

CHS Tenant Committee Draft Minutes

Thursday 22 January 2026 6.30 – 8.30pm

Meadows Community Centre, Arbury Road, Cambridge and on Zoom

In Attendance	
Tenants	<p>In Person: Trish Laver (TL), Chair, Lesley Barham (LD), Sally Crawley (SC), Tish Berkley (TB), Louise Downham (LD), Ruth Driver (RD), Sue Mayo (SM), Maria Parnell (MP) and Chris Soanes (CS)</p> <p>Online: Jane Bird (JB), Jacquie Taylor (JT)</p>
Guests	<p>Online: Cara Jackson and Douglas Silverstone, Board Members</p> <p>Tenants: GB, NB, RE, MH, MT, HT and FW, AP, D</p> <p>In Person: Tenants: LB, PD, CG, PS, MM</p>
CHS Directors and Colleagues	<p>Chris Harris, Chief Executive (CH)</p> <p>Andrew Church, Director of Communities (AC)</p> <p>Helen Tonks, Director of Customers (HT)</p> <p>Tina Warren, Director of Homes (TW)</p> <p>Yanne Loveday, Performance & Quality Manager (YL) (online)</p> <p>Laura Papanikolaou (LP) (Minutes) and Louise Higgins, Customer Engagement</p>

Item	Subject	Action
1	<p>Welcome, Housekeeping, Meeting Etiquette & Apologies</p> <p>Trish Laver, Chair welcomed all to the meeting and introductions were made.</p> <p>Apologies were received from tenants GA, CB, DC, MC, LC, KE, JE, DH, SR, PR, MS, ST, JT, HW, JF, EH, PC, TB, VE-K, CC, SP and CHS Board member JM.</p>	
2	<p>Draft Minutes</p> <p>The minutes of the last meeting held on 15.10.25 were agreed.</p> <p>Matters Arising:</p> <p>TL raised a point from the last meeting when Jacquie Taylor asked when the hazard reporting poster with the QR code will be rolled out to all buildings? Tina Warren replied, Mel Bennett wanted to analyse reports of hazards using the QR code. Unfortunately, it doesn't have that functionality. However, the feedback reflects it is a good, informative poster. She is going to roll it out to other buildings over the next couple of months.</p> <p>Jane Bird requested a date of the next Building Safety Forum, TW said it was proposed for March.</p> <p>JT raised a need to establish who is responsible for street lighting. Laura Papanikolaou replied Fortem had attended Friar Way/Fawnlea but not having the materials, another appointment is booked on 28.01.2026.</p> <p>Action: TW is going to follow-up the issue of streetlights in Friar Way/Fawnlea</p>	TW

<p>3</p>	<p>Board Member Introductions Cara Jackson, Douglas Silverstone and Jacquie Taylor introduced themselves. CJ has been a Board member for over 2 years, she is very passionate about the impact affordable housing can have on individuals and their families. DS has been a Board member since October and is looking forward to getting to know everyone. JT has been a tenant Board member for over 3 years. Prior to that she was Chair of the Tenant Committee and she's been on Scrutiny and Complaints Panel.</p>	
<p>4</p>	<p>Case Study Helen Tonks presented a case study about anti-social behaviour (ASB) in which CHS took tenancy action against a tenant who had a dog in a flat without permission and was causing a nuisance to his neighbours. HT explained that CHS are interested in feedback about ASB handling and looking for volunteers to help us to review the ASB policy, which is due to be re-approved in the summer.</p> <p>LD asked if the tenant was offered mental health support. HT confirmed that he was offered support, and the decision to take action was balanced with the needs of neighbours.</p> <p>JB suggested the Anti-social behaviour policy could be a workshop. Helen Turner and Faye Wright would like to help with the ASB policy.</p> <p>Action: HT will get in touch with HT and FW about reviewing the ASB policy and consider the idea of a workshop.</p>	<p>HT</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Customer Service Standard LP explained following the workshop in July to draft a new Customer Service Standard, the notes were written up by LP with updates on Awaab's law.</p> <p>LD pointed out that the Standard refers to the tenancy handbook and the handbook is currently a Scrutiny project. She asked if it could be held until her team had finished their Scrutiny.</p> <p>HT responded that it's true more work is needed to bring the handbook up to date, which is a priority. TL asked to defer this item and bring it back to a future meeting. LD felt the Standard is a contract between CHS and the tenant. LP said it's information rather than a contract. It sets out what tenants can expect from CHS.</p> <p>LD gave an example of where CHS are not meeting the Standard: she's been in her house 17 years and she's never had a stock condition survey. TB said it really annoys her when the customer is treated as though their time doesn't matter, so it doesn't matter if tradesperson is late. TL suggested adding to the Service Standard that operatives need to attend appointments within the booked appointment window. GB gave an example he had today, he was told an engineer would be with him between 8am and 12.59 and an engineer turned up just after 1500 and</p>	

