



## Welcome to the May housing newsletter

Spring is finally in the air, with all the beautiful spring flowers and blossom out, Winchester looks stunning in the spring. Within this newsletter you can read about how we are consulting with you on the repairs contract. We have introduced a Repairs and Maintenance Policy & Contractor's code of conduct, which is long overdue for housing. The neighbourhood services team have a new fleet of electric vehicles which are great for the environment and the cost to the council. Fancy doing some yoga in the fresh air? The Winchester & Whiteley Park yoga is back.



## Retro Fit Programme

We are running a programme of improvement works to our council homes to make them more energy efficient. This will make them warmer and more comfortable to live in, whilst also saving on energy bills. Currently, we have

---

completed 776 energy assessments, which allows us to assign each property to a programme of work which is most suitable and will provide the greatest benefit.

- 80 properties have been completed on our cavity wall insulation programme.
- 50 properties have been completed on our SHDF Loft Insulation programme.
- 150 properties will have been completed on our C4 measures programme which involves cavity wall insulation, loft insulation, door undercuts and ventilation.

Many more properties are in the development stage or being worked on and will be completed this year.

### **Energy Saving Homes Programme for Council Homes - Suspicious Calls Reported**

We've received a small number of reports from residents who have been contacted by companies falsely claiming to be working with us on our Energy Saving Homes programme.

Please be aware that when you join the energy saving homes programme, we will let you know which contractor will be carrying out works at your property. They will NOT contact you before we've let you know who they are. Please also keep in mind that the programme is fully funded, and you will NOT be charged for the work.

If you are concerned, or unsure at any stage, please don't hesitate to contact our Retrofit team on 01962 848 175 or [email](#)



## Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety – Greener Faster

The Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Team are getting 'Greener Faster' after taking delivery of 5 new electric vans, meaning that the team's fleet of vehicles is now fully electric.

The Team's first electric van arrived in 2017 and we have been working towards an all-electric fleet ever since, continuing to demonstrate the service's commitment to the council's target to become a carbon neutral council.

---



## A lightbulb moment for Jackie

Jackie Jones from Stanmore is a member of the readers panel and enjoys scrutinising all our publications ensuring they are all easy and understandable to read by you, our customer. As a thank you to the reader panel for all their help during 2023 we gave them £25 of shopping vouchers. Jackie had recently moved home and with the vouchers she purchased some energy efficient lightbulbs, not only good for the environment but her pocket too. If you would like to join the readers panel, please contact us by [email](#)

---

## **New location for a Community Hub at Alresford**

We are proud to have set up our third Community Hub at Alresford Coffee#1, from the 28 June. Join us for a FREE cuppa and a bite to eat at one of our Community Hubs at Alresford, Wickham or Winnall. Have a friendly chat with our officers about any issues relating to benefits, housing, and wellbeing.

- Wickham Community Centre (First Monday of the Month between 14:30-16:30)
- Unit 12, Winnall (Third Thursday of the Month between 10:30 - 12:30)
- Coffee#1, Alresford (Fourth Friday of the Month between 10:00 - 12:00)

We really look forward to seeing you there! For more information, please contact Engagement Officer, [Tobias Mason](#) 07880 154 798 for more information visit the [website](#)

---

## **Sewage treatment works - service charges consultation**

The HRA is responsible for the operation of several small sewage treatment works, septic tanks, and cesspools which provide private sewage treatment connections for 761 properties - 394 council tenants and 367 private homes. There is currently an under-recovery by the HRA of the annual cost of operating these treatment plants which the council will eventually seek to fully recover.

At its meeting on 22 February 2024, full Council approved the Cabinet recommendation to consult affected private householders and council tenants about moving, from 2025-26, to full cost recovery of the council's sewage treatment works.

---

It was noted that this would include transitional protection, and be achieved within a nine-year timeframe, subject to a further report to Cabinet Committee: Housing in Autumn 2024.



## **Housing Engagement - How you can be involved in your housing service**

Would you be interested in being in being a member of the new Tenants and Council Together (TACT) Board. This is a fantastic opportunity for you to have a direct impact on decisions that affect your housing and neighbourhood, and to help shape your community

We will be contacting all tenants with more information about this fantastic opportunity soon.

We'd love you to join us at a family-friendly recruitment event on Saturday, 8th June, 11am – 2pm at The Courtyard, The Guildhall, Winchester. This event will provide an excellent opportunity for you to meet with council officers, fellow tenants, and gain a deeper understanding of the role of the new TACT Board and new Consumer Standard Groups.

