

November 2025 Newsletter



Welcome back to our tenant newsletter for November!

In this edition, we announce the launch of our seventh annual Shoebox Appeal which supports young people in our supported housing services with gifts at Christmas. Alongside this announcement, we share details of how you could become an Estate Inspector to support our communal areas, information on how Cambridge Water can help you with your bills this winter, and an announcement on the winners of our Garden of the Year competition!

Read on to find out more...



Launching our seventh annual Shoebox Appeal

To support our appeal, we regularly work with and call on local organisations, individuals, schools, churches, businesses and community groups to get involved. This year, we're asking donors to give shoeboxes filled with Christmas gifts similar to what people may put in a stocking such as toiletries, clothing, sweets, savoury treats, stationery and retail gift cards.

In previous years, we have received support from RxCelerate, PocDoc, Natwest, Barclays, Hill Group, HMB Cosmetics, Costello Medical, Arecor, Conscious Communications, St Faiths School, Sawston Village College and Cambridge Country Club's Ladies Golf Team.

As with previous Shoebox Appeals, any surplus shoebox donations we receive will be redistributed to other supported housing services and community groups across Cambridgeshire who support people in need. To find out more, [visit the Shoebox Appeal webpage on our website.](#)

Tenant Annual Report - 2024-25

This month, we are pleased to share our Tenant Annual Report for 2024-2025, packed with updates on how we've been working to improve our homes, services and communities over the last 12 months.

Here's a snapshot of what you'll find inside our latest report:



Repairs and improvements

– see how many repairs and planned maintenance works we completed to keep your homes safe and comfortable



Building safety – take a detailed look at the safety checks, upgrades and compliance works carried out to make sure your home remains safe and secure



Tenant satisfaction – find out how we've performed against our Tenant Satisfaction Measures, and what we're doing to improve our services



Listening to you – discover how your feedback has helped shape the way we deliver our services



Zero carbon in action – hear real stories from our tenants and teams as we make our homes safer, warmer, and more energy efficient



Housing with Care – the number of hours of personal care we've provided, and how tenants in our schemes rate their experience



Complaints and learning – a summary of our complaint handling and how we've used your feedback to drive improvements



Supporting our communities – read about the difference our Money Matters and CLAS services are making including Jane's story



Read the report in full to learn more about our progress and future plans:
<https://www.chsgroup.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/CHS-Annual-Report-2024-2025-Final.pdf>

Next month, in our final tenant newsletter for 2025, we will be shining a light on the incredible work our tenant volunteers have done over the past year. From supporting community events to welcoming new tenants to share their ideas to shape our services, our volunteers make a real difference every day.

Keep an eye out in our December tenant newsletter for our Tenant Volunteer Roundup for 2025!

Could you help maintain standards as a CHS Estate Inspector?

The upkeep of our estates is an important service for all tenants, residents and shared owners in our community. To ensure that the standard of our upkeep is high, we work with tenants who volunteer to inspect the work done in our communities. Currently, we are looking to expand our Estate Inspector team so we can cover as many sites as possible.

What are the duties of an Estate Inspector?

As Estate Inspector, you will be invited to respond to an email survey once a month to rate the grounds maintenance and/or cleaning services delivered to communal areas in your community. You can also accompany your Housing Officer on their regular estate inspections.

You don't need to be an expert or have years of experience, all you need is the enthusiasm to maintain our community and be able to access the required areas!

We have a variety of Estate Inspector opportunities, including:

- **Victoria Way, Melbourn**
- **Tayberry Close and Cherry Drive, Ely**
- **Trout Beck, Linton**
- **Heron Croft, Soham**
- **Wheatstone Road, California Road, Huntingdon**

How do I apply?

If you think becoming an Estate Inspector is for you, please contact us by emailing or calling the Engagement Team Laura Papanikolaou
lpap@chsgroup.org.uk 07540 122624
or Louise Higgins
louise.higgins@chsgroup.org.uk 01223 713540.





Cambridge Water

Could you receive support from Cambridge Water?

