

Annual Report for Tenants

2023/24



Introduction

Welcome to our Annual Tenants Report for the financial year 2023-2024. This report serves as a comprehensive overview of our performance over the past year, providing you with essential information on how we have managed our responsibilities as your housing provider.

At the heart of our service is a commitment to transparency and accountability. By sharing detailed insights into our performance, we aim to keep you well-informed about the progress we've made, the challenges we've faced, and the steps we're taking to improve your living experience.

The report includes information about how we invest in homes, repair and improve them and respond to the issues and complaints that you raise. It will tell you how the rent that we collect is used to maintain and raise the quality of council homes in the District.

We believe that your feedback is invaluable, and we have listened closely to your concerns and suggestions over the past year. We have also received feedback from external auditors who have challenged us to improve in specific areas - and you can find out more about our plans going forward on page 18.

The initiatives and changes reflected in this report are a direct response to the conversations we've had with you, and the recommendations from the auditors, ensuring that we are meeting your needs effectively and sustainably.

As we review the past year, we also look forward to building on these foundations in the year ahead. Our focus remains on delivering high-quality, reliable services while fostering a strong, collaborative relationship with our tenants.

We hope you find this report informative and that it gives you a greater insight into the work that we do for the benefit of all our tenants and leaseholders.



Cllr Sue Thornley

Portfolio Holder
for Housing



Nirmal Samrai

Head of Housing and
Corporate Assets

Priorities

Quality Homes

We will be undertaking a stock condition survey during 2024/25 to determine exactly where we need to improve homes. We will continue to improve the quality of the Council's housing stock for the benefit of our tenants by ensuring that we continue to meet and exceed the Decent Homes standard.



Support and Engagement

We will make the best use of our stock, provide tenancy sustainment support, promote the provision of suitable accommodation, and provide information and advice to prevent and reduce homelessness. We will improve our engagement with tenants, leaseholders and other customers with a new Resident Involvement Strategy for 2024-27.



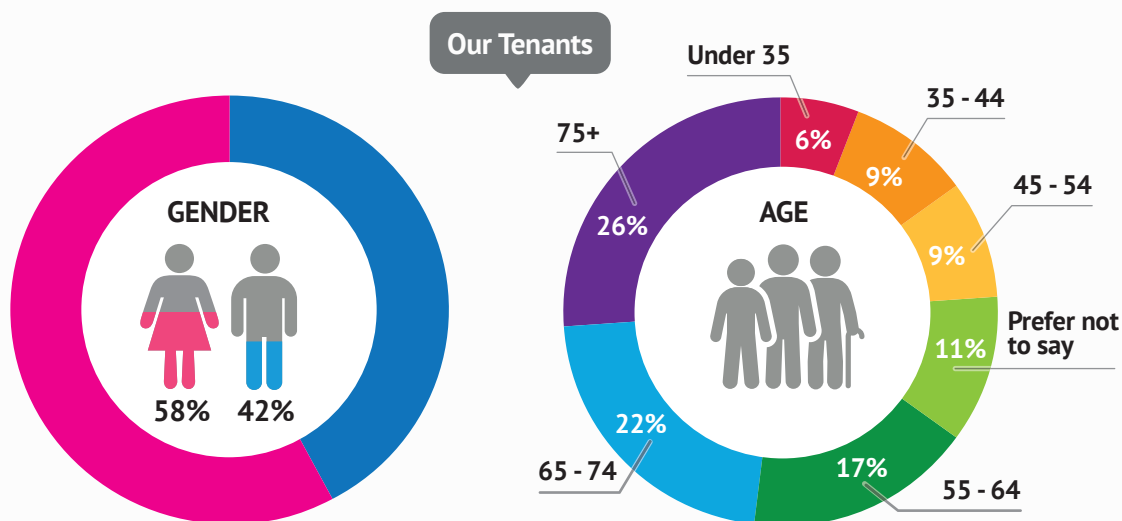
New Homes

We will continue working towards delivering further new council homes over the coming years using the Housing Investment Fund. A site in Rugeley on the former Aelfgar school site is currently progressing for start on site in Autumn 2024 and will deliver 58 homes comprising of 29 Council homes for rent and 29 for outright sale by Spring 2026/27.



