346.60 if you have a partner

You might still be eligible even if your income is higher and you have savings but you:

- have a disability
- or care for someone
- or pay rent or service charges

For details, visit www.gov.uk/pension-credit or visit www.ageuk.org.uk and type 'pension credit' in the search box. Or phone the Council at 01223-457000 and ask for the Tenancy Sustainment Team.

More support for you

Free help to get online

A recent study showed that a third of those without access to the internet are social housing tenants. It estimated that over half of social housing tenants face some kind of 'digital exclusion', ie. a limited ability to access the internet.

This means they are not using the internet fully to help with daily life. That can make everyday tasks much harder - things like booking GP appointments, ordering prescriptions, or accessing support services.

Lack of internet access can be a barrier to claiming benefits, accessing health services, applying for housing, finding jobs, and staying in touch with friends and community.

Importantly, lack of internet access can also mean paying more for everyday goods and services, when you are unable to benefit from the lower prices available online. This can mean that those with the least financial resources end up routinely paying more for daily necessities.

Cambridge's Digital Inclusion Directory

can help a lot. It's a free handbook bringing you a range of free, local support to learn how to use the internet, get online, access internet devices, and learn digital skills.

These free services are provided by trusted local organisations around the city. Published by the City Council and partner agencies, the *Directory's* organisations are all safely vetted and reputable.

Its information is very clearly laid out and jargon free. It will point you towards the free organisations that would best support your specific internet needs.

The **Digital Inclusion Directory** is designed to easily bring you the right free support, whether you're looking to:

- get online for the first time
- just improve your confidence with computers and the internet
- or access affordable data and internet devices

Paper copies are available at all local libraries in Cambridge.

And an electronic version is available to download on the City Council's website at www.cambridge.gov.uk/guide-to-getting-online

This is a practical assistance that can make a real difference for those who are in any way excluded from computers and the internet.

Community Grants of £5,000

The City Council is providing **Community Grants** to fund activities that help reduce social or economic inequality among Cambridge residents that have the greatest need.

Your local community group can apply for either:

- £5,000 or less (best for smaller or newer organisations)
- or over £5,000

The activity funded must take place before 31st March 2027. (Funding application rounds happen each April and November.) See www.cambridge.gov.uk/community-grants for more details on eligibility. To discuss a potential application, email grants@cambridge.gov.uk or phone 01223-457875.

Community Grants of £5,000 or less

This can be for a single activity or for multiple activities totalling £5,000. They must achieve at least one of these:

- helping people to be more active
- improving access to arts and culture
- bringing communities together

- reducing poverty
- reducing loneliness and social isolation

Community Grants over £5,000

The activity to be funded must achieve one or more of the following:

- improved social or economic equality
- improved general health and wellbeing
- an improved sense of belonging, where diversity is valued
- a stronger voluntary sector in the city

Support to help you apply

Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service can help you do your application. Or *Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum* can also help you. To watch a webinar on the application process in a previous year, visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=WL7V72x52Lo

Or to contact us at the Council for an appointment to receive personal guidance about applying for a grant:

- email grants@cambridge.gov.uk
- or phone 01223-457875
- or visit www.cambridge.gov.uk/community-grants



City actions on climate

New Climate Change Strategy

The City Council's new *Climate Change Strategy* (2026-31) sets out how we will work towards a net zero carbon city, where people and nature benefit from a clean river, clean air and biodiverse green spaces. Resident consultation helped to shape it. 86.4% of survey respondents said they support it. And 96% said that increasing tree canopy cover is important to help the city adapt to climate change impacts such as hotter summers.

The Council's emissions have halved since 2014/15, and we aim to reduce them by 69% by 2028. We have improved the energy efficiency of council buildings, and are switching our vehicles to electric. Since 2005, emissions across the city overall have fallen by 47.3%, and Cambridge has been rated an 'A-list' city for the third year running - one of only 120 cities worldwide.

For the *Climate Change Strategy*, progress so far includes:

- installing air-source heat pumps and solar panels at the city's swimming pools
- switching diesel refuse collection vehicles to electric
- solar panels on the Guildhall and community centres
- upgrading council homes to improve

energy efficiency, reduce energy bills and cut carbon emissions, including bringing 48 homes in Ross Street up to net zero carbon standards

The new *Climate Strategy* plans include:

- exploring creating a city centre low-carbon heating network with partners such as the University of Cambridge, Anglia Ruskin University and Cambridge colleges
- redeveloping the Civic Quarter, upgrading the Guildhall, Corn Exchange and Market Square: if approved, this would vastly improve the look and feel of the city centre, making the Guildhall net zero carbon, and reducing Corn Exchange emissions by 65%

We will continue seeking government funding for the work, and partnering with community organisations and businesses. We'll support residents through improved communications, and together increase citywide actions to achieve the vision for a sustainable city.

