

Summer 2024

Open Door

For the Tenants & Leaseholders of Cambridge City Council



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Samantha Shimmon

Assistant Director for
Housing & Homelessness

Welcome to this Summer edition of *Open Door*. It brings you the results of your annual satisfaction survey. We hope they are clearly presented and of interest to you. We are working on an action plan to improve service-areas that show lower satisfaction. Each edition of *Open Door* will report back to you on these improvement actions. They will be overseen too by your elected resident representatives on the Council's Housing Scrutiny Committee. Any ideas you have for improvements, please email resident-involvement@cambridge.gov.uk

Following our recent resident elections, page 14 introduces you to the residents who will represent you on the Committee over the next four years. Please note that we still have one vacancy for a tenant representative to join them on the Committee - see page 14 for details, in case that could be you.

On the back cover, we are surveying your opinion on extending the hours in which we do your repairs appointments. There's £400 of shopping vouchers for some lucky winners, so please do take a moment to respond either via the online link or by post.

Another part of our commitments is to bring you, in every edition, an overview of your staff teams, and how best to use their services. This time the focus is on your tenancy management staff, the team that deals with your rent, and your grounds maintenance teams. Page 3 brings an update on the Tenancy Audit Visits our tenancy team have been doing, which tenants have been finding helpful.

This edition is packed with fun, free activities provided by the Council and partners across the city this summer. From a street festival to free *Music in the Parks*, from explorer trails 'augmented' with artificial intelligence to *Splash Pads* water-play, there is something for everyone, and for all ages. In a new section on children, our Community Development team offer to support you as residents to run an exciting *Play Street* event for kids in your own street.

The City Council now has some responsibility for preventive health measures in the city, so this edition launches a new series led by our Preventive Health Officer. You can meet one of the NHS Social Prescribers doing outreach from GP surgeries in your communities. And we bring you tasty, inexpensive, health-building recipes for summer by our registered nutritionist.

This edition launches a new series on fire safety, and the Council's zero tolerance policy on items left in communal areas. Interviews with our enforcing officer, Jamie Lambert, will help you keep your homes and estates fire-safe for all.

Finally, the coloured logo below shows the four qualities that the City Council recently adopted as our core values. We aim to express these in every interaction that customers have with our staff and systems. So if we ever fall short of them, please let us know using the simple complaints procedure described on page 5.

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 post, visit <https://camcit.co/opendooremail>

A *Residents' Open Door Editorial Panel* helps to edit the content of every 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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Your fire safety with Jamie



Meet Jamie Lambert, the council officer working with residents to ensure the fire safety of communal areas on council estates.

Your Tenancy

Agreement or Lease Agreement states that residents must never leave anything in communal areas, indoors or outdoors, however briefly.

The Housing Service has a **Zero Tolerance Policy** on this, with powers to remove items, charge offenders for costs, and get fines imposed. Jamie, the Council's Engagement, Education & Enforcement Officer, told *Open Door* about the issues at stake. He'll be updating *Open Door* regularly about progress on tackling offenders.

Jamie, what is the problem?

"Tragic fires in social housing have shown that anything left in a communal area:

- increases the risk of a fire
- increases the risk of a fire spreading
- can obstruct residents trying to leave in an emergency - especially residents



with reduced mobility or small children

- can obstruct emergency services from entering in an emergency

Communal areas - including immediately outside a front door - do not belong to any tenant or leaseholder. Areas that must be kept 100% clear include communal gardens, walkways, stairs, balconies, storage areas, access paths, gardens and drying areas. Big items like washing machines, fridges or mattresses must never be left there, even briefly. And fire doors to escape routes must never be wedged open.

What does your day's work involve?

I inspect estates, as well as responding to complaints, to enforce the rules. I can find blocked entrances, even motor vehicles in communal areas, like this one



stored under the sign prohibiting it! Mobility scooters must always be stored either inside the resident's home or away from communal areas. Residents must not store or recharge electric bikes or electric scooters in communal areas other than those designated by the Council. (Further fire safety for E-bikes and E-scooters is at www.cambsfire.gov.uk/community-safety/take-charge-and-be-safe/e-bikes-and-e-scooters)

I've found bikes, pushchairs, prams, buggies, shopping trolleys, cabinets, rubbish bags. Or areas obstructed with toys, carpets, plant-pots, newspapers... For instance the scene on the left here

is a real danger to any residents - but especially the elderly or small children - trying to get down the stairs during a fire. These items may have seemed harmless in the past, but residents now know they're a danger to everyone.

What happens to residents who leave items in communal areas?

The Council can remove any item left in a communal area or identified as a risk. The cost of removal and storage can be charged back to the resident who left it, up to £95. If items are considered fly-tipping, or dumped as household waste, the resident can be fined up to £400. And the Council can take legal action against them for breaking the terms of their Tenancy or Lease Agreement."

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

"Just 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 them for £30 (plus £5 per additional item). Request it at www.cambridge.gov.uk/arrange-a-bulky-waste-collection or phone 01223-457000.

And see our free local **Neighbourhood Clean-Up Days** (on page 12 of this edition), where you can get all your unwanted items removed for free.

Final question until we see you in the next edition: how to report left items?

For items left in indoor communal areas, please email me at Jamie.Lambert@cambridge.gov.uk or phone 01223-457000.

For items left or flytipping in estates' outdoor communal areas, please do report them online at www.cambridge.gov.uk/report-flytipping or phone 01223-457000."

Tenancy visits are helping residents

Your housing officers have been making *Tenancy Audit Visits* to your homes, with almost 1,500 visits done and about 6,000 to go. These visits enable the Council to:

- check your home's condition, to discover any repairs we can do for you
- update our information on your household
- identify any needs you have, eg. for your housing, finances, health or safety, and get you the help you need
- identify homes that are too big or small, supporting you if you wish to move
- spot any tenancy fraud or breaches of the Tenancy Agreement

Many tenants have found their Tenancy Audit Visit extremely helpful. Visiting

staff have been able to identify their unmet needs and arrange practical supports that improve tenants' lives.

A visiting officer explains: "For instance, I've come across tenants discharged from hospital, anxious as to whether they could continue to live at home. I got the Council's Independent Living Service to arrange Occupational Therapist visits, so they can be supported to stay living independently in their own homes..."

Other visits have resulted, for example, in benefits the tenant was entitled to but not receiving; occupational therapist support for medical or disability needs; and resolving problems around neighbours harassing them...

Given the number of council homes to visit, your housing officer normally does your Tenancy Audit Visit without an appointment. (This also helps verify that the home is occupied by the correct people.) Under your Tenancy Agreement, we are normally required to give 24 hours notice before visiting. But if we can do your Tenancy Audit Visit the first time we come, it would be really helpful. If you can't let us in, we will return the next day or as soon as possible.

For more information, please visit www.cambridge.gov.uk/council-tenants or phone your Housing Service at 01223-457000.



