



CHEL TENHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Housing services

Your Annual Report 2024/2025

For tenants and shared owners



Introduction

A joint message from Cllr Rowena Hay, leader of the council and Gareth Edmundson, chief executive, Cheltenham Borough Council.

Hello!

We are delighted to welcome you to your annual report. Here, you'll find out all about our achievements and how we are involving you in shaping future decisions about the support and services that matter most to you.

It's been a busy year, following the successful transfer of housing services back into the council from Cheltenham Borough Homes (CBH). We are delighted to announce we are on track to achieve our goal of £2m in savings. So far we have saved £565K from the housing budgets and £965K from the rest of the council. We are also due to save a further £1.8m per annum on pension contributions from the 1st of June 2026. By making savings it means that we can invest in more things that are important and which help us to improve the service we provide.

Bringing housing back to the council has changed the way we take decisions. We want to make it easier for you to be involved in the way we run our services, so you can find out more about what is going well and what we need to do to improve. Our new public Housing Committee meetings are a great opportunity for you to provide your input. They are supported by our tenant and leaseholder panels who are instrumental in making sure we hear your views and feedback. You can read all about their achievements on page 14.

You may have also noticed that our name has changed. Earlier this year we began replacing the CBH branding to Cheltenham Borough Council housing services. We have also updated our social media platforms to reflect this new name. You will of course, still continue to access MyCBH portal and visit cbh.org for information about housing services, while we update our housing branding.

Finally, we started a big improvement plan to achieve our new mission for housing services – What does this mean in practice? Well, we want to make the relationship between tenant and landlord feel more like a partnership, where we can better



“
Together with our tenants
we provide safe, secure
and well-maintained
homes that help everyone
reach their potential.
”

work together to listen, learn and make the right changes when things don't quite go as we planned. We also want to focus on how we involve tenants and leaseholders in the way we design and deliver services. Our first priority will always be making sure that you have a safe and high-quality home that meets all of the national standards. With this focus we have made excellent progress on better understanding the condition of the homes we own. Many of you will have had a visit from our team so we can survey and update our records which helps us better understand where we need to fund improvements to make sure all our homes are well maintained. At the time of writing this report we are about 60% complete in our visits so it's really important that you help us by making sure we can look at every home and hit our 100% target.

We hope you enjoy reading this report and thank you for being a part of CBC housing services.

Gareth and Rowena

Great Homes

Everyone deserves a place they can call home. We want to help you and your family live in homes that are affordable, high quality and safe.

This year:

Over **£3.6m** (for a total project cost of just over **£7m**) was successfully obtained in government funding through the **Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund Wave 3**, whose aim is to improve the energy performance of social homes in England.

425 homes, which have been identified as having a poor performance, will have works carried out to improve energy efficiency. Some cases will involve the installation of a heat pump heating system over the next 3 years.

We teamed up with Rand Associates, a specialist surveying company, to do a quick visual check of all the homes we manage, inside and out. This survey is helping us make sure your home receives any upgrades it needs at the right time.

Supporting long-term plans to improve:

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Kitchens |  Windows |
|  Bathrooms |  Heating |
|  Roof |  Wiring |

Did you know?

Early findings show that more than **90%** of components inside homes are in good condition, and we've already been able to spot where upgrades are needed. The surveys have also helped us find and fix hazards, making homes safer. These results are already helping shape future improvement programmes and we'll share more once the full survey is finished.

If your home hasn't been surveyed yet Rand Associates, will be in touch to arrange an appointment. You can find more information in our Tenant Voice magazine at: cbh.org/download/publications/cbhnews/tenant-voice-spring-2025.pdf

2,800 the number of homes that have been surveyed so far, which is over **60%** of the properties we manage. The rest will be visited over the coming months.

Why this matters

Each survey helps us:

-  **Make sure kitchen and bathroom upgrades happen when they're needed**
-  **Replace things like windows and roofs at the right time**
-  **Keep homes safe, comfortable and well maintained**
-  **Plan future investment more accurately**



Putting your safety first

Each year we are required by the Regulator of Social Housing to monitor and collect information on your home to keep you safe.