For more information email the [tenant involvement team](#)

---

## Repairs service survey & focus groups

Have you had your say on the re-design of your repairs service yet?

Our contracts with Cardo (formerly Osborne) and CCS will end in the Summer of 2026. The process of procuring new contracts can take over 2 years and one of the first steps in this process is getting your views.

You will be receiving either an email or survey through the post. If you haven't seen it don't worry – you can complete the survey via this [link](#)

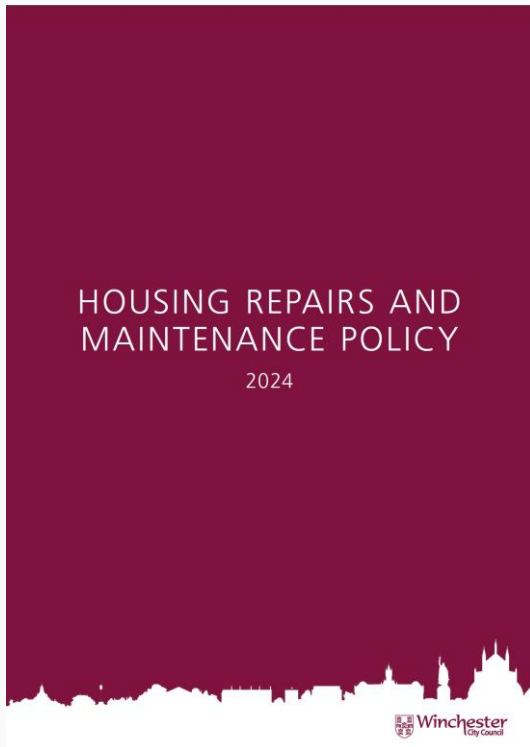
As a thank you for taking part in the Repairs Service Re-Design we would like to offer 3 randomly selected respondents a £50 shopping voucher for participating & submitting their details. You will also be in with a chance of winning the annual draw of a prize up to £200.

We will also be holding workshops in June and July at various venues around the district (details below). These workshops will give you more information about the process of procuring new contracts, give you some feedback from the [survey](#) and gather more of your views.

We would appreciate hearing from you, however works best for you. If that's completing a survey then great, if you want to just attend a workshop or do both that's also fine.

- TBC - Wednesday 12th June, 6 - 7.30pm, Carol Centre Community Centre, Stanmore, SO22 4EJ
  - Thursday 20th June, 6 - 7.30pm, Tubbs Hall, Kings Worthy, SO23 7PJ
  - Monday 24th June, 6 - 7.30pm, Makins Court, Common Room, Alresford, SO24 9HX
  - Monday 1st July, 6 - 7.30pm, The Ruby Room Jubilee Hall, Bishop's Waltham, SO32 1ED
  - Wednesday 3rd July, 6 - 7.30pm, White Wings Common Room, Denmead, PO7 6DL
  - Monday 8th July, 6 - 7.30pm, Wickham Community Centre, PO17 5AL
  - Wednesday 17th July, 11 - 12.30pm, Court Yard Room, Guildhall, SO23 9GH
  - Wednesday 17th July, 6 - 7.30pm, Court Yard Room, Guildhall, SO23 9GH
-

You can let us know via the survey if you would like to attend one of the workshops. If you don't want to complete the survey you can let us know which workshop you would like to attend by emailing the [tenant involvement team](#) or by calling 0800 716 987.



## **Repairs and Maintenance Policy & Contractor's Code of Conduct**

We now have a repairs and maintenance policy and a contractor's code of conduct both policies. This policy sets out the council's approach for the delivery of housing repairs and maintenance. The policy reflects responsive repairs and the planned & cyclical maintenance programs, all of which ensure the council's stock is well maintained, safe and meets the needs of residents. The contractors code of conduct puts residents at the heart of what we do and establishes responsibilities for our contractors.

The policy can be read on the [website](#)

---





## FIRST FOOT FORWARD **EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT COURSE**

Are you looking for employment? Do you need support with finding and securing a job?

This course will help you build your confidence, identify your skills, boost your employability, and find employment opportunities – all in a **fun, friendly** and **positive** environment.

Winchester City Council tenants attending the course will be supported to build confidence and motivation, identify your skills, take part in interesting projects, enhance employability skills, and receive support to find employment opportunities.