Understanding and responding to your needs

Tenant Profile (from STAR survey 2023, based on lead respondent/main tenant)



During 2023/24 we received around 28,000 calls through the Contact Centre on Housing related matters and 1,200 visits to the Council offices.

This is a decrease on last year for calls, but a slight increase in physical visits - perhaps shifting back slightly towards pre-pandemic customer interactions with more face to face interaction. We understand that some customers still want face to face interaction and we have maintained that offer and are continuing to work on improving our service to you.



The Council has 5032 properties for rent
(as at 31/03/2024)

2024 one bed properties;

1432 two bed properties

1460 three bed properties

59 four bed properties

1 five bed property

56 sheltered bedsits

Tenants have on average held their tenancies for **13 years 5 months** (slightly higher than last year, so we are retaining tenancies longer). According to our records the longest tenancy held is an incredible **70 years!**



524 households requiring 1 bedroom accommodation

181 require 3 bedroom accommodation

424 require 2 bedroom accommodation

63 households require 4+ bedroom accommodation

We have 296 leasehold properties.



We also manage 790 garages, of which 379 were occupied.



(as at 31/03/2024)

Complaints, Compliments and Feedback

Total complaints/service requests received - **259**

Stage 1 - **36**

Stage 2 - **7**

MP enquiries - **113**

Service Requests - **103**

Only **one** complaint was considered by the Ombudsman, however it was not taken on as it was not within the Ombudsman's jurisdiction.



Stage 1 Complaints by Service Area

Repairs and Maintenance - **15**

Housing Property Services - **10**

Allocations - **5**

Neighbourhoods - **5**

Rents - **1**

Complaints upheld

26 Stage 1 Complaints were upheld (fully or partially) - **72%**

Four Stage 2 complaints were upheld (fully or partially) - **57%**

Complaints escalated to Stage 2

Allocations - **3**

Repairs and Maintenance - **2**

Housing Property Services - **1**

Neighbourhoods - **1**

Response times

83% of Stage 1 Complaints were responded to within 10 working days.

100% of Stage 2 Complaints were responded to within 20 working days.

More information about our complaints procedure is available at:
www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/residents/housing/housing-complaints-and-compliments

What we learned from the complaints received and what we did:



You said: “Worker turned up with no notice given.” - Mr J, Norton Canes



What we did: We now ensure that all tenants receive a text message notification prior to their appointment. The message gives confirmation of the appointment date and time, and an option to re-arrange the appointment if inconvenient.



You said: “Please consider doing the work earlier than February as I suffer with health conditions including COPD” - Mr L, Rugeley



What we did: We enquired with our Housing Repairs Team if this could be possible but due to the complexity of the works, the date could not be brought forward. However, we did complete a bio-check at the property which was a suitable temporary measure before the full works commenced. More importantly, the tenant was put at ease knowing his health was not at risk and he then submitted a compliment to our Repairs Team for the works carried out.



You said: “We are unhappy with the length of time taken for bathroom and kitchen upgrades to be completed, that the communication from the contractor and the Council was not good enough, and the finished work was not good enough.” - Several tenants.



What we did: We met with the Contractor at senior management level and expressed our concerns. Regular senior management strategic meetings take place to monitor performance now. The contractor changed its contract management team, introduced a Customer Liaison Manager position and reminded its staff about good customer care, communication and providing a high quality finish.



You said: “My housing application was not processed correctly and you did not answer my queries or follow-up on them.” - Ms G, Hednesford



What we did: We need to be sure to understand customer enquiries better and construct replies in a clear and understandable way, from the customer perspective. We reviewed the process as part of a wider Allocations process review, and made changes to the Policy to clarify the matter. Managers reinforced aspects of customer service with the team and performed sample checks of customer correspondence to ensure responses were clear.

A more detailed report on our complaints performance was presented to Cabinet on 12th June 2024 and can be accessed from www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/council/meetings/agendas-reports-minutes/cabinet/2024-06-12

Compliments

As well as complaints, we also record compliments from tenants.
Over the past year we have received over 65 compliments from tenants.

