



April Newsletter

Welcome to our April tenant newsletter! This month, we share details on how we work together with our contractors to ensure that our tenants are looked after, the changes to our grounds maintenance service with the change in season, and how we support our tenants to move between our services when their needs change. Read on to find out more...

Working together for our tenants

At CHS Group, our dedicated teams work together with our contractors to provide an all-round service, and ultimately, support our tenants.

Recently, one of our contractors visited a tenant's home to carry out an annual gas service. After working closely with the tenant to arrange a suitable appointment date, the gas engineer visited the property and explained what he was there to do. Our tenant explained that, due to financial pressures, there was an outstanding amount owed on the meter so they weren't using gas to heat their home, and suggested that their supply be cut off.

Due to this, the engineer was unable to complete the gas service and he reported this visit in his notes as a welfare issue which was passed to our Performance

& Quality Team (P&Q) the same day. Our P&Q team contacted the tenant's housing officer who made contact with the tenant to discuss these issues. After speaking to our Money Matters advice team, they were encouraged to speak to their energy supplier who agreed to clear the debt on their meter. The housing officer applied to a grant scheme to organise additional credit, which would sustain their account throughout the summer.

From one contractor visit, our team worked together to support our tenant quickly and effectively by relieving them from the worry of unmanageable debt. Moving forwards, we will continue to offer financial support to our tenant, and we encourage all tenants who are struggling to get in touch; we're always here to help.

Grounds maintenance

We aim to deliver excellent services that exceed our tenants' expectations. This includes within our community and maintaining the area outside of your home.

Our contractor, Mark Walker Grounds Management (MWGM), spent the winter preparing our sites ahead of spring. This preparation included weeding, trimming and general maintenance of shrub beds, maintaining hard surfaces and litter picking. Our preventative programme of tree works has also helped minimise some of the issues caused by strong winds and recent storms.

We're pleased to share that our spring preparation is now complete and has been successful. As we enter the growing season, you will see MWGM teams returning to their usual maintenance routines of grass cutting, lawn edging, hedge maintenance, shrub bed maintenance, weed control, hard surface maintenance and litter picking. We are also now moving over to the summer schedule of fortnightly grass cutting.

As we enter bird nesting season, some tasks such as hedge trimming and shrub pruning may be delayed, but will be maintained once the season is over.



You can view the planned work schedule for each month on our [designated page](#) on the MWGM website. If there are any unforeseen circumstances, such as staff absences, the team will aim to rectify any delay at the earliest opportunity.

If you have any issues with the delivery of MWGM's service, you can contact them directly via:

- Phone - [0333 220 5485](tel:03332205485)
- E-mail – office@markwalkergm.co.uk
- Live chat – www.markwalkergm.co.uk

Both CHS and MWGM want our tenants to receive the best service possible. We welcome any feedback you may have on how we can improve our grounds maintenance service. To get in touch, contact: info@chsgroup.org.uk or servicedesk@markwalkergm.co.uk

Giving tenants a home for life

Since 1927, CHS has provided support for individuals and families across Cambridgeshire. Sometimes, tenants will move between our services when their needs change. One example of this is Wendy, who became a CHS resident in 2000 when she moved into Russell Street, Cambridge. Our service at Russell Street provides accommodation and support to tenants with learning disabilities and autism. Wendy, who is a popular resident, has appeared in numerous photographs and articles written within the community.

After 24 years of living at Russell Street, Wendy's needs changed. Staff at Russell Street spoke to colleagues at our Richard Newcombe Court scheme on Histon Road in Cambridge, which provides housing with care and support for older people. After discussing her needs, Wendy was invited to view one of the two-bedroom self-contained flats that was available.

James, Wendy's support worker, accompanied her to view her flat. After the viewing, James said:

"When Wendy first saw the flat, she had the biggest smile on her face and danced around the flat singing 'Wow, look at all this space.' She said that she felt like the luckiest lady alive now that she had a spacious two-bedroom flat. Moving to Richard Newcombe Court and having her own front door, means that she can still maintain her independence which is extremely important to her. Alongside this, she still had the reassurance of knowing that someone is onsite to offer her help and support if she needs it as she gets older."

Soon after Wendy moved in, she was having lunch in the restaurant and spotted an old friend she used to go to school with sitting at the table beside her. Her friend had lived at Richard Newcombe Court since it first opened in 2013, and was delighted to see Wendy. The two have since reignited their friendship, and have loved catching up.

James went on to say:

"It's great that Wendy was able to move to one of our other schemes and remain a CHS tenant as this really reassured her during what was a big change in her life. Wendy still calls us regularly, filling us in with what she's been doing. She always finishes our conversations by saying, 'I bet you miss me', and we always respond with 'we most certainly do!'."





Water safety advice for your home

As a CHS tenant, your health and wellbeing is our top priority. Therefore, we need to tell you about Legionella so that you can prevent problems and report any concerns to us.

Legionnaire's disease is a form of pneumonia, which can affect anybody. It is caused by the inhalation of small droplets of water from contaminated sources containing legionella bacteria.

All the hot and cold-water systems in your home are a potential source for legionella bacteria growth. The main areas of risk are where the bacteria can multiply, for example, spray from showers and taps, and even in pipes.

Legionella bacteria grows in conditions where water of between 20°C and 45°C stagnates, and where there is sludge, rust and scale present for the bacteria to feed upon and multiply.

The risk of you contracting Legionnaire's disease is very low in the UK and most healthy people are not affected, however there are some precautions you can take:

- After a period of non-use of water in your home, e.g. after a holiday, long hospital stay or when you first move in, from a safe distance, flush water through showers and taps for five minutes
- Keep all shower heads and taps clean and free from limescale build up, mould or algae growth – regular cleaning will help sterilise and kill any bacteria
- Do not adjust the temperature of the hot water in your boiler system - it should be set at 60°C or above. **WARNING: BE AWARE OF SCALDING!**
- Report any deposits such as rust or any unusual matter flowing from your water outlets to us
- Please do not worry – this is precautionary advice and there is no need for concern.

Legionnaire's disease is easily preventable by putting in place these simple control measures. For further advice and information visit: www.hse.gov.uk/legionnaires

For more help and guidance, 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 new newsletter. To get in touch, email: info@chsgroup.org.uk.

