Tenant Voice magazine

Autumn 2026



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CHELTENHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL
Housing services

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Did you realise you can watch the **Cheltenham Borough Council YouTube channel** for live meetings or to catch up on previous meetings. Scan the QR code or search for us **@CheltenhamBC**

Foreword



Welcome to the autumn edition of Tenant Voice. Housing remains a key priority for us which is why the announcement of £650,000 investment into modernising sheltered accommodation at Barlow Road is so important (see page 4). We're proud to be delivering new homes at the Cherringtons (see page 10) and are making good progress on improvement work at three blocks of flats in Hesters Way and St Peter's (see page 14).

But housing itself is just one part of the story. Developing community cohesion, togetherness and pride between neighbours is fundamental. That's why we've been so impressed with the work underway at Monkscroft which has helped to transform life for so many tenants (see page 5).

If you want a snapshot of our overall performance across the last year, we've run a special double page spread from our annual report highlighting progress and achievements made in 2025/26 (see page 8 and 9). We are particularly proud to have surveyed 79% of our properties, that's 3,652 homes. That's important because it means we're able to build a better understanding of the condition of housing so you can have a home that's safe, well maintained and energy efficient.

Then there's all the usual support, activities and help that our teams have been providing to help make our tenants' lives better. From this summer's Party in the Park (see page 6) to advice on how best to make your money spread over the upcoming festive period (see page 11). These have all been designed with you and your families in mind.

Finally, we wanted to make you aware of our drop-in sessions which are designed to make it easier to speak to a member of the housing services team closer to where you live (see back page).

Rowena and Claire

Cllr Rowena Hay,
Leader Of Cheltenham Borough Council.

Claire Hughes,
Director of Governance, Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive).

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Major improvements to sheltered housing in Barlow Road

About £650,000 is being spent on a major refurbishment programme to improve sheltered housing in Cheltenham's Barlow Road.

An estimated £400,000 of this will be used to upgrade the mains water pipework. Although the water is safe to drink some tenants had reported discoloration to the water and due to the age of the pipework it was decided to replace it. Work is due to start this autumn / winter and is anticipated to take up to 16 weeks.

A further £250,000 is being spent upgrading the warden call system from analogue to digital. This will ensure that tenants can continue to be supported to live independently at home with the reassurance that help is on hand if needed. This work will include new 'nurse call' alarms in each flat for tenants to contact the support team, 24 hours a day. In addition new smoke and heat detectors will be installed where necessary and the video door entry system will be upgraded. Work started on 14th September 2026 and is due to be completed in October / November.





Barlow Rd has 74 flats dedicated for sheltered housing.

The investment will be enhanced by the planned replacement of kitchens and bathrooms where these have reached the end of their useful life, in 2027 and 2028. Tenants living in Barlow Road will receive communications directly advising in detail of how this will impact on them.



Cllr Flo Clucas, cabinet member for housing and customer services, said the work demonstrates our commitment to

"tenants' safety and wellbeing".

An open space where friendships are built



Apple tree bearing fruit in Central Quad.

Tenants in Monkscroft formed an action group with the aim of putting pride back into their community.



Gardening tools used by tenants.



(Left to right): Christian Cusick, Ian Mason and Glen Foley.

Now the central quad, an open shared green space in the centre of Monkscroft, is a bit of a hub helping connect neighbours with one another, building social cohesion and establishing lasting friendships.

Led by local tenant Ian Mason, Monkscroft action group has successfully attracted funding which has helped establish regular gardening sessions, general maintenance and social check ins.

"Initially the community had doubts but the key thing about what we are doing here in Monkscroft is that it is not just about buying stuff," Ian said. "It's about getting people who live here to own those things, appreciate the area and collectively come together to build pride."

The new gazebo, outdoor sofa lounge and BBQ, has proved a big hit. Ian explained: "Over the summer we regularly had neighbours gather around to watch the football world cup. It was really popular and a great way for us to meet and enjoy time together."

