

Annual Report on Customer Engagement 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026

1. Overview

2025 – 2026 was the second full year of CHS’s Customer Engagement Strategy agreed in February 2024.

The key areas that we set out in the Action Plan to support the Strategy were:

- Improving communication
- Offering different ways tenants can influence CHS
- Supporting our involved tenants
- Learning from complaints
- Accountability and Scrutiny
- Data / knowledge – particularly knowing our customers better

2. Action Plan

Our Action Plan is updated at least twice each year in agreement with involved tenants to ensure it stays relevant to the latest issues and priorities we discuss. Actions completed during 2025 – 26 include:

- Making the decision to invite the 3 Tenant Chairs to formally join our Customer & Home Committee as Independent Committee Members
- Completing the large-scale customer survey to improve how well we know their needs and communication preferences – there was a 41% response rate
- Launching a separate newsletter for shared owners to contain more relevant news for them
- Making all Tenant Committee meetings hybrid so that people can attend in person or online for every meeting
- Publishing all Tenant Committee minutes on the CHS website
- Reporting on the outcomes of engagement more regularly (twice yearly to our Tenant Committee and Board)

3. The Year in numbers

Event	No.	Notes
Number of replies to surveys	2856	Includes all surveys after transactions or other perception surveys
Number of tenants personally contacted about volunteering	151	Sources: TSM expressions of interest, Housing Officer referrals, census calls and post meeting attendance
Number of Housing with Care tenant meetings	30	Members of the Engagement Team and involved tenants visited each scheme tenants’ meeting at least once.

New volunteers taking part in Committees/Panels/focus groups	24	Sources: TSM expressions of interest, Housing Officer referrals, Tenant Committee invite/attendance at meeting and CF
Number of Tenant Committee and Panel meetings	19	4 Tenant Committee Meetings 12 Scrutiny Team Meetings 3 Complaints Panel Meetings
Number of sheltered scheme tenant meetings	12	Members of the Engagement Team and involved tenants visited each scheme tenants' meeting at least once.
Number of monthly online Tenant Newsletters	12	
Number of new Estate Inspectors	10	New EIs recruited in this period.
Number of tenants involved in regulatory inspection	10	Inspectors observed a Scrutiny meeting and met for a discussion with 10 tenants.
Committee / Panel Chairs meetings	7	Chairs Meetings (May, June, Sep, Nov and Dec 25 and Mar 26) and Chairs and CEO (Nov 25)
Number of tenants attending Tpas events	5	TPAS National Tenants Conference (2 days July 2025) Regional event May 25
Number of Online Focus Group / Forums	5	Contractor Forum with Sureserve May 25 Contractor Forum with Mark Walker Sep 25 Contractor Forum with Fortem (Nov 25) Annual Report Focus Group (June 25) Building Safety Forum Sep 25
Number of Volunteer training sessions	4	TPAS Chair Training (online), Scrutiny Data Protection (June 25), Complaints Handling (June 25) and EDI (Sep 25)
Number of tenants involved in CEO selection process	2	Involved tenants met with each candidate to ask them about engagement.
Number of Community Events	2	River Lane skip day (Sep 25) and Scrutiny Event at Cambourne (Oct 25)
Annual Celebration event	1	Volunteer Christmas Dinner (Dec 25)
Number of Shared Owner online newsletters	1	Feb 26

4. Engagement in Action

These are some examples of changes made as a result of suggestions and feedback from our customers or different ways we support our local tenant communities:

- Tenants told us that they were frustrated when prebooked repair appointments were cancelled at the last minute due to sickness of the appointed engineer. Our repairs contractor Fortem introduced a new plan for managing operative sickness absence. Where an operative reports sick, appointments scheduled for that day are reviewed and rescheduled immediately, while appointments over the following two days are proactively assessed and, where possible, reallocated to alternative engineers.
- Tenants were being impacted by delays to completion of repairs, particularly where access scaffold or drainage works were required, as Fortem relied on a small group of specialist subcontractors for these works. Fortem recruited additional subcontractors to support the

service and employed an additional staff member whose focus was to reduce the overdue repairs that had gone past target. Fortem also bought in additional engineers from their national team and one of them has now joined the Fortem repairs team full time

- Tenants who work 9am-5pm told us that it was difficult to find the time to rearrange appointments by phone during working hours. Sureserve introduced WhatsApp for customers to rebook gas servicing and electrical testing appointments for a more convenient date.