	<p>this is a repair that has been going on since June 2025 and still nothing has been done, they just keep assessing and taking pictures. RE agreed with TB’s point about respect for tenants time, as she is aware of a tenant that faced disciplinary for time off work.</p> <p>JT pointed out that the Standard says we ensure the area you live in is safe, but it’s not safe if we haven’t got working street lights in car parks and footpaths.</p> <p>HT said whatever we commit to in this document is the standard we want to meet, and we accept we haven't always met it. She suggested we treat this as the standard we aim to reach and are measured against, the standard we specify to our contractors.</p> <p>LD thinks that repairing street lights should be added to 24 hour emergency repairs.</p> <p>PD asked if they can have more frequent changes to the communal door code at his block. HT said this will be followed up with the Housing Officer.</p> <p>HT asked all members to submit any further specific changes to the Standard so that we can agree a final version. TL suggested that people send in their ideas.</p> <p>It was decided to defer this item until the April meeting. Action: Can all members send in specific suggestions to the Standard.</p>	All
6	<p>Engagement Action Plan HT gave the background to the action plan. CHS spent 9 to 12 months working on a strategy in 2023-24, involving all customers: tenants, shared owners, and other residents. It was agreed through the Tenant Committee, and this action plan sits underneath that. As actions are completed they are taken off and new actions are added, when they are agreed with tenants. The action plan is about all of the customer engagement that goes on across CHS. JT asked about the Shared Ownership newsletter, LP confirmed that it is going out next week. LP agreed to share the feedback from Shared Owners at the next Tenant Committee meeting.</p> <p>MP raised the issue of digital exclusion: it's getting harder and harder, for those of us who are not online and haven't got smartphones, are we going to be included in all the information that we need? LP said if you request information in paper form then we can send it to you in the post, this Customer Service Standard for example. LP asked if MP receives the printed newsletter and she confirmed that she does. TL said we need a strategy to look at how we reach digitally excluded customers.</p> <p>Louise asked who is a customer? HT explained that tenants, shared owners, licensees and people who receive our services, including tenants at Housing with Care schemes are all customers. TL asked that tenants are credited for suggestions added to the action plan, it shows that you’re listening to what tenants would like.</p>	

	<p>HT said there is a more detailed version of the You Said We Did, that is going to the Customer and Home Committee, in which it's made clear where each suggestion came from.</p> <p>TL asked can we ask tenants to opt in to allow involved tenants to contact them for legitimate reasons? TL asked can the question be added to the customer data gathering survey?</p> <p>HT said the large-scale survey CHS are doing won't be annual, but the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) survey is. They are already looking at re-phrasing the question asking people if they would like to have their say, because they've found the answers to that don't reflect the people who actually want to get involved. HT said they will take it away to think about whether they can add it to the TSM survey.</p> <p>HT pointed out that not everybody replies to the survey so you wouldn't want to rely only on those people who opted in for Scrutiny research.</p> <p>LD said could it be mentioned in the privacy policy that involved tenants have a legitimate basis for contacting other tenants.</p> <p>The Engagement Action Plan was agreed</p> <p>Action: HT will consider options for tenants opting in to contact from other tenants about scrutiny projects.</p>	HT
7	<p>You Said We Did Tracker</p> <p>LP explained the purpose of the You Said We Did Tracker is to acknowledge the contributions of tenants to service improvements. She highlighted the money saved by the Scrutiny project on payment methods.</p> <p>PS asked if the QR codes are going to be the only way to report issues. LP reassured that CHS is not going all digital, we value our Customer Service team who answer our phones, they are experienced and knowledgeable, and customers say we are easy to contact via the phone.</p> <p>TL asked for the idea about adding a form to the website for reporting damp and mould issues, to be credited to Scrutiny Team.</p> <p>The principle of acknowledging where suggestions came from was agreed.</p> <p>Action: LP will make updates to the You Said We Did tracker</p>	LP
8	<p>Contractor Forum Update</p> <p>YL explained that last year CHS hosted forums with our contractors Sureserve, Mark Walker and Fortem. The idea was to get tenants to speak directly to contractors to discuss experiences and performance. The one with Fortem was the most popular. YL thanked everyone who attended those forums because they are a channel for CHS and contractors to improve our services. YL's team are working on the next set of forums, they will circulate the dates once they're booked in. The next contractor forum will be with Sureserve and they hope you can come to that. YL gave a reminder to fill out the satisfaction surveys after repairs are completed. Her team take that feedback to the contractors and discuss ways of improving the areas that tenants think need improvement.</p>	