Neighbour Christian Cusick added: "The quad has become a bit of a meeting place where we catch up, share things and enjoy a bit of company. I've met neighbours here who've stayed in the area for years but we've never had the opportunity or reason to come together."



Garden furniture in Central Quad.

Flower arrangements bringing a splash of colour to Monkscroft.

To find out more about how community funding could support your area visit **cheltenhgam.gov.uk** and search for community infrastructure levy (CIL) funding.

Families enjoy a day of fun at Party in the Park

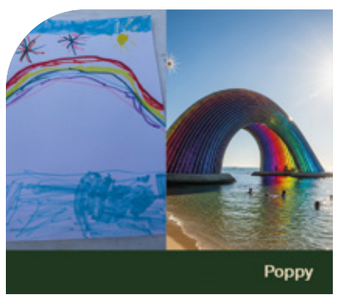
More than 6,500 children, young people and their families attended No Child Left Behind's (NCLB) Party in the Park, filling Pittville Park and Prince of Wales Stadium for a day of free fun, activities and entertainment.



The much-loved summer event featured more than 80 free activities across four themed zones, giving families plenty of opportunities to get active, be creative and try something new. From sports and circus skills to music, dance and art, there was something for everyone to enjoy.

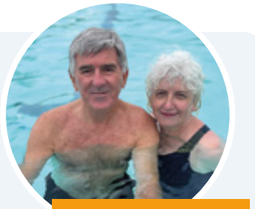
Throughout the day, crowds gathered at the NCLB main stage for entertainment and performances from hosts Camilla Lewington and Kishi and Maria Allebone, alongside performances from local groups including CEG band and Kingdom Academy of Performing arts.

Local community organisations offered support and guidance to families at the advice hub, and 1,200 children were provided with a healthy lunch through Gloucestershire County Council's Holiday Activity and Food Scheme (HAF). Food donations for the event were provided by FeedCheltenham with support from The Jockey Club, Sewa Day and Tesco.



Well done, Poppy on your art depicting dream homes and future communities which was brough to life by AI as part of the Golden Valley Imagine competition.

Making a splash



Terry and Jane Chamberlain.

Residents have taken the plunge by enjoying outdoor swimming at Cheltenham Lido over the hot summer as part of a trial to help improve health and wellbeing.

A group of 18-strong regularly enjoyed swims as part of a joint initiative run by our community investment team and the lido.



Harriet Hyde.

Harriet Hyde has a neurological condition called dystonia. She says swimming not only helps her physically but also mentally.

"Before I came swimming to Cheltenham Lido with the group I was doing physiotherapy to help manage my condition," she said. "However, I find it hard. The water is very soothing. Swimming here gives me a real sense of freedom. There's this feeling when you're underwater and the stresses just fade away."

Daniel Hill added: "Everyone who attends the group has a different story and finds themselves in a different position. For me I was made redundant and it hit hard. I soon found myself in a bit of a rut. For me this has been a real eye opener. I've met so many people and been learning so much about other people and how they deal with adversity. It's helping me to get my spring back."

Enrich holds sessions at Goldfoot House, Griffith Avenue, on Tuesday mornings between 11am – 1pm. Feel free to drop in.



Regulars who attend Enrich have been making a splash.



Shirley Barrett enjoys the slide at Cheltenham Lido.

When might you be charged for a repair?

Most repairs to your home are covered by Cheltenham Borough Council and funded through your rent. However, there are some situations where we may need to recharge you for the cost of a repair. This happens when damage is caused deliberately, through neglect or misuse.





An example of our housing.

Examples of repairs that may be rechargeable include:

- Broken doors or windows caused by accidental or deliberate damage.
- Lost keys or replacement locks where keys have been misplaced.
- Clearing blockages caused by items such as wipes, cooking fat or sanitary products.
- Unsafe DIY work, such as installing fixtures incorrectly or making alterations without permission.
- Damage caused by pets.
- Rubbish or unwanted items left in the property or garden when moving out.