Your feedback to your Housing service

What you said



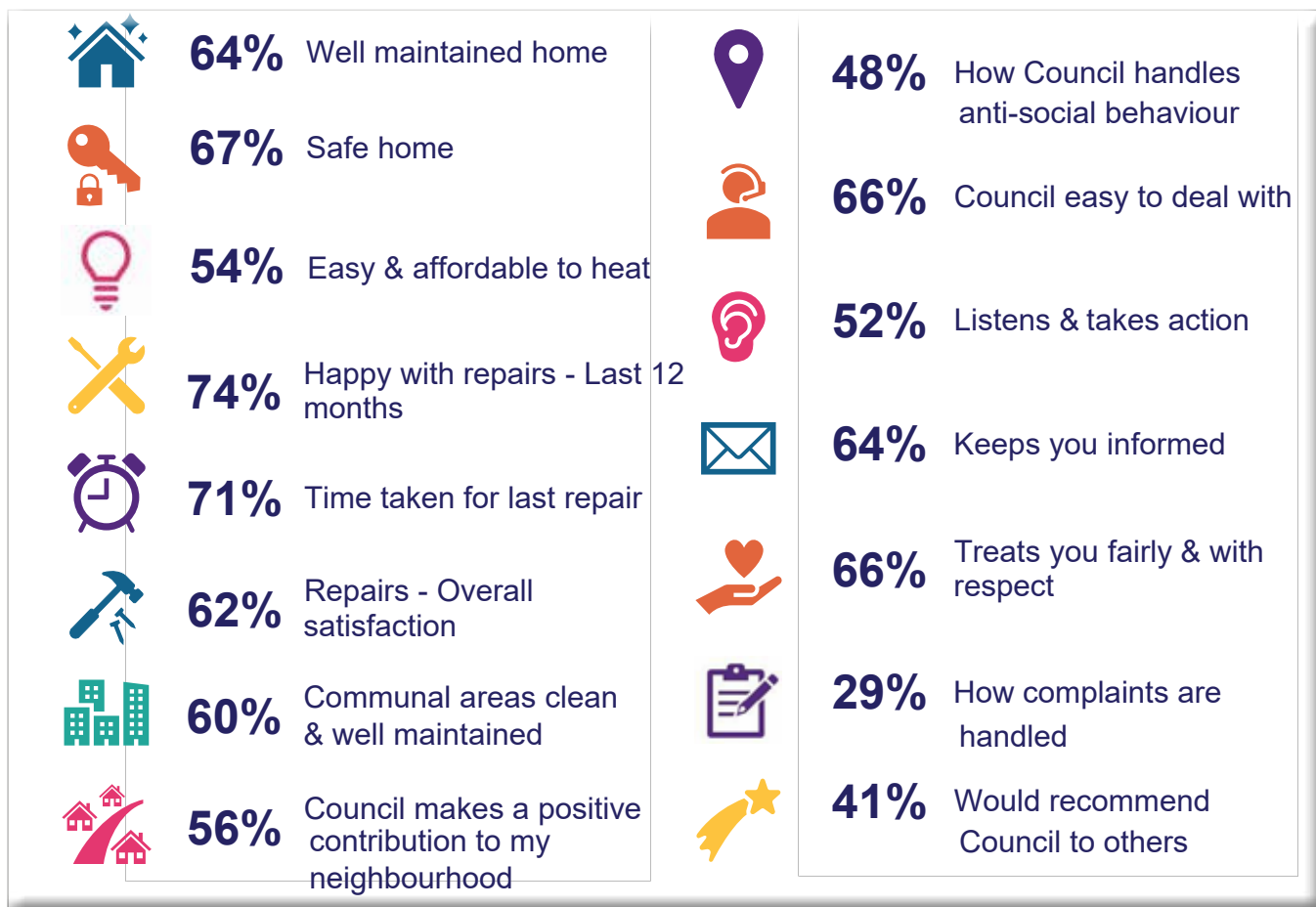
An independent company was recently commissioned to do a satisfaction survey with all the City Council's tenants. The national Social Housing Regulator now requires all social housing landlords to do this type of survey annually, with specific questions called the 'Tenant Satisfaction Measures'. Landlords must report the results back to the Regulator, for ongoing monitoring of the landlord's performance. In Cambridge:

- ◇ All City Council tenants were invited to take part, either online or by post
- ◇ 1,886 completed the survey

Respondents' 'Overall satisfaction with the Council as your landlord' was rated at 67%. Responses to more specific questions are shown below. For instance, some percentages show how many respondents agreed with the statements that they have a 'Well maintained home'; have a 'Safe home'; that it's 'Easy & affordable to heat', etc. Other percentages show how many were satisfied with the Council's performance on each issue, such as being 'Easy to deal with', or that it 'Listens and takes action'.

These results show the satisfaction rates both of tenants who hold 'general' tenancies and of sheltered tenants. (All over the country, sheltered tenants' satisfaction rates tend to be a little higher on most questions.)

You will be able to read a detailed report of the survey results online at www.cambridge.gov.uk/resident-involvement. It gives useful comparisons with the satisfaction rates of tenants at other council landlords, as well as the average satisfaction rates among social housing tenants nationally. It also shows how both national rates, and those of Cambridge tenants, have fallen a little in recent years, and gives some national context as to why independent surveyors believe this has happened.





Results of your Tenant Survey



Acting on your feedback

The diagram here on the left shows the same satisfaction responses but ranks them in order, from highest to lowest. It shows that respondents were most satisfied with repairs done in the last 12 months, and least satisfied with your landlord's approach to handling complaints. (Nationwide, as well as in Cambridge, the lowest satisfaction tends to be with the handling of complaints and of anti-social behaviour cases.)

The City Council will now start an **Action Plan** to improve on areas of lower satisfaction. Over the year ahead, each edition of *Open Door* will bring you updates on specific actions that the Council is taking to improve satisfaction levels. Your elected tenant and leaseholder representatives will help to oversee this process.

If you are interested to read the detailed survey report online at www.cambridge.gov.uk/resident-involvement, you can see other trends it shows, like the different satisfaction levels across age groups and length of tenure. For instance, newer tenants and those with the longest tenancies tend, both in Cambridge and nationally, to express the highest satisfaction, with those in between expressing lower satisfaction.

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.

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 reply within 10 working days. If we need longer, we will say why.

If you are unhappy with the final outcome of a formal complaint to us, you could then take your complaint to the [Housing Ombudsman](http://www.housingombudsman.org.uk). 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>

Your quarterly performance snapshot

Repairs appointments kept 96% Target: 95.8%	Rents collected 96.66% Target: 96.58%	Repairs done in target time 89.2% Target: 97%
Homes' fire risk assessments done 94% Target: 100%	Satisfaction with estate services 94.1% Target: 95%	New affordable council homes built 248 Target: 152

For the first quarter of 2024, the 'traffic-light' colours on the left show performance by specific services against their targets. (Note that the '*Rents collected*' figure also includes the collection of past rent arrears owed to the Council by tenants.)

