

# TenantVoice<sup>magazine</sup>

Spring 2025



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transforms  
lives with  
**£25,000 grant**

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**CHEL TENHAM**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Housing services



**GREAT  
HOMES**



**STRONGER  
COMMUNITIES**



**CHANGE**



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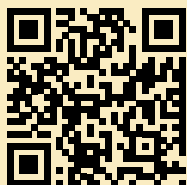
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## Drop in and see us

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Did you realise you can watch the **Cheltenham Borough Council YouTube channel** for live meetings or to catch up on previous meetings. Scan the QR code or search for us **@CheltenhamBC**



Call 0800 408 0000



housing@cbh.org



www.cbh.org

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**GREAT  
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## Foreword



**Welcome to the new look Tenant Voice. We will continue to bring you the same great content but it will just look different.**

Over the coming months, we will be updating our branding and you'll notice that communication from us will be from 'Cheltenham Borough Council housing services' (see page 4). For the time being, you will still continue to receive emails from cbh.org, access MyCBH portal and visit [www.cbh.org](http://www.cbh.org) for information about housing services, as we work through updating our housing branding. If you are not sure or have any concerns about any correspondence you have received please call our customer helpline.

If you follow us on social media, you might have noticed a change there too. You can find us **@YourCBCHousing** on **Facebook** and **X**.

In this edition of Tenant Voice, we're sharing news of more online courses to help you upskill and improve your CV and we've shared why it's important we continue to improve our services as your landlord. We wish you a wonderful spring.

*Rowena and Gareth*

## Housing committee chair – Cllr Julian Tooke

**My name is Julian Tooke and I chair the cabinet housing committee.**

The job of the committee is to constructively challenge and scrutinise the council, to speak up and to provide advice when needed. When doing this, we aim to never forget that all discussions are about homes, and the people who live in them, not just buildings.

As chair of the committee, I am determined that we represent you. To do that really well though, we need to hear from you. All questions must be sent in 7 days in advance of committee meetings to **[democratic.services@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@cheltenham.gov.uk)**

The committee will do its job better with your input. I can't wait to hear from you.

*Julian*



Scan the QR to show the times of upcoming meetings

# Check out our new look... We've changed our name to Cheltenham Borough Council housing services

You may have noticed some changes as Cheltenham Borough Homes (CBH) is now known as Cheltenham Borough Council housing services.



## CHELTENHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL Housing services

To bring housing services in line with our other council service areas, we are now using the Cheltenham Borough Council crest, with a 'housing services' tag line.

The new refreshed branding is gradually being rolled out and has already been applied across our social media platforms.

When you get a moment, why not check out our new style on Facebook and X by visiting **@YourCBCHousing**.

Don't forget, you will still continue to receive emails from **cbh.org**, access MyCBH portal and visit **www.cbh.org** for information about housing services, while we update our housing branding.



If you have any questions about this, please call our customer helpline.



# Consumer standards, what does it mean for you?



The Regulator of Social Housing has introduced new standards that all councils and housing providers must follow to ensure you live in a safe, well-maintained home, where your voice is heard, and services are shaped around your needs. We can now be inspected by the regulator to make sure we're meeting these standards.

These consumer standards are:

- **Safety and quality standard:** We have to ensure that your home is safe, warm, and in good condition, with repairs and maintenance carried out promptly.
- **Transparency, influence and accountability standard (including tenant satisfaction measures):** You must be treated fairly and with respect, and have your voice heard on decisions that affect you. Our communications must be clear about the services we provide, what you can expect, and how to hold us to account and complaints must be handled fairly, promptly, and in line with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. We must also publish the results of our tenant satisfaction measures to show you how we are performing.
- **Neighbourhood and community standard:** You should feel safe and supported where you live. We are required to work with other landlords, the police, and local organisations to keep shared spaces safe and address anti-social behaviour and hate crimes. We can also support you in accessing necessary advice and services related to domestic abuse.
- **Tenancy standard:** Homes must be let fairly and consider your current and future needs. Support is provided if you need help maintaining, ending, or mutually exchanging your tenancy.