During 24/25 we carried out:



99.98%
required gas safety checks



100%
required fire risk assessments

There were a number of outstanding actions that were needed following earlier fire risk assessments, and we are working hard to ensure we are compliant and complete these as quickly as possible. We have improved our monitoring processes for future fire risk actions to ensure that they are completed within the required timescales



96.47%
re-inspections and surveys to manage asbestos



100%
required communal passenger lift safety checks



100%
required legionella risk assessments



94.6%
non-emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlords target timescale



97.4%
emergency responsive repairs, completed within the landlords target timescale

Housing provision overview:



264 households were accommodated in **24/25**



We helped **23** tenants downsize to smaller homes. This freed up properties for larger families in housing need



We successfully acquired **24** properties and an additional **6** flats at Medway Court, Whaddon Road, from a housing provider.

This helps us with our goal to continue to provide quality homes whilst investing in our communities for the future

We are legally required to publish the Tenancy Satisfaction Measures in full, you can view these at: cbh.org/tenant-satisfaction-measures/

Stronger Communities

We understand the importance of strong, healthy and connected communities. Working closely with our tenants and local partners we want to bring people together, reduce loneliness and help you get the support you need.

Helping you to manage money and benefits



We helped tenants claim **£1.9m** in benefits



Provided **683** people with benefit and money advice



Cleared **£75K** of rent arrears



Welcomed **93** people to our benefit and money advice drop-in sessions



Supported **91** tenants and their families through our Help2 crisis fund. Providing important items including white goods, carpets and furnishings to those who are vulnerable.

Last year:

We supported Dunelm's Christmas campaign to ensure people who are experiencing significant hardship, don't miss out on a present during the festive season.



We made a difference to:

82 people and **14** vulnerable families, who received a present just in time for Christmas.



This campaign was so successful it was featured on BBC news.



That's not all...

We partnered with Dunelm and invited Cheltenham residents to donate used and in good condition school uniform.

During this event we:

- Provided more than **£1K** of items to **47** families and over **120** children.
- Received invaluable feedback helping us improve and deliver the events that meet your needs.
- Additional support was also provided by our partners. This included:
 - Severn Trent who helped people apply for discount schemes to help reduce their water bill
 - Severn Wye who provided families with free energy saving lightbulbs and energy saving advice
 - Local food pantries were in attendance to talk about the support they can offer
 - Citizens Advice attended to provide advice on debt
 - The benefit and money advice team were also there to provide benefit calculations, talk about income support and look at any benefit queries people had

Looking after your community

Over the past year, we have continued to support and strengthen communities across Cheltenham. With nearly £79k in funding secured, we've worked alongside residents, local organisations and volunteers to deliver activities that promote wellbeing, inclusion, and opportunity.

Coding Clubs – we secured £19K in funding from Spirax Group to support 10 children attending Code Ninjas coding programmes over the next two years. This funding follows a successful pilot of the Oakley coding club, which began in 2024. The funding will run from September 2024 to September 2026

Stop Animation – in collaboration Jam Coding. Travis Perkins provided £1000 of funds to the project which we delivered in a six-week stop animation club at Hesters Way, where eight children created animations focusing on Cheltenham's net zero goals and how communities can contribute to achieving

Warm Hubs – to support families during the winter months, we invested £900 in warm kits for children and residents in The Moors. Making a difference to the lives of 31 children and 9 parents, helping them stay warm during winter 2024/25

Build Back Better Fund – we are grateful to Gloucestershire County Council's Build Back Better (BBB) Fund, which awarded the project £1,236. This funding was crucial in purchasing essential gardening equipment and plants that kick-started our development of a thriving green space



Enrich – secured £25K funding to empower individuals to take control of their health and well-being through creative, inclusive and engaging community-led initiatives. This was achieved in collaboration with: The Isbourne; Wiggly Food Charity; Goals Beyond Grass inclusive sports charity; Third Aged Fitness