Your elected resident representatives help to monitor performance measures like these. If you are interested in getting involved - or in monitoring a particular service such as grass-cutting or repairs - please email resident-involvement@cambridge.gov.uk or phone 01223-458323.

Know your housing staff

Staff teams helping with your tenancy

Your housing officer is responsible for the council tenancies in your geographical 'patch' of the city. They are supported by assistant housing officers, as the tenancy management team for your area. They work closely with the Income Management Team (on the page opposite) who handle your rent, and the various grounds maintenance teams (below) who look after your estate.

For any of the issues listed here, please phone our Customer Contact Centre, whose staff are trained to help with them. Only for more complex cases will they pass you on to your housing officer's team.

Tenancy Management teams deal with:

- applications for new tenancies
- queries about your *Tenancy Agreement*
- adding someone to your tenancy
- deaths, succession, survivorship or name change requests for your tenancy
- advice on exchanging your home for another council home
- abandoned, under-occupied, over-occupied or sub-let tenancies
- renting of garages and parking spaces
- pursuing former tenants' unpaid arrears
- tenancy audit visits to homes

Neighbour problems, including:

- enforcing tenancy rules
- neighbour disputes
- animal-related nuisance
- misuse of communal areas or parking
- overgrown gardens
- evictions

Caring for homes, that is:

- authorising alterations to your home
- inspections of homes
- forced entry for gas safety checks
- handling vacated properties (except on redevelopment sites)

Caring for vulnerable tenants, eg.:

- safeguarding concerns
- supporting victims of domestic abuse
- dealing with hoarding
- liaising with other agencies, from police to social care

Note that Tenancy Management staff may occasionally visit homes unannounced, and will always carry identity badges. (On page 3 of this edition you can read about their Tenancy Audit Visits.)

If you are ever unsure whether such a visitor is genuine, please phone the Council at 01223-457000 to confirm.

What you can expect from us

Our *Tenancy Management Service Standards* have been developed with your resident representatives. When you request a service from your tenancy staff, we aim wherever possible to:

- phone you back within 24 hours for emergencies
- phone you back within 5 working days for non-emergencies
- if a disclosure of Domestic Abuse has been made, phone you back within 24 hours, arranging a meeting within 5 working days
- reply to letters and emails within 7 working days
- if you request a visit, phone you back within 5 working days to arrange one
- investigate all reports of tenancy abandonment and non-occupation within 10 working days
- if you apply to exchange your home for another, give a decision within 42 days

If you wish to make a complaint about your landlord's services, please visit www.cambridge.gov.uk/compliments-complaints-and-suggestions

Teams caring for your estate

Your estates are maintained by contractors who deliver a range of services on behalf of the Council. These include:

- providing caretaking services
- cleaning communal areas, including windows
- keeping the grounds tidy, including cutting grass and maintaining plant beds
- cleaning streets within estate boundaries
- maintaining communal electrics, lighting and door-entry systems
- maintaining lifts, fire-safety equipment and communal TV aerial systems

These services are monitored by council staff, including our housing officers and Estate Services Officers, and by volunteer Resident Inspectors. Our Estate Services Officers monitor the maintenance of your estates, coordinate feedback to our contractors, manage the estates' caretakers, and work on projects to improve the estates. Resident inspectors support the process by checking the work done by our staff and contractors, and letting us know whether it has been done to the appropriate standard. (New-built estates with mixed communities may have different arrangements.)

Building cleaning

Contractor Goshen cleans communal areas in buildings every week. Report any problems with the cleaning of your building to Goshen at email cs@goshenmultiservices.com or tel. 07542-826553.

Window cleaning

Residents who pay for communal window cleaning receive it from contractor *Hi-Spec* in January, May and September, weather permitting; email helpdesk@hispecservices.co.uk

Grounds maintenance

Grass-cutting and maintenance of shrub beds is done by the Council's *Streets and Open Spaces Team*. We usually cut the grass on your estates from April to September. If necessary we will start earlier in the year or cut again in October.

We tidy and replant plant beds in February, March, October and November. We trim hedges if needed in early spring and late summer. (We avoid doing so from April to August, so we do not disturb nesting birds.) We clear fallen leaves from November to December. We clean car parks and forecourts on your

estates twice each year, and clean the drains every November. We spread or provide grit to keep the roads and paths safe on your estates when needed. We maintain the communal trees on your estates along with those around the city.

We hold regular *Neighbourhood Clean-Up* events at your estates, where we bring recycling bins and skips to help clear communal areas. See page 12 of this edition for dates of the upcoming events.

We organise regular 'Walkabouts' with council officers and local councillors to help identify and report local issues and request repairs.

The Council also provides caretaking services to some of its estates.

All these estate services are delivered in line with the *Caretaking and Cleaning Standards* of the independent quality agency *Housemark*. They are monitored by housing staff, and by trained resident representatives known as *Green Inspectors*. If you would like to become a volunteer *Green Inspector* for your area, please email resident-involvement@cambridge.gov.uk or phone 01223-458323.

What you can expect

The team for your rent

You must pay your rent in advance every week, fortnight or month, depending on your contract. If you miss rent payments and fall into arrears, phone the Council's rent team straight away at 01223-457000, as we may be able to help you.

Please be aware that this year there are 53 weeks' rent to pay (not 52): if you receive Universal Credit, the 53rd week will not be covered by benefits. The amount you pay in rent is fixed every April, in line with government rules. If we have to increase your rent, we'll tell you in writing at least four weeks in advance.

Pay by direct debit - For peace of mind, the easiest way to pay your rent is by monthly direct debit. You can set it up on our tenants' portal, or you can use our online form to set up a direct debit.

Pay online or by bank transfer - Alternatively, you can pay your rent online at any time at www.cambridge.gov.uk/pay-your-housing-rent. Or you can transfer the funds to our bank account number: 201768 20412090. (Use your tenancy number as the payment reference as without it we cannot trace your payment.)

Pay by phone - Phone 01223-457000 to pay over the phone (for payments only; we can't answer questions on this number). You'll need your housing rent account number and your debit or credit card. We'll give you a confirmation number for the transaction.

Pay in person - Use your Rent Payment Card to pay at any Post Office, or anywhere displaying the *PayPoint* sign.

Pay from your salary - Some employers will take your rent out of your salary and send it to us. If your employer can do this, ask us for a form to start it.

Our **Income Management Team** can:

- give you advice and support to avoid or reduce rent arrears
- make payment arrangements with you to clear rent debts (see details below)
- pursue any unpaid rent arrears
- give you advice on budgeting, and applying for benefits or grants where necessary
- issue vouchers for financial help where appropriate

See the article below for the ways that they could help you with rent paying problems.

Help with paying your rent

If things go wrong and you think you will not be able to pay your rent, it is crucial to phone 01223-457000 and speak to the Council's rent team about it as soon as possible.

