

CHS Tenant Committee Draft Minutes
Wednesday 15 October 2025 10.30-12.30
Meadows Community Centre, Arbury Road, Cambridge

In Attendance	
Tenants	In Person- Trish Laver, Acting Chair (TL), Lesley Barham (LB), Tish Berkley (TB) David Cracknell (DC), Sally Crawley (CS), Ruth Driver (RD), Chair of Complaints Panel, Sue Mayo (SM), Jacquie Taylor (JT), CHS Board Tenant Member and Steve Tyrell (ST) Online - Jane Bird (JB).
Guests	Andrew Ryde, CHS Board Member (AR) Charlotte Daleworth, Housing Manager (CD) Tenants: MC, GD, LM
CHS Colleagues	Stephen Hills, Chief Executive (SH) Helen Tonks, Director of Customers (HT) Tina Warren, Director of Homes (TW) Laura Papanikolaou (LP) and Louise Higgins, Customer Engagement (Minutes).

Item	Subject	Action
1	Welcome, Housekeeping, Meeting Etiquette & Apologies Trish Laver, Acting Chair welcomed all to the meeting and introductions were made. Apologies were received from Charlotte Brinkley, Lorna Chisholme, Louise Downham, Chair of Scrutinising Team, Jackie Embury, Kate Edwards, Andrew Finney, Dave Howatson, Maria Parnell, Sarah Rutledge, Chris Soanes, Helen Walker, Andrew Church, Director of Communities and Susan Bard who is no longer a CHS tenant.	
2	Vote for a New Chair Decision: Trish Laver was nominated and unanimously voted in as the Chair of the Tenant Committee. LP said there is still an opportunity to be a Vice Chair, and we can provide support if any tenant is interested. TL offered to mentor into the role, usually a 3-year term.	
3	Draft Minutes Matters arising: - JT enquired about the Building Safety Forum. LP stated we have had two forum meetings in 2025. TL requested a regular update from that forum and TW confirmed she will take this forward as an action with her team. - ST updated on building safety at SJC where the main issue is the reporting for communal areas. This has resulted in a poster trial with a QR code to advise tenants how to report communal issues to increase	

	communal safety and this has been well received. Mel Bennett is leading on this and exploring what CHS can do to improve general safety. • JT enquired if the poster will go out to all communal areas and was advised it is currently being trialled at Samuel Jones Crescent and will be reviewed to see how successful the pilot has been. • TW reported CHS have updated the website and online reporting form for tenants to report safety issues within communal areas. TW asked how tenants would like to have updates on building safety forum shared and TL recommended an update report at Tenant meetings and in the tenant newsletter. The Minutes of the meeting held on 2.7.25 were agreed. Action: TW's team to provide regular updates from Building Safety and Contractor Forums to the Tenant Committee.	TW
4	Board Member Introductions Andrew Ryde gave an introduction. He said he was in the banking sector for many years and left a couple of years ago. He currently has three Board positions, CHS, Freebridge Housing Association and Orwell Housing Association, all covering East Anglia. His areas of specialism are audit, finance and risk and he looks forward to working with tenants.	
5	Domestic Abuse Policy Charlotte Daleworth, Housing Manager, presented the policy with the key points noted: • The current Policy is our approach towards customers and has been in place since 2022. It is an update of that policy and due to be completed by Nov 2025. • The review is timely as we are due for our Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation review. • We wanted to make the policy more accessible, easier to read, easier for customers to see our approach and for staff to interpret and to be more inclusive. We have tried to make it more reader friendly with bullet points and less jargon. • We have increased awareness around perpetrator accountability. • We are trying to speak directly to survivors and we have taken into consideration the DAHA guidance and best practice from the sector. • DAHA states you must include the legal definition and we now include this in the main body of the policy and also be clear about the importance of intersectionality (term to describe those who are experiencing domestic abuse who may have other layers of challenges and issues which makes it harder for them to access services) and we have tried to give this more substance. Feedback was noted: • TB said it is very clear how you can report a domestic abuse case • JB stated it is much better than the last draft and asked about ongoing domestic abuse cases and if there is an increase and if linked to the	

