



January 2026 Newsletter

Welcome to the first edition of our 2026 tenant newsletter!

For those of you who read this newsletter regularly, you will know that each month, we provide you with information and updates from within our communities. This month, we share news about rent changes in April, our Domestic Abuse Policy, outcomes from our Fortem contractor forum, information about how you could win £500, and advice on how to resolve tensions with your neighbours.

Read on to find out more...



Changes to your rent in April 2026

In April each year, housing associations increase rent for rented homes. This increase is set by the government's Regulator for Social Housing and is based on the inflation rate (CPI) of the previous September, plus 1%. In September 2025, the CPI rate was 3.8% meaning that the maximum amount your rent will increase by in April 2026 is 4.8%.

We have decided that, to maintain our high standards and continue to maintain homes every year, we must increase rent by the full 4.8%. By increasing rent, we are also able to ensure that we can carry out necessary adjustments to your homes such as improving energy efficiency, which reduce the running costs of your homes long-term.

We understand that a rent increase of any kind is concerning. If you are receiving housing benefit or the rent element of Universal Credit (UC), any rent increase you face this April will be covered. Elsewhere, from April, the standard allowance for UC will increase by 6%, child benefit will increase by 3.8% and state pensions will increase by 4.8%.

If you do not currently receive housing benefit or UC but are struggling with household finances, you may be able to get help. If you're worried about having enough income, or you need help claiming what you're entitled to **please** speak to us – you can call your housing officer, our Customer Services Team or our Money Matters team on 0300 111 3555. We're here to help.

To check which benefits you could be entitled to, use the [benefits checker online calculator](#). Through this simple calculator, an estimate of what you are entitled to will be given based on the information you provide and will explain how to take the next steps.

You can also get help from:

Cambridge & District Citizens Advice (Cambridge & South Cambs)



www.cambridgecab.org.uk/help-advice/get-advice



www.cambridgecab.org.uk/get-advice/email-us/



[0808 278 7808](tel:08082787808)

Citizens Advice Rural Cambs. (Fenland, Huntingdon. Limited advice for East Cambs)



www.citizensadvicerruralcambs.org.uk/



www.citizensadvicerruralcambs.org.uk/contact-us/online-advice-form/



[0808 278 7807](tel:08082787807)

Our Domestic Abuse Policy

Ensuring that all of our tenants are safe in our communities is one of our key priorities. **We oppose all forms of domestic abuse, and will work to support those who experience it.**

CHS is an accredited member of the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance and we recently updated our Domestic Abuse Policy to strengthen our support. As part of this, we incorporated the thoughts and suggestions of tenants and other people who have experienced domestic abuse. To read our updated policy in full, please [visit our website](#).

At Cambridge Housing Society, we believe you should not live in fear of violence or abuse from a partner,

former partner or any other member of your household. We focus on the needs of victims/survivors and always tailor our response, we take time to understand, show patience, and treat everyone with respect. We can help those experiencing abuse in lots of different ways, so if you need support please do contact us, either through our Customer Services Team on [0300 111 3555](tel:03001113555) or info@chsgroup.org.uk or through your Housing Officer. We will support you at your pace and let you know what choices are available to you.

Please be assured that we understand how traumatic and overwhelming these experiences can be and we are careful not to make things harder for anyone who may already be feeling vulnerable.



Fortem's contractor forum

In November, Fortem and CHS held an online forum to listen to tenants on their experience of the repairs and maintenance service. The objective of the forum was to find out what you think of Fortem's repairs and maintenance service, and see what we can do to improve.

During the forum, Fortem gave an overview of their performance, which looked at customer satisfaction, how many appointments were kept and how many repairs were completed within target timescales. The trends identified from complaints were about appointments being rearranged, follow-on works and communication.

The themes that came out of the forum were tenants' wish to improve communication between Fortem, subcontractors and tenants, so that tenants know when to expect tradespeople to arrive, and tenants are kept informed about the progress of more complex jobs.



Your chance to win £500!



Only by understanding the needs of our tenants can we deliver the best possible service.

Over the next few months, we will be in touch to ask you to complete a short survey confirming the details of everyone living in your home. We've kept our questions to a minimum, and to the point, to make this survey quick, easy to complete and only asking for information that we need to know to help you most.

As a thank you for giving us your feedback, those who complete the survey will be entered into a prize draw to win £500, plus five additional prizes of £100. Keep an eye on your emails!

Are you having issues with your neighbour?

We know that a negative relationship with our neighbours can be stressful. We want everyone in our communities to feel safe and happy in their homes and will do what we can to support you.

If you are experiencing tensions with your neighbours, it could be that they are unaware of the impact they are having on you. So we encourage you to speak to them about the issues you're having in a calm and respectful manner. This may seem daunting, however, your neighbour may prefer to hear it from you first before hearing it from us as their landlord.

If you do need our support to resolve issues, we can help you to reduce tensions by offering independent mediation. In the past, discussing issues through a mediator has resulted in very positive outcomes. However, for some issues, such as anti-social behaviour, we will take action. This can range from noise nuisance, drug dealing, other criminal behaviour, threatening behaviour, nuisance from pets, vandalism and misuse of shared areas. At times, neighbours will make allegations about one another to us, and it's not clear what action we should take. We listen objectively to both parties and offer our advice, even if it's not possible to take formal action.

In taking action against anti-social behaviour or harassment of a neighbour, your Housing Officer will agree an action plan with you, and may ask you to keep a record of the type of behaviour, dates and times as it's important to be specific about what's happening. This plan can also include reporting issues to another agency, such as the police or local council, and we can work with them to achieve the best outcome.

If you need advice about issues affecting your relationship with neighbours, call us for advice, use Live Chat, or email us at info@chsgroup.org.uk.

We receive a growing number of complaints in relation to privacy due to doorbell cameras and CCTV. To help tackle this issue, we have included advice on [our website](#) and from the [Information Commissioner's website](#) to help you resolve this issue.



For more help and guidance or to check your rent account and raise repairs, don't forget to log into [myCHS](#).

**We'd also love to hear your thoughts on our newsletter.
To get in touch, email: info@chsgroup.org.uk.**