“
We would like to thank your maintenance team for their prompt help today. Two very polite men turned up and addressed the problem. Thank you again.
”

Mr & Mrs B

“
I want to thank the council for completing my wet room for me. I really appreciate it and I am very pleased.
”

Mr B

“
The Neighbourhoods Officer assisted me throughout the whole process, I am very appreciative of all the work that she has done for me.
”

Mr M

“
The Council have been very courteous to me and my husband in the very short time since we became tenants. They have always helped us with everything, no complaints about being a Council tenant. Thank you ALL!
”

Mrs P

“
Please pass on my appreciation for all of the extremely kind support received from your Housing Team, who provided critical advice and information during a stressful and upsetting time. You have a great team!
”

Ms C

“
A sincere thanks and appreciation to all the repairs operatives that have attended my property during the first 12 months of my tenancy. All of the operatives have been polite, courteous, and respected the property.
”

Mrs B

Understanding social housing consumer standards

On 1 April 2024 the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) launched revised standards for social housing. These new Consumer Standards for social housing providers, like the Council, aim to ensure you have a safe, secure, and well-maintained home with clear communication and support from your landlord.

What are the Consumer Standards?

There are 4 key standards:

- 1 Safety and Quality Standard:** This ensures your home is safe, well-maintained, and meets basic needs for warmth, dryness, and functionality. We will conduct regular checks, handle repairs promptly, and keep you informed.
- 2 Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard (including Tenant Satisfaction Measures):**
We will treat you with respect, involve you in decisions, and be open about our performance. You'll have access to all tenancy information and a clear process for raising concerns.
Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs): This system allows you to assess our performance in meeting the other standards. TSM results are published on the website, social media and newsletters, with clear explanations and videos. See page 10 for more details.
- 3 Neighbourhood and Community Standard:** We will work with local partners to create safe and well-maintained neighbourhoods, including addressing anti-social behaviour and supporting victims of domestic abuse.
- 4 Tenancy Standard:** We will offer fair tenancy procedures, support you in maintaining your tenancy, and provide guidance if you need to leave your home. We will also facilitate home swaps if desired.

What does this mean for you?

These standards aim to empower you as a tenant and ensure you have a positive experience living in a Cannock Chase Council property. You can expect better communication, improved service delivery, and a focus on creating safe and secure communities.

Impact on Cannock Chase Council

Local authorities have tried to prepare for this by ensuring their policies and procedures comply with these new provisions, including accurate and up to date record keeping, and comprehensive stock condition information.

Landlords must also establish the most appropriate methods for their tenants to communicate with them to ensure tenants have an effective opportunity to have their say.

We are classed as a large provider with more than 1,000 properties. That means we will be subject to a full inspection by the regulator, who plan to inspect providers every 4 years. The Regulator inspects each landlord on how they meet the required standards and has the authority to take actions against any social housing landlord who fails to do so.

More information about the Regulator of Social Housing and the role they play in supporting tenants visit www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/residents/housing/regulator-social-housing and in more detail at: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/regulator-of-social-housing

Tenant Satisfaction Measures

Housing Services carried out a general satisfaction survey for housing tenants and leaseholders last year. This has become known as the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) Perception Survey and will now be undertaken each year.



The TSM perception survey results provide information around tenants' perceptions of the Council's housing service delivery to support effective scrutiny by tenants of our performance in managing their homes and neighbourhoods. The results are reported to the Regulator of Social Housing as part of their regulatory standards that all Registered Providers of Social Housing (including Local Authorities like Cannock Chase Council) are required to adhere to.