By staying in contact and making an arrangement with them, you can avoid building up rent debts and being evicted for not paying your rent.

Payment plans

If you have difficulties paying your rent, we can arrange an individual payment plan to help you spread the cost. For instance, this could include paying less rent for a few months, then spreading the cost to catch up over an agreed period, based on your circumstances.

For example, if your rent is £600 a month (£7,200 per year), we might be able to agree that you can pay £300 for 2 months, then £660 for 10 months.

The Council's rent team can work out a payment plan tailored to your needs. So contact them as soon as possible if you are struggling to keep up with your repayments. If you miss rent payments, the team will contact you about it.

Get one to one help

The Council's **Financial Inclusion Officers** offer free, friendly, confidential one to one sessions that hundreds of tenants have found very beneficial and reassuring. Phone 01223-457000 to make an appointment. They can advise and support you to:

- manage your finances better
- create and stick to a personalised budget that's right for you
- get further help to tackle and manage debts
- apply for any grants or benefits that you're eligible for
- draw ongoing support from other agencies and services

Benefits help online

Why not use our **budget planner** at www.cambridge.gov.uk/pay-your-housing-rent to help keep track of your money? Or use our **Benefits Calculator** on there to see what benefits you could claim. (You'll need information about your savings, income, pensions and existing benefits.) Page 12 of this edition explains that many benefits are now being moved over to become Universal Credit.



Enjoy it all for free

Street festival in August



Out of The Ordinary is your free street arts festival, taking over your city centre streets again for the August Bank Holiday weekend. Put it in your diary now!

After its huge first-time success last year, street artists and performers will entertain you again for free in your thousands. As you wander around the city centre, you'll be stopped in your tracks by unusual and amazing characters.

Among the performance artists, look out for *The Flying Buttresses*, and *What the Tortoise Taught Us*, the beautiful giant

tortoise puppet. Come walk side by side with the world's oldest, most awesome reptile. Feed her, stroke her enormous shell and be inspired by a close-up encounter with nature at its most incredible.

This summer, the festival will be even bigger than it was for last year's debut. As well as occupying the city centre streets, there'll also be lots to enjoy on Christ's Pieces green behind the bus station. There, you can relax, eat and drink, and watch fantastic performances at the same time. There will be a Music Stage, a Dance Stage, a Wellbeing & Sports Area, food and drink stalls, and a big performance on the Sunday.

Over the weekend, local dance schools, musicians, artists and performers will also be taking to the streets and Christ's Pieces to showcase their talents. The festival is supported by Cambridge BID. For more information visit www.cambridgelive.org.uk/city-events and www.facebook.com/CamCityEvents

So get it in your diary: *Out of The Ordinary* street festival, August Bank Holiday Weekend, Saturday 24th & Sunday 25th, 11am-5pm. See you there!

'AI-augmented' explorer trails

'Love Exploring' Adventure Trails

With 'augmented reality', you can now experience your city for free in ways you've never imagined.

Cambridge has a range of different *Adventure Trails* that you can explore for free using the new augmented reality app, *Love Exploring*.

The artificial intelligence within the app means the trails you'll walk will be 'augmented' with themes from dinosaurs to tree fairies, planets to mini-beasts! Kids of all ages love them!

So just download the free *Love Exploring* app to your smartphone and search for Cambridge. Then be amazed as dinosaurs, planets or fairies appear in front of you as you follow the local trails!

These free local adventures include a Tree Trail, a Mindfulness Trail, and a Sensory Trail at Cherry Hinton Hall. All these free adventure trails are suitable for anybody - aged 4 to 104 - and you can enjoy them at any time.

So download the app and take a visit like

never before to places like Cherry Hinton Hall, Coldham's Common, Jesus Green, Lamas Land & Sheeps Green, The Pulley in Kings Hedges or Trumpington Meadows Country Park...

The trails can be used by anyone, from family groups to individuals looking for a bit of escape into a world of their own along the Mindfulness Trail or Tree Trail.

However you do it, you'll also be benefitting from being in the outdoors, and the exercise of walking or even jogging along your chosen trail.

Created together with local experts, each trail leads you to points of interest, whether a remarkable building or landscape feature or a spectacular tree.

Having been downloaded almost 50,000 times now around the country, the *Love Exploring* app must be doing something right! For more information, have a look online at www.loveexploring.co.uk



Summer in the city

Music in the Parks all summer long

Celebrate your Cambridge summer in musical style! *Music in the Parks* is always a popular highlight of summer in the city.

It gives everyone the chance to get together, enjoy time in local parks and greens, and relax to free live music in the company of friends and family!

These free concerts, 3–5pm on Sundays, are open to all, in beautiful green spaces across the city. They will be easy-going outdoor afternoons of music, organised by the City Council and supported by Cambridge BID.

The concerts offer different styles of music, so there'll be something for everyone. Why not take a picnic and make it a free day out?

There's the infectious, irresistible ska dance rhythms of Cambridge's massively popular Big 10 and Colonel Hathi. There's sophisticated funk and pop. There's the joyous sounds of swing jazz, blues, soul and latin rhythms. Plus the warm strains of brass on a summery breeze... These concerts on the greens will make great days out.

So these are essential dates for your summer diary:

- Sunday 14 July, Cherry Hinton Hall: *Cambridge Wind Band*
- Sunday 4 August, Chesterton Recreation Ground: *We Got That Swing*
- Sunday 11 August, Jesus Green: *Big 10 and Colonel Hathi*
- Sunday 18 August, Nuns Way Recreation Ground: *Waterbeach Brass*
- Sunday 1 September, Dudley Road Recreation Ground: *Under the Covers*



100 parks and nature reserves

Did you know there are about 100 free play areas and nature reserves around the city? Why not explore some this summer? Pack a picnic and a ball or frisbee for a relaxing day out for all.

For a map of all the city's parks, nature reserves and playgrounds, visit www.cambridge.gov.uk/parks-and-playgrounds

And to find the city's many free nature reserves (some quite hidden and unknown) visit <http://lnr.cambridge.gov.uk/visit-the-cambridge-nature-reserves>

Cambridge Folk Festival isn't free, but it merits a mention as one of the world's oldest and best loved music festivals, rated 'Outstanding' for its green credentials. On 25–28 July, in the beautiful parkland of Cherry Hinton Hall, it will showcase the best of world music, headed by Robert Plant, Saving Grace and Suzi Dian.

There will also be lots of fun children's activities; workshops for song-writing, drawing and instrument-making; a late night Silent Disco; tai-chi; talks and storytelling; music sessions and clog dancing; a traders' marquee with a stall to stock up on vinyl and CDs. There will be the ever-popular *Songlines Signing Tent* where artists meet fans and sign autographs. Plus mouth-watering food trucks and bars.