There are more examples of changes made as a result of customer feedback for example in individual schemes in our You Said, We Did tracker 2025-6. Other changes have followed Scrutiny team recommendations, see paragraph 7.

5. Communication

The e-newsletter is emailed to all tenants for whom we hold an email address, and a quarterly print version is posted to all other tenants. We shared links to our 2024-5 engagement annual report and TSM results, and we averaged 1 article a month about tenant engagement. In February 2026 a Shared Owners e-newsletter was published with articles of particular interest to them, 46.2% of customers who received the email opened it and the most clicked on article was Service Charges.

The 2024-5 Customer Annual Report featured a fresh design and 3 pages on the Tenant Voice, including details of tenant involvement in procurement and the online feedback panel as well as the work of the tenant committee and panels. The tenant satisfaction measures were woven through the whole report and given context in the relevant sections.

Changes were made to the Tell us what you think page on the website, with input from involved customers who wanted us to provide a visual diagram of the tenant engagement structure and include links to the agenda and minutes for Tenant Committee.

We added a new web page on performance bringing together information in one place on:

- Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)
- Regulatory judgements
- Complaint handling
- Tenant Annual Report

6. Tenant Committee

We started to use text messages to advertise Tenant Committee meetings. We sent texts to around 2200 numbers, and we received about 30 replies each time; 4 new tenants came along in person to the October 2025 meeting as a result, and 5 tenants came in person to the January 2026 meeting, with another 9 joining online. The October meeting was during the daytime, and the January meeting was in the evening and they attracted different audiences.

The Committee had a busy year including:

A workshop to develop new Customer Service Standards

Policies agreed:

- Complaints
- Damp and Mould
- Responsive Repairs

- Domestic Abuse

Presentations and reports considered:

- Awaab's Law
- Housing Ombudsman's Report on Repairs and Maintenance
- The Contractor Code of Conduct
- Customer Engagement Report

Regular updates on:

- Scrutiny Team
- Complaints Panel
- Contractor Forums
- Building Safety
- The Engagement Action Plan
- "You Said, We Did" tracker
- Tenant Satisfaction Measures latest performance

7. Scrutiny

The Scrutiny Team's report on Payment Methods was presented to the Scrutiny Feedback Committee in July and the CHS Board in September 2025. All the recommendations were fully or partially accepted. Feedback from customers demonstrated that CHS should continue to offer choice while nudging people towards paying in the most cost-effective way. The Scrutiny Team recommended that Finance sign a new contract with AllPay on a new tariff saving £24k a year to CHS.

The Scrutiny team chose to review the Tenancy Handbook for their next project. They held an event in Cambourne in the October half term for tenants to give their views on the Tenancy Handbook. They also used email and telephone surveys to gather data. In their report, the Scrutiny Team recognised the importance of sharing accurate tenancy information with tenants and the need to be able to easily update information when necessary. They suggested introducing a more tenant friendly handbook and leaflets using photos and links and having a lead editor to create a consistent approach and avoid repetition.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures and performance data were reviewed, including satisfaction with repairs and results from a survey on tenant communications in order to select topics for future Scrutiny projects. Repairs satisfaction and communication are areas they want to investigate.

8. Complaints Panel

The re-formed Complaints Panel met for the first time in May 2025 we were joined by members in the office and online. New members were introduced to CHS's Complaints Policy and how complaints are handled. Members were guided through the process of reading a real property complaint and evaluating CHS's response.

