


Partnership newsletter

Welcome to the very first edition of
Cambridge Housing Society's Social
Impact Partnership newsletter!

July 2025





Through these newsletters, we will provide you, our partners, with news from within the Cambridge Housing Society community, and inform wider organisations on how they can partner with us to positively impact the lives of our tenants and residents.

Our mission is simple; help individuals to thrive by providing safe, affordable housing and creating opportunities for growth. Together, we can offer the care, support and hope that people need to move forward.

We are thrilled to launch this newsletter to **bring our partners and sponsors closer to our community** and showcase the difference your support makes. In this issue, we will cover:

- The launch of our Social Impact Partnership initiative
- A case study featuring life changing support from our partner, Thomas Parsons' Charity
- The incredible volunteering work from AstraZeneca's Cambridge team
- An announcement of two grants we have been awarded to support our young residents
- How our When It's Needed (WIN) fund helped an award-winning young resident

Thank you to everyone who has worked with us so far. Your support plays an integral role in shaping brighter futures for those living in our communities.

Read on to find out more...

Our Social Impact Partnership Initiative

At Cambridge Housing Society, we want to provide better life opportunities and outcomes so that our communities thrive. That's why, to enhance the level of support we offer our tenants and residents, we launched our Social Impact Partnership initiative, helping us to work with local organisations to respond to the issues that those living in our communities face today.

Thanks to the dedication of our partners and sponsors, the Social Impact Partnership initiative is continuing to grow to allow us to offer greater support to people in times of need, and there are various ways that our partners and sponsors can support us as part of their ESG strategy.



CHS team at our Social Impact Partnership launch event earlier this year



Ways to support:



Practical support through volunteer opportunities (e.g. gardening, decorating, expertise)



In-kind contributions such as professional expertise including legal advice



Work placement, apprenticeship and mentoring opportunities



Donated items



Raising awareness about our campaigns and the work we do within your networks, both locally and with your business community



Lobbying local and national governments for policy change to better support our mission

If you can think of other ways that your organisation can support our Social Impact Partnership initiative, get in touch!

To focus our efforts in the first year of the Social Impact Partnership initiative, we have selected four key campaigns that we would like support with.

These campaigns are:



Employment Support Fund enables 16–25-year-olds to remain living in supported housing receiving the essential support they need whilst taking their first steps into employment



WIN (When It's Needed) which provides financial and practical support to help level the playing field and give young people the same opportunities as their peers



Young People's Mentoring Scheme offers one-to-one mentoring to our young people to support them with both personal and professional development



Nursery Bursary Fund which provides residents at our Young Parent Project two days a week childcare for children aged 6 months and over to ensure they don't miss out on early access to education and socialisation



If you or your organisation would like to get involved in supporting young people access better outcomes, we'd love to hear from you!

Get in touch: kristina.cairns@chsgroup.org.uk

To learn more about our Social Impact Partnership initiative, [click here](#).



THOMAS PARSONS' CHARITY

Supporting the people of Ely since the 15th Century

A Year of Partnership - Thomas Parsons' Charity case study

Over the last year, we have seen meaningful change to the lives of the young residents living in our supported housing services thanks to a year of powerful partnership between Thomas Parsons' Charity and Cambridge Housing Society. Thomas Parsons' Charity, which is based in Ely, has a longstanding history of supporting the local community and has been hugely supportive of our young residents living at Wheatsheaf Close in Ely.

A transformative partnership

Our young residents at Wheatsheaf Close are aged between 16-25 and come from a variety of backgrounds. Many have experienced a difficult start in life, and as a result, face daily barriers to independence, including financial hardship, poor mental health, social exclusion and criminal exploitation.

While the young people at Wheatsheaf Close have ambitions of employment, they face financial barriers due to a complex housing benefit system that sees them financially worse off once in work. However, thanks to a partnership with Thomas Parsons' Charity, we were able to support residents facing these financial barriers and ensure they can afford to remain living in supported housing and continue to receive essential support as they take their first steps into employment.

Impact in action

Between January 2024 and March 2025, Thomas Parsons' Charity contributed almost £10,000 to our Employment Support Fund, directly supporting nine young residents in sustaining employment whilst remaining living in supported housing – this equates to less than £2.39 per young person per day.

Going beyond finances, Thomas Parsons also donated and installed three high-quality Miele dishwashers which also improved the living environment for all residents, further underlining the charity's thoughtful and practical commitment to wellbeing.



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Social Value Created

To help us understand the impact of our partnerships to the lives of our young people, we use a well established tool developed by the Housing Associations Charitable Trust (HACT). This tool assigns a defined financial metric to each positive outcome and includes a wellbeing value, a health top-up, and, where applicable, an Exchequer value that illustrates the financial savings to the state.