More information visit www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/residents/housing/tenant-and-resident-engagement/tenant-satisfaction-measures-and-performance

In addition to the perception measures, the Council must also collect management performance measures, these have been collected and monitored over the last year and at year end 23/24 were as follows:

Tenant Satisfaction Measures 2023/24		Year End
CH01	Stage one complaints received per 1,000 homes during the reporting year.	7.15
	Stage two complaints received per 1,000 homes during the reporting year.	1.39
CH02	Proportion of Stage one complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales (10 days)	83%
	Proportion of Stage two complaints responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales (20 days)	100%
NM01	Number of ASB cases opened per 1,000 homes by or on behalf of the registered provider during the reporting year.	9.94
	Above, of which involve hate incidents.	0.79
RP01	Proportion of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard at year end.	0.28%
RP02	% of emergency repairs completed within provider timescales ¹	100%
	% of non-emergency repairs completed within provider timescales ²	82%
BS01	Proportion of homes for which all required gas safety checks have been carried out.	100%
BS02	Proportion of homes for which all required fire risk assessments have been carried out.	100%
BS03	Proportion of homes for which all required asbestos management surveys or re-inspections have been carried out.	100%
BS04	Proportion of homes for which all required legionella risk assessments have been carried out.	100%
BS05	Proportion of homes for which all required communal passenger lift safety checks have been carried out.	100%

¹ Emergency repairs completed within 24 hours

² Non emergency repairs: P2 (Urgent Repairs) completed within 3 working days; P3 (Essential Repairs) completed within 5 working days; and P4 (Routine Repairs) completed within 38 working days. See Repairs Handbook for more details.

Tenants Satisfaction Measures 2024/25

In the last Annual Report we presented the 2023/24 perception measures survey results, which are also available on the website. We can now bring you the early findings from the 2024/25 perception survey and comparison with last year's results.

		2023/24	2024/25
TP01	Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied with the overall service from their landlord.	76.4	77.1
TP02	Proportion of respondents who have received a repair in the last 12 months who report that they are satisfied with the overall repairs service.	75.6	78.2
TP03	Proportion of respondents who have received a repair in the last 12 months who report that they are satisfied with the time taken to complete their most recent repair.	72.3	69.7
TP04	Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their home is well maintained.	73.7	76.1
TP05	Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their home is safe.	80.6	80.1
TP06	Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them.	58.4	58.2
TP07	Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord keeps them informed about things that matter to them.	65.3	66.4
TP08	Proportion of respondents who report that they agree their landlord treats them fairly and with respect.	75.5	75.8
TP09	Proportion of respondents who report making a complaint in the last 12 months who are satisfied with their landlord's approach to complaints handling.	41.5	48.8
TP10	Proportion of respondents with communal areas who report that they are satisfied that their landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained.	64.4	65.6
TP11	Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied that their landlord makes a positive contribution to the neighbourhood.	54.4	62.0
TP12	Proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied with their landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour.	53.4	55.2

More details and analysis will be made available on the website:
www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/residents/housing/tenant-and-resident-engagement/tenant-satisfaction-measures-and-performance

