

WINTER 2025

TENANT NEWS

In this issue:

MEET THE MEMBERS
OF YOUR TENANT
PANELS

READ THE ANNUAL
REPORT

FIND OUT WHAT TO
EXPECT WHEN YOU
REPORT A REPAIR

...and lots more!



PLEASE NOTE: NOT ALL OF THE CONTENT IN THIS NEWSLETTER NECESSARILY APPLIES TO RESIDENTS
IN INDEPENDENT LIVING. IF YOU ARE IN DOUBT, PLEASE CONTACT US.

Tenant engagement

We've had a busy year in tenant engagement with lots of meetings, running community events and making improvements to the housing service. You can find out about our engagement activities by visiting canterbury.gov.uk/getinvolved.

Resident Engagement Panel

Message from the Chair

The Resident Engagement Panel is made up of tenants across the district who want to make improvements and changes to the housing service.

As Chair, I've had great pleasure over the years on working on many projects with council officers and contractors. One of my favourites is the garden competition which I take great pride in organising. We welcome anyone from across the district to come and join our meetings.

Sheila King, Chair of Resident Engagement Panel

Meetings – every other month

Where – Thanington Neighbourhood Resource Centre

When – Tuesdays 6pm to 8pm

Communications Group

Message from the Chair

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. I am the chair of the new Communications Group. We aim to make sure you receive the best communication from the council and its contractors by making sure they use plain English in a way that you understand.

We want to get things right, but we need your feedback, ideas and support in doing this. I would like to invite you to one of our meetings, giving you the opportunity to make changes and see for yourself the difference we can make together.

Transport can be organised if needed. If you decide it isn't your cup of tea you can always pass your ideas and messages through me directly. I look forward to a bright future together; we cannot do this without you.

John Shilling – Chair of the Communications Panel

Meetings – Every month

Where – Council Offices, St George's Lane, Canterbury

When – Tuesdays 10.30am to 12.30pm

Disability Forum

Message from the Chair

It is hugely important for tenants from all walks of life to take the opportunity to have their say about how their housing and their communities are developed. Disabled people often feel they are invisible and have no voice; our input proves this is not the case.

Disability Forum has already persuaded the council to start making a confidential register of all disabled tenants, had an impact on the Vulnerable Persons Policy and ensured the views of its members are heard loud and clear. Our meetings are informal and every person present has the chance to be heard..

Liz Stewart, Chair of Disability Forum

Meetings – Every three months

Where – Thanington Neighbourhood Resource Centre

When – Tuesdays 6pm to 8pm

Independent Living Forum

Message from the Chair

The Independent Living Forum has been running for many years. It has done some brilliant work on making changes for the tenants living within the council's Independent Living Schemes.

We often have contractors and council specialists come along to discuss performance and raise any areas for concern.

We'd love to welcome more tenants to get involved from Independent Living schemes. The meetings are a great way to get scheme-wide issues solved and to the attention of housing management.

Liz Stewart, Chair of Independent Living Forum

Meetings – Every three months

Where – Longfield Court, Whitstable

When – Tuesdays 10.30am to 12.30pm

We're always on the look for new members to join our panels. Everyone is welcome to come and see what we're all about!

You can join any of our panels or get more information by emailing the tenant engagement team on getinvolved@canterbury.gov.uk.

Alternatively, if you'd like to speak directly to a tenant representative, please email using the address above.

Contractor gets to know the community

Our repairs contractor Cardo has been doing a fantastic job in engaging with communities in the district over the last year.

You may have seen its team out and about painting sheds, making bird boxes or supporting the council at our listening days.

Here's some of what they've been up to:

- veterans breakfast at Spring Lane Neighbourhood Centre
- donation of hats and gloves to Catching Lives in Canterbury
- Thanington Neighbourhood Resource Centre memory wall
- Canterbury Young Carers half term activity at Spring Lane Neighbourhood Centre
- work experience for Canterbury residents
- Hope View School careers fair
- Cramner House garden shed repair
- Spring Lane Easter Fete
- Canterbury College Trades Fair
- Thornhurst House VE day cream tea party
- Wife of Bath Hill community VE day event
- Cramner House VE day cream tea party

- Herne Bay High School mock interviews
- Young Carers bird box making
- Longfield Court bird box making
- Hersden Community fete
- Community Listening Days in Whitstable, Herne Bay, Canterbury and Charlham
- Thanington family fun day

The feedback has been great and it's lovely to see people enjoying their community.