	cost of living rise. CD replied there are around 15-20 cases at any one time and had we haven't noticed any increase due to the cost of living. • JB asked about speaking to tenants with previous experience and CD said she had arranged contact with tenant survivors. • JT enquired if we need a summary of the Crime Survey for England and Wales or could this be directed to an online link? Some of the bullet points on page 6 could be joined up to shorten the policy. Policy aims could be more concise. • TL suggested the Recognising Abuse in Appendix 2 may need updating or a link to the Women's Aid website as the content may have changed. • The Committee thanked CD for her work on this Policy. The Domestic Abuse Policy was agreed subject to these amendments.	CD
6	Damp and Mould Policy CHS's Damp and Mould Policy originated from the Scrutiny Panel's Damp and Mould Project. TW explained the policy has been revised to incorporate the new Awaab's Law that will come into effect in October 2025. Landlords will have to respond to hazards within specific timescales. CHS is updating its <u>website</u> to reflect our obligations with the new legislation. We are moving towards investigating all hazards and this has been incorporated into our internal hazard reporting system. Feedback was noted: • JT enquired if there were any photos on the website to reflect point 5 in the Policy? TW replied that CHS are updating the website with photos to identify minor and major damp problems. The Damp and Mould leaflet has been updated and will be shared on the website with a link in the newsletter. • LP asked if any tenants had experience of damp and mould in their home and GD shared a personal experience of damp and mould behind furniture that she was not aware of until it has been moved. Discussed ventilation. • TB asked whether CHS are concerned about new external cladding on older buildings causing mould. TW stated that CHS's external wall insulation project is part of the highly regulated government funded scheme with robust surveys with ventilation requirements. We are monitoring effectiveness over time and in our Zero Carbon pilot scheme we put monitors in the properties to track improvements. TW will take this to the Team to discuss further. Responsive Repairs Policy The meeting discussed the Responsive Repairs Policy. Tina Warren explained the Housing Ombudsman has produced a Spotlight report on repairs and maintenance and CHS undertook a self-assessment. It is now clearer what our repairs standard is and the Code of Conduct goes along with this. TW recommend that the Scrutiny Panel review this Policy within their scrutiny of the tenancy handbook project to ensure consistency.	

	Feedback was noted: • MC shared there is dumped rubbish near the car park at her estate in Swavesey Lane, Cambourne. LP requested photo evidence we can share with her Housing Officer. • JT highlighted the need to identify who has responsibility for street lighting. • JT asked if there is a CHS standard format for policies with aims of the policy and suggested to keep it short and concise • ST mentioned that the Scrutinising Team in reviewing the tenant Handbook have noticed it has been drafted by different people and is not standardised. • HT confirmed the tenancy handbook is on our website and has PDF chapters. The Damp and Mould and Responsive Repairs Policies and Code of Conduct were agreed subject to these amendments.	TW
7	Complaints Panel Update Ruth Driver, Chair of Complaints Panel gave an update with key points noted: • The new group will be looking at how CHS is managing complaint handling. We are trying to find ways to do things better and the Panel will look at a finished complaint and review how it was handled by CHS and make recommendations. • Tenants have consistently been unable to attend the meetings due to childcare, work, etc., we have tried different times and we have reverted to a morning meeting on Thursday 13 November. • JT asked how many tenants were on the panel and RD said we are currently recruiting members and HT confirmed there is training available for new members.	
8	Scrutiny Update Steve Tyrell gave the update from the Tenant Scrutinising Team (in the absence of the Chair). The key points were noted: • The role of the Panel is to scrutinise aspects of the service provided by CHS and their performance. The current project is to review the tenancy handbook and the tenants are running a community event on 29 October from 10-12 at Cambourne and this is open for tenants to share their feedback • The Team are looking at how the tenancy handbook is updated and shared with tenants, and the best ways for tenants to access it. • TL confirmed there will be a leaflet invite that will be circulated to tenants. Action: The leaflet for the Community event on 29.10.25 to be circulated to tenants	LP
9	Customer Engagement Report LP provided an overview of the customer engagement strategy, highlighting various methods to gather tenant feedback and encourage involvement and key points were noted:	

	• We meet with the Committee Chairs to have an overview of the Customer Engagement Strategy. • We host focus groups online to discuss topics such as building safety or our annual report. • We provide training sessions for volunteers, induction sessions and committee skills training. • There are also opportunities to attend TPAS (Tenant Engagement) conferences and webinars and meet other tenants. • Volunteers visited our contractor's head office and we arranged a site visit to the energy efficiency project at Montreal Square. • We do lots of surveys and share information about how to engage and to become an involved volunteer. • We have three sheltered schemes and they have quarterly residents meetings to talk about issues to do with their schemes. Feedback noted: • GD said that the CCTV is working well at Ellis House. • TW asked about forward planning and other property services customer engagement. • HT stated it is time to refresh the action plan and share at this meeting. • LP shared information about the Contractor Forum and tenants are welcome to join online and we will evaluate how this is working for tenants. • HT advised the report is an annual report and asked if tenants want an update more often to which ST suggested could we report twice a year. • TL said we need to ensure that we are engaging all tenants and agreed that we should publish the minutes from Tenant Committee on our website so we can make tenants aware of the engagement opportunities. Actions: 1. CHS to provide short engagement updates to the committee twice a year. 2. Publish minutes of Tenant Committee meetings on CHS website and include a link in the newsletter.	HT/LP LP
10	Format and Timing of Tenant Committee Meetings CHS colleagues were asked to leave the room during the discussion. The tenants have agreed to hold four meetings per year with two daytime and two evening meetings and all to be hybrid with in-person and online. At least one meeting to be outside Cambridge • HT advised we can look at concentrations of tenant estates such as Soham or Ely • TL requested we survey all tenants for their availability and interest in engagement events. • LP suggested that the distance could be a barrier for some tenants and TL suggested taxi or car sharing and tenants can join online.	