Grow. Cook. Eat. – our family cooking sessions, running twice a month and during school holidays, have become a cornerstone of the Hub's programming. Families prepare meals using fresh and often homegrown ingredients, learning to cook healthy and affordable food together. Thanks to £5K in funding from Travis Perkins, we've been able to expand this programme. New cooking equipment has been purchased, enabling us to extend sessions



Providing people with employment and training opportunities

We are a registered Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) training centre provider. This year our dedicated team have been busy improving the services they deliver through completing:

- a level 3 coaching and mentoring qualification
- a level 3 award in education and training



Each week we run a range of workshops at our Skills Hub to help you develop your skills. These free and easy to access sessions include:



Job clubs



Budgeting



Online courses



IT skills



Digital support and help with getting online

Following some feedback and requests, we introduced new short courses in 2024, which can be accessed at our Skills Hubs, in community settings and at home. During this period more than 100 people have enrolled onto these courses.



The session was very encouraging, morale and confidence boosting for me! The tutors were ultra helpful and welcoming, creating good learning atmosphere for every course seeker. Thank you!

Tutor on the feedback from the courses

Achievements

In 2024/25 the training and employment team achieved the following:



Providing people with opportunities into work, training and education

Provides accredited training and employment opportunities to 6 local students during one term, who are at risk of exclusion or likely to leave education early.

During 24/25:

Our Thrive programme

We worked closely with Pittville School, All Saints Academy and Bournside School to deliver a variety of workshops and work experience placements to students as part of our Thrive programme.

Gloucestershire College Partnership

This year we worked in partnership with the construction skills department to bridge the gap between training and employment. We support these students prior to completion of their course by running bespoke employability workshops to apply for jobs and apprenticeships. In 2025/26 we will be expanding this offer to students studying catering, hair and beauty.

We worked with students with mild learning difficulties offering an ASDAN course in Employability Skills Development, a part of this programme includes working with the college

tutors to support the students in CV, employment skills, application forms and mock interviews.

Earlier this year we expanded our young person's offer and formed a partnership with the Youth Support Team offering employability workshops and online training courses.



Supporting and keeping you safe in your community

We want to prioritise making your home a safe and enjoyable place to live. Thanks to some feedback in our Tenant Satisfaction Surveys (completed by Acuity) and taking on board your comments, we have started an antisocial behaviour (ASB) improvement project to try and reduce anti-social behaviour and support the communities affected by it.

ASB was also one of the key areas that was identified as an area for improvement in the consultation that was conducted prior to Cheltenham Borough Homes coming back under the council.

The ASB improvement project, which is ongoing, includes the following:

- Involves a group of colleagues from multiple teams
- Focuses on increasing satisfaction and regulatory compliance
- Managing community expectations on achievable outcomes
- ASB focus group held during ASB awareness week
- Launch of ASB text messaging satisfaction surveys in Nov 2024

Achievements:

- Work closely with local partners including Police, Social Care, Crimestoppers and detached Youth Workers as part of the 'Endeavour' project to tackle organised criminality in The Moors and St Paul's areas. This forms part of the Home Office's 'Clear Hold Build' initiative
- Clear, Hold, Build is a nationally recognised plan in which:
 - Phase one – police and partners pursue criminal gang members using all their available powers and tactics to clear them from a particular area
 - Phase two – continued activity follows to hold the area and prevent other gangs moving-in
 - Phase three – partners and police work with those who live there to build the community into a more prosperous and crime-free place
- Continued engagement with tenants and families in this area – tenants and ward councillors describe the areas as feeling 'different' and more positive, with greater engagement
- Successful renewal of Moors lettings plan for a further 12 months
- Cheltenham recognised as a best practice area for Clear Hold Build in the South-West
- Continued commitment to partner working with the local policing team and SOLACE cross team collaboration on case work and legal interventions
- The ASB Team have successfully utilised additional legal powers available to them as part of a local authority – closure orders. The aim is to develop use of community protection warnings and notices as an additional tool for case resolution



Your tenancy

We are here to support you through your time with us as a tenant and help you with any queries you have about your home.

