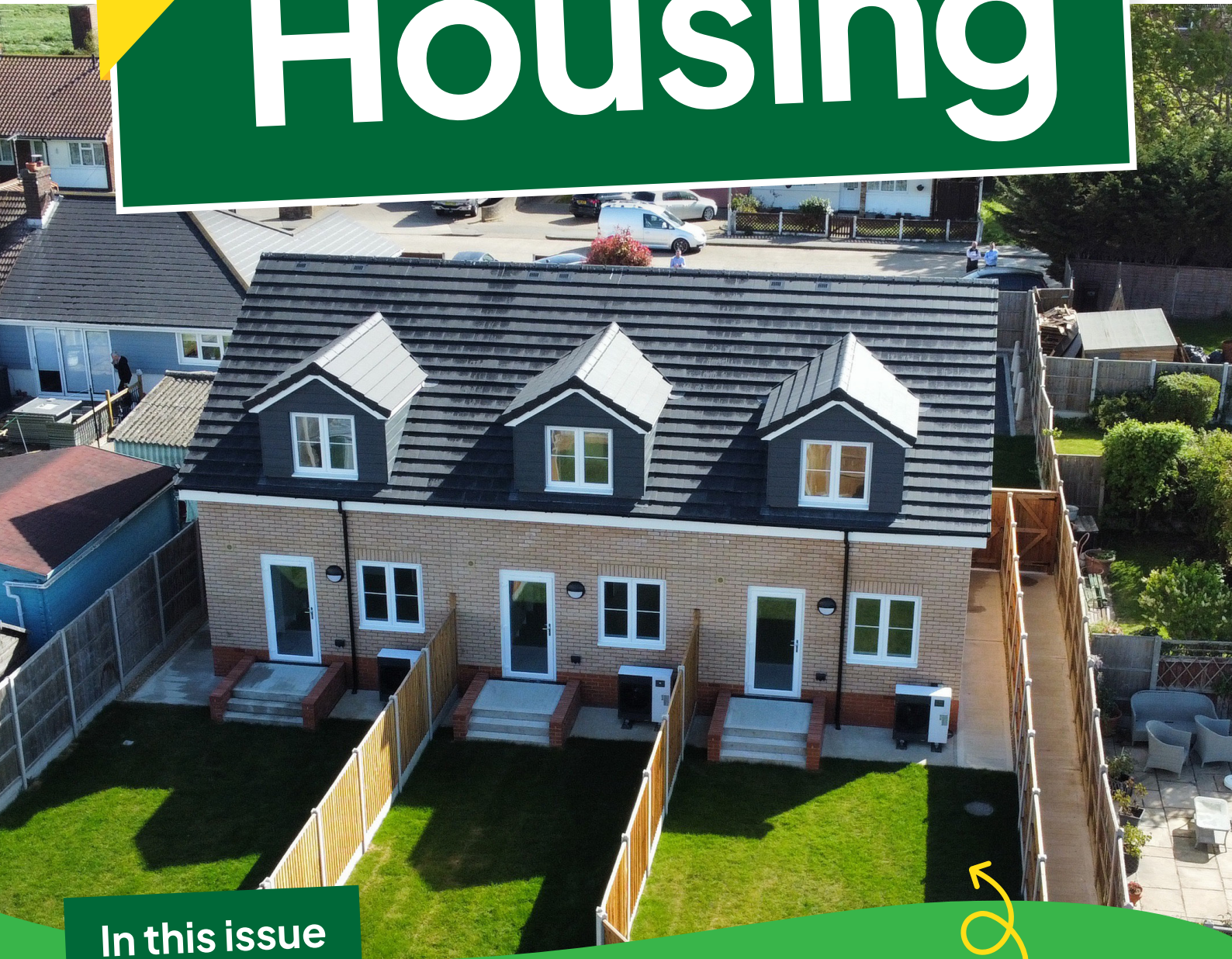




June 2026

# Your Housing



## In this issue

- New Home and Wellbeing Project
- Tenant satisfaction results
- Investment in homes and communal spaces
- Getting active
- **New homes at Linden Way**
- Our new Recharges Policy
- Day in the life - Customer Relations Officer
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# Welcome to the latest edition of Your Housing

I'm pleased to introduce this edition of Your Housing.