The opening evening with folk legend Ralph McTell costs £35 (but £10 for under 18s and free for under 5s). There are spread-the-cost payment options for the festival, and reductions for city residents. For details visit www.cambridgelive.org.uk/folk-festival

Free 'Splash Pads' water-play & paddling



'Splash Pad' water play

Kids paddle and play for free at the city's many *Splash Pads*, set in our beautiful green outdoor spaces. For instance, elaborate water-play facilities are provided by the Council:

- at *Coleridge Recreation Ground*: tractor-themed play, interactive water-features and a crawling-tube
- at *King's Hedges Recreation Ground*: 14 water features with an 'Outer Space' theme
- behind *Abbey Pool*: 11 water features with tipping buckets, water cannons and spray jets

To locate all the city's free public water-play equipment, visit www.cambridge.gov.uk/splashpads

Kids adore these *Splash Pads* in the warm weather. Research shows this water play is excellent for child development. As well as being relaxing, therapeutic and good physical exercise, it helps develop motor skills, problem-solving abilities and social skills. While parents and carers relax with a picnic nearby...

Abbey and Coleridge *Splash Pads* are open until 15th September. And King's Hedges *Splash Pad* will reopen soon after maintenance work. You can phone 01223-446100 to confirm a specific *Splash Pad* is open before visiting.

Free paddling pools

Many of these are on the same greens as the city's *Splash Pads*. For instance, Coleridge Recreation ground has a paddling pool. Lammas Land is a beautiful secluded green in Newnham with a paddling pool, accessed from Barton Road. And the grounds of Cherry Hinton Hall have two paddling pools. For all the city's free public paddling pools, see the map at www.cambridge.gov.uk/swimmingandpaddling-pools

Free days out at the city's museums

Cambridge has more museums and galleries per square mile than anywhere in the UK outside London. These (and many others) are free:-

The **Fitzwilliam Museum** in Trumpington St, CB2 1RB, is the most popular free attraction in East Anglia. It offers everything from medieval weapons to impressionist paintings. It's open Tues-Sat, 10am-5pm & Sun, midday-5pm.

The **Sedgwick Museum** (Downing St., CB2 3EQ) takes you back billions of years, with its collection of dinosaurs, fossils and minerals. It's open Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm, 2pm-5pm & Sat, 10am-4pm.

The **Scott Polar Research Museum** at Lensfield Rd, CB2 1ER has the world's biggest collection on the polar regions, with boats, tools and maps of polar explorers' adventures.

Who are NHS Social Prescribers?



"Hello! I'm George Ioannou, and I'm a **Social Prescriber** at East Barnwell Medical Centre and York Street Medical Centre. As a Social Prescribing Link Worker, I reach out from GPs' surgeries to give people one to one time where we focus on '**What matters to you?**'.

Together, we produce a simple, personalised *Care and Support Plan* for you, encouraging you to take control of your health and wellbeing. I connect people up with community-based support, including activities and services that meet their practical, social, and emotional needs for health

and wellbeing. This can include public services like housing, or financial and welfare advice.

A vital part of my role is to build a relationship with you, the person I'm helping, by listening carefully to what's important to *you* for your health and wellbeing, and what motivates *you*.

There are four 'pillars' of Social Prescribing. We look for the solutions that will suit you in terms of:

- physical activities for you
- debt, finances, housing and other practical advice
- arts and cultural activities for you
- nature-based activities for you: there are many different types of nature-based outdoor activities and therapies that you can access through us

In all, we can...

- help patients who are isolated to join a social group
- help those with financial stress to get help with debt or claiming benefits
- assist patients who need to access wider services
- help people feel they have both the emotional and practical support to improve their own wellbeing."

Reaching out from your GP surgery

Social Prescribers help people find solutions to things that are difficult in their lives, and detracting from their wellbeing. A range of such health and wellbeing professionals are being added to the NHS to help patients get the most appropriate care. Some work at doctor's surgeries, others in the wider community.

The GP's team now includes **Social Prescribers** (like George, on the left here). The goal is that every person in England will have access to one, to work out a unique personal *Care and Support Plan* for and with them.

Available to everyone, they can help you find solutions by addressing your needs flexibly, one to one. They can connect you with essential non-medical services too, as George explains here on the left. And they can signpost you to the specific support or activity groups you need.

For more information please visit www.england.nhs.uk/personalisedcare/social-prescribing

Is healthy food necessarily more expensive?

A health message from Registered Nutritionist, Dr R Hoffman...

"The honest, scientific answer is 'No!' Healthy eating means lots of fruit and veg, wholegrains, pulses, and small amounts of dairy, meat and fish: the key is to buy the cheaper varieties of them. Studies prove they don't cost more than fast food and 'ultra-processed foods'.



Just buy two large carrots for 20p - not green beans at £4/kg. Buy a whole kilo of frozen white fish for your freezer for £4.80 - not salmon fillets at £18.65/kg. For simple healthy foods, the UK is actually among the cheapest in Europe.

For instance carrots - when given a bit of love - can make enticing, colourful, delicious meals. Research shows they protect against cancer, as well as protecting your eyes. Grating releases their sweetness, while large chunks taste more earthy. *Chef's tip:* a small sprinkle of sugar greatly boosts their flavour. These easy, tasty recipes serve two.

Grated carrot and orange salad

This is an ultra-simple recipe with an amazing taste - please try it!

Ingredients: 1 orange, 1 large carrot, a sprinkle of sugar, orange flower water (optional)

Peel the orange over a bowl to catch its juice. Remove the white pith. Chop the orange into large chunks in the bowl. Sprinkle with sugar. Add a few drops of orange flower water if desired (available at most supermarkets). Grate the carrot and mix well with the orange. That's it!

Cost: 25p per person

Carrot and bean stew

Ingredients: Tin of white beans, 1 large onion, 1 potato, 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil (or vegetable oil), 2 large carrots, clove of garlic (optional), a few spoons of lemon juice, salt and pepper

Chop a large onion into chunks, sprinkle with a little sugar and some salt. In a covered medium saucepan, fry gently for 5-10 minutes in 2 tablespoons of oil till soft and light brown. Add 2 carrots and a potato, both chopped into 1cm chunks. Cover with water and bring to the boil. If using, add the garlic mashed or finely chopped. Simmer for 15-20 minutes until the carrots and potato are cooked. Add the white beans and heat through. Add salt and pepper. Take off the heat and add some lemon juice.

Cost: 60p per person (if using olive oil; otherwise less)

I know from experience that the second time you make a new dish, it's always so much easier. You may even find it becomes a relaxing new hobby - a bit of '*Me Time*' for yourself in the kitchen! Try this very simple dish that's both cheap and delicious.

Carrot rice pilaf

Ingredients: cup of rice (ideally risotto rice), 1-2 large carrots, handful of raisins, large knob of butter, 1 tablespoon olive oil (or vegetable oil), good pinch of salt, sprinkle of sugar, cinnamon - plus ideally, aniseeds, fennel seeds or tarragon for flavour

Melt the butter in a medium saucepan with the oil over a medium heat. Add 1 or 2 grated carrots and stir for a couple of minutes. Add the raisins, sugar and half a teaspoon of cinnamon. Add the rice, salt, and stir for another minute. Add water up to about 2cm above the rice. Cover, bring to the boil and cook at low heat until all the water has been absorbed (add more water if needed). A teaspoon of aniseeds, fennel seeds or dried tarragon boosts the flavour brilliantly.