If you would like some extra support in your community, please contact us on getinvolved@canterbury.gov.uk



Our housing promise

We'll put you and your safety at the heart of everything we do.

We promise to deliver a housing service that keeps you safe, listens to you and treats you with respect.

We'll do our best to get things right first time and, if we don't, we'll fix it and learn from it.

In return, we ask you to:

- pay your rent and/or service charges on time
- look after your home and report issues early
- be respectful to your neighbours and to staff
- contact us if you're struggling – we're here to help

Together, we can build safer homes, stronger communities and a better service for everyone.

This promise will be reviewed every year and updated when needed - whether that's due to new laws, improved standards or your feedback.

Housing Service Standards

You can read our full housing service standards on our website by visiting canterbury.gov.uk/housingservicestandards

Annual report

Repairs and maintenance

The Regulator of Social Housing's **Safety and Quality Standard** says it expects us to provide you with a good quality home, ensure your health and safety and provide an effective, efficient, and timely repairs and maintenance service.

This year we've spent £4.8 million on improving your homes, including replacing:



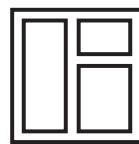
53 kitchens



13 bathrooms



475 doors



1,995 windows



6 flat roofs

Decent home standard

We're currently working hard to make sure all our properties meet the Decent Home Standard. We've recently recruited new officers to complete stock condition surveys. We aim to have this completed by summer 2026. It's important you let them have access to your home.

How we are doing	Our target	Our result
Routine day-to-day repairs completed on time	98%	97.67%
Day-to-day repair appointments kept	96%	99.15%
Routine heating repairs completed on time	98%	96.08%
Heating repair appointments kept	98%	98.27%

Where we need to improve

While general day-to-day repairs are good, they are still below target and we feel there is room for improvement.

We'll continue to work with our reactive repair contractor, Cardo, to employ more staff and continue our efforts on fixing issues the first time.

When it comes to the heating contract, we have been working closely with Sure Serve Compliance South to improve its performance and customer satisfaction.

CARDO

Tenancy

The Regulator of Social Housing's **Tenancy Standard** says it expects us to let our homes fairly and transparently and support residents to maintain their tenancy.

How we are doing	Result 23/24	Result 24/25
How many homes we let	423	357
Average days to relet homes	33.85 days	182.63 days
Rent arrears as a % of total rent debt raised	3.54%	3.12%
Current tenant rent arrears	£973,948	£934,271

Where we need to improve

The numbers show the average days we're taking to relet homes is very high.

We're currently making changes to improve this including changing the contractor that manages our voids process and employing a new dedicated voids officer.

We're also working with our Resident Engagement Panel and housing management to have a new target and keep a close eye on progress.

This issue has a knock-on effect of how many homes we have been able to relet this year.

Neighbourhood and community

The Regulator of Social Housing's **Neighbourhood and Community Standard** says it expects us to ensure communal areas are kept safe and to work with partners to promote wellbeing and tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB) on estates the council manages.

How we are doing	Result 23/24	Result 24/25
ASB cases closed	68	94
ASB cases opened	81	79
Notices served	13	7
Evictions	6	3

Our Neighbourhood Managers and enforcement team work closely with local organisations such as Kent Police, Kent Fire and Rescue Service and Kent County Council to help reduce the amount of anti-social behaviour and make your neighbourhoods a nicer and safer place to live.

This year we've served almost half the number of notices and had half as many evictions.

This shows we work closely with tenants to resolve issues before they become court matters.

If you have anything you'd like to share with the neighbourhood teams, please contact us on generaltenancyenquiries@canterbury.gov.uk or call **01227 862 142**.

Tenant involvement

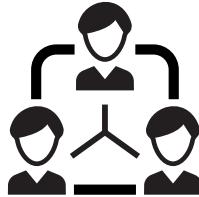
Getting involved in your housing service

The Regulator of Social Housing's **Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard** says it expects us to take your views into account in our decision-making, ensure you understand what you can expect from us, allow tenants to hold us to account and deal with complaints fairly and promptly.

This year, we've:



Held **eight meetings** with tenants on our Resident Engagement Panel



Held **four meetings** with our Disability Forum



Hosted **four community events** across the district



Held **three meetings** with our Independent Living Forum



Sent out **two tenant newsletters**

How we are doing

2023 2024

Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them	47.10%	50.10%	▲
Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them	63.70%	63.10%	▼

Where we need to improve



We're pleased you think our listening has improved but we still have some work to do on keeping you informed.

