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Your Housing



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Welcome to the latest edition of Your Housing.

Over the past few months, we have continued to make progress in improving our Housing Service and I am very pleased to see more tenants becoming involved in shaping that journey.

One of the most important developments has been the launch of our Tenant Engagement Framework. The Tenant and Leaseholder panel recently held its first meeting and has already begun to play an important role in helping us to understand what matters most to our tenants and leaseholders. We have also seen a tenant representative observe a Housing Improvement Programme Board meeting, helping to ensure that tenants are involved at every possible level of scrutiny.

In addition, two tenants recently joined me and housing colleagues at our staff 'away days'. Their feedback and insights helped shape discussions about how we continue to improve our services. This is exactly the type of partnership working that we want to build on as we create a Housing Service that listens to and works with our tenants.

While these are fantastic first steps, we would like to see even more tenants get involved. If you are interested in helping to shape the future of our Housing Service, I would encourage you to consider joining one of our tenant groups. You do not need any special experience, just a willingness to share your views and experiences. If it would help, I would be happy to meet with you to discuss what is involved and answer any questions that you may have.



“I would also like to thank all the tenants who have taken the time to contact me over recent months. Your comments, suggestions and feedback are valuable.”

A great deal of work is also taking place behind the scenes, and I want to recognise the efforts of all Housing Service staff and the Housing Improvement Programme Board. Their continued commitment is helping to drive forward the changes that are needed. There is still much to do, but we are making steady progress and moving in the right direction.

In this edition, you will find updates on the progress being made through our capital investment programme, and the improvements being delivered to homes and communities across the Borough. Together, these projects demonstrate our commitment to providing safe, well-maintained homes and services that put you first.

Thank you for your continued support and I hope you enjoy reading this edition. If you have any feedback or questions you can email me at cllrilllis@castlepoint.gov.uk

All the best,

Cllr Rob Lillis
Cabinet Member for Health,
Wellbeing and Housing

Earn £20 in vouchers in return for your opinion



We want to understand the types of things that stop you from telling us how you think we should

improve our Housing Service. We're offering **£20 in Love2shop vouchers** to the first 15 tenants that sign up to a Zoom video call on **Wednesday 21 October 2026 6.30pm – 8.30pm.**

Who will run the session?

Ellie Darling from Tpas - The Tenant Engagement Experts (www.tpas.org.uk) - will host the session. Ellie has worked in tenant engagement and influence for 18 years; she works with landlords of all shapes and sizes across England. No Castle Point Borough Council staff or councillors will be in attendance at the session because this is

an opportunity for you to share views confidentially. We know we haven't always got it right but your lived experiences can really help drive improvement.

Ellie will bring a few questions to get the conversation going and based on what you tell her, she'll tell us the best way to move forward. She'd like to record the session for her own notes, but it won't be shared with us or published anywhere. The recording will purely be so Ellie can double check anything afterwards.

If you want to take part, please let us know by **emailing the Resident Engagement team at Residentengagement@castlepoint.gov.uk**, and we'll confirm your place by sending the link to join the Zoom call. Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis (limit of one tenant per household).

£20

From garages to new homes: Carlton Drive transformation is complete

A former garage site at Carlton Drive in Benfleet has been transformed into two new two-bedroom homes ready for their first tenants.

The homes are built using traditional materials and are designed to be comfortable, energy efficient and affordable to run. Each property has an air source heat pump for heating and hot water, underfloor heating throughout and solar panels to help reduce energy bills and environmental impact.

The development has brought an unused site back into use, providing much-needed homes, close to local shops, services and existing neighbourhoods. The result is two high-quality homes that offer tenants lower running costs and a more environmentally friendly way of living.



Investment in better homes and services

Castle Point Borough Council is continuing to invest in its homes through a programme of improvements designed to make life more comfortable, safer and enjoyable for tenants.

As part of the Council's wider record-level investment plans, £35.4 million has been earmarked for housing services, helping to fund improvements to homes, communal facilities and neighbourhoods across Castle Point.