Visit www.cambridge.gov.uk/climate-change-strategy To be kept up to date on the Council's climate change and nature work, email sustainablecity@cambridge.gov.uk

New food-bins save money

Each year, UK homes throw away 4.4 million tonnes of edible food that cost them £17.5 billion! For a family of four, that's around £1,000 wasted every year.

The Council has now begun to collect food waste from homes weekly, on your usual bin days. The service will reach all homes in the city by the end of this year.

Homes will receive a letter a few weeks before the service starts for them. You will also receive:

- a new outdoor food-waste caddy to put out for kerbside collection weekly, along with your wheelie bins
- and a small indoor caddy to collect food waste in your kitchen, for you to empty into your outdoor caddy

Most flats will share an outdoor food-waste wheelie bin in their bin store, to empty their indoor caddies into. You can find out when your food-waste collection starts by typing in your postcode at www.greatercambridgewaste.org/food-waste/weekly-food-waste-collections

The new service aims to:

- reduce food waste by making residents more conscious of it
- boost recycling rates

- reduce the amount of food in UK landfills, where it produces 16 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions per year
- enable us all to help limit climate change by reducing these emissions

The food waste collected will be processed at an Anaerobic Digestion plant. This captures gases released as the food breaks down, using them to generate electricity. Fertiliser is also produced, for use on farmland.

It is hoped that the new weekly collections will make residents much more conscious of just how much edible food they are throwing away! Hopefully, the service will encourage everyone to save money by reducing their food waste, and using all the food they buy.

Making meal plans and shopping lists; buying and cooking just the right amount; freezing food before it goes off... These are all great ways to cut your grocery bills and reduce your food waste.

For practical, easy tips and tasty recipes to reduce your household's food waste and save up to £1,000 a year, visit www.lovefoodhatewaste.com



Caring for estates' environment

Benefits of Residents' Garden Competition



It has become clear over the years that the annual *Residents' Garden Competition* on our council estates really strengthens community spirit and boosts residents' wellbeing.

With categories like 'Community Gardens', the competition also promotes neighbours gardening together. The judges have seen lovely examples of clusters of residents all working together on a shared green space, at the same time building friendships and supporting each others' wellbeing.

Biodiversity and environmental awareness

The competition is committed to supporting biodiversity. It encourages entrants to adopt wildlife-friendly and environmentally responsible gardening, reducing or stopping their use of

herbicides and pesticides. See the article below to realise just how important that is! Gardens doing this are looked on more favourably by the judges. So too are gardens that have visibly made improvements in that direction since previous years.

Encouraging pride in neighbourhoods

The competition celebrates effort, creativity, colour, variety and sustainability. It motivates residents to make the best of their own outdoor space, whether that's a full garden, a small patch, or even just a few pots by the front door. And that uplifts the spirits of neighbours in turn.

Enter this year

Why not enter the Council's friendly *Tenants' & Leaseholders' Garden Competition* this summer? Total prizes are worth £500. Whether you have a big garden, a veg plot or just a few pots, there's a category for everyone.

Communal gardens are welcome too. It's not the type or size of your gardening efforts that matters - just that they be nature-friendly, avoiding the use of pesticides and herbicides.

Your estate environment

Neighbourhood Clean-up Events

We hold regular neighbourhood clean-up events at our estates, with skips provided for residents to clear out their homes and gardens. The Council will deliver a leaflet to your door with details before the event comes to your neighbourhood.

For more information, visit www.cambridge.gov.uk/neighbourhood-clean-up-events, email housing.officer@cambridge.gov.uk or phone 01223-457000.

The deadline for entries will be in late June. Friendly judges will arrange a time with you to visit your garden in July, and the prize-giving event will be in September.

You can download your entry form at www.cambridge.gov.uk/tenant-and-leaseholder-garden-competition Or request one by emailing resident-involvement@cambridge.gov.uk or phoning 01223-458323.

Help save our city's bees

The Council is taking a herbicide-free approach to managing weeds in public spaces. In 2024, we decided to stop using herbicides across all council-owned sites, including greens and parks, car parks and council housing estates. This is part of our commitment to the environment, and to protecting biodiversity.