Your tenancy management officer can provide:

- general advice on your tenancy
- support, and advice to help you stay in your home

They will also sign post you to the correct team or agency, if they are unable to help.

Visiting your home

Every five years we visit your home to complete a tenancy audit with you. This helps us check that all your details on our system are correct.

During **2024/25**, we visited more than **1,000** of you to ensure we have the most up-to-date information about your tenancy, helping us identify any support you may need.

Estate walkabouts:

You will often see your tenancy management officer out and about in your areas, carrying out inspections of communal area and gardens to address any issues. This is all part of our drive to fulfill our requirements under the consumer standards. For this reason we also carry out quarterly estate walkabouts, which you are welcome to join. These are a great opportunity to discuss and raise any questions you have about the communal areas we manage.

For more information on your tenancy and who your tenancy management officer is visit: cbh.org/services/your-home/your-tenancy/

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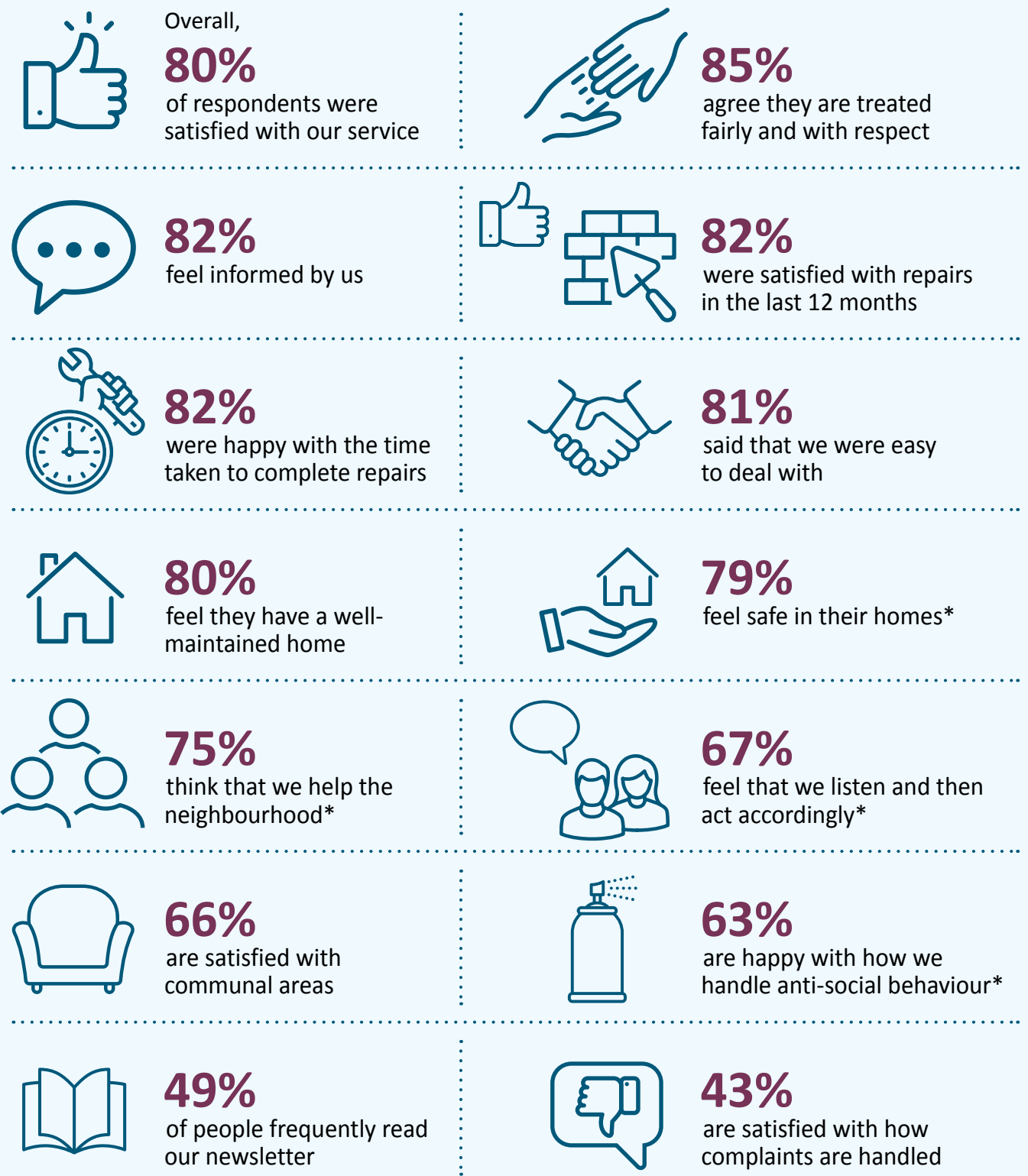