Over the coming months, tenants will see a range of improvements across our sheltered housing schemes, communal areas and individual homes.

Improving outdoor spaces at sheltered housing schemes

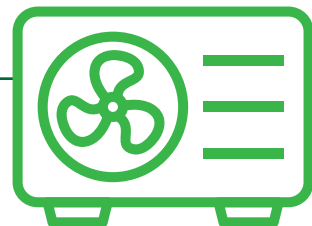
Work is due to begin soon on improvements to communal outdoor areas at our sheltered housing schemes.

The programme includes replacing existing fencing with modern fencing. Walkways and pathways will also be repaired and resurfaced to improve safety and appearance.



Looking ahead

We're also surveying our general needs blocks to identify where similar improvements may be needed in the future, helping us invest where improvements will make the biggest difference.



Creating cool, comfortable community spaces

As hotter summers become more common, high temperatures can be particularly difficult for older tenants and people living with health conditions.

To help support tenants' wellbeing, we're aiming to install air conditioning units in the communal lounges and day rooms across all of our sheltered housing schemes.

These communal spaces are often at the heart of sheltered housing communities. They are places where residents can meet

“ We're investing not only in buildings, but in the wellbeing, comfort and quality of life of our tenants. ”

friends, take part in activities, enjoy a cup of tea or simply spend time together. By creating cooler, more comfortable spaces, we hope that tenants will continue to enjoy them even during the hottest days of the year.

Modern kitchens and bathrooms

We're also continuing our programme of kitchen and bathroom improvements in partnership with our planned works contractor, Wates Property Services (WPS).

These upgrades will create modern, practical spaces that better meet tenants' everyday needs and help make homes more comfortable to live in.



Where we've improved

Kitchen improvements include:

- ✓ complete new kitchen replacement
- ✓ new kitchen units, with colour choices where available
- ✓ modern flooring and wall tiling
- ✓ electrical upgrades to improve safety and convenience

Bathroom improvements include:

- ✓ new bathroom suite
- ✓ new shower and screen
- ✓ new flooring and aqua board panelling
- ✓ new or upgraded extractor fans to improve ventilation

By updating some of the most-used rooms in the home, these improvements will make day-to-day living easier and help keep homes looking their best for years to come.



Investing for the future

These projects are part of our ongoing commitment to improving council homes and providing the high standards our tenants deserve. Alongside the Council's wider housing investment programme, millions of pounds are being invested to improve homes, communal facilities, safety and residents' quality of life

Every improvement is designed to make a positive difference to tenants' homes and communities.





Building tenant voices into our Housing Service



We're pleased to report that our new Tenant Engagement Framework is continuing to grow, with 10 tenants and leaseholders starting to play an active role in shaping the Housing Service.

While this is a great start, we're still looking for more people to join most of our panels and help ensure a wide range of voices are heard. There is still time to join all the framework panels, except the Leaseholder Panel.

Early progress

The first meetings of the panels are now taking place:

- Tenant and Leaseholder Panel met for the first time in July and will continue to meet monthly.

- Panel members were also invited to attend the Housing Improvement Programme Board (HIPB) giving them an opportunity to see how the Housing Improvement Programme is progressing and how tenant feedback helps inform decision-making.
- The Home Panel shapes and improves how we deliver repairs, planned maintenance and safety measures. It met for the first time in August and will continue to meet quarterly.
- The Sheltered Housing Panel has also begun meeting quarterly.
- The Scrutiny Task and Finish group recently scrutinised the Housing complaints process and will submit a report of recommendations to the Housing Improvement Programme Board for adoption into service delivery.

Although the new panels are only just getting underway, they are already making a difference.



There's still time to get involved

By getting involved, you can help influence decisions, shape services and make a real difference in your community.