It's important to us that tenants are at the heart of everything we do, including improving services overall.

We're giving our tenant panels more opportunity to make real change.

We're also putting more time and effort into engaging with communities.

Hopefully you saw us out and about this summer at our Community Listening Days, we'll do more drop-ins over the winter months alongside your neighbourhood managers.

We will also be running a garden competition in 2026 – keep your eyes peeled for entry forms!

Complaints

Complaint response times have improved compared to the previous financial year but remain an area of where we can do better.

In previous reporting Homelessness and Housing Needs complaints were included as part of the overall statistics.

However, following changes to the Housing Ombudsman's complaints handling code in April 2024 these must be excluded.



This year:

- Received **174** Stage 1 complaints
- Received **44** Stage 2 complaints

We use learning from the complaints received to improve service delivery. Below is some of the learning we have implemented as a direct result of complaints:

- We reviewed the Neighbour Nuisance and Anti-Social Behaviour Policy to improve our approach
- Complaints handling training has been delivered as mandatory training for all staff involved in housing activity (over 140 staff)
- Creation of a Vulnerable Persons Policy to improve how we deal with vulnerable customers
- Standard letter templates are being reviewed by the Tenant Communications Group to make them more user friendly for tenants and leaseholders
- In 2025 we started asking tenants if they need reasonable adjustments, helping us tailor our support to individual needs

Where we need to improve

Responding to our complaints on time and getting them right is important to us.

We're having weekly manager meetings to improve complaints overall. We're also working closely with our Resident Engagement Panel on making service improvements.



Money matters

Where our money comes from...

Our total income in 2024/25 was £31,417,195

- £28,202,932 from tenant rents
- £2,275,270 from tenant service charges
- £611,176 from other property types such as garages
- £327,816 from leaseholder service charges



Our total income in 2025/26 is expected to be £32,559,155

- £29,435,238 from tenant rents
- £2,069,313 from tenant service charges
- £734,604 rent from other property types such as garages
- £320,000 from leaseholder service charges

...and how we spend it.

2024/25 (last year's breakdown)

	2024/25 spend per pound
• Repairs and maintenance	36p
• Tenancy and estate management, including staffing -	22p
• Cost of borrowing money	21p
• Services specifically for residents in independent living schemes	11p
• Other expenses	6p
• Mortgage repayment to the government	4p

2025/26 (this year's breakdown)

	2025/26 spend per pound
• Repairs and maintenance	39p
• Tenancy and estate management, including staffing -	22p
• Cost of borrowing money	20p
• Services specifically for residents in independent living schemes	10p
• Other expenses	6p
• Mortgage repayment to the government	3p



Tenant satisfaction measure

Each year we report to the Regulator of Social Housing how we're doing within the housing service through the tenant satisfaction measures. Below is table of results from last year, we will publish this year's results in the May 2026 newsletter.

Performance information:	2024 results
Proportion of homes for which all required gas safety checks have been carried out	96.6 %
Proportion of homes for which all required fire risk assessments have been carried out - 100%.	100 %
Proportion of homes for which all required asbestos management surveys or re-inspections have been carried out	100 %
Proportion of homes for which all required legionella risk assessments have been carried out	69.5 %
Proportion of homes for which all required communal passenger lift safety checks have been carried out	100 %
Number of anti-social behaviour cases opened per 1,000 homes	15.4 %
Number of anti-social behaviour cases that involve hate incidents opened per 1,000 homes	0 %
Proportion of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard	N/A
Proportion of non-emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale	84.2 %
Proportion of emergency responsive repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale	100 %
Number of stage one complaints received per 1,000 homes	8.6 %
Proportion of stage one complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales	52.6 %
Proportion of stage two complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales	56.8 %

Your council house

Buying (Right to Buy)

If you are a secure tenant who has lived in social housing for at least three years, you could be eligible to buy the home you live in from the council.

To find out more about the Right to Buy scheme and to check whether you are eligible, please visit canterbury.gov.uk/righttobuy or email homeownership@canterbury.gov.uk or call 01227 862 373

Swapping with someone

(Sometimes called mutual exchange)

If you wish to move, you can look at swapping home with council or housing association tenants in the UK. You can do this easily by registering with Home Swapper.