Cost: 40p per person (if using olive oil; otherwise less)."

Looking ahead

203 new council homes built



A recent national report found that the majority of local authorities in the UK did not build any new council homes in the past five years.

Cambridge City Council is significantly different, with a long-term building programme that includes, in a recent phase, 75 new social and affordable rental homes recently completed at Orchard Park.

Orchard Park includes 30 homes for social rent. Its other 45 homes - for residents who don't quite qualify for a council home - are for 'affordable rent', set at 20% less than private rents in Cambridge. The City Council will be the landlord for all 75 properties.

Orchard Park is made up of two attractive

apartment blocks and a row of houses. All are gas-free, heated with air-source heat pumps, have biodiverse green roofs and are highly insulated to keep energy needs low and avoid fuel poverty.

Outdoor amenities at Orchard Park include a community garden, pergola and seating, a trim trail, running track and table tennis. There is a shared 'car club' with a hybrid-electric car, plus six electric vehicle charging spaces, parking for 124 bikes, and Cambridge North train station nearby.

Meanwhile, 28 new-built council-rent apartments were completed at Buchan Street and 78 at The Meadows. These 78 add to the 22 council-rent apartments and the state-of-the-art community centre previously completed at The Meadows. All the new Buchan Street and Meadows council homes are wheelchair accessible.

All these council homes are the result of extensive consultations with the local communities to meet their needs. See the article below for the next step in involving communities in any redevelopment of their area.

Redevelopments and you

The City Council has published a new *Statement of Community Involvement* that will involve residents more deeply in any redevelopment of their area. The new framework empowers residents to play an active role in shaping their area's future, with everyone knowing how to influence development and make their voice heard.

It includes consulting residents at the earliest stages, with clear information about proposals. Both community groups and individuals will be offered digital, as well as traditional methods, to make it as easy as possible for local communities to feel heard.

An example is the recent consultation on proposals to redevelop the Council's 122-home estate at Ekin Road. Some of its aged council homes have significant structural problems and maintenance issues that fall well below the Council's current standards for new developments.

But the Council listened to residents' consultation feedback and altered its original plan. It now proposes to retain 14 of the existing houses, as well as building 131 new mixed-tenure homes. It will continue to provide ongoing support to any residents affected by the

redevelopment.

The work is part of the City Council's wider programme to:

- improve accommodation standards for its existing council tenants
- build additional council homes to meet local needs
- address wider housing needs, such as the serious need for larger family homes

Councillor Gerri Bird, the city's Executive Councillor for Housing and Homelessness, said: "Our council house building programme is transforming residents' lives by providing new homes that are of a far higher standard than many ageing council homes.

They are more energy efficient, meaning they're warmer and healthier, but also have lower energy bills.

We understand that anyone facing redevelopment will have lots of questions, and we'll continue to be available to discuss any concerns you have and to support you throughout the process.

Our track record of supporting residents during previous regeneration schemes speaks for itself, and case studies provide reassurance."



Support for you

A cleaner, safer environment

Garden for Nature, not against it

Gardening is a great way to connect to nature, boost your mental wellbeing and support wildlife and biodiversity. To help you take care of both your own garden and the wider environment this year...

- Please avoid using herbicides: they damage the surrounding environment, not just the places you put them in. Wind spreads them out to harm other plants and wildlife. They can even harm you and your pets.
- Please always avoid cutting back hedges from March to July, to protect nesting birds and their new chicks.
- Use a watering can instead of a hose: it saves water, and saves on your water bill!
- Why not enter the annual *Residents' Garden Competition* for council estate residents? There's over £500 in prizes for gardens that take care of Nature. (Details coming in Autumn *Open Door*.)

Council stops herbicide in more areas

The City Council has been actively reducing its use of herbicides across the city, and will continue to do so. Since 2019, we have stopped using herbicides in our parks and open spaces.

Last year, West Chesterton and Trumpington joined Newnham and Arbury as trial areas going herbicide-free. Vegetation such as weeds has been managed with mechanical sweeping and hand tools such as spades and hoes. The project has gone well, with growth in these four wards being monitored so that targeted action can be taken in any areas that need additional maintenance.

Free local skips on *Clean-Up Days*

The Council will bring free skips and recycling bins to neighbourhoods on the Saturday mornings below, to help you clear household and garden waste.

We can collect large items such as sofas and washing machines, and may be able to help clear your garden if you can't. There's often a '*Take It or Leave It*' stall to exchange unwanted items.

Remember, items must go in the right bin or skip, like at a recycling centre. And don't put anything out beforehand: you could be prosecuted for flytipping.

Leaflets with details will be delivered to local residents in advance of the events, which will be at:

- Rawlyn Road, 20 July, 8.30-11.30am
- Brackley Close, 3 August, 8.30-11.30am
- Ashley Road, East Chesterton, 10 August, 8.30-11.30am
- Wulfstan Way, 14 September, 8.30am-2pm
- Ditton Fields, 21 September, 8.30am-2pm
- Maitland & Mortlock Avenues, 28 September, 8.30-11.30am
- Ancaster Way, 19 October, 8.30am-11am

For more information, email housing.officer@cambridge.gov.uk or phone 01223-457000.

Moving to Universal Credit

The nationwide switch to move claimants of many other benefits over to Universal Credit began in Cambridge back in October 2018. For Cambridge people of working age making a new claim from then on, Universal Credit replaced:

- Tax credits
- Employment & Support Allowance
- Housing Benefit
- Income Support
- Jobseeker's Allowance

The government is now also starting to move across to Universal Credit those people who were already on the above benefits before October 2018. So if you currently receive any of the above benefits, you will be contacted and invited to claim Universal Credit instead.

This move will happen over several years, so you may not be contacted soon. But when contacted, you must respond. If you don't, your current benefits will stop after three months.

Be aware that you might be better off when receiving Universal Credit. You can use our [Benefits Calculator](#) to check. If you find you would be better off on Universal Credit, you don't have to wait to be contacted to move over to it. You can ask the Job Centre to move you onto Universal Credit earlier. For more information, visit cambridge.gov.uk/moving-to-universal-credit Or you can contact the Council about it by emailing benefits@cambridge.gov.uk or phoning 01223-457000.

Free local fun for kids & families

Want a *Street Play* session where you live?



Would you like a **Play Street** event where you live? Lots of city residents are doing them!

Play Streets are when residents apply to the County Council to close their road for a short time, to

create a safe space for local kids to play freely together. Or your play event might be in a part of your neighbourhood that's already safe and traffic-free.