Over recent weeks, I've spent more of my time meeting tenants in different settings. I visited Westwood Court, where it was really helpful to hear directly from residents about their experiences over a cup of tea. I also sat in on a Tenant and Leaseholder Panel meeting, listening to the discussion and seeing first hand how tenants and leaseholders are helping to shape our Housing Service.

“ These conversations are incredibly important. They help us understand what matters most to you and where we need to do better. ”

I also want to update you on our most recent judgement from the Regulator of Social Housing. On 29 April, the Regulator confirmed that the Council's Housing Service had moved from a C4 to a C3 rating. This means the Regulator recognises that progress has been made, particularly in tackling the most serious safety issues in your homes.

The Regulator has also been clear that further improvement is still needed. While there is more work to do, this judgement shows we are moving in the right direction and gives us a clear focus for what needs to happen next.

One of our key priorities is improving how we listen to and support our tenants. In this issue, you can read about our Influence and Engagement Framework, which explains how you can stay informed about the Housing Service, get involved, share your views, and hold us to account.



Cllr Rob Lillis' visit to Westwood Court.

You'll also find our latest Tenant Satisfaction Measures scores on page four. These are surveys that help us understand what is working well and where our services need to improve.

Alongside safe, well maintained homes, we know that some tenants may need extra support at different times in their lives. That's why I'm pleased to share that we are launching a new Wellbeing Service, working in partnership with Castle Point Association of Voluntary Services (CAVS) and South East and Central Essex Mind. This service is there to support our tenants who may be feeling isolated, struggling, or who need help accessing the right support.

Elsewhere in this magazine, you'll find updates on the major investment that we will be making in your homes this year and information about new Council properties that are now ready for their first tenants.

Thank you to everyone who takes the time to get involved, share feedback or attend meetings. Your voices make a real difference, and we are committed to listening, learning and showing how your feedback leads to real change. I hope to meet more of you over the next few months.

As always I hope that you find this edition useful and informative.

All the best,

**Cllr Rob Lillis**  
Cabinet Member for Health,  
Wellbeing and Housing



## New support to help you live well at home

Sometimes we all need a bit of extra support – whether that's help with feeling lonely, managing day to day life, or looking after our mental wellbeing.

That's why we're pleased to introduce the Castle Point Home and Wellbeing Project – a free, confidential support service for our tenants.

### How can it help you?

The service offers friendly, one to one support to help you feel more confident, connected and in control. **Support can include:**

- £ Help with benefits and forms (such as Blue Badges or Attendance Allowance)
- Support with day to day practical issues, transport or staying safe at home
- Emotional and mental wellbeing support, at your pace
- Help to manage loneliness, including befriending and local social activities
- Support to access work, training, volunteering or community groups
- Gentle support if you're dealing with bereavement or life changes

Support is provided by experienced staff from Castle Point Association of Voluntary Services (CAVS) and South East and Central Essex Mind, who work together to support tenants in the community.



### Mental health support, closer to home

If you're struggling with your mental health, you can also access one to one support from trained Floating Support Workers.

This includes regular sessions, help with setting goals, practical coping strategies and support with daily routines or appointments.

### Who can be referred?

- any Castle Point Borough Council tenant
- you can refer yourself, or a support worker can refer you (with your consent)

### How to get in touch

To make a referral or find out more:

Email: [wellness@cavsorg.uk](mailto:wellness@cavsorg.uk)

Phone: 01268 214 000  
(Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm)



### Capital Works prize draw winners

Thanks to everyone who attended our Capital Works drop in sessions in April. Congratulations to our prize draw winners who all received Love to Shop vouchers.

£100

Doug Morgan and Jane King

£50

Layla Reeves

£25

Michelle Cleavley

# Tenant Satisfaction Measures

How tenants rated our services in 2024/25 and 2025/26



Measure	2024/5 score	2025/6 score	Change
Overall satisfaction	54%	58%	+4%
Well-maintained home	54%	59%	+5%
Safe home	63%	67%	+4%
Repairs in last 12 month	63%	65%	+2%
Time taken to complete a repair	65%	62%	-3%
Communal areas	56%	56%	No change
Landlord listens and acts	40%	53%	+13%
Being kept informed	58%	66%	+8%
Complaints handling	23%	26%	+3%
Neighbourhood contribution	49%	56%	+7%
Approach to antisocial behaviour	43%	45%	+2%
Being treated fairly and with respect	65%	68%	+3%

Percentages show tenants who said they were either satisfied or very satisfied.