An example of our housing.

Before any recharge is raised, we will consider the circumstances of each case. Charges will not normally apply where damage has resulted from a crime that has been reported to the police, domestic abuse, or where there are relevant mitigating circumstances that we need to take into account.

Any money recovered through rechargeable repairs is reinvested back into the housing service to help maintain homes and neighbourhoods to a high standard for all tenants.

If you are unsure whether a repair is your responsibility, please contact us before arranging work or making alterations to your home.

Our year in review:
How we're improving your home

Here are some of the highlights from our annual report:

Looking after the condition of your home

Over **£15 million** is the amount we spend each year on improvements.

In 2025/26 we replaced:

- **483 kitchens**
- **80 bathrooms**
- **65 wet rooms**
- **112 homes had new roofs**

Keeping your home safe

Last year we completed:

1,106 emergency repairs

95.3% of these were completed within our target timescale of 24hrs.

11,234 non-emergency repairs in an average time of **7.3** days.

Providing new high-quality homes

In 2025/26:

302 local people and their families found a home.

13 people downsized into a home that is better suited for their needs, this helped free up larger homes for families who needed more space.

As part of our social value commitment, it's not just about housing. We are committed to making a positive difference in our communities by supporting local people, creating job opportunities and helping neighbourhoods thrive.

159 **homes for social rent and shared ownership are being built across four different sites:**

Former Monkscroft School site - 70 new affordable homes are progressing following planning approval earlier this year.

320 Swindon Road development - on track to deliver 14 homes for social rent and 7 shared ownership homes.

Cherringtons Kidnappers Lane - 5 sustainable homes for social rent and shared ownership have been secured in partnership with Newland Homes.

Regents Village - 70 affordable homes are being delivered as part of a wider 266-home development.

Designed for the future, many of the new homes will include solar panels and energy saving heating systems.

Helping you manage your money and benefits

During 2025/26:

We helped tenants claim **£1.7m** in benefits.

Cleared **£54K** of rent arrears.

Supported **143** tenants and their families through our Help2 crisis fund. Providing important items including white goods, carpets and furnishings to those who are vulnerable.

Provided benefit and money advice to **901** people.

Training and employment:

> "The staff have been very good to me and helped me get my job. Very grateful to them."

Listening and acting:

> "Thank you for getting my door lock fixed so quickly."

> "They listened, cared and understood my concerns."

What tenants told us:

If you would like to view our full annual report, it will be available this autumn at **Cheltenham.gov.uk**

Scan here to see the full annual report.

A new chapter begins for local families in Cheltenham

Local families are moving into five high-quality new homes for social rent and shared ownership at the Cherringtons development in Cheltenham.

Delivered by Cheltenham Borough Council in partnership with Newland Homes, the properties consist of a three-bedroom house, 2 x two-bedroom houses and 2 x two bed bungalows.

Located at the Cherringtons development in Leckhampton, families are expected to begin moving into their new homes over the autumn.

The homes have been designed to be energy efficient to help reduce energy use and keep household costs as low as possible. They have also been built with adaptable features to make day-to-day living easier and to support people to remain independent should their needs change over time.

Councillor Rowena Hay, leader of the council, said: "We are delighted to have collected the keys to these five high-quality affordable homes for social rent and shared ownership at the Cherringtons development. It's fantastic to know that over the coming weeks, people will be moving into these homes and starting a new chapter in their lives.

"Providing more homes that are affordable and low-cost to run remains a key priority for the council."

Five high-quality affordable homes for social rent and shared ownership are ready to welcome local families.

Learn more about shared ownership, an affordable way for eligible buyers to purchase a share of a home and take a step towards home ownership, by visiting **Cheltenham.gov.uk**







Register to vote

We have sent letters to every property in the borough to check who is eligible to register to vote at each household.



Tenants are urged to check that their details are correct. The email, text or letter will explain what action, if any, must be taken.

Postal voters must now reapply for their postal vote every three years. Affected postal voters will be contacted by email and / or by post in the autumn with further information.