For more information:

Email: residentengagement@castlepoint.gov.uk

Visit www.castlepoint.gov.uk/get-involved to read about the Engagement Framework, find out more about each panel or apply

Or speak to a member of our Tenant Engagement team by calling **01268 882200**



Meet some of your new tenant representatives

Jennie

I would like to thank CPBC for the invitation and opportunity to participate in the Tenant Engagement Framework alongside other tenants, CPBC and Tpas.

“ I have found the experience over the last 18 months a massive step towards a more positive and inclusive partnership between the Council and their tenants. ”

There have been many discussions, not always easy but definitely with the shared view of improvement of the services delivered. I hope the Council and the tenants find the new changes implemented positive.



Of course, this is a new strategy and there may be a few sticking points along the way but as a team we are all willing and keen to find solutions.



Lorraine

It's been a long journey but I'm now seeing improvements coming.

This new team is passionate in their approach to solving tenants' concerns. They listen, get to the bottom of the problem and direct it to the relevant officers to get it solved. Timelines are given by this team and they keep us informed at all times of what is happening and why. You are now not alone in trying to fight a wrong.

Another big success for me was a face-to-face meeting with the Project Engineer from our new Maintenance Contractor. A resident had been waiting years for a new roof. I'm happy to report that the work started on that date and the new roof is now installed.



“ At present, we are a small group with so much more to achieve. To enable us to do more, we need more voices, more tenants to get involved. ”



Community walkabouts:

Working together to improve our estates

Our community walkabouts are a great opportunity for tenants and the Housing Service staff to come together, identify local issues and agree practical actions.

In June, tenants joined officers and Councillor Rob Lillis for a walkabout around Middleburg Road, St Guiberts Road and Church Parade, highlighting a range of issues including communal cleaning, grounds maintenance, repairs, bin storage, lighting and parking concerns.

Following the walkabout, an action plan was put in place to address the concerns identified. Progress has already been made on several issues, including arrangements to replace a damaged communal bin, discussions about motorcycle parking and plans to review bin locations to reduce their impact on nearby homes. Communal window cleaning was also scheduled following feedback from tenants.

Tenants also raised concerns about the condition of communal areas, including overgrown grass, fencing, drains, lighting and block entrances. These issues have been logged and allocated to the appropriate teams for investigation and action.

Community walkabouts play an important role in helping us understand what is important to tenants and ensuring that local concerns are seen first-hand by the teams responsible for delivering services. They also provide an opportunity to discuss ideas for future improvements.

We'd love to see more tenants get involved.

Keep an eye on future community walkabouts in your area and help us continue making improvements where you live. We will write to every tenant and leaseholder within the block, advising them of the visit and providing an opportunity for you to join us during the walkabout.



Big Door Knock a success in Canvey

In June, staff visited tenants across an area of Canvey Island as part of a successful Big Door Knock initiative, helping to update tenancy information and gather valuable feedback.

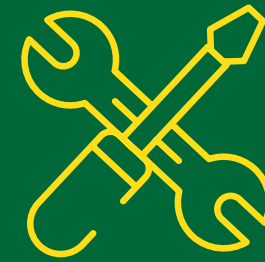
The event was well received, with many tenants welcoming the opportunity to speak face-to-face with staff and share their experiences. Staff updated 98 tenant profiles during the day. These are records containing the latest contact details, communication preferences, reasonable adjustments and any support needs identified.

As a direct result of conversations on the doorstep, **12 repair jobs were raised**, while one repair was completed there and then, much to the delight of the tenant involved.

The main issues highlighted by tenants were outstanding repairs and concerns about anti-social behaviour. This feedback will help shape future engagement activities and support ongoing service improvements.

The day also gave those staff, who do not usually work directly with tenants, a valuable insight into tenants' priorities and the challenges they face. Our next Big Door Knock will be on 23 September in Canvey Island Central Ward.

The information gathered will help improve communication, strengthen services and ensure key issues are monitored and addressed.



Why we sometimes need access to your home

Keeping your home safe and in good condition is a shared responsibility. From time-to-time, we will need access to your home to carry out essential checks, repairs or improvements.