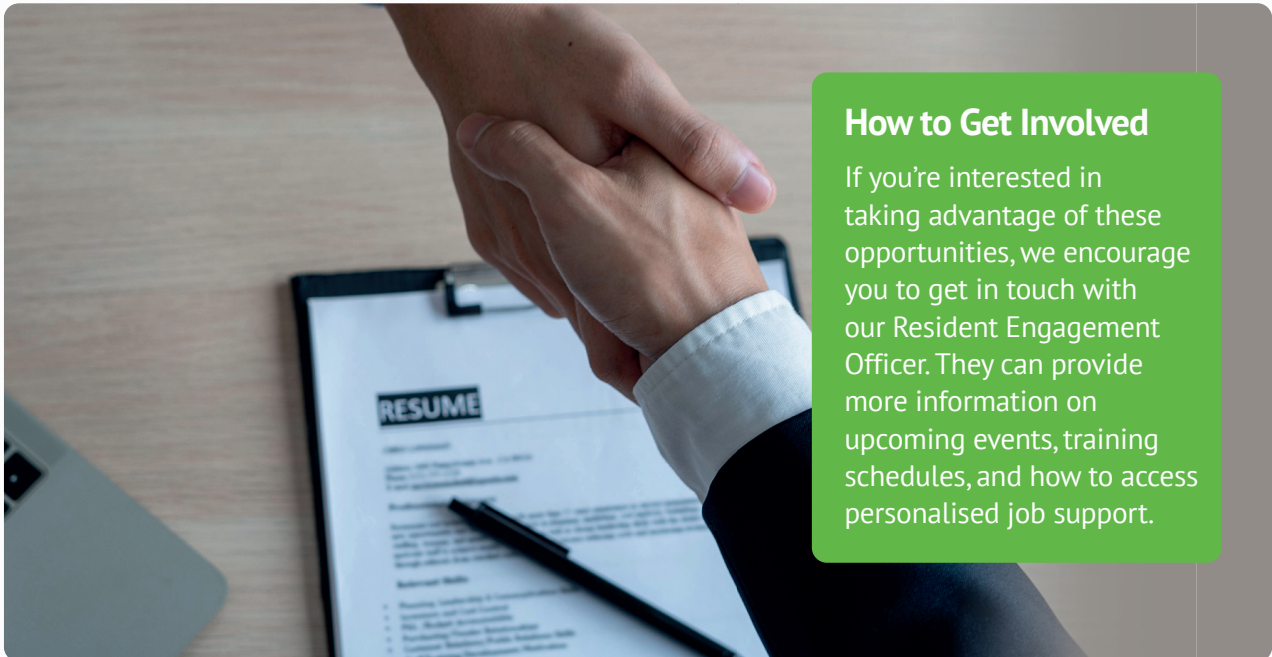
Support for Tenants

Support with Jobs and Training Opportunities

We are excited to announce a new initiative aimed at supporting people in their journey towards employment and personal development. As part of our Resident Involvement Strategy lies a commitment to not just providing engagement opportunities, but also empowering our tenants and residents with the skills and opportunities to prosper.

Whether you're just starting out in employment, or looking to return to work, our Resident Engagement Officer is available to assist you. In partnership with local providers, we can offer you courses in CV writing and interview preparation sessions to ensure you're ready to put your best foot forward.

In addition to this, we regularly collaborate with local employers who are keen to recruit from within our community. Through local job fairs and networking events, you'll have the chance to connect directly with potential employers, giving you a head start in securing your next role.



How to Get Involved

If you're interested in taking advantage of these opportunities, we encourage you to get in touch with our Resident Engagement Officer. They can provide more information on upcoming events, training schedules, and how to access personalised job support.

**Don't miss out -
take the first step
towards your new
career today!**

For more information call **01543 462621** or
email **Residentengagement@cannockchasedc.gov.uk**

Repairs and improving your home

Repairs during 2023/24

12,722 repairs (both emergency and non-emergency) were completed in 2023/24



100% of emergency repairs were completed within 24 hours

The average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs was **15.18 working days**

The average time taken to complete all repairs was **16 calendar days**

The total cost of maintenance and repairs during 2023/24 was **£7.5m**

99.72% of our homes meet the decent homes standard (excluding where tenants have refused remedial work).

During 2023/24 we continued our monthly repairs satisfaction surveys sent to a random selection of tenants who had required a repair job to be completed during the previous month. We have found that:



87% were satisfied with the quality of the work

82% were satisfied overall with the service they received

78% were satisfied the repair was done right first time

Whilst we carried out all of the emergency repairs within 24 hours and our overall satisfaction is relatively high, we have unfortunately not managed to maintain the level of performance from last year. There has been an increase in repair requests, alongside an increase in disrepair claims which has increased the need to comply with legal processes that takes up staff time. This has reduced our capacity to respond to 'day-to-day non urgent' repairs as quickly as we would normally and has increased the time taken to complete repairs, and ultimately impacted on your satisfaction levels. Measures are being put in place to rectify this and return with a better performance for 2024/25.

Improving the homes our residents live in



723 properties received electric upgrading works (wired in smoke detectors and provision of additional sockets)



214 properties benefitted from a central heating upgrade



170 properties benefitted from disabled facilities work (safe WC and showering, alterations to rooms; heating and power improvements; safety related works)



457 properties had bathroom upgrades

377 properties had kitchen upgrades

These capital programme improvements cost £7.2m

Disrepair Claims

There were 22 disrepair claims brought to the Council during 2023/24 and these do take up a lot of time and money. 19 of the 22 were resolved and 3 have rolled over into 2024/25. Of the 19 resolved cases, 8 were proven and cost the service over £40k.