The City Council's Community Development team have a webpage of information about how to run a **Play Street**, such as how to close a road. The team can support you to get things started, if you visit www.cambridge.gov.uk/play-streets. The **Playing Out Cambridge** group on Facebook can also help if you have any questions.

As well as being a lot of fun, other benefits of *Play Streets* are the socialising and community building. They enable children to play freely, without organised games or activities. Kids cycle, scoot, skate, chalk the pavement, skip, play hopscotch or kick a ball around and make up games. They are lively and active!

Children need ample space to play energetically. Play is the natural way for children to get the exercise they need to be healthy: all they really need is easy access to safe local space.

Playing in the street increases community belonging. It brings neighbours of all ages together, giving a sense of shared space and ownership. It helps create a sense of collective responsibility, and can increase the safety of your neighbourhood.

Street play creates new chances to socialise and make new friends. These links are often across age groups, or with children who go to other schools. It also increases contact between children and adults, helping to build familiarity and trust. Why not have a go at running one?

Hello Summer!

Look out for the City Council's **Hello Summer** booklet, showing everything on offer for families to have a fantastic, fun-filled summer in the city. There will be something for everyone with a mixture of community events, bookable sessions, and drop-in sessions. The **Hello Summer** booklet will be available to download at www.cambridge.gov.uk, and paper copies will be available at all the city's primary schools and community venues.

Free family activity sessions

Join us with your family and friends every Tuesday in the summer holiday for free, fun activities. Local clubs will lead sessions of archery, dance, orienteering, skating, and much more. Or you can make your own fun in the **Family Play Zone**. There will be something for people of all abilities, with council staff supporting everyone to get active in their own way.

All events will run from 10am to 2pm. Please wear comfortable clothes and footwear, and bring water, snacks and a picnic blanket. Get the dates into your summer diary now. The events will be at these venues on Tuesdays, 10am to 2pm:-

- 23 July: Coldham's Common
- 30 July: Trumpington Recreation Ground
- 6 August: Cherry Hinton Recreation Ground
- 13 August: Nuns Way Recreation Ground
- 20 August: Nightingale Recreation Ground
- 27 August: Pye's Recreation Ground

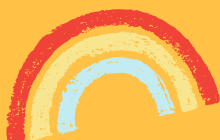
For more information, visit cambridge.gov.uk/summer-events or email sport@cambridge.gov.uk, or follow **Get Moving Cambridge** on Facebook.

What does Street Play look like?

Street Play is..



- Resident-led and organised
- Short, regular road closures
- Free, child-led play
- All neighbours consulted and included
- Road legally and safely closed to through traffic
- Stewarded by residents
- Accessible to cars at a walking pace
- Simple, 'normal' – **not** a street party!



I want a Street Play session on my street how can I make this happen?

Lets take a look at the Four Simple Steps (taken from Playing Out Net):

STEP1: Talk to neighbours

STEP 2: Get permission and support

STEP 3: Tell everyone

STEP 4: Play out!



Who can support me?

- A peer activator who has personal experience of organising play streets
- Someone known and trusted locally from a community organisation
- Housing association community workers
- Council community workers



Residents are having their say

Your resident reps on the Housing Committee



Last year the City Council encouraged tenants and leaseholders to stand for election onto the Housing Scrutiny Committee, which makes the top decisions about your housing.

Only four eligible tenants applied for the five tenant positions, so no tenant ballot needed to take place. However two eligible leaseholders stood for the one available leaseholder position, so a leaseholder election was held recently.

Open Door can now introduce your four tenant representatives and your one leaseholder representative on the Housing Scrutiny Committee for the four-year term ahead. From the left above, they are tenants Justyna Ulman-Jaworska (*elected for the first time*), Diana Minns, Harmony Birch (*elected for the first time*)

and Mandy Powell Hardy, and leaseholder representative Diane Best.

They will champion your interests, and will use *Open Door* to keep you updated on their activities. Your tenant and leaseholder representatives are in a unique position to challenge, input and vote on the high-level decisions relating to your housing at the Council's Housing Scrutiny Committee.

For instance, part of the Housing Scrutiny Committee in March was chaired by one of your resident representatives. At that meeting, your resident reps debated or voted on decisions including:

- a progress update on the Council's building of new council homes
- the Council purchasing some newly built affordable housing

- the setting of social housing rents and service charges for the year ahead
- a 'Compliance Report' on how the Council is meeting legal requirements for the safety and maintenance of council homes
- closing the finance accounts of the Housing Service for the year just past

Your resident representatives are very much available to listen to your concerns and questions. To contact them at any time, please email hsc.residents@gmail.com or phone 01223-458323 to leave them a message.

For minutes of all their Committee meetings, visit <https://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx> and click 'Housing Scrutiny Committee'.

A vacancy and other opportunities

There have been a lot of positive changes in social housing this year. The national Regulator of Social Housing now enforces standards to empower tenants and drive improvement in housing services. This includes a **Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard**. It requires landlords to be open with their tenants, treating them with fairness and respect so that tenants can access services, raise concerns when necessary, influence decision-making and hold their landlord to account.

Here in Cambridge we recognise the need for even greater responsiveness to our residents. We know our policies and decisions are stronger when we listen to and act upon the insight and experience of those who live in our council homes.

Our **Resident Involvement Strategy** is due a refresh next year. We will seek your views to co-create the updated version together. By doing so, we hope to increase your confidence in us and satisfaction with our performance.

As you saw on page 4, we have a lot of valuable feedback from you already. And we will soon invite you all to input on our new *Involvement Strategy*. Meanwhile, here are some of the other ways you can influence your housing service:

- Join the *Open Door Residents' Panel* - Tell us what you want in your magazine and help edit articles. It's a small informal group that meets with us three times a year before each edition.
- Join an *Estate Walkabout* - Walk your estate with officers and councillors to point out what you'd like changed.
- Become a *Resident Inspector* - The only requirement is a bit of time to do some inspections on our housing estates, reporting your findings to us.
- Be part of a *Focus Group* - At a one-off meeting, your contributions will feed into our policies and decisions.

If any of these opportunities interest you, please email resident-involvement@cambridge.gov.uk or phone 01223-458323.

Vacancy opportunity to be a rep on Housing Scrutiny Committee

As you see in the article above, five tenants and one leaseholder can sit and vote on our Housing Scrutiny Committee. As your elected resident representatives, they act as a 'critical friend' to the Council. They scrutinise performance data and policies, and gather feedback from residents about our services. They use this information to raise concerns with the Council and make recommendations for service improvements.

At present there is one vacant space for a tenant representative to sit on the Housing Scrutiny Committee. This is a chance for you to get involved in helping shape your housing service. If you are interested in finding out more, please email resident-involvement@cambridge.gov.uk or phone 01223-458323 or visit www.cambridge.gov.uk/housing-scrutiny-committee-elected-tenant-and-leaseholder-representatives



www.facebook.com/camcitco



www.facebook.com/getmovingcam



cambridge.gov.uk/resident-involvement

Leaseholders

Will your needs change?