	<p>TB said the repairs surveys come to the phone, but she doesn't have the kind of phone needed to respond to it.</p> <p>YL confirmed that the survey can be answered on a landline or non-smartphone. You are asked to press a button if you are satisfied or not.</p> <p>TB doesn't like only having two options yes or no.</p> <p>YL said you do have the option to leave a message at the end of the survey and if you give a dissatisfied answer, a member of the Customer Service team will call you back to discuss it.</p> <p>TB prefers to be sent a satisfaction survey in the post to write on.</p> <p>TW thanked everyone who attended the forums for being very courteous. TW explained that the having a large collection of tenant feedback presented together to Fortem makes a bigger impression on them. TW said that previously TC members have made suggestions about improving the questions on the repairs survey and CHS have added those in. Now we may need to check that we are using the right method to contact people and ask how many people would respond if we contacted you by email. For everyone who doesn't answer by phone, do we just follow it up with an email? The more people who respond, the more we can improve the service.</p> <p>TW posed the question – what if we are not meeting the standards in the Customer Service Standard? Tenants may be thinking, what do I do? Who do I go to?</p> <p>TW said we want you to know that we stand with you, we see what you see, and we are doing something about it. It's not always possible to tell you about it just now. TW wants to tell you about what they are doing about it, at the right time.</p> <p>TL said that it's hard to answer if the survey call goes to an answerphone.</p> <p>TL asked where is the feedback on the questions we asked at the Fortem Contractor Forum?</p> <p>TW said they will collate the feedback and circulate it outside of the meeting.</p> <p>TL requested if questions are asked at a forum can the answers be circulated in a timely manner.</p> <p>Action: YL will circulate the responses to the Contractor Forum questions.</p>	YL
9	<p>Complaints Panel Update</p> <p>RD said in the Complaints meeting they reviewed a complaint and using a checklist of things the Ombudmsan expects when they are reviewing complaints that have already been handled by CHS. The complaint they were given was dealt with brilliantly, so they didn't have any suggestions for improvements. RD would like to see some examples of poor case handling in future so that they are be able to give more feedback. If anyone is interested in getting involved, please get in touch with Laura and she can pass on your phone number so that Ruth can chat with you.</p>	
10	<p>Scrutiny Update</p> <p>LD explained the role of the Scrutiny Team and the current project is to review the Tenants' Handbook, to update it and make it more user-friendly. They have been speaking with tenants in Housing with Care schemes. Rosie Trew (Manager of the Housing Officer for Housing with Care) put together good welcome packs. They are going to take some ideas from that, such as the use of pictures. They are looking at responsibilities for repairs. They will</p>	