There were also 11 further cases which were submitted, but these were withdrawn as the cases were disproved due to a lack of disrepair evidence, or tenants ceasing to communicate/engage with us. As a result of these disrepair cases being disproved, we have saved approximately £55k.

In disrepair cases, for most tenants involved, the claim only slows the repairs process down. We believe that some of these solicitors and law firms may advise tenants to refuse access for repairs, which delays the repair being completed and could cost tenants money. In many cases, tenants may be liable to pay court costs even on a no-win, no fee basis. We have received reports of a number of firms operating in the area and touting for business with letters and phone calls. Please speak with our staff if you have any concerns before 'signing up' to a lengthy legal process that may not deliver what is promised.

If you have any outstanding repairs then in the first instance it is essential you call **01543 462621** to report these to the Housing Maintenance service who will raise the repair and get you booked in.

Repairs can be resolved much quicker this way and the cost of involving law firms means that the money you pay in rent is directly being paid to these firms for repairs that would have been completed if they were reported anyway. It also means other repairs and improvement work cannot be completed as the time and money is spent on dealing with disrepair claims.

If you are dissatisfied with any housing or repairs service you have received, or feel that you are entitled to compensation, there are a number of options available to you, both informal and formal. Our complaint procedure allows tenants to raise concerns and request that the service 'makes it right'. Tenants can log complaints by phone, in writing, by email or through the website at www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/council/about-council/customer-feedback-help-us-get-it-right

More information is available at: www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/residents/housing/housing-complaints-and-compliments

The Repairs Handbook is a useful guide for tenants that provides information on repairs, maintenance and safety within your home. A copy of the handbook can be downloaded from our website, by visiting www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/residents/housing/maintenance-and-repairs/how-report-repair

Repairing Empty Homes (Voids)

Average re-let time:
42.50 days

99.72% of our homes meet the decent homes standard (excluding where tenants have refused remedial work).



The decrease in relet times has meant the rent loss decreased significantly on last year, down from **£286k**.

We lost **£144k** in rent whilst properties were being repaired and let during the year.

We know our performance in turning around void properties has improved, but we still want to drive down the time it takes to relet properties further. We've made changes and are continuing to implement our Improvement Plan that includes a number of actions that we know will further speed up the process for repairing and re-letting our properties.

Managing your tenancy

Your Rent

Taking into account the reduced inflation rate, Government guidance and the need to continue to improve our services to you, we increased your rent by 7.7% in April 2024. This was the rate of inflation (6.7%) in September 2023, plus 1%.



Your average rent in 2023-24 was **£86.61 per week.**



We received **£21,584,396** in dwelling rent income during the year.

Current tenants were in arrears to the amount of **£198,536** at the end of the financial year. Those tenants in arrears were behind with their payments by an average **£213.71**.



Unfortunately we evicted **8** households as a result of their rent arrears.

Support with heating this winter

Are you struggling with heating bills this winter? Then don't struggle in silence. Beat The Cold are here to help you with debt and to support with the cost of living. Our Neighbourhood Officers can refer you or you can refer yourself by visiting www.beatcold.org.uk/



87% of respondents to our monthly new lettings satisfaction survey said they were satisfied with the lettings and allocations process

40 Anti-Social Behaviour cases were investigated, of which **35** were closed as successfully resolved, with only **5** being closed unresolved.



We recovered **12** abandoned properties

Lettings 2023/24



98% of tenancies granted in the last two years lasted for more than 1 year, which shows our proactive approach to tenancy sustainment.



195 tenants received a new tenancy visit and **101** tenants were assisted by the tenancy sustainment service.



145 introductory tenancies were sustained for 12 months.

272 properties let throughout 2023/24, of which:



177 lettings were made to new social housing tenants.



78 lettings were to existing social housing tenants.



17 mutual exchanges took place during 2023/24.

Resident Engagement

Following the appointment of a dedicated Resident Engagement and Insight Officer at the start of 2024 and with the help of residents, we have now developed our Resident Involvement Strategy. We have developed six key aims for how we will engage with our tenants throughout the next three years.