If you want to discuss any issues/concerns with your tenancy management officer we can arrange for them to visit you in your home or call you, please contact us on **0800 408 0000** who will be able to put you through to the correct person.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)

Each year, a company known as Acuity will carry out tenant satisfaction surveys four times a year on our behalf. These have been designed using Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) from the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH). In April 2023 it became mandatory to report how we are doing every year. This is important as it helps us better understand your views on the services we provide.

In 2024/25, our results were as follows:



*This is a reduction from our last report by **3%** and something we will be focusing on in 25/26.

Listening and taking action

Compliments and complaints



217
complaints and we upheld **171** complaints in full or in part



Per every **1,000** homes we received **49** stage one complaints



Received **156** compliments



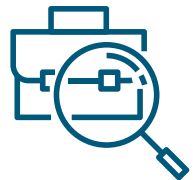
21
stage two complaints with **11** resolved



Per every **1,000** homes we received four stage **two** complaints



96%
of stage **one** complaints responded to within Housing Ombudsman's Complaint handling code timescales



94%
of stage **two** complaints responded to within Housing Ombudsman's Complaint handling code timescales

We take complaints seriously and our complaints policy is there to make sure we handle these fairly. Where complaints are upheld, we work hard to resolve the situation and log when we don't always get things right so we can continuously improve the way we deliver our services. All learning is recorded and the information we collect is shared with the relevant service area.

We are very proud of the positive feedback we receive and would love to hear all about these experiences to enable us to see where we are excelling and how this can be mirrored or replicated in other service areas. This can be done by using our website, online portal, calling **0800 408 000** or emailing your compliments to **housing@cheltenham.gov.uk**

“Thank you for getting in touch with me so soon concerning the above complaint. I am very pleased with the outcome”

“This is to commend the electricians. They were polite, friendly, fast and efficient”

“Tenant wanted to say that he was very pleased, and they have done a wonderful job. He's very happy”

Your feedback matters



Over **50k**
of calls received through our free phone number



Our customer service team responded to **98.5%** of these calls



94%
of calls were answered in **60** seconds



These calls can vary but common themes include:

- Flagging anti-social behaviour
- Financial difficulties
- Arranging a payment plan
- Requesting appointment changes for home visits
- To raise a repair for their home or communal space (26% of all calls)
- Requesting updates regarding ongoing agreed work from our repairs and maintenance service

Acuity complete quarterly satisfaction measures on behalf of housing. The customer service team follow up on any form of dissatisfaction, these form part of 'you said, we did' which is a project we will work on in 2025-2026. The total amount of calls we completed for this was 249, this gives us some really valuable feedback on what our tenants want to improve within the services we provide to them.