While many factors contribute to the positive outcomes experienced by our residents, it is important to recognise the significant role that **Thomas Parsons Charity** has played. By providing targeted financial support, the charity has empowered our young people to pursue and sustain employment—an essential step toward long-term independence. As such, Thomas Parsons should be acknowledged as a key contributor to the Social Value outcomes achieved by these individuals. The positive outcomes created through this partnership included residents being more confident, engaging in their community, increased exercise, undertaking vocational training and ending drug use.

We would like to thank the Thomas Parsons Charity for its enduring support, and we look forward to our continued partnership with the organisation. To learn more about Thomas Parsons' Charity's first year with us, [visit our website](#)

To find out more about the Employment Support Fund, [click here](#)

Want to contribute to the Employment Support Fund?

Due to the success seen in Ely, we have expanded our Employment Support Fund to our Cambridge and Wisbech services. If your business or organisation would like to help our young people to achieve independence through employment, get in touch: kristina.cairns@chsgroup.org.uk

Working together with CHS communities - AstraZeneca

We would like to thank the volunteering team at AstraZeneca Cambridge for their generosity and support. Over the last few months, the team kindly donated a selection of Easter gifts to give to our young residents, and recently travelled to our Pauline Burnett House and our Russell Street service which support adults with learning disabilities and autism, to help with gardening and decorating projects.

The generosity shown by AstraZeneca reminds us that, by working together, we can make a lasting impact on our communities. We are incredibly grateful to Laura Sheldrake from AstraZeneca and her volunteering teams alongside Louisa and Jon from Employee Volunteering for making a huge difference to those living in our services.

If your business or organisation would like to volunteer with Cambridge Housing Society, or to enquire about donating goods, contact:
kristina.cairns@chsgroup.org.uk



Want to Volunteer with Cambridge Housing Society?

Volunteering with Cambridge Housing Society is a great way to make a tangible difference and connect with the people in our services. We're always looking for passionate volunteers – whether you can give your time, skills, or simply a pair of helping hands.

Two grants awarded to support our young residents

We would like to thank Assura, NHS Cambridgeshire and Peterborough ICB Grants Programme and Cambscuisine for their kindness and generosity in awarding us a total of £10,000 in grants.

Split into two grants with a value of £5,000 each, these grants will support our Employment Support Fund and our new Mentoring Scheme, which aid young people who are at risk of homelessness.

To learn more about the positive impact your organisation can provide through mentoring, visit: www.chsgroup.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/CHS-and-G17-Partnership-Brochure.pdf



The first grant awarded by the Assura and NHS Cambridgeshire & Peterborough ICB Grants Programme via Cheshire Community Foundation will go towards our Young People's Mentoring Scheme in Ely where we work with mentoring specialists, Goal 17, to provide our young people with consistent, one-to-one support, guidance, and encouragement — building trust, confidence, and ambition over time.



The second grant awarded by Cambscuisine via Cambridgeshire Community Foundation, will go towards supporting our Employment Support Fund in our Cambridge and Wisbech services.



Support from like-minded organisations allows us to continue to champion our young people to achieve brighter futures. If you would like to make a real, meaningful, and sustained difference to the lives of disadvantaged young people in our services through a financial donation, contact: kristina.cairns@chsgroup.org.uk

WIN supports young resident to attend Fenland Pride Awards ceremony

Set up in 2018, our When It's Needed (WIN) fund was designed to support young people living in our communities. WIN will step in and offer support for things that would typically be provided by family or friends, but because the young person is estranged from their family or living in poverty, this isn't an option. WIN provides support for things that most of us take for granted, such as clothing or toiletries, as well as other essentials which are often barriers to our young people accessing the same opportunities as their peers.



Last month, one of the young people living at our Fenland Young People's Outreach Service was nominated for a Fenland Pride Award in recognition of their voluntary work. After being nominated, she realised she didn't have a suitable outfit for the event and couldn't afford to buy one. But with the help of our team, she applied to WIN, seeking support and was awarded a £50 Primark voucher to buy an outfit for the occasion, where she was announced the winner of the Community Group award!

Speaking about being awarded support through our WIN fund Lillie-Rose, said:

“

The funding that I was given to get some clothes for the Fenland Pride Awards ceremony has been a saviour. Without the funding I would not have had anything nice to wear and wouldn't have felt confident in myself at the awards event.

”

Want to donate to the WIN Fund?

Your contributions are instrumental in helping our young people to thrive. If you would like to make a donation to the WIN fund, or to find out more, you can:

Email: kristina.cairns@chsgroup.org.uk

Visit: www.chsgroup.org.uk/social-impact-partnerships/