The quickest and easiest way to reapply for a postal vote is online by scanning the QR code in your letter or visiting

www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote

For more information and support contact:
Email: **elections@cheltenham.gov.uk**
Phone: **01242 264132.**

Help with your finances this festive season

Christmas and New Year can be an expensive time. From food and presents to heating and higher household bills, it can be hard to make your money stretch.

If you are worried about money, you are not alone and help is available. Our benefits and money advice team can provide free, confidential support.

They can also offer advice if you are struggling with bills, rent or other household costs. Getting advice early can make a real difference.

Suzanne Nightingale and Lianne Hearn, from the benefit, money and advice team.



We can help with:

- Budgeting tips and energy advice.
- Universal Credit information and support.
- Claiming benefits and handling reconsiderations.
- Affordability assessments for renting.

You can pop into one of our outreach sessions:

- Elim Foodbank every Tuesday: 11am – 1pm.
- Cheltenham Job Centre every Wednesday: 10am – 2pm.
- Hesters Way Resource Centre every Thursday: 10am – 12.

Alternatively you can:
Email the team at: BMA@cheltenham.gov.uk
Call 0800 408 0000

We've listened to your feedback

A big thank you to everyone who took part in our recent tenant survey. Your feedback helps us understand what's working well and where we can improve.

One thing we heard was that you'd like more opportunities to speak to us face-to-face. This is why we've introduced new local drop-in sessions, making it easier to speak to a member of the housing services team closer to where you live. You can find a full list of locations and times on the back page of this newsletter.

There have also been some changes to our office locations, as we are no longer permanently based at Hesters Way and Oakley community resource centres.



What this means for you:

- Our intercom facilities at Hesters Way Community Resource Centre and Oakley Community Resource Centre have now closed.
- The post boxes at Hesters Way and Oakley offices have moved to the Municipal Offices where you can continue to drop off keys, forms, letters and other correspondence

During opening hours:
Items can be handed in at reception from 9am to 5pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, and from 10am to 5pm on Wednesdays.

Outside opening hours: Secure post boxes are available at the front and back doors of the Municipal Offices.

You should have received a letter with more information about these changes. If not, you can find out more by:

Visiting: cheltenham.gov.uk/news/2026/september/new-drop-in-sessions-and-office-location-changes-for-tenants/

Calling: 0800 408 0000
Emailing: housing@cheltenham.gov.uk

Thank you for having your say!

Everyone who completed our tenant survey were automatically entered into a prize draw to win a £100 shopping voucher. And with more than 280 surveys completed, a very healthy 5% response rate, we are delighted with your input.

We're delighted to announce that Thomas is our winner. Congratulations!



Lucky winner Thomas Burke received a £100 shopping voucher for M&S

A familiar face within the community, Thomas is very involved in life at Wallace House. He regularly volunteers helping with gardening and watering the plants and enjoys taking part in a range of activities including Embrace, our health and wellbeing session, as well as quizzes, fitness sessions and art classes.



Wallace House is an independent living scheme.

He said:

"I saw the survey and wanted to have my say to try and help shape services. I do think it's important that we, as tenants, get involved. Of course that's just half the story. It's equally important that we are heard and listened too as well where reasonable.

"Winning the £100 voucher was a complete surprise. I didn't expect that at all. Don't get me wrong I'm really happy with it and I'm planning to keep hold of the voucher until Christmas when I'll get myself something nice. I'm looking forward to that."

Investing £1.27m in better homes

Work on providing new insulation to three blocks of flats in Hesters Way and St Peter's as part of a £1.27m improvement programme are well underway.

Contractors Cardo (Wales and West) are expected to complete the work this winter. Other repairs including upgrading of bathroom ventilation, flue pipe extensions and repairs to concrete walls and balconies are also underway.

Once completed the buildings will not only have a fresh, contemporary new look but they'll also be much more energy efficient, potentially resulting in household energy savings.