	<p>talk to Debra Carey, General Needs Housing Officer, at their next meeting. They have done a survey about the Tenants' Handbook, and they found the majority of tenants who replied want the handbook in paper. Scrutiny team want to add some advice to the handbook on bereavement for the tenant's relatives. They will make a report with recommendations to the Board. Recommendations and actions are monitored every 6 months. Having lost two of her team (one has moved away from CHS and the other is now Tenant Chair) they are also looking for new members; Louise encourages people to speak to her if they are interested. At the moment they meet every 3 weeks. They also take suggestions for new scrutiny projects.</p>	
<p>11</p>	<p>Summary of Housing with Care Resident's Meetings</p> <p>AC gave an overview of what Housing with Care (HwC) is: a tenancy for a flat, with personal care as and when you need it.</p> <p>TL has visited tenants' meetings in all three HwC homes in the last month. LD has been to two, and LP and LH have been to one.</p> <p>TL said residents can get anxious because they don't have control over communal areas.</p> <p>TL said that another care provider Radis are responsible for emergency care. The residents are scared and concerned about being looked after by Radis staff that they don't know who they are and if they are trained.</p> <p>AC explained that Cambridgeshire County Council awarded the contract to Radis to provide 24/7 emergency care. There are two care teams. CHS don't have control over the Radis contract. There is a service level agreement between CHS and Radis. Radis staff have training and access to 'eventuality folders' so they know what to do in emergencies. CHS want to make it as easy as possible for residents to get in touch with Cambridgeshire County Council and Radis to give concerns and feedback. CHS invited Cambridgeshire County Council to come to monthly tenants' meetings.</p> <p>TL said there were fire concerns at Moorlands.</p> <p>TW said the fire service went on site and questioned the staff to make sure they know the fire process. TW said the removal of fire extinguishers was the recommendation from the fire risk assessment, the fire service doesn't want people tackling fires, although there seemed to be a lack of consultation about that. Property Services staff are very willing to attend tenants' meetings to talk about concerns.</p> <p>LD said Moorlands should have had a fire alarm test on a Tuesday and it didn't happen this week.</p> <p>TL said at Dunstan every tenant knows Tina from Radis, and they don't have care concerns. At Moorlands and Dunstan tenants said the food was good. At Richard Newcombe tenants said there are issues with the food.</p> <p>AC said they are going to get dietary advice on their menus, and they will also do an anonymous survey to get feedback as well as at the meetings.</p> <p>Action: TL will invite Phyl Chigome (Housing with Care Service Manager) to come to a future TC meeting.</p>	<p>TL/LP</p>

<p>12</p>	<p>AOB Next Meeting</p> <p>JB said a huge thank you to Mel Johnson and Kris Cairns for the 7th Shoe box appeal, they distributed over 400 gift boxes with a value of around £10,000. JB received a letter from Martin Wheatley, the Chair of the Board. LP will share the letter with photos with members on email. AC will pass the thanks on. Residents who received gifts really felt valued.</p> <p>Lettings policy – HT described changes to the policy to turn the language into 2nd person, addressing the reader as 'you'. The new policy would remove the time limit on the history of conduct in your tenancies that CHS can consider. CHS will still find out more of what goes behind ASB e.g. mental health and take into account vulnerabilities when they make lettings decisions. There is an appeals process for lettings refusals. The policy is now more explicit that CHS is happy to work with advocates. LD suggests that drugs is mentioned as a breach of tenancy.</p> <p>HT said it currently says criminal behaviour, but we could include drug use and dealing as an example.</p> <p>MH shared his problem with getting Broadband in his home. He asked when will it get approved? CHS will respond to this after the meeting. MH asked is this something Scrutiny could look at? LD Scrutiny will consider this.</p> <p>JT asked if TSMs would be discussed. TL suggested that we could have a longer discussion at the April meeting when we have the year-end figures. TL wants to improve the cover note that goes on the front of the charts.</p> <p>MM raised an issue he is having with some neighbours smoking cannabis. MM has health issues that are being affected. MM finds it difficult to get support from CHS. HT offered to listen to MM after the meeting.</p> <p>Action: LP/HT/TL to improve cover note for TSMs Action: LP will get an answer for MH about Broadband Action: CHS will follow up with MM with his ASB issue.</p>	<p>LP/HT/ TL LP LP</p>
<p>13</p>	<p>Staff were asked to leave while tenants had a debrief</p> <p>It was requested to have more tenant input into the meeting. Better communication by CHS. Look at all ways to communicate.</p>	