



# May Newsletter

Welcome to our May tenant newsletter! This month's update includes information on the timeline for Universal Credit migration, an update on our investment in the Cambridgeshire community, an overview of our three-year corporate plan, and a personal story from one of our tenants. Read on to find out more...

## Timeline for Universal Credit managed migration

The DWP recently announced that claimants who receive Employment Support Allowance and Child Tax Credits will receive mandatory migration notices to move to UC between July and September 2024. Below is a timeline so that you can be well prepared for this move.

- April - June 2024 claimants of Income Support
- April - June 2024 claimants of Tax Credits with Housing Benefit
- June - August 2024 claimants of Housing Benefit only (of working age)
- July - September 2024 claimants of income-related Employment and Support Allowance with Child Tax Credit
- From August 2024, pension aged claimants (including mixed aged couples) of Tax Credits
- From September 2024, claimants of income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- **By the end of 2024 - 2025** the DWP will have completed the moves of all legacy cases with Tax Credits (including those on both ESA and Tax Credits), all cases on Income Support (IS) and Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) and all Housing Benefit (HB) only cases.
- Those on income-related **Employment and Support Allowance**, either by itself or with Housing Benefit, will be left until last, and this may not be completed until 2028-2029. Many will have reached state pension age by then, so will not need to be migrated at all.

# Important changes to our Debt Advice service

From 1st June 2024, our Money Matters team will no longer be offering debt advice services. We have decided to stop offering this because you have been telling us that you need a different type of financial service:

- You told us you want advice about welfare benefits and grants rather than debt advice. This includes new tenants who want advice and support with getting basic furniture, including white goods.
- Looking ahead, demand for this type of advice and support is likely to increase, particularly from households which include people with disabilities or long-term illnesses. These groups of people have been hit hard by the cost-of-living crisis and there are planned welfare reforms which will further increase pressure on them.

There are other organisations locally who can provide debt advice services and you can access them for free via phone, web or face to face. Many of them provide full debt counselling services, including Debt Relief Orders.

If you need help or advice with debts, free debt counselling services include:

## Cambridge and District Citizens Advice (Cambridge and South Cambs)

- <https://www.cambridgecab.org.uk/help-advice/get-advice>
- Email for advice via the website. Phone the Advice Line on: **0808 278 7808**

## Citizens Advice Rural Cambs (Fenland, Huntingdon, East Cambs)

- <https://www.citizensadvicerruralcambs.org.uk/>
- Email for advice via the website.
- Phone the Advice Line on: **0808 278 7807**

## Cambridge Money Advice Centre

- <https://www.cambridgemoneyadvicecentre.org.uk/>
- Email: [office.mac.cambridge@gmail.com](mailto:office.mac.cambridge@gmail.com)
- Phone: **01223 727455**

## Huntingdon Money Advice Centre

- <https://www.huntsmoneyadvice.co.uk/>
- Email: [help@huntsmoneyadvice.co.uk](mailto:help@huntsmoneyadvice.co.uk)
- Phone: **01480 418866**

## Christians Against Poverty (CAP)

- <https://capuk.org>
- **0800 328 0006** Local centres in Cambridge & Fenland

## Stepchange Debt Charity

- <https://www.stepchange.org/>
- On-line debt advice tool.
- Phone **0800 138 1111**

## National Debt Line

- <https://www.nationaldebtline.org/>
- Webchat and online debt advice tool.
- Phone: **0808 808 4000**

## For those with Business Debts:

- Business debt line, run by the Money Advice Trust.
- Business debt line can help those who are self-employed or have small businesses.
- Call **0800 197 6026** or visit their website <https://www.businessdebtline.org/>



## Take advantage of our community grant

At CHS, we're all about creating better opportunities for you, our tenants, and investing in our local communities. We are proud to offer tenants living in our communities a neighbourhood grant of up to £250 to help with setting up a new a community project, group or event.

If you're interested in applying for a grant, please get in touch with our Customer Involvement Officer Laura Papanikolaou by email on [laura.papanikolaou@chsgroup.org.uk](mailto:laura.papanikolaou@chsgroup.org.uk) or phone on 07540122624.

With the help of a £50 neighbourhood grant to buy materials, local resident Susan has started a free craft and cake group on Friday mornings from 10.30am to 12.30pm at River Lane Community Centre in Cambridge. If you would you like to come along, email Susan at [craftycakegroup@gmail.com](mailto:craftycakegroup@gmail.com) to find out more.



## Our Corporate Plan 2024-27

In three years' time, 2027, we will celebrate our 100th birthday and over the next three years we want to continue to do the unique and special things we do in Cambridgeshire. Our three-year plan, for 2024/25 to 2026/27 incorporates feedback from you, our tenants, via our Tenant Committee, Complaints Panel and Scrutiny Panel and outlines our overall objectives and how will we achieve them.

### Our purpose

We are here to enable people to flourish, by providing security and creating opportunities, through the delivery of high-quality Cambridgeshire based homes with support.

### Our vision statement

CHS will be a trusted local provider of long term, affordable, secure housing. We listen to our tenants and customers, and provide support where needed. We will be entrepreneurial with a social purpose, developing local partnerships and looking for new opportunities to support communities in Cambridgeshire.

### Our values

- Caring
- Openness
- Trust

### The way we work - 'the CHS way'

- Flexible
- Creative
- Respectful
- Working in partnership
- Focused on the social objective

Our key focus during this period will be on our core housing and property services and ensuring that we are able to deliver the new standards required by the Regulator of Social Housing. This will include developing a better understanding of our tenants and their diverse needs.