A training session with the Housing Mediator Dave Simmons was held in June 2025 with staff and Complaints Panel members. It gave background to the Complaint Handling Code, guidance on effective written responses to complaints, and suitable remedies, including compensation.

The next meeting was held in November because there was difficulty getting a reasonable number of members to attend on the same date. The Panel reviewed a housing complaint plus:

- Unreasonable Customer Behaviour policy
- Self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code

- Annual complaint handling report

At the February meeting a repairs complaint was reviewed and:

- Lessons learned from complaints
- Property Services Complaints and Feedback Analysis

For each complaint that was reviewed, members gave feedback on the quality of complaint handling and suggested improvements.

9. Estate Inspectors

The Engagement Team recruited 10 new Estate Inspectors with the help of Housing Officers. Joint walkabouts have been done with tenants, Housing Officers and Mark Walker to assess the level of work needed and agree shared expectations. There were less negative comments about grounds maintenance and cleaning in this year's TSM survey compared to the previous year, which may indicate better levels of service and improved communication around what areas are included in plans and what the expected standard should be.

10. Contractor Forum

We held Contractor Forums with our 3 main contractors:

Sureserve (Heating and hot water) tenants attended: 9

Mark Walker Grounds Maintenance tenants attended: 6

Fortem (repairs and maintenance) tenants attended: 17

The purpose of the forums was to share information with tenants about the performance of our contractors, hear their experiences and take on board suggestions for improvements. At each forum, the contractors and CHS staff gave a presentation, and tenants were encouraged to ask questions. There was constructive and respectful interaction at all the forums, the Fortem forum generated the most discussion, where tenants raised their concerns with repairs. As these were evening online meetings, it attracted a wider audience than some of our face-to-face tenant meetings and we heard from a wider range of voices. The more experienced volunteers were able to engage with the performance information, whereas the newly engaged tenants were more focussed on their personal experiences. Each forum was a snapshot in time so there wasn't an opportunity for ongoing tenant monitoring of the contractors' performance, but updates were made in the Tenant Committee meetings.

11. Building Safety Forum

The Compliance Manager discussed unseen hazards with the group and tenants reviewed draft posters with QR codes for reporting repairs and hazards in communal areas. Their feedback was used to create the final poster. A building safety case was shared to describe how the risk assessment process works and there was discussion on communication and transparency.

12. Tenant Satisfaction Measures

111 (25%) Shared Owners and 544 (22%) tenants gave us their views through the Tenant Satisfaction Measures survey. The results were considered by Tenant Committee and Customer and Homes Committee. These results are also submitted to the Regulator for Social Housing with other CHS management information.

13. Shared Owners communication

To address low satisfaction from Shared Owners, a working group used an action plan to ensure progress on improvements in communication. A survey was created to capture feedback from new shared owners on the buying experience. A leaflet was developed to accompany service charge schedules to help shared owners better understand the complexities of service charge amounts. A learning point from complaints was that CHS should ensure requests for alterations are considered pragmatically and be more flexible than the model lease where reasonable, to reduce dissatisfaction and complaints.

14. Looking ahead to 2026-7

During 2026 – 7 we are looking to build on the depth of engagement between CHS and its customers, including agreement of our new Engagement Strategy for 2027 – 2030. Actions already under way are :

- Having achieved a 'C2' Consumer Standards rating in June 2026 in which our involved tenants played a key role, we will continue to work alongside them to deliver actions aiming to enable us to achieve the higher grading of 'C1'.
- We are looking to embed involved tenants more in the Governance of CHS. In 2026/27 we have confirmed that the Chairs of Tenant Committee, Complaints Panel and Scrutiny Team became Independent Committee Members of Customer and Homes Committee.
- We will develop the use of the new 'Tenant Hub' in CHS's head office as a resource for tenants to meet and collaborate together.
- We will continue to update our Engagement Action plan with the Independent Committee members and monitor delivery of actions.
- We will confirm the updated Anti-Social Behaviour and Reasonable Adjustment Policies which have been developed alongside the Tenant Committee and other tenants.