Instead of herbicides, we now use mechanical sweepers and hand tools such as hoes and brushes. They are better for the environment, and for the health of residents, pets and wildlife. Our weeding programme now includes:

- regular, scheduled cleaning to prevent excessive build-up of weeds
- using mechanical sweepers and weed-ripping brushes to maintain streets and pavements
- intensive initial efforts to address the backlog of weed growth following the phase-out of herbicides
- ongoing adjustments to improve our efficiency and responsiveness

Residents are encouraged to please report overgrowth of weeds and unwanted vegetation on public land. But also to join the *Happy Bee Streets* scheme described here on the right.

The City Council is keen to raise residents' awareness of the negative impacts that herbicides can have on the environment and on themselves. Benefits of going herbicide-free in your home and neighbourhood include:

- better health and safety, reducing yours and others' exposure to harmful chemicals
- supporting pollinators such as bees and butterflies
- improved soil and water quality, preventing run-off of harmful chemicals into your local waterways

Local community environmental organisations *Pesticide-Free Cambridge* and *On the Verge* have supported the Council in this move to going herbicide-free. We collaborate with them to provide training to local schools for how they too can reduce herbicides to create safer, more biodiverse settings both for pupils and wildlife.

See their handy guide at www.pesticidefreecambridge.org/pesticide-free-guide And visit *On the Verge* at www.onthevergecambridge.org.uk for help in planting flowers that will feed pollinators on your estate.

Is yours a 'Happy Bee Street'?

Britain's bees are in severe decline, which also puts our crops and ecosystem in danger. Our **Happy Bee Scheme** helps



you support bees and improve biodiversity in your street through community weeding. We support groups of residents with tools and advice to manage their pavements in ways that support wildlife and public health.

The scheme is popular, with more streets joining regularly. To join, your street must be a 20mph zone, and other residents of your street must be willing to sign up with you.

For details and to express your interest in joining, visit www.cambridge.gov.uk/happy-bee-scheme-help-improve-biodiversity-on-your-street Or email happybeestreet@cambridge.gov.uk

Visit <https://savebees.co.uk> for lots of other tips and resources to help our bees survive.

Resident involvement for you

Become a resident rep on the Housing Board

Want to help influence decisions affecting more than 8,500 council homes? Become a tenant or leaseholder representative on the Housing Advisory Board!

Help shape the future of council homes in Cambridge



No experience needed - we just need your voice, passion and perspective as a tenant or leaseholder. There are currently vacancies for three tenants.

What's in it for you?

You will...

- have influence over housing services, decisions, policies and investment
- attend four main evening meetings per year
- receive up to £1,400 annual allowance
- have any transport costs paid, for getting to and from meetings
- receive full training and support
- get to hold the Council to account,

represent your neighbours, and improve outcomes for residents

Especially welcome are...

- *younger tenants*: shape the future of housing for the next generation.
- *working residents* with limited time: you can make a difference even with a busy schedule.
- *disabled tenants*: your experience is vital to ensure accessible, inclusive homes.
- *those from minority ethnic backgrounds*: help us ensure housing decisions reflect our diverse communities.

You will represent the interests of residents and be consulted on housing policies, reviews of services, building new council homes, and the tendering of maintenance contracts for homes and estates.



Register your interest at www.cambridge.gov.uk/housing-advisory-board-representatives, or by using this QR code. Or to find out more, email resident-involvement@cambridge.gov.uk or phone 01223-458323.

Or have your say this way...

Prefer something more informal or flexible? There are lots of other ways to influence your housing services.

- Be an '**Armchair Reviewer**': advise on housing policies from the comfort of your own home, giving us your feedback when it suits you.

- Join **Resident and Officer Asset Management** meetings 4 times a year, to discuss key issues around properties' repairs and maintenance.

- Join the **Open Door Residents' Editorial Panel** online 3 times a year, and help shape each edition of *Open Door* magazine.

- Suggest topics for councillors and resident representatives to **examine at the Housing Advisory Board**.

- Join us for an **Estate Walkabout** on your estate, to point out improvements we can make for you. See the article below.

Just get in touch by emailing resident-involvement@cambridge.gov.uk or phoning 01223-458323

Residents co-create Involvement Strategy

Together, resident representatives and residents contributing from the estates have been working with the Council's Housing Service to create a new *Tenant & Leaseholder Involvement Strategy for 2026-2028*.

This approach offers more meaningful opportunities to influence housing services. It supports residents to take part in the ways best suited to them. And it ensures that everyone can see, afterwards, the visible difference that their voice has made.

This *Involvement Strategy* has evolved from residents' feedback, insights from housing staff, and examples of best practice from other social landlords.

It includes a practical Action Plan, with timescales, named responsible people, ways to track progress, and ways to report back to residents on it. Delivery of the Action Plan will also be monitored regularly by your resident representatives on the Council's Housing Advisory Board.