We are working hard to make sure we meet all these standards and provide the best service possible for you. We've created a **new webpage** where you can learn more and get updates.

Visit the page here:

[cbh.org/about-us/consumer-standards/](https://cbh.org/about-us/consumer-standards/)



# “You said, we did”

- Thanks to your feedback, we are reviewing our mutual exchange (home swapping) policy, to look at how we can improve the service.
- We have invested in new materials and equipment including vacuums and floor scrubber dryers to improve the cleanliness of communal areas. These improvements have received positive feedback.
- Additional resource has been given to our dedicated team of damp, mould and condensation experts. Helping us to fulfil demand and continue our high level of support.

## Estates

“It was really noticed by me and other tenants for the team’s hard work in cleaning the block. They did a fantastic job in tidying the car park. Just wanted you to know what a great job they have done.”

## Repairs



“It is lovely for a repairs engineer to take a pride in their work in someone else’s house. We’ve had a real giggle, and he’s brightened my day. He is coming back tomorrow to finish off the work and I’m looking forward to it!”

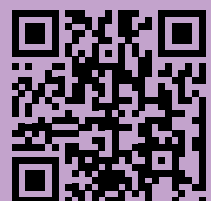
## Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)

The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) regulates landlords to check that they are giving people good housing and that they are efficient and run well.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) are a new part of the RSH’s regulatory approach, aimed at making it easier for people to find out how good a landlord is and compare different housing providers. This means people can see which landlords are better at looking

after homes and tenants. The RSH thinks it’s important that people know how tenants feel about their landlord, and if landlords are doing what they’re supposed to do.

To find our latest TSM report scan this QR code or visit [cbh.org/tenant-satisfaction-measures/](https://cbh.org/tenant-satisfaction-measures/)





## Tenant services

“

Last year my elderly mother became a tenant of yours. Her experiences when dealing with anyone at the council has been great, I would like to thank everyone at the housing department for the way in which my mother has been treated. From what she's told me about the service you've provided to her you have been absolutely first class. So, thank you all very much. ”



## Benefits and money advice

“

Many thanks for your help and support for our family. We truly appreciate it, and we would like to extend a big thank you from all of us to you and your team. ”

## Anti social behaviour (ASB)

“

I am grateful for the support you and your team gave during the whole process. We are really enjoying our new home. ”

## Training employment services



“

Finally, I've received an offer for a 5-week temp role from a digital marketing company, thanks for your help and support on my job hunting. I wish you all the best. ”

## Customer services team

“

The customer service was good, the lady who dealt with my reason for repair was so helpful in getting the problem sorted the same day. Fantastic! Thank you so much for your help. ”

# Working together to keep your home safe

You may have noticed in previous editions of our tenant magazine, we made you aware of our stock condition survey programme. We're making great progress and so far, over 1800 homes have been surveyed, which means we're at approximately 40% completion – thank you to everyone who has provided access!

## Why are these surveys important?

### These surveys help us:

- ✓ Plan for future repairs and improvements
- ✓ Ensure your home remains safe and well-maintained
- ✓ Check if homes meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard
- ✓ Comply with the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards

### The surveys assess key elements including:

- Doors and windows
- Roofs
- Kitchens and bathrooms
- Paths and fences

For each component, surveyors record its age, condition, and estimated lifespan, helping us create a long-term maintenance plan. Some homes will also receive an EPC (Energy Performance Certificate) assessment to check energy efficiency.

## What should you expect?

- Either a Cheltenham Borough Council or a Rand Associates surveyor will visit your home. This will take less than an hour.
- No furniture needs to be moved, and carpets will not be lifted.
- Surveyors will carry official ID and a letter from Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC).

## Haven't had your survey yet?

If you haven't had your survey yet, Rand Associates will be in touch soon to arrange an appointment time that works for you.