## What are Tenant Satisfaction Measures?

Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) are set by the Regulator of Social Housing and help show how well social landlords are performing from tenants' point of view. We carry out the survey independently through Acuity and **more than 350 tenants** took part during 2025/26.

**Thank you to all of you that participated.**

## What the results show

Overall satisfaction with the Housing Service has increased since last year which shows that improvements are starting to have an impact.

More tenants feel their homes are well maintained and safe. Satisfaction with repairs completed in the last 12 months has also gone up, showing progress in keeping homes in a good condition.

However, satisfaction with the time taken to complete repairs fell slightly. The Council has now procured a new repairs contractor, with two residents involved as observers during the moderation process. Improving the speed and reliability of repairs is a key focus for WPS, the new contractor.

Results for neighbourhoods and communal areas are mixed. Satisfaction with communal areas has stayed the same. Funding has now been agreed to improve these areas. Tenant feedback will be used to help decide which blocks and areas are improved first.

More tenants feel that the Council listens and acts on feedback, and satisfaction with being kept informed has increased significantly. This is particularly pleasing to note. While satisfaction with complaints handling has improved slightly, it is still one of the lowest scoring areas and needs further improvement. We are planning some additional training for all customer facing staff in the handling of complaints.

## Next steps

We will use these results to focus on the areas that matter most to our tenants, including repairs, complaints and neighbourhood services. Tenants and leaseholders will be involved through the new Influence and Engagement Framework to help review performance and to help us to continue to improve.



# Housing Service upgraded from C4 to C3

In April this year, the Regulator of Social Housing reviewed the Council's Housing Service and our regulatory grade was improved from C4 to C3.

This means the Regulator recognises that progress has been made, especially in addressing the most serious risks to tenants' safety. However, the Regulator is also clear that more improvement is still needed before services fully meet the required standards.

The Council will continue to work closely with the Regulator while these improvements are put in place.

## What progress has been made?

The Regulator has recognised progress in several key areas, including:

- Action taken to reduce the most serious safety risks in Council homes
- Bringing responsibility for housing safety and property condition back in-house
- Stronger monitoring of repairs and maintenance performance
- Improvements to how housing information and data are managed

This work is part of a wider Housing Improvement Programme that focuses on making homes safer and services more reliable.

## What still needs to improve?

The Regulator has said that some changes are not yet fully embedded. More work is needed to improve:

- tenancy services
- how tenants are kept informed
- how tenants can influence decisions
- how tenants can hold the Council to account

These are the areas the Council is now focusing on as the next step as it works towards a further improved regulatory grade.

## New Influence and Engagement Framework launched

To help address some of these issues, the Council has launched a new Influence and Engagement Framework which you can read about on **pages 10 and 11**.



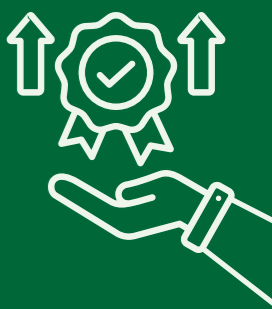
## What happens next?

We remain under ongoing, intensive engagement with the Regulator of Social Housing and will continue to provide evidence of progress.

The focus over the coming months will be on:

- embedding recent improvements
- continuing to improve safety and repairs
- strengthening tenancy services
- making sure tenant voices help shape future decisions

Our ambition is to **continue improving standards** and to **demonstrate further progress to the Regulator by the end of the financial year.**





## Getting help early can make all the difference

If you are having difficulties with your tenancy, or are worried about losing your home, help is available before things reach crisis point.

Our Tenancy Sustainment Service is here to support tenants to stay safely in their homes, wherever possible. This is a free and confidential service that offers practical advice and support.

### We can help with:

- rent arrears
- benefits and income
- budgeting
- understanding tenancy notices
- resolving issues



We can arrange an appointment with a Tenancy Sustainment Officer, who will take the time to understand your situation and work with you on practical steps to help keep your home secure.

If you would like to book an appointment, or simply talk things through, please email [TS@castlepoint.gov.uk](mailto:TS@castlepoint.gov.uk)

Getting in touch early often means more options are available, so we encourage anyone with housing worries to contact us as soon as possible. **The earlier you speak to us, the more we may be able to help.**



### Bootcamp at Gunny Park

A free outdoor bootcamp session takes place at The Gunny every Wednesday at 12.15pm. This is a relaxed, welcoming class designed for adults of all fitness levels, with a focus on moving more and enjoying being active outdoors.

