



CHS GROUP
housing, care, and community services in Cambridgeshire



August 2024 Newsletter

Welcome to August's tenant newsletter! Every month, we share organisational updates as well as news from within the CHS community. This month, we provide a guide on how to keep your windows well-maintained and safe, details of our new domestic CCTV systems and doorbell camera policy, share good news from our 204 service in Wisbech, and outline how to submit your repair photos to our contractors. **Read on to find out more...**

Keeping your windows well-maintained and safe

The safety of our tenants is our top priority. In order to keep your home, and in particular, windows, as safe as possible, we've shared some useful information below.

What are the risks?

- Opening windows above ground floor level can be dangerous for young children and vulnerable adults. Whilst the number of falls from windows is small, a fall from a window can result in serious injury.

Window restrictors and locks

- Window restrictors are a safety precaution product which connect to window frames, preventing windows from being opened beyond a specific point. They typically only allow the window to be open by 100mm or less.
- Although window locks do not restrict window openings, when in use they can stop windows from being opened from the inside and prevent accidents from happening.

Glazing and balconies

- Glazing and balconies can also pose a risk if they are in poor condition or not secure. This includes landing and walkway balconies.
- Most homes have window restrictors and locks fitted to windows and doors. You should regularly check the operation of your window and balcony doors to ensure the people in your home are safe.

What precautions can I take?

- If your home has window restrictors, it's important that you use them correctly and regularly check that they are in good working order.
- If you release a window restrictor to clean your windows, always remember to put it back into the correct safety position immediately after you have finished.
- Do not overreach or lean out of windows to clean them. Always consider a safer way before putting yourself at risk.

- Some windows have safety locks to stop them from being opened. Make sure that these types of windows are kept locked, and keys are put away.
- Do not place furniture or store items under windows or on balconies. Children or vulnerable adults may be curious and unaware of the dangers. It only takes few seconds for an unsupervised child or vulnerable adult to climb onto a table or chair and become unsteady and fall.



Report window and balcony repairs to us immediately on [0300 1113555](tel:03001113555) or online at www.chsgroup.org.uk



Great news from our 204 service

Highest score of all 23 approved providers!

80%
scored in our evaluation

We are all about creating better opportunities for our tenants and customers, and do this by providing high quality, good value services with easy access to support.

Our 204 service in Wisbech provides 'Looked After Children' (LAC) housing and care support to 16–17-year-olds who are leaving the care system.

Every five years, we are required to submit a tender to remain on the framework of approved providers. Last month, we learned that not only were we approved to remain on the framework with a score of **80%** in our evaluation, but that we scored the **highest score** of all the 23 approved providers!

How to submit your repair photos to our contractors

Our contractor, Foster, helps us to ensure that our homes are safe and well-maintained for you, our tenants. When you report a repair to us, you can now send photos to Foster directly to help them better understand and diagnose the issue. You can either email them at fostercentral@fpm-ltd.co.uk or send them photos via WhatsApp on [07377 989073](tel:07377989073).

If you're submitting repair photos to Foster, here are some tips on how to best share your images:

DO

Ensure proper lighting:

Take the photo in well-lit conditions to clearly show the issue. Use natural light if possible or a flashlight if necessary

Focus on the problem area:

Center the camera on the specific area needing repair. Ensure the problem is clearly visible and in focus

Provide context:

Take a few steps back to capture the surrounding area. This helps the contractor understand the location and extent of the issue

Include relevant details:

Capture any tags, model numbers, or identifying marks that can help the contractor identify the equipment or parts involved

Use multiple angles:

Take photos from different angles to provide a comprehensive view of the problem. This can help in diagnosing the issue more accurately

Keep the camera steady:

Use a tripod or stabilise your hands to avoid blurry photos. Clear images are crucial for proper assessment

Check the photos:

Review the photos to ensure they are clear, detailed, and informative before sending them to the contractor

Label the photos:

If possible, provide a brief description or label each photo to explain what it depicts

DO NOT

Take photos in poor lighting:

Avoid taking photos in dark or dim conditions as they can obscure important details

Zoom excessively:

Excessive zoom can reduce photo quality. Instead, move closer to the subject if you need more detail

Include unrelated items:

Keep the focus on the repair area and avoid including unnecessary objects that can clutter the image

Use filters, effects or editing:

Avoid using any photo filters, effects or editing that can distort the true appearance of the problem

Ignore background information:

Don't just take close-up photos without showing the problem in the context of its surroundings

Submit low-resolution images:

Avoid sending photos that are too small or low in resolution. High-resolution images provide better detail

Overlook safety issues:

Ensure that taking the photo does not put you at risk of harm. Avoid dangerous positions or situations



Our new domestic CCTV systems and doorbell cameras policy

With the increase of domestic CCTV systems, including doorbell cameras, we recognise that some tenants may want to install these systems in their homes. This can create some privacy concerns among neighbours, especially if the cameras capture images outside of property boundaries.

To ensure safety for everyone, we have published a new 'Domestic CCTV Systems and Doorbell Cameras Policy', which can be found [here](#). Below are a few key things you should know:

Legislation

While Data Protection laws do not apply to data collected purely for personal, family or household purposes, you should be careful if your recordings or images picture things beyond your property's boundary.

If the footage you record is used for reasons other than personal, e.g. to harass others, to post online, or share in connection with a dispute or claims of anti-social behaviour, you will be bound by Data Protection Laws.

This means you will need to ensure your use of CCTV complies with the provisions of the UK Data Protection Act 2018 and EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Under this law you are legally responsible for the data you collect on your CCTV system, and therefore you must have a justifiable reason for capturing these images in the first place. You must have considered how intrusive or upsetting these images might be to others and what you can do to keep this to a minimum.

If you do not comply with these obligations, you may be subject to regulatory or legal action which could result in a fine and compensation claim from those who feel their privacy has been infringed.

What to do if you are unhappy about someone using domestic CCTV to record you:

Contact the person

If you are concerned about talking to them in person, try writing them a letter

Ask why they are using CCTV

People usually install domestic CCTV cameras and smart doorbells to monitor and protect personal property. They can make the user, and their family feel safe. If you understand why they are recording, it may put your mind at ease. You might even come to an agreement where you share the system. You can then both benefit from the camera's safety features

Explain your concerns

The CCTV user may not understand why you are worried about being recorded. If you explain your reasons, they may change the position of the cameras or amend the 'zone' settings

Ask to see what they are recording

The footage captured by the camera may not be as intrusive as you think. Seeing an example of what the camera records may make you feel less concerned

These steps do NOT involve CHS and are your responsibility.

What you can do if you have an ongoing dispute with a neighbours' CCTV recording:

- Try to solve the problem informally by talking to them
- You could contact CHS, and we may give you advice on handling your dispute between you
- Use a mediation service, if raising the issue informally does not work
- Contact the police if your neighbour is breaking the law
- As a last resort, take action through the courts



We will follow our '[Anti-Social Behaviour & Harassment Policy](#)' if a claim is made of anti-social or criminal behaviour against someone else. We understand that every case is different, which is why we take a case-by-case approach.

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 newsletter. To get in touch, email: info@chsgroup.org.uk.