The *Strategy* has four main Objectives, each delivered through specific Actions. These were co-developed with residents

in workshops and consultations that we ran with them.

The *Strategy* also delivers all the engagement services required by the national Social Housing Regulator.

This new *Strategy* is expected to deliver:

- increased trust and confidence in how the Housing service responds to residents
- a more diverse and representative range of residents involved in shaping Housing services
- clearer accountability and transparency through published outcomes and performance reporting
- improved resident satisfaction with involvement opportunities and communication

The new *Involvement Strategy* will be available soon at www.cambridge.gov.uk/tenant-involvement And *Open Door* will keep you informed on the delivery of its Action Plan.

Why not start by joining a council staff *Walkabout* on your own estate? See the yellow box on the right for our *Walkabouts* that are coming up soon.



Join our Estate Walkabouts!

Come out and tell council staff how we can improve your area. We'll do

our best to get it sorted for you. All are welcome.

Lichfield & Neville: Wed 22nd April, 11.30am, from Lichfield Hall Community Room

Colville Road: Wed 13th May, 11am, outside shops near Spurgeon's Close

Dykes Bower Court: Wed 17th June, 12 noon, from Meadows Community Centre

Tiverton Way: Wed 8th July, 11am, from Ancaster Way

Walpole Road: Fri 14th August, 11.30am, outside Bracondale

Bermuda: Thurs 24th Sept, 11am, from car park, Bermuda Terrace

Anstey Way, Wilson & Lingrey: Wed 7th Oct, 11am, from shops at corner of Anstey Way and Trumpington High St.

Leaseholders

Are you fully insured?

An incident at one of our blocks of flats recently caused damage to the structure, with two flats rendered temporarily uninhabitable.

Leaseholders are reminded that the Council's buildings insurance does not cover the cost of alternative accommodation whilst your home is being repaired or rebuilt.

You are strongly advised to ensure that your home insurance or contents insurance covers this aspect, often known as 'Alternative Accommodation Cover'.

This insurance typically covers the cost of you living elsewhere for a time. But it can also cover the costs of storage for your possessions and kennel or cattery fees for your pets.

It is not only large-scale incidents like fire or impact from a vehicle that can render a property uninhabitable.

For instance, subsidence or a significant escape of water are not uncommon occurrences, and they too can make your home temporarily uninhabitable.

In another recent incident at our flats, a property was left empty over the cold snap that we had earlier this year. This resulted in frozen pipes bursting and a large-scale leak from the cold water tank in the loft.

It caused significant damage. We want to remind leaseholders that if your property is left empty for more than 30 days, parts of the buildings insurance become invalid. For instance, 'malicious damage', or damage caused by the 'escape of water from any tank apparatus or pipe', will not be covered.

If you are likely to be away from your property for an extended period of time (and especially in the colder months), you should leave the heating on low and / or turn your water off to prevent burst pipes. Consider also asking a friend or relative to check on your home while you are away. If you sublet your leasehold property, you should alert your tenants to follow this protocol.

For more information, email leasehold.services@cambridge.gov.uk or phone 01223-457835.

Service charges and works

From time to time the Council will need to carry out planned works to your block of flats. This could range from substantial works such as re-roofing and structural works, to cyclical repair and redecoration, to replacement of communal doors and windows.

Under the terms of your lease you are liable to pay a 'reasonable' contribution to the cost of these works. This usually means that the cost is divided by the number of properties in your block.

For instance, if there are four flats in your block, you can expect to be charged a quarter of the cost of the works.

If the cost of any works is expected to be more than £250 for any one leaseholder, we call this 'major work' and we will notify you in writing if we think it is needed at your property.

For these works you will receive a 'Section 20 Notice'. The cost will be added to the following years' actual charges, as a 'reconciliation adjustment' invoice. Leaseholders often receive Section 20 Notices 12-18 months in advance of being invoiced for the work.

Invoices are due to be paid within 28 days, but leaseholders who pay by Direct Debit automatically have these invoices spread over 6 payments (if you pay monthly), or over 2 payments if you pay quarterly. Please contact us if you wish to switch to a monthly Direct Debit.

Under the terms of your lease, the Council has no obligation to offer a payment plan to help you pay for works on your building.

But the Council recognises that not all leaseholders are able to pay these large invoices over 6 months. So we have a Payment Plan Policy. It allows us to offer a payment plan spread over 18 months, interest free, to eligible leaseholders.

For more information, visit www.cambridge.gov.uk/repairs-and-maintenance-for-your-leasehold-property

There you can download our FAQs for leaseholders on planned works.