**No booking necessary – just turn up. Running until 24 June 2026.**

### Castle Point Active Wellbeing Membership

Castle Point Active Wellbeing Membership provides **12 weeks of free, unlimited access to local leisure facilities**, including gym sessions, swimming and fitness classes at Runnymede Leisure Centre in Benfleet and Waterside Farm Leisure Centre on Canvey Island. You can also take part in wellbeing outreach sessions at The Paddocks Community Centre.

Everyone on the scheme receives a one-to-one assessment and support from a fitness coach or member of the Wellbeing Team.

**To join the programme speak to your GP or health professional about a referral.**



## Getting active and feeling great

Being active isn't just about fitness – it can also help boost your mood, build confidence and connect you with others.

The good news is there are several free-of-charge activities available locally, with options to suit beginners, families and people returning to exercise. Here are just a few ways to get more active.

### Backside to Trackside

Backside to Trackside is designed to be welcoming, particularly for people who may feel nervous about exercise or who are starting from scratch. The aim is to create a positive environment where people can move more, feel better and build confidence together. Sessions take place on the running track behind Waterside Farm Leisure Centre.

**Please book in advance: [bookwhen.com/backsidetotracksidecanvey](http://bookwhen.com/backsidetotracksidecanvey)**



## Working together to prevent fraud

We are working with a specialist fraud team from Southend-on-Sea City Council to help ensure council homes and public money are used fairly.

### Tenancy fraud

Tenancy fraud happens when someone gets a council home by giving false information, or keeps a home they are no longer entitled to. This can mean other households wait longer for housing.

Examples include:

- **subletting a council home**
- **moving out and letting others live there**
- **leaving a property empty without telling the Council**

Council homes are meant to be lived in by the tenants they are allocated to.

### Council tax fraud

Council tax fraud happens when someone claims a discount they are not entitled to, such as a single person discount when more than one adult lives in the property. This reduces funding for local services.

### How you can help

If something doesn't seem right, you can report it. You don't need to be sure – the team will check. Reports are confidential and can be anonymous.

- Phone: **01702 215254**
- Email: **CPBCCounterFraud@southend.gov.uk**
- Online: **[www.castlepoint.gov.uk/report-fraud](http://www.castlepoint.gov.uk/report-fraud)**

## Our new Recharges Policy and what it means for you

**We've adopted a new Recharges Policy. It explains when you may be charged for certain repairs.**

Sometimes repairs are the responsibility of the tenant or leaseholder. In these cases, the Council may recharge the cost of the work to the person responsible.

A recharge may apply if damage is caused by:

- **misuse**
- **neglect**
- **vandalism**
- **accidental damage**

This includes damage inside your home or in shared areas.

### Why we recharge

Recharging helps ensure costs are paid fairly and money can be used to improve homes and services for everyone.

### Can I repair the damage myself?

In most cases, yes. If the damage is not dangerous, we will usually give you the chance to carry out the repair. We will explain the standard required and agree a reasonable timescale. Once the work is complete, you must let us know so we can inspect it.

**If there is a health or safety risk, the Council will always arrange the repair.**

### How will I know if I'm being charged?

If a recharge applies, we will tell you as soon as possible and give you an estimated cost.

After the work is completed, you will receive an invoice showing:

- **the repair cost**
- **a 10% administration charge**
- **any VAT (if applicable)**
- **the total amount due**

### What if I don't agree?

You can appeal a recharge by emailing [TenancyOfficers@castlepoint.gov.uk](mailto:TenancyOfficers@castlepoint.gov.uk)



# Day in the Life of a Customer Relations Officer

In this issue we meet Alex Sheridan in Customer Relations.



## In simple terms, what does your job involve?

I work as a Customer Relations Officer in Housing Management Services. My role is to help tenants when something hasn't gone as expected, particularly when they're unhappy or frustrated. I deal with complaints, customer concerns and overall customer relationships, making sure people feel listened to and kept informed.

## How long have you worked in housing, and why did you choose this role?

I've worked in housing and customer services for over eight years. I was drawn to housing because it gives me the chance to make a real difference to people's everyday lives, especially when they're dealing with challenges in their home.

## What kinds of issues do tenants usually contact you about?

Most tenants contact me when they're having difficulty accessing a service or are waiting for updates. This is often about repairs that have been delayed or cases that feel like they aren't moving forward.