How are we doing so far
(From April 2024 until December 2024):



Consultation with Tenants and Leaseholders

9 consultations

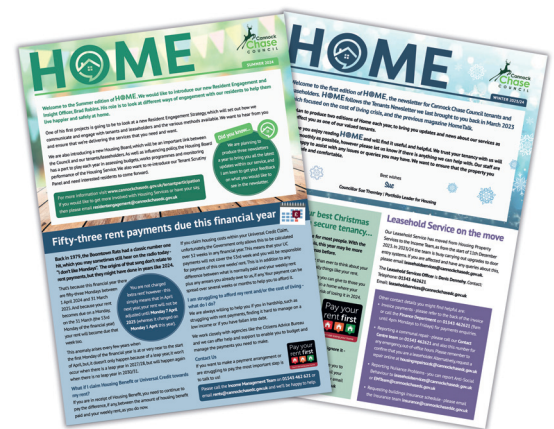
404 consultees



Home Newsletters

2 sent out in 2023/24

3 planned for 2024/25



Community Events

16 community events

258 Tenants

Social Media Interaction

8 Posts



For more information visit www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/tenantparticipation if you would like to get more involved with Housing Service or have your say, then please email residentengagement@cannockchasedc.gov.uk

Looking forward to 2024/25

We will build on our resident engagement offer and look forward to working with you much more closely. The new Resident Engagement and Insight Officer and our new Resident Involvement Strategy and action plan will deliver positive change in this area.

We will continue improving and maintaining the quality of our housing stock beyond the Decent Homes Standard, and in order to better inform us as to where we need to focus stock improvements will be undertaking a Stock Condition Survey during 2024/25, so we may be surveying your property soon.

We will be sending out letters in the near future with more details about the Stock Condition Survey and your co-operation would be very much appreciated, when your home is selected for survey.

We will continue to work to drive down the turnaround times of our empty homes (voids) to reduce the time incoming tenants have to wait for a property to be ready and subsequently reduce our rent loss due to empty homes. We will continue to deliver safe, clean and tidy homes that are decent and conform to our lettable standard.

We will ensure we are compliant with the Social Housing Regulator's Consumer Standards so that we improve the standards of social housing, make sure tenants get quality accommodation, have choice and protection, and can hold us to account.

We are also looking at re-opening the Housing bungalow reception towards the end of the year. This will provide a dedicated reception area for tenants and other housing customers to visit us in person, which will improve our service offer to you.

We are working hard to put service improvements in place, we are listening to your views, learning from complaints and feedback, and aim to engage more closely with you to better provide the housing services you need and want.

Looking further ahead, we will be introducing a new Housing Board to ensure that the wider diverse voice and experience of tenants and leaseholders is considered and heard before the Council makes decisions about housing policies and strategies.



Nirmal Samrai

Head of Housing and
Corporate Assets

In 2024/25 your rent has been increased by 7.7% in accordance with Government's rent policy, so average rents per week in 2024/25 will be approximately:



1 bed =
£81.98



2 bed =
£93.63



3 bed =
£98.23



4 bed =
£109.09

Housing Revenue Account Budget 2024/25

£24.56m

£24.07m

HRA Income
2024/25

HRA Expenditure
2024/25

HRA Capital Programme - proposed spend for 2024/25

Kitchen Replacements £2,175,000

Bathroom Replacements £2,064,000

Disabled Facilities Work £618,000

Central Heating Replacements £1,002,000

Electrical Upgrades £557,000

Replacement of Social Alarms £141,000

Replacement of Vehicles £421,000

Sheltered Schemes Improvement
Works, Lift Replacements and
Door Entry £541,000

Electrical Inspection Condition Report £323,000

External/Environmental Works £147,000

New Affordable Housing (Aelfgar Site) £3,300,000

Demolition of Garages £16,000

Right to Compensation £25,000

Communal Block Door Entry System £109,000

Other Costs and Contingencies £125,000

Total £11,564,000



Contact us

Cannock Chase Council
Civic Centre, Beecroft Road, Cannock, Staffordshire WS11 1BG
tel 01543 462621
www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk
email serviceimprovements@cannockchasedc.gov.uk

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