Three five-storey blocks at Arle Road and Grevil Road, both off Princess Elizabeth Way, St Peter's and Orchard Way, also off Princess Elizabeth Way, Hesters Way will be refurbished as part of the works programme. We would like to apologise in advance for the disruption while works are underway.











Before and after images of the flats at Arle Road, Grevil Road and Orchard Way.

Community cook book

Families from St Paul's have cooked up a storm and are celebrating the launch of their community cookbook.



Families from St Paul's who've helped create the community cookbook.

Flavours of St Paul's is packed with simple and easy recipes from around the world including Jamaican jerk chicken, Polish dumplings and the humble cottage pie. During production of the book, it has brought people together, helped build friendships and strengthened connections.

The book, launched at this year's Cheltenham Literature Festival, is now available to buy from St Paul's Community Hub. All proceeds will be donated to the St. Paul's Residents Group Association to support future activities and events.

The new cookbook is a partnership between our community investment team, Art Shape and Cooking with Josie. For more information about the wide range of activities we offer please visit us at St Paul's Community Hub, Manser St or email us: **community.involvement@cheltenham.gov.uk.**

Keeping your home cool safely

As this summer has shown keeping your home cool is important. We know some tenants may be thinking about installing air conditioning ahead of the hotter weather next year.



That's why we wanted to share this important update. Tenants are not permitted to install fixed air conditioning units in council-owned properties including flats, houses and leasehold buildings. Even though these units can be legally purchased, they do affect fire safety, can damage the building and create extra maintenance work. They can also cause noise and disturbance for neighbours.

Instead portable air conditioning units are a safer option – and always follow the manufacturer's instructions.

For more information contact **0800 408 0000** or **email housing@cheltenham.gov.uk**

Generating renewable energy safely

As a safety precaution we are advising tenants and leaseholders not to use plug-in solar panels in any of our homes.



Plug in solar panels, also called 'plug and play' or 'balcony solar,' are expected to become increasingly popular after they were made legal to buy in the UK and households seek ways of saving money and reducing their carbon footprint.

However, we have wider safety and maintenance concerns meaning that, unfortunately, the devices will not be permitted in any council-owned flats, maisonettes, houses or leasehold property.



We understand that many residents are interested in renewable energy and reducing their household energy costs. We will continue to explore opportunities to improve the energy efficiency of its homes through planned investment programmes and wider sustainability initiatives.

Drop in to see us

You can speak to a member of our team, ask questions, seek advice and discuss general housing matters.



Day	Location	Time
Monday	**Employment and training room,** Hesters Way Community Resource Centre, Cassin Drive, Cheltenham, GL51 7SU	10am - 2pm
Tuesday	**Housing support office,** Barlow Road, Cheltenham, GL51 0BQ	10am - 2pm
Tuesday	**Digi Den,** Oakley Community Resource Centre, 113a Clyde Crescent, Cheltenham, GL52 5QJ	2pm - 4pm
Wednesday	**Housing support office,** Popes Close, Swindon Road, Cheltenham, GL50 4BQ	10am - 2pm
Wednesday	**Housing support office,** Wallace House, Windermere Road, Up Hatherley, Cheltenham, GL51 3PF	2pm - 4pm
Thursday	**Housing support office,** Lynworth Court, Mendip Road, Lynworth, Cheltenham, GL52 5DZ	10am - 2pm
Thursday	**Digi Den,** Oakley Community Resource Centre, 113a Clyde Crescent, Cheltenham, GL52 5QJ	2pm - 4pm
Friday	**Housing support office,** Gilbert Ward Court, Croft Road, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL53 8LA	10am - 2pm
Friday	**St Paul's Community Hub,** St Paul's Walk, Cheltenham, GL50 4HG	2pm - 4pm

Alternatively, visit our reception at the Municipal Offices, Promenade, Cheltenham, GL50 9SA to speak to our customer services team. You can also contact us on 0800 408 0000 or email housing@cheltenham.gov.uk

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