## How do you help someone who is upset or frustrated?

The most important thing I do is listen. I take time to understand what's happened, acknowledge how the tenant is feeling and explain clearly what will happen next. Being honest and keeping people updated helps to build trust.



“ I would like tenants to know that we genuinely want to help. ”

## Can you share an example of resolving a difficult issue?

One case involved repairs that had been delayed for a long time. I worked with several teams to move things forward and made sure the tenant received regular updates. Clear communication helped rebuild trust and the work was completed.

## What might surprise tenants about your role?

Many people don't see how much work happens behind the scenes. I regularly liaise with contractors, review policies, gather evidence and make sure everything meets legal requirements and Housing Ombudsman standards.

## Do you have any advice for tenants when they have a complaint?

Reporting issues through the correct channels and sharing as much information as possible really helps. Dates, reference numbers, photos or previous emails make it much easier for us to investigate and resolve issues quickly.

## What do you wish tenants understood most?

I would like tenants to know that we genuinely want to help. Some processes take time because we have to follow the law and work with others, but our aim is always to be fair and improve the service.



# Exciting improvements coming to your home and communal areas

We're pleased to share some great news with our tenants. In 2026/27, we will be delivering a major programme of investment to improve homes and communal blocks across our housing.

This programme – worth over £4 million – is designed to make your home more modern, comfortable, secure and energy efficient and to improve shared spaces.



Members of the Housing team and our contractor WPS.

## Improvements to homes

During the 2026/27 programme, we will be completing upgrades to **over 400 properties**. These works may include:

- new or upgraded kitchens and bathrooms
- replacement windows and doors
- roof repairs and replacements, where needed
- improved security features
- essential works to ensure all homes meet or exceed the Decent Homes Standard

We're also continuing our focus on energy efficiency, with improvements such as better insulation and more modern heating systems. **These upgrades can help keep homes warmer and may help to lower energy bills.**

## Keeping you informed

We'll keep you updated as the programme progresses, with more information about specific works and timescales shared over the coming months.



## Improving our communal blocks

Alongside improvements to individual homes, we will also be upgrading all our general needs and sheltered housing blocks.

Our surveyors have already begun detailed inspections of communal areas, looking at both internal and external spaces. These surveys help us identify the best possible improvements we can make while ensuring all works meet fire safety, electrical and building safety standards.

## Planned improvements may include:

- fresh internal and external decoration
- improved lighting to enhance safety and visibility
- new fencing and upgraded pathways
- modern door entry systems
- new bin, bike and scooter storage areas
- other upgrades identified through consultation with tenants



**Our aim is to give every block a fresh, modern look, alongside practical improvements that make a positive difference to everyday living.**



# Shaping our Housing Service together



Cllr Rob Lillis, staff and tenants at a recent tenant engagement meeting.

Listening to our tenants and leaseholders and working together is at the heart of how we deliver our Housing Service. That's why we have a new Influence and Engagement Framework – a clear way for tenants and leaseholders to have a real say in how services are provided and to help us to improve.

The Framework brings together a range of groups, making sure that you have the opportunity to help influence decisions at every level – from day-to-day services to long-term plans.

## What is the Influence and Engagement Framework?

The Influence and Engagement Framework sets out how tenants and leaseholders can get involved, share their views and help influence Housing Services.

It supports you to:

- help improve housing services
- check our performance and plans
- feed into new policies and service changes
- make sure tenant and leaseholder voices are heard

## What's in it for me?

Being part of the Influence and Engagement Framework gives you the opportunity to:

- influence decisions that affect your home and neighbourhood
- learn more about housing services and how decisions are made
- build confidence, skills and experience
- help improve services for yourself and your neighbours

Contributions are valued, and support is available throughout.

## Who can be involved?

The framework is open to:

- tenants and leaseholders living in a Castle Point Borough Council property
- tenants who are interested in improving housing services
- those who are able to commit some time and share their views

There are no formal skills required – just an interest in making the Housing Service better.

## Get involved

We would like to thank our working group of tenants and leaseholders, whose contributions have helped shape our new Influence and Engagement Framework. Their involvement has supported our recent recruitment drive and strengthened our ongoing engagement with tenants across the Borough.