You can find more information on canterbury.gov.uk/swapyourhome or by calling 01227 862 000

Before you move home

If you decide to end your tenancy there are a few steps that you need to make.

All of this is clearly explained when tenants advise us they'd like to bring their tenancy to an end or if we're notified there is a reason why their tenancy will be coming to an end.

We want to make it clearer and help tenants to be ready to avoid delays or charges.

We'd like to remind you that you could receive an inspection of your home, called a 'pre-tenancy termination inspection' upon joining the Housing Needs Register.

We may also arrange an inspection when you begin to be shortlisted high on properties you bid on.

The reason for this is to avoid any delay in your potential move.

We're inspecting to:

- identify any maintenance or repair problems that can be discussed with you and resolved prior to a tenancy ending
- make you aware of recharges we can apply for any damage to the property
- reduce the extent of repairs or maintenance work that need to be completed during the time the property is empty, to minimise the void period. This could be a repair issue that is a landlord responsibility that may need immediate work, or to plan works for when your property may become void.

Anti-social behaviour and the Noise app

ASB stands for anti-social behaviour which is defined as 'behaviour by a person which causes, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to persons not of the same household as the person'.

If you experience ASB, in the first instance you can contact your Neighbourhood Manager or reporting this issue online at canterbury.gov.uk/reportasb

The Noise app is the number one noise reporting app.

We are pleased to announce we're supporting the use of a new tool to capture any ASB you may be experiencing.

The Noise app can be downloaded on to your mobile device which can capture the level of noise you are experiencing.

The app allows you to download the recording to your account where an officer can assess whether the nuisance hits the ASB threshold or whether this is inconsiderate behaviour.

In order for you to use the app, you must firstly report the ASB so a case can be opened and if appropriate you will receive an invite from an officer via email. You will then be able to set up an account to provide voice/video evidence.

If the ASB is of a serious nature, the app is not here to replace reporting to the police.

You must always contact the police by calling 101 or 999 if you feel there is a threat to life.



How we deal with your repairs

Dealing with your repairs quickly is important to make sure you have a safe and well-maintained home.

Our contractors have targets on responding to repairs which vary depending on the type of repair.

An emergency repair is one that puts the health, safety or security of a tenant or third party at immediate risk or that affects the structure of the building.

Repairs and maintenance contractor

Cardo

Emergency

Started immediately or no longer than two hours. To be made safe or completed within 24 hours.

Urgent

To be started and completed within three working days.

Routine

To be started and completed within 10 working days or 20 working days depending on the repair.

Gas, hot water and heating contractor

Sure Serve

Emergency

Complete within four hours

Vital

Complete within one day

Urgent

Complete within three days

Routine

Complete within seven days

The government introduced a 'right to repair' scheme to make sure council tenants can get repairs completed quickly and easily.



HOW TO...

...report a repair

Some repairs and maintenance jobs are your responsibility.

Before reporting anything, it's best to check who's responsible for the repair. You can find this information at canterbury.gov.uk/tenantresponsibilities

If you're still unsure, contact us on **01227 862 142**.

General household repairs

For any general household or shared area repairs, water or electricity problems, you can report them directly to our contractor Cardo on **01227 202 321** or use our online form at canterbury.gov.uk/repairs

You can report issues like:

- water leaks
- electrical faults
- problems in shared areas (eg broken lights or doors)

When you report a repair, please tell us if there's anything we should know - for example, if you:

- need more time to answer the door
- have a hearing or mobility difficulty
- need an interpreter

Gas or central heating repairs

For problems with your gas supply or central heating, you can:

- Call Sure Serve directly on **0800 987 4033**
- If the issue is with a communal boiler room, report it to Thermoserv by calling them on **020 8681 7330**

All repair staff will carry official ID cards. Always ask to see ID before letting anyone into your home.



...make a complaint

We aim to provide a high standard of service, but if something goes wrong, we want to hear about it.

You can make a complaint if:

- we haven't delivered a service properly
- there's been a mistake or delay
- you've been treated unfairly
- you're unhappy with the outcome of a repair or decision

How to complain

You can make a complaint:

- Online using our complaints form at canterbury.gov.uk/complaints
- By calling our customer service team on **01227 862 000**
- By emailing tenantcomplaints@canterbury.gov.uk
- By writing to: **Canterbury City Council, 14 Rose Lane, Canterbury, CT1 2UR**

If you need help making your complaint, or if English isn't your first language, we're happy to support you or connect you with someone who can.