**It's really important that you allow us access for this survey. If you need to reschedule please contact Rand Associates:**

Freephone: **0800 035 3051**

Email: **[surveys@rand-associates.co.uk](mailto:surveys@rand-associates.co.uk)**





# Can we improve? Keep talking to us

Your feedback is vital for continuously improving our services to you. Whether you would like to thank a particular team or feel we could have done better, let us know. We are always keen to learn and will be led by your views and suggestions.

If you ever feel that you need to make a complaint, you can do this in a variety of ways:

- In person
- In writing
- Via **My CBH** portal
- On the telephone, by calling **0800 408 0000**
- By minicom
- By typetalk
- By email to **cbhcustomerrelations@cbh.org**

OR visit our contact us page and fill in our **online form** at **[www.cbh.org/contact-us/](http://www.cbh.org/contact-us/)**

We follow a two stage complaints process – you can read more about this at **[www.cbh.org/contact/making-a-complaint/](http://www.cbh.org/contact/making-a-complaint/)**

You can also contact the Housing Ombudsman Service at any point during the complaint process.

The Ombudsman cannot investigate your complaint whilst it is going through our complaints procedure, however they may be able to provide you with advice.

- Telephone **0300 111 3000**
- Email **[info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)**
- **[housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://housing-ombudsman.org.uk)**
- Housing Ombudsman Service,  
PO Box 152,  
Liverpool, L33 7WQ



# More on-line training courses available



**We've increased the number of online training courses available to people who live in Cheltenham.**

Our partnership with Gloucestershire College is going from strength to strength, together we are working on a couple of projects, these include:

- **A taster day, which is being offered by Gloucestershire College to the Thrive programme students with the construction college. We are exploring the possibility of expanding this offer with other departments at this college.**
- **Employment sessions which we are providing to college students on the supported internship programme.**

You can access these courses by popping into the Skills Hub at Hester's Way on a Wednesday or Thursday (between 10am and 3pm).

We continue to receive positive feedback for our courses. Some attendees have gone on to complete more than one to strengthen their job applications and CV's.

Don't just take our word for it, check out the following glowing feedback:

## CSCS (Construction Skills Certification Scheme) course

“  
I am very delighted for the lessons and knowledge I have achieved so far, thanks a lot.”

## Customer service course

“  
Learning this vocation has really opened my eyes in gaining and keeping customers happy. Glad to have met great tutors who are very supportive of me.”

## Digital drop in sessions

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





# Coding club

**We've joined forces with staff at CGI and Lockheed Martin to host a free 6 week coding club to children in Cheltenham. This all started from a conversation at the Cheltenham Science Festival!**

CGI staff volunteered to help run an after-school club at the Skills Hub in Hester's Way for an hour, once a week.

The sessions welcomed 8 children who learned how to code and create their own games. All the children worked so hard and enjoyed every second of the sessions, they were rewarded with a certificate and goodies once they completed their games.



**Rebekka Mann,  
Community investment officer said:**

“  
I can't wait to work with CGI again and bring these sessions to another area. Providing the opportunity for more children to have a chance at learning how to code. This has been another successful partnership!”

# ENRICH project transforms lives with £25,000 grant

**We've successfully secured £25,000 from the health inequalities fund to support the ENRICH project.**

This program is designed to empower individuals to take control of their health and well-being through creative, inclusive, and engaging community-led initiatives.

## **The project focuses on five key areas:**

- **Active lifestyles** – Encouraging movement and exercise through fun, age-appropriate activities like street dancing, yoga, strength training, and even frisbee. These activities help prevent dementia, reduce falls, and boost mental well-being.
- **Connecting with nature** – Encouraging outdoor engagement through mindful walks, community gardening, and nature-based programs, fostering a deeper connection with the environment and enhancing mental clarity.
- **Healthy eating and nutrition** – Teaching families how to prepare balanced meals using locally grown produce while also providing community meals to strengthen social bonds and reduce isolation.
- **Inclusive and supportive spaces** – Creating safe, dementia-friendly environments described by participants as “calm sanctuaries.”