When might we need access?

There are several reasons we may need to enter your home, including:

- **repairs or servicing** to keep your home working as it should
- **emergency situations**, where there is an immediate risk to a person or property
- **annual improvement works** as part of our planned investment programmes
- **gas safety checks**, which are a legal requirement
- **fire safety surveys and works**
- **electrical testing and repairs**
- **asbestos surveys** or related works, where needed
- **damp, mould and condensation (DMC)** inspections and treatments
- **general safety inspections**
- **servicing and maintenance** of personal lifts, including stairlifts and telecare equipment
- **repairs or refurbishment**, especially where delays could cause damage or put tenants at risk
- **property condition surveys**, which help us plan future improvements
- **tenancy reviews or checks**, or to investigate a possible breach of tenancy

We will work with you

We understand that life is busy. Except in an emergency, we can be flexible. If the appointment time we suggest does not work for you, **please let us know as soon as possible.** We will do our best to rearrange for a time that suits you.



Our teams and contractors will always show identification and explain what work is being carried out, so you know exactly what to expect.

Why keeping appointments matters

When we cannot get access as planned, it often means appointments must be rearranged. Fewer missed appointments means contractors can do more works and deliver a better service.



Have we got your current contact details?

Keeping your contact details up-to-date is one of the simplest ways to help us provide you with the best possible service.

Having a current telephone number and email address means we can contact you quickly about important matters relating to your home, including repairs, safety checks and urgent updates. It also helps us keep you informed about appointments and any changes that may affect you.

If your phone number, email address or other contact details have changed recently, please let us know so we can keep our records up-to-date.

You can update your details by calling us on **01268 882200** or emailing TenancyOfficers@castlepoint.gov.uk



New gas servicing and repairs contractor off to a strong start

Our new gas servicing and repairs contractor, **T Brown Group (TBG)**, has been busy since taking over the contract on 1 June 2026.

The TBG team is now based in our offices in Kiln Road, helping us work closely to provide a great service for residents. Since the start of the contract, engineers have carried out more than **370 gas servicing appointments** and completed over **190 repair jobs across the Borough**.

These essential services help keep homes safe, warm and compliant with gas safety requirements, while ensuring repairs are dealt with as quickly as possible.

As part of their commitment to Castle Point, TBG is keen to become an active part of the local community. Over the coming months, their team will be attending community events, meeting tenants and sharing advice on gas safety and energy efficiency.

Here's a reminder how to **book a service or repair**

Phone:

Freephone: **0800 066 8916**

Local number: **01268 538961**

Email:

Repairs: Repairs@tbrown.com

Servicing: Servicing@tbrown.com



Report noise nuisance quickly and easily with our Noise App

If you're experiencing noise nuisance, our **Noise App** makes it easier than ever to report it to our **Neighbourhood Management Team**.

Whether it's loud music, persistent banging, shouting or other disruptive noise, the app allows you to securely record and submit evidence using your smartphone.

The app helps you to:

- record audio and video evidence of the noise disturbance
- submit reports at any time, day or night
- keep all your noise reports in one place
- provide our Neighbourhood Management Team with evidence to help investigate complaints more effectively



If you make a noise nuisance complaint, we will email you a link with details of how to download the app and simple instructions on how to use it.

Once set up, you can upload recordings directly through the app, helping us build a clearer picture of the issue and take appropriate action where necessary.

If you're being affected by noise nuisance, please contact the **Neighbourhood Management Team** and we'll guide you through the next steps.



For more information visit thenoiseapp.com

General repairs service update

Since **Wates Property Services (WPS)** took over our repairs service in April this year, we've seen a **big increase in the number of repair requests, with demand up by 138% compared with the same time last year**.

To help keep up, WPS has increased the size of its repairs team by 11 people since April and is now completing more than **700 repairs each month**.

We're also carrying out more checks on completed repairs and asking more tenants for feedback. If you're not happy with a repair, we'll work with WPS to put things right.