Have you thought about whether your home will always be suitable for your needs as you get older? This is especially important if your property is not on the ground floor or served by a lift.

Overall, you should consider how you will continue to live in your home as you get older. The Council is often approached by older leaseholders who live in flats without lifts, above the ground floor. They report that they are struggling to live safely in their homes, with stairs to navigate in older age.

As a homeowner, your options with the Council can sometimes be limited as to how you can move home. You are not able to simply switch to another property as council tenants can.

And if you own your property outright, you will probably have a large amount of financial equity in your home that could render you ineligible to apply to become a council tenant.

If a time came when you were unable to access your home due to stairs, you could find yourself in a difficult situation. So we urge leaseholders to please think well in advance about your future living

situation, and to act sooner rather than later if you think your home may become inaccessible to you in the future. For any advice, email us at leasehold.services@cambridge.gov.uk or phone 01223-457835.

Your 2024 Leaseholder Election

As you saw on the page opposite, your election to choose your leaseholder representative on the Council's Housing Scrutiny Committee ran successfully this Spring.

Your long-serving elected leaseholder representative, Diane Best (pictured, far right, on the page opposite), hardly needs any introduction here, as you have elected her yet again to represent your interests on the Scrutiny Committee. Diane is indeed a dedicated and experienced leaseholder representative.

We are also grateful to the other candidate who stood for election. There is lots to do in representing leaseholders, so the Council will be pleased if that person is happy to get involved as a leaseholder rep in ways other than on the Scrutiny Committee.

Some leases need extending

Have you considered whether you will need to extend your lease?

Please be aware that the length of your lease can significantly affect the value of your flat. The sooner the lease is due to expire, the less your flat is worth, and the more expensive it can be to extend the term of your lease.

If there are less than 80 years remaining on your lease, you may encounter problems in selling or remortgaging your leasehold property. Mortgage lenders typically will not give a mortgage for a property with a shorter lease.

So please do check to see when your lease will expire. Or email the Council if you do not have a copy to hand, and we can let you know when it is due to expire.

To be eligible to extend your lease, you must have owned your property for a minimum of two years. Under the *Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Act 1993*, you can currently add a further 90 years to the remainder of your lease term.

For instance, if your lease has 100 years left to run, you can extend it to have a new lease for 190 years.

In all, Cambridge City Council has 1,168 leasehold properties. To date, of these, 57 leaseholders have successfully extended their leases, adding an extra 90 years to the length of their lease.

However, over 100 of you now have less than 85 years remaining on your lease. These leaseholders in particular are encouraged to make enquiries and to take legal advice about extending your lease, so as to protect the value of your property as a financial asset. We suggest you speak to a solicitor for advice.

The legislation is currently being reviewed by the government. The *Leasehold and Freehold Reform Bill* has now received Royal Assent. However we do not know when this will become active law.

For a copy of the City Council's current advice leaflet or to discuss your own lease situation, please email leasehold.services@cambridge.gov.uk or phone 01223-457835.



Win a £200 shopping voucher!



We want to improve your experience of repairs. So tell us what you think, for a chance to win a **£200 Love2shop gift voucher!** Four lucky respondents will win vouchers: there's one for £200, one for £100 and two for £50! You can either:

- cut out and post this form back to us
- respond online via the QR code below
- or respond online at www.cambridge.gov.uk/repair-appointments

Closing date is 22 August, with random winners drawn by Councillor Gerri Bird.

Our repairs team strives to keep your home in good shape. We know that repairs during weekdays can be challenging for you, for instance while juggling jobs, childcare responsibilities or caring commitments.



Currently, we do repairs on weekdays, 8am to 4pm. We're considering expanding appointments to also include:

- **weekdays until 6pm**
- **Saturdays, 8am to 6pm**

Please tell us what you think of this proposal.

1. Have you ever used our repairs service? **Yes** **No**
2. Did you find the available times suitable? **Yes** **No**
3. Would the proposed extended hours **in bold** below be helpful for you?

Weekdays until 6pm? (extended from current 4pm) **Yes** **No**

If helpful, why?

- Convenience
- Childcare
- Work schedule conflicts
- Other (please explain below)

If not helpful, please say why: _____

4. **Saturdays 8am to 6pm?** (currently not offered) **Yes** **No**

If helpful, why?

- Convenience

- Childcare
- Work schedule conflicts
- Other (please explain below)

If not helpful, please say why: _____

5. We currently offer only 'Morning' or 'Afternoon' appointment slots. Would a more specific time-slot be helpful for you? **Yes** **No**

6. Any other suggestions on how we could improve our repair appointments times?

Your name and address: _____

You can reply online, or cut out and post this form to: *FAO Brigitte Wilson (130 Cowley Road), Cambridge City Council, PO Box 700, Cambridge CB1 0JH*

Who to contact for services



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

Domestic Abuse 24-hour Helpline

Tel: Freephone 0808-2000-247
Visit www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk

Make council payments by phone

Tel: 01223-457000, with bank card

Homelessness & temporary accommodation, outside office hours

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

Rents, tenancies, lettings, renting a council garage

Tel: 01223-457000
Visit www.cambridge.gov.uk/council-tenants

Repairs

Tel: 01223-457000; or 0300-303-8389 for out of hours emergency repairs

Contact Council in Sign Language

Register at <https://signlive.co.uk>, then dial 01223-457000 for a live interpreter

Council Tax

Visit www.cambridge.gov.uk
Tel: 01223-457000

Leasehold services

Visit www.cambridge.gov.uk/leaseholders
E: leasehold.services@cambridge.gov.uk
Tel: 01223-457835

Housing for Older People and Visiting Support Service

E: independent.living@cambridge.gov.uk
Tel: 01223-457000

Home-Link lettings

Visit www.home-link.org.uk
Tel: 01223-457000

Housing & Council Tax Benefits

Visit www.cambridge.gov.uk
Tel: 01223-457000

Bins, recycling, street-cleaning

Visit www.cambridge.gov.uk/bins-recycling-and-rubbish
Tel: 01223-457000

Bulky waste collection

Visit www.cambridge.gov.uk/arrange-a-bulky-waste-collection
Tel: 01223-457000

Report anti-social behaviour

E: asbsection@cambridge.gov.uk
Tel: 01223-457000

Report tenancy fraud

E: fightfraud@cambridge.gov.uk

Noise complaints

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

Council emergencies out of hours

Tel: 0300-303-8389

To complain about council services

Visit www.cambridge.gov.uk/compliments-complaints-and-suggestions

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: 0754-2826553

Hi-Spec window cleaning

E: helpdesk@hispecservices.co.uk

Suicide Awareness

If you or someone else feels suicidal, dial 111, then option 2, for help from NHS mental health professionals.

And www.stayingsafe.net is a free website offering practical help for people with suicidal thoughts, and for those caring for them.