If you're a tenant or leaseholder and would like to get involved by joining a group or panel, please contact:

Email: [ResidentEngagement@castlepoint.gov.uk](mailto:ResidentEngagement@castlepoint.gov.uk)

Robyn O'Toole: 07484051048 or  
Lisa Joyce: 07484052866

## Find out more

We will continue to share updates in this magazine on tenant engagement activity and opportunities to get involved.

If you'd like to find out more about the Influence and Engagement Framework: [www.castlepoint.gov.uk/get-involved](http://www.castlepoint.gov.uk/get-involved)

## Different ways to get involved

You can get involved in different ways depending on your interests, experience and how much time you have available.

### Home Panel

This panel helps look at how repairs and maintenance services are delivered. Members help review performance, planned maintenance and service improvements. The panel focuses on service quality rather than individual repair issues.

### Tenant & Leaseholder Panel

This panel is involved in reviewing performance, policies and improvement plans. The panel makes recommendations to senior officers and councillors, helping shape key housing decisions.

### Sheltered Housing Panel

Designed specifically for tenants of sheltered housing schemes, this panel helps shape how services are delivered in sheltered schemes and supports improvements that benefit our sheltered housing tenants.

### Complaints Panel

Members on this panel help review complaints, look at outcomes and support learning from complaints to improve services and customer experience.

### Scrutiny and Task and Finish Groups

These groups focus on specific topics or services. Tenants with recent experience of a service may be invited to take part.

### Block Champions

Block Champions focus on local issues, such as communal repairs and safety. They help report issues quickly, support inspections, encourage communication and help strengthen community pride.



## New homes at Linden Way ready for tenants

(Pictured on front cover)

Three new one bedroom homes built on a former garage site are ready for their first tenants.

The properties are close to existing homes and local shops, making them an ideal location for new housing. By using already developed land, the homes have been created without building on open green spaces.

The properties have been designed to fit in well with the surrounding neighbourhood and to provide comfortable, high quality living spaces.

## Designed to keep costs down

Keeping homes affordable to run was a key focus of this project. Heating and hot water are provided by air source heat pumps, which are cheaper to run than traditional gas systems and better for the environment. Underfloor heating is installed throughout each home, giving even warmth and added comfort.

Solar panels have also been fitted, helping to lower energy bills and reduce carbon emissions. Together, these features mean residents can enjoy warm, comfortable homes with lower running costs.

Are you living in a home that's bigger than you need? Our Downsizing Scheme offers practical and financial incentives.

Call 01268 882200 or email [tischeme@castlepoint.gov.uk](mailto:tischeme@castlepoint.gov.uk)





# Repairs and Service Update

In our last issue, we let you know about our new repairs and planned maintenance contract with WPS (Wates Property Services), which started on 1 April 2026.

We're pleased to say that the changeover went smoothly and WPS has settled in well. Thank you to everyone who came along to meet some of the WPS team at our Capital Works drop-in events in April – it was a great opportunity to ask questions and find out more about the new service.

Following all completed works, WPS will send a text survey asking if you were satisfied with the works completed. If you can, please complete these as they help us monitor and improve the repairs service. We are also physically inspecting at least 10% of all completed works, which helps us to improve the quality of works the WPS team are delivering in your home.

## Feedback

Your feedback is really important to us. After your repair is completed, please take a few minutes to tell us about your experience. This helps us understand what's working well and where improvements are needed.

In our next issue, we'll include a special introductory feature on our new main contractors and what you can expect from them.

## New contractor for gas, heating and electrical services

From 1 June 2026, T Brown Group (TBG) took over gas servicing, heating and electrical repairs for tenants.

All new repairs and servicing requests for gas, heating and electrical services should now be reported to TBG. Any existing appointments or ongoing repairs have been transferred over to TBG.

### TBG will:

- send reminders before your appointment
- let you know when an engineer is on the way, with an estimated arrival time
- make it easier to rearrange appointments
- provide access to your latest gas safety certificate
- make sure all engineers wear TBG uniform and carry identification.

After each repair or service visit we will ask you to complete a short survey to let us know how the appointment went.



Cut out and keep!



## Report a repair

### General repairs



Telephone:  
**0203 701 4756**

Email:  
**castlepointqueries@wates.co.uk**

### Gas, heating and electrical repairs



Freephone **0800 066 8916** or  
local phone number **01268 538961**

Email:  
Repairs: **Repairs@tbrown.com** or  
Servicing: **Servicing@tbrown.com**

Live chat: by visiting **www.tbrown.com**