We know the service is not quite yet where we want it to be but we're listening to your feedback and working to make further improvements.

Here's a reminder how to **book a repair directly with WPS**

T: **0203 701 4756**

E: castlepointqueries@wates.co.uk



Introducing our new Staff Code of Conduct

We're pleased to have developed a new **Housing Service Staff Code of Conduct** which sets out the commitments tenants can expect from our **Housing Service teams**.

These standards are designed to ensure we provide a service that is professional and focused on your needs.

Our Staff Code of Conduct reinforces the commitment to treat everyone fairly, listen to feedback, communicate clearly and protect tenants' personal information. Staff will always act with honesty and integrity, wear identification when visiting tenants and work hard to provide the support and advice you need.

Keeping you safe is also a key priority. Staff are trained to identify and report concerns about welfare, safeguarding and fraud, helping to ensure support reaches those who need it most.

The new standards also reinforce our commitment to learning and improving. By listening to tenants and acting on feedback, we can continue to develop services that meet the needs of our communities.



Just for fun autumn word search

Find the words in the puzzle. Words can go in any direction and can share letters as they cross over.

E	A	H	F	T	C	Z	L	L	S	T	N
F	R	R	A	O	Y	E	J	Q	Q	S	I
Q	B	I	N	P	A	G	U	S	U	E	K
N	W	K	F	V	P	C	M	K	I	V	P
I	E	I	E	N	R	L	P	R	R	R	M
R	O	S	N	W	O	S	E	O	R	A	U
F	G	F	A	D	E	B	R	W	E	H	P
B	J	M	C	V	D	Y	L	E	L	V	X
R	E	B	O	T	C	O	L	R	R	F	W
M	P	L	R	W	E	L	L	I	E	S	L
D	G	F	N	S	C	A	R	F	N	F	E
A	T	U	N	T	S	E	H	C	J	V	E

Acorn
Apple
Bonfire
Chestnut
Conker
Fireworks
Gloves
Harvest
Jumper
Leaves
October
Pumpkin
Scarf
Squirrel
Wellies
Wind



A day in the life of a Site Manager

In this issue we meet Vlad Telecan from Wates Property Services (WPS), our repairs and planned maintenance contractor.



Tell us a little about yourself and your role at WPS.

I joined WPS in 2023 and have worked on a range of projects, including planned works for the London Borough of Brent and Croydon Council. I'm currently part of the team delivering the Castle Point project, helping to manage works across social housing properties.

What does a typical day look like for you?

Every day is different, which is one of the things I enjoy most about the job. My mornings usually start with site visits, contractor briefings and health and safety checks. I'll also review the day's programme, issue permits if needed and make sure everyone understands the work taking place and any associated risks.

What's the most important part of your role?

Without question, it's keeping people safe. Health and safety is at the heart of everything we do, and my priority is making sure everyone working on site goes home safely at the end of each day.



How do you keep a project running smoothly?

Communication is key. I work closely with contractors, supervisors, clients and our Resident Liaison Officer to make sure everyone is informed and any issues are dealt with quickly. Good planning also makes a huge difference, especially when working in occupied homes where minimising disruption for residents is so important.

“ The best lessons often come from facing challenges and working through them. ”

What skills are essential for a Site Manager?

Organisation, communication and problem-solving are probably the biggest ones. You need to be able to plan ahead while also adapting when unexpected challenges arise.

What do you enjoy most about the job?

The variety. One minute I might be carrying out a site inspection and the next I'm helping resolve a programme issue, coordinating works or meeting residents. No two days are ever the same.

What's been the highlight of working with Castle Point?

Being involved from the early stages and seeing the project develop has been incredibly rewarding. It's helped build my confidence and given me the opportunity to play a key role in delivering improvements for residents.



What advice would you give to someone considering a career in site management?

Be patient, keep learning and take every opportunity to gain experience. The best lessons often come from facing challenges and working through them.

Finally, sum up being a Site Manager in three words.

Challenging. Rewarding. Varied.