Or for more information, email leasehold.services@cambridge.gov.uk or phone 01223-457835.



Foster wins contract to maintain homes



Recently there was a competitive tendering process to find the best contractor to deliver the external planned maintenance of the Council's homes over the next five years.

Your tenant and leaseholder representatives were involved in reviewing the companies who applied and selecting the one that finally won the contract. Foster Property Maintenance Ltd. had been the previous holders of this contract. And despite stiff competition, they won the contract again for the coming five years.

The Council and resident representatives considered that Foster demonstrated clear value for money, and provided evidence of robust, reliable delivery processes.

Their continued commitment to social value will also ensure that they make meaningful contributions to our council estate communities, where they do these maintenance works.

Over the past nine years, Foster Property Maintenance has delivered more than £50 million of improvements to the Council's tenant and leaseholder homes

through the external planned works programme.

Cambridge residents who have received maintenance work by Foster have rated them with industry-leading levels of satisfaction.

In response to the awarding of the contract, Foster commented: 'Cambridge City Council is a key client for us as a business, and we remain committed to providing an outstanding service to their residents and the wider community.'

We look forward to continuing this partnership well into the future and delivering improvements to the homes and communities of Cambridge.'

Foster will now continue to do the long-term planned maintenance programme of work that is delivered on our estates. But the Council itself does the day-to-day repairs needed on your home.

If you need to request a repair:

- log on to your Housing Account at <https://housing.cambridge.gov.uk/housing/www/dashboard>
- or phone 01223-457000 and ask for Repairs
- outside office hours, phone the Out-of-Hours emergency line at 0300-303-8389

Get your community group funded

Match my Project is a council-backed platform that enables businesses to donate specific funds, resources or support that a community group has requested.

More than 60 community groups have already signed up to ask for what they need. And the Council wants more charities, voluntary groups and grassroots organisations to do so.

In the first year of the scheme, the equivalent of £100,000 has been pledged by businesses for the needs of specific community organisations around the city.

Fifty-two local businesses are already registered on the platform to provide support to community groups. Seven projects are already completed, with 27 underway.

To register your group or organisation for the scheme, visit <https://matchmyproject.org/cambridge>

Or to find out more, visit www.cambridge.gov.uk/match-my-project

Who to contact for council services



Register for your personal **Housing Services account** at www.cambridge.gov.uk/online-accounts

Need to request a service?

It's quicker online at www.cambridge.gov.uk for links to all our teams and services, 24/7, 365 days a year.

Just want to report an issue?

Visit www.cambridge.gov.uk/report-it

Need to speak to someone?

Phone 01223-457000, Mon-Fri, 9am-5.15pm, and ask for a team or service. Eg. Ask for 'bins', 'repairs' or 'rent team': our automated switchboard will put you through to the advisors who can help you.

Want to apply for housing?

Visit www.home-link.org.uk

A repairs emergency out of hours?

Emergency repair needed? Phone 0300-303-8389

Emergency homelessness & temporary accommodation, outside office hours

Tel: 03300-538-109 (same cost as a normal landline)

Leaseholder question?

Visit www.cambridge.gov.uk/leaseholders
Email: leasehold.services@cambridge.gov.uk, tel: 01223-457835

Housing for Older People and Visiting Support Service

Email: independent.living@cambridge.gov.uk, tel: 01223-457000

Need to report antisocial behaviour?

Email: asbsection@cambridge.gov.uk
Tel: 01223-457950

Noise complaints

Email: env.health@cambridge.gov.uk
Tel: 01223-457000

Bulky waste collection

Visit www.cambridge.gov.uk/arrange-a-bulky-waste-collection

Report tenancy fraud

E: fightfraud@cambridge.gov.uk

To complain about council services

Visit www.cambridge.gov.uk/compliments-complaints-and-suggestions
Tel: 01223-457000

Need support for contacting the Council?

Contact Council in Sign Language

Register at www.convo.io/uk/home, then dial 01223-457000 for a live interpreter

Need help in another language?

Phone 01223-457000 and ask for a translator.

Council's contractors on estates

TSG Services

E: enquiries@tsgplc.co.uk

Tel: 01223-828777

For gas or hot water, tel. 0800-111-4044

Foster Property Maintenance

E: info@fpm-ltd.co.uk

Tel: 01945-586999

Goshen communal cleaning

E: cs@goshenmultiservices.com

Tel: 0800-037-1958

Domestic Abuse

24-hour National Helpline

Visit www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk

uk

Tel: Freephone 0808-2000-247