Did you know, Cambridge Water offer a range of schemes to help customers who may be struggling to pay their household bills? This support includes:

Assure tariff

Thousands of customers are already saving through this three-year discount scheme:

- **60% off in year one**
- **40% off in year two**
- **20% off in year three**

You could qualify if your household income (after tax) is **below £22,011**, plus **£1,500 per dependent child**. Some benefits, such as DLA, PIP, Carer's Allowance, and Housing Benefit, are not counted as income. If you receive the guaranteed part of Pension Credit, you will qualify for Assure. [Find out more.](#)

Assure Assist tariff

If you currently have **no household income** and are applying for Universal Credit, this tariff offers a **100% discount for eight weeks**. After that, you'll move onto the Assure scheme. [Find out more.](#)

Charitable Trust

If you've fallen behind on your water bills, the **Cambridge Water Charitable Trust** may be able to help you clear arrears and reduce future payments. [Find out more.](#)

WaterSure scheme

If you're on a water meter and receive certain income-related benefits and either have **three or more children** or a **medical condition that increases water use**, you may qualify for capped water bills. [Find out more.](#)

Other ways Cambridge Water can support you include:

Priority Services Register

This free service offers extra help during emergencies, such as bottled water deliveries during supply interruptions or large-print bills for visually impaired customers. [Find out more.](#)

If you're on your **energy provider's Priority Services Register**, make sure you join Cambridge Water's too!

Water meters and saving water

A water meter is a great way to save both money and water, and you can switch back within two years if it isn't helping you make savings. Try the Get Water Fit tool to find out simple ways to save and how much you could cut your bills.

Take the survey and find out more, visit [Get Water Fit's website](#).

Know your stop tap (water shut off valve)

Could you find your stop tap in under three minutes? It is essential in case of a leak or burst pipe. Are you unsure of how to find yours? Visit Cambridge Water's website for [tips](#).

If your water is supplied by a different provider, don't worry, most water companies offer **similar support schemes**. Visit your provider's website to find out what help is available to you.

For more information visit Cambridge Water's [website](#).



Meet our Garden of the Year competition winners for 2025

Congratulations to the winners of our Garden of the Year competition!

The overall winner, a CHS tenant from Little Paxton in St Neots, has a tiny courtyard garden but has made the most of the space available. With a calming sanctuary and a wildlife haven, she says:

"I hope it will give inspiration to others to give it a go, whatever space you have, as it's so important for your mental health and wellbeing to be outdoors."

Winner: CHS tenant in Little Paxton



The winners in the other categories were:

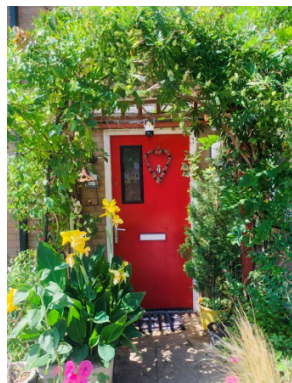
Best wildlife garden:

Mrs J Embury,
Moorlands Court, Melbourn



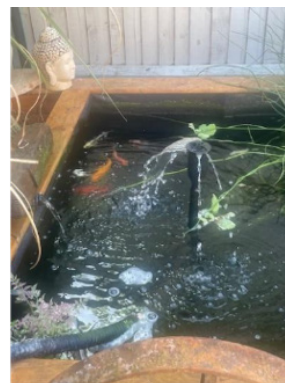
Most colourful garden:

Mr Nick Packer,
Little Paxton

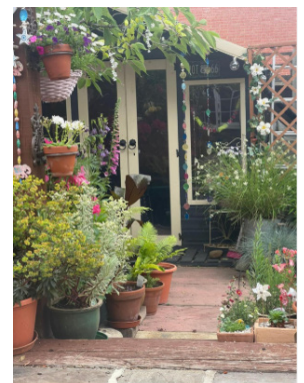


Most tranquil garden:

CHS tenant in Brampton,
Huntingdon



Imaginative use of pots and containers:
CHS tenant in Soham





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.**