The initiative ensures accessibility for ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) learners, wheelchair users, and individuals with learning difficulties.

- **Cultural and creative engagement** – We work together with The Wilson, The Everyman, Cheltenham Festivals, and Gloucestershire Libraries to offer interactive creative sessions that spark joy, boost confidence, and enhance personal growth.

## **Making a real difference**

Since its launch in the spring of 2024, the ENRICH project has already reached over 140 individuals in Cheltenham, putting their health and wellbeing first. With the secured funding, the initiative will expand to include tailored sessions for children, families, and the over-55s, aiming to tackle health inequalities and prevent avoidable illnesses.

Everyone over the age of 18 is welcome to join ENRICH and its free and fully inclusive.

ENRICH takes place on **Tuesdays 11am-1pm** at **St Marks Church Hall, Church Road, Cheltenham, GL51 7AL.**



## Voices from the community

“

I learned about the stages of sleep. I use my iPad less, watch less TV, and my sleep has improved so much that I'm now off sleeping pills and antidepressants. ”

“

When I come to ENRICH, I feel—Wow! It's Tuesday, a great day ahead. I look forward to new projects. Everything is different, and I love it all. It's fantastic! ”

The most powerful testament to ENRICH's success comes from the participants themselves:

“

My life has changed. Need I say more? I've met so many people, enjoyed chats, stayed active with fitness and art—so many things. Thank you! ”



# Drop in and see us

Come and join us at our drop in sessions for free to get money and benefit advice.

## You'll find the team:

### Every Wednesday

10am-2pm

Job Centre Plus, Cheltenham

### Every Thursday

9-11am

Ron Smith Pavillion,

Springback,

Cheltenham

## Not able to make it to the sessions?

You can contact the team by phoning the customer helpline or by sending an email to [bma@cbh.org](mailto:bma@cbh.org).

## Have you had your gas capped and are struggling with getting it back on due to the debt on the meter?

We may be able to help. Give us a call and speak with the team.

These sessions provide you with the opportunity to raise any money concerns that you have, whether that is seeking advice about cost of living or general budgeting tips.





# Celebrating growth at St. Paul's community hub garden

Local children at St. Paul's Community Hub Garden showcased their hard work in a vibrant event back in the autumn, highlighting the garden's role in community engagement.

With support from Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust's "Nextdoor Nature" project, the garden flourished, fostering activities like a bi-monthly gardening group and cooking sessions.

During the celebration, children from the afterschool gardening club created scrapbooks, planted herb seeds to take home, and displayed their stunning mosaic artwork, reflecting their creativity throughout the year.

**Join our St Paul's Hub gardening group**

We meet **every second and fourth Tuesday of the month 11:30am-1:30pm**, we'll even throw in a light lunch too!

For more information contact: Ali English  
**07775 545608**  
or email:  
**ali.english@cbh.org**



# Cheltenham's BIG museum project invites you...



Cheltenham's BIG museum project is inviting you to transform the collections galleries of The Wilson Art Gallery and Museum.

Since 2020 collections galleries at The Wilson have been closed for renovation.

The renovation work is almost complete, resulting in four large modern collections galleries which will become your museum. The project will showcase well-loved Cheltenham stories alongside hidden stories relating to the people who lived and worked here. The stories and objects we share will be selected with Cheltenham's communities.

## Cheltenham's BIG Museum project:

Test Space is a free exhibition which gives you the chance to shape what the final museum will look like by telling us what's important to you.

Look out for other ways to get involved including our '**Museum on Wheels**' which will be out and about in our communities over the summer, online feedback forms and free workshops and family activities in the Test Space.



To find out more please visit [cheltenhammuseum.org.uk](http://cheltenhammuseum.org.uk)