Gaining a better understanding of the condition of our homes and the improvements needed.

Understanding and responding to our tenants' priorities for how their services are delivered.

# Our three-year pledge

## Our tenants & customers

***"We will listen to our tenants and customers and provide support where needed"***

- We will improve our interaction with tenants and customers to maintain a high level of overall tenant satisfaction - tenants need to feel happy, healthy, and safe
- We will improve our channels of communication to enable all tenants and customers to influence our services
- We will engage more with our tenants and customers to understand their different needs to ensure everyone has equal access to our services
- We will work closely with tenants providing support and assistance to help people sustain their tenancies with us

## Our rented homes

***"CHS will be a trusted local provider of long term, affordable, secure housing"***

- We will actively manage all our homes to meet health and safety requirements to ensure they are of a high quality and safe standard
- We will invest in our homes to improve affordable warmth and environmental sustainability
- We will work with our tenants and contractors to deliver a high-quality repair service for all



## Our community

***"We will be entrepreneurial with a social purpose, developing local partnerships and looking for new opportunities to support Cambridgeshire communities"***

- We will play a leading role in addressing local social issues by engaging with other organisations and local authorities
- We will create partnerships to identify needs in the local community and fundraise to deliver support
- We will continue to offer a wide range of community focussed support and care services

## Our business

***"We will maintain a long-term viable business plan, financial viability and offering clear value for money"***

- We will maintain the highest financial viability rating (V1) with the Regulator of Social Housing
- We will ensure value for money is core to the way our services are organised and delivered
- We will deliver a well-managed housing development programme to meet local needs

## Our governance

***"We will be governed to an excellent standard and achieve a high level of assessment with all our regulatory bodies"***

- We will achieve a good Consumer Standard grading with the Regulator of Social Housing
- We will achieve excellence with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) for our older people's services
- We will achieve high levels of assessments from other regulatory bodies e.g. OFSTED
- We will actively engage with our tenants to ensure the Tenant Voice is effectively represented in the decision-making process of the organisation.

- We will maintain excellent governance practices to ensure good quality decision making and strong management of risk

## Our staff

***"We will achieve recognition as an employer of choice"***

- To enable us to offer a better service to tenants and customers, we will maintain high levels of staff satisfaction by ensuring that we are a rewarding place for staff to work, where they feel valued, and can access a well-developed training programme

## Tenant engagement

We value engagement with you as it helps us to improve our services. Typically, to get this feedback or share updates with you, we try to use email because it is cheaper, more efficient and better for the environment compared to other methods. We are currently updating our database, so if you are changing your email address, want to redirect our updates to an alternative email address or don't receive emails from us and want to, please contact us at [info@chsgroup.org.uk](mailto:info@chsgroup.org.uk) or phone us on **0300 111 3555** and we will update our records.



## Naomi's Story

My name is Naomi and I have lived in CHS accommodation on Norwich Street for the past three years. I was living at home with my family, but wanted somewhere of my own because I felt I was ready for independence.

At the same time as moving into Norwich Street, I was attending a new college while trying to settle into my new home, which ended up with me struggling with my mental health due to taking on too much. I eventually left college, but I am planning on returning in the near future, whilst doing meaningful activities in the interim. My mental health has drastically improved since taking time out to adjust to one change at a time, and my self-care and desire to participate in the wider world has adjusted accordingly.

I live in a self-contained flat (bachelorette pad) which I look after entirely self-sufficiently, apart from when mum wants to pop over and do a deep clean to her standard. I strongly suspect it is to check I am OK rather than my inability to clean properly! When I first moved in, I found it hard to cook fresh food from scratch, so I was basically living on frozen food, which I suspect is normal for someone going from the transition of living like a teenager and having everything done for them!

What I feel grateful for is I have a support worker who I feel understands my needs (autism, ADHD and anxiety) which is the main reason I am here. The type of support I benefit from most is emotional support as opposed to practical support and it is nice to have a support worker who is receptive to that.



We also wanted to share a few words from Naomi's support worker, Sharon:

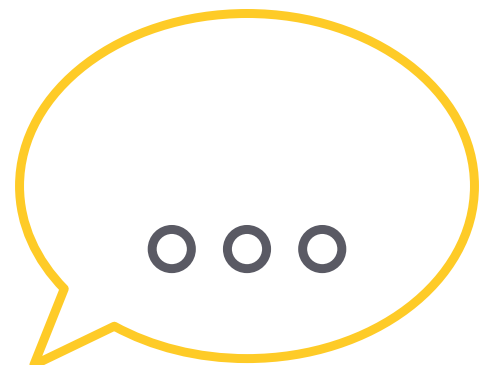
***"I have watched Naomi grow and become more independent over the past year. She is very proactive and enjoys going for walks and chats outside of her flat. The future is looking very bright for Naomi, and I am looking forward to supporting her with the next exciting chapter."***

## Have your say

We have many ways for you to have your say and help to improve our services for you and our local community. Give us feedback, share your thoughts and help us understand what matters most to you.

We'll take your views into the heart of our organisation. For an informal chat with our Customer Involvement Officer, Laura Papanikolaou, email [laura.papanikolaou@chsgroup.org.uk](mailto:laura.papanikolaou@chsgroup.org.uk) or telephone 07540 122624.

If you have any feedback on this corporate plan, please get in touch on [info@chsgroup.org.uk](mailto:info@chsgroup.org.uk) or calling 0300 1113555.





**CHS** GROUP   
housing, care, and community services in Cambridgeshire

**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](mailto:info@chsgroup.org.uk).**