“They are always so helpful on the phone”

“The customer service team was really good the lady who dealt with my reason for repair was so, so helpful in getting the problem sorted the same day”

“[tenant wanted to] pass on her thanks on to the CST as they have been so helpful throughout their tenancy with CBH... they have always been, kind, caring and deal with any issues they have raised”

Tenant and leaseholder panel

In 2024 the **Tenant Scrutiny Improvement Panel (TSIP)** became the **tenant panel**, following the decision by Cheltenham Borough Council to take the housing service back in-house. The aim of the tenant panel is to ensure that tenants are at the heart of housing service delivery through the scrutiny and review of our services. The tenant panel reports to the newly formed CBC housing committee.

In 2024, we established a new, independent leaseholder panel to serve as a representative body, ensuring the needs and interests of our leaseholders are being met. The meetings take place quarterly, providing an opportunity to discuss important matters affecting leaseholders and to raise any concerns.

Tenant panel achievements

Over the past year, the **tenant panel** has been instrumental in shaping the direction of tenant services and have done the following:

- **Completed compliance training** with Pennington to enhance knowledge and skills
- **Contributed to the consumer standards action plan** helping to ensure services meet required standards
- **Delivered one full scrutiny review** providing vital challenge and recommendations for improvement of our complaints process
- **Helped develop our new tenant promise** setting clear commitments that meet the needs of our tenants
- **Shaped the new ASB policy** focusing on practical solutions and better outcomes
- **Influenced the new tenant voice plan** ensuring ongoing resident input into council services
- **Shaped the single equality scheme** feeding into the development of the new Single Equality Scheme for CBC housing
- **Influenced the new fencing policy** the tenant panel was invited to share their views on the new fencing policy
- **Approved the new governance structure** The tenant panel fed into the development of the new governance structure at CBC

Leaseholder panel: building a strong voice for leaseholders

We have seen **excellent engagement** with the newly formed leaseholder panel, with **15 attendees** at the first meeting, and strong ongoing engagement.

Key Highlights:

- **Relationship building** to get to know leaseholders and **co-create an annual plan** that reflects their priorities and needs
- **Deep dive into section 20 notices** (Section 20 notice is a legal requirement for landlords to inform leaseholders about any major works planned for a property) with updates from the head of service, Matt Ward
- **Development of the new leaseholder handbook** and improvements to the **leaseholder section of the website**, ensuring clearer and more accessible information for all leaseholders



Additional tenant engagement



Tenants and leaseholders are working with CBC to ensure the website meets their needs



A new text-based survey was developed to capture real-time feedback on complaints and ASB services



A new residents' association was formed at Barlow Road with our support



Scrutiny reviews are now published on our website for public access



Developing a community-led approach to crime reduction in St Paul's and The Moors – Based on resident input, additional youth services, employment training, and financial support programs were introduced



Monthly coffee mornings were introduced at every independent living scheme to provide a space for older tenants to voice concerns

“I have found the tenant panel to be a place where we can actually get involved in the running of properties run by CBC housing. It is real life and real problem solving, not just lip service.”



Timothy Lansdown, tenant panel member:

Leaseholder engagement panel representative statement (Bozena Tarnawska):

“I first got involved with the leaseholder panel because I believe it's essential that residents have a voice in the decisions that affect their homes and communities. As someone who cares deeply about transparency, fairness and the quality of our shared living environment, I wanted to contribute in a meaningful way.

Since becoming a representative on the panel, I've attended monthly housing committee meetings where I provide feedback on behalf of leaseholders. This includes raising concerns, sharing suggestions and helping to shape policies

that reflect the real needs and experiences of those who live here.

What I value most about this role is the opportunity to collaborate with both tenants and housing officers. It's rewarding to see that our input can influence positive change, improve services and strengthen the sense of community we all share”.

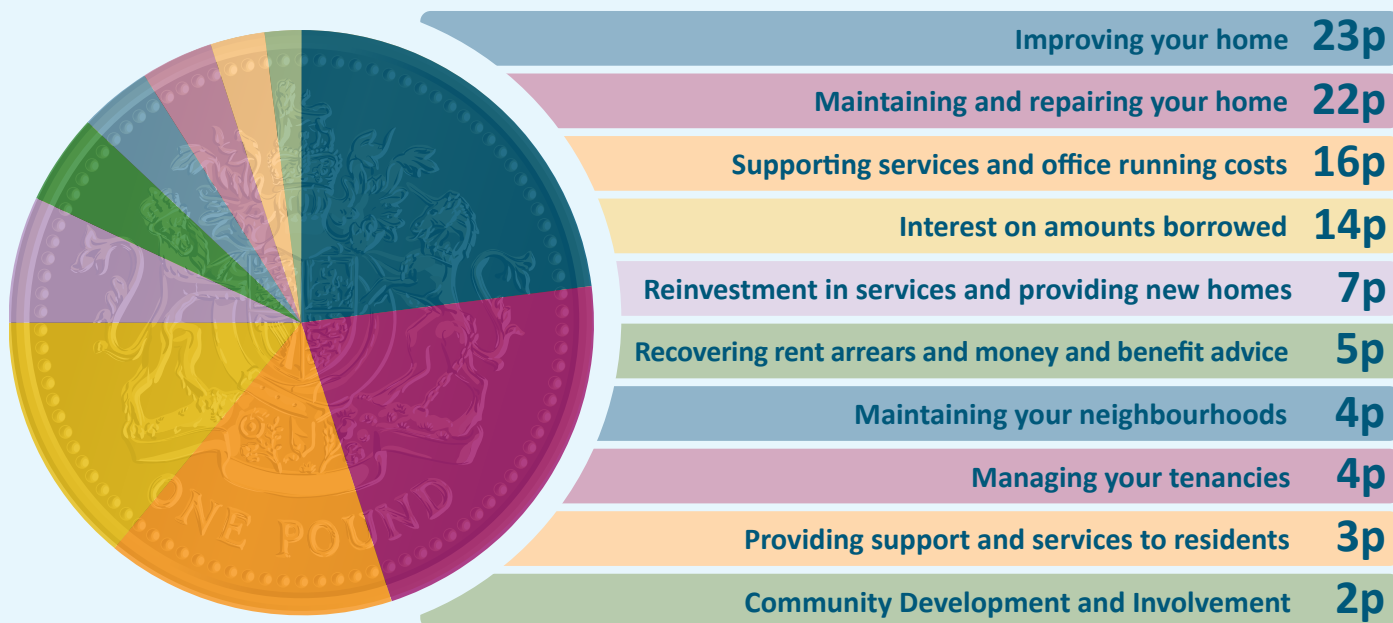


How your rent is spent

Making sure we offer great service without unnecessary expense is very important to us. We want to give you value for your money, and do this by carefully handling our spending to keep our essential services strong and ensure positive results for you.

Every year your rent is paid into a pot of money called the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

During 2024/25 the HRA spent a total of **£25.7m**. For every **£1** of income received, this was distributed across the service areas in the following way:



If you require this document in any other format please contact communications@cheltenham.gov.uk

如需此文件的其他格式，
请联系 communications@cheltenham.gov.uk

Jeśli niniejszy dokument wymagany jest w innym formacie,
prosimy o kontakt z communications@cheltenham.gov.uk

જો આ દસ્તાવેજ તમે અન્ય કોઈ પણ ફોર્મેટમાં
મેળવવા ઇચ્છતા હોય તો કૃપા કરીને
communications@cheltenham.gov.uk પર સંપર્ક કરો.



Keep an eye out for our new website and tenant portal!

We are currently developing a new website which will include all of the relevant information you need in regard to housing services.

We will also be creating a new tenant portal. This will be very similar to the previous My CBH account, but on a Cheltenham Borough Council domain.

Updates on when the new webpages and portal go live, will be posted on our social media accounts. Once the new pages are up and running the old webpages and tenant portal will no longer be available. You can also keep up to date on the latest news by visiting:



@YourCBCHousing



@Cheltenham Borough Council