The tutor will work on a 1:1 basis with participants to complete application forms, apply for vacancies and prepare them for interviews.

Speak to your Work Coach or email [Richard Waghorn](#) the Employer Adviser for the Winchester City Council Job Centre

Course dates: Monday-Friday from 13th May for 4 weeks (excluding half term which is 27 May-31st may). The course will end 15th June 2024.

Course Time: 10am to 2pm, with breaks including a lunch break.

Location: The Winchester Club, Highfield Lodge, Worthy Lane, Winchester SO23 7AB.

More information available on the [website](#).

---



## Congratulation to the Income Services Team

Whose hard work this year has produced fantastic results, finishing 23/24 with a superb collection rate of 1.49%, leading to a reduction in arrears of nearly £100k in the last year!

The Regulator of Social Housing's Quarterly Survey for Q3 23/24, reports the average collection rate amongst providers as 3.7%, so this is excellent performance, putting us well up into the top quartile of providers. This is a particularly impressive achievement during the cost-of-living crisis and highlights the successful joint working with the Tenancy Sustainment Team and Citizens Advice who have also contributed to this achievement.'

### Need support? Let's talk - Lets work it out together

#### Review of the Rent letters workshop with the readers panel

The Income team recently held a workshop with the readers panel to look at the introductory tenancy letters and the process when new tenants sign up for a tenancy. A lively debate took place to look at the processes and the letters to ensure that we have the best communication with our customers about rent arrears. The feedback from the group was very informative, and they did not realise how many attempts we make to engage with our customers when they fail to pay their rent. We are looking to run a similar workshop, regarding the letters and arrears process for secure tenancy's, in the early autumn. If you would like to be involved, please [email](#) us.

For more information about the income team and how we can help visit the [Income team website](#)



## Winchester & Whiteley Park Yoga

Park Yoga connects people to the natural outdoors and helps to improve our physical and mental wellbeing. Our FREE weekly yoga takes place every Sunday morning from 5 May to 22 September 2024 for people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities. All sessions are led by a qualified instructor - just bring your mat, towel or blanket and a drink of water.

There was a great turnout for the first free yoga sessions of 2024 in Winchester and Whiteley.

In Winchester, over 115 people – and a dog – turned up for the first session! You're more than welcome to join in for future sessions, which take place every Sunday morning from 9.30am to 10.30am, until 22 September.

Winchester Venue: Garrison Ground (Next to the Winchester Sport & Leisure Park)

Whiteley Venue: Meadowside Recreation Ground (Behind Meadowside Leisure Centre)

Dates: Every Sunday from 5 May – 22 September Time: 09:30 – 10:30am

If you would like further information, or have any questions, please [email us](#) or visit the [website](#).

### **Football & Cricket**

Please join us to celebrate the opening of our new Pavilion at King George V Playing Fields on Thursday 30 May from 12:00-2.00pm. Winchester City Council has partnered with local coaching provider, ActiveMe 360 to organise football and cricket sessions for girls and boys from 6-14 years old.

If you would like further information, or have any questions please [email](#) or to book your space, please [visit](#)

---



### **A free NHS Health Check – don't miss out**

Calling all 40-74 year olds! If you haven't had your free NHS Health Check, now is a good time to catch up on this important appointment. It takes just 30 minutes every five years.

The check is designed to spot early signs of potentially serious conditions.

As we get older, we have a higher risk of developing conditions such as stroke, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, kidney disease or dementia, so even if you feel OK, there are steps you can take to stay healthy now and in the future.

The check includes a blood pressure check, cholesterol measurement and assessment of your diabetes risk. Your health professional will discuss your results and explain how to lower your risk of developing these conditions with simple lifestyle changes, such as improving your diet, cutting back on alcohol and being more active. The good news is that small changes can make a big difference.

#### Who's eligible?

If you are aged 40-74 and do not have certain pre-existing conditions, you should receive an invitation from your practice inviting you when you're eligible. Further information can be found [here](#):

---

## My Winchester Tenancy

**31.45% of our tenants have signed up to My Winchester Tenancy, our aim is 75%. Using My Winchester Tenancy is so quick and easy to use and a lot quicker than calling us.**

It's never been easier to access our services at the touch of a button, saving you time waiting on the phone. You can now access the following services

- Check your account balance
- View and print rent statements
- Report a non-urgent repair
- Check repair appointments
- Make payment
- Update your personal information
- Send and receive messages

Click [here](#) to register for this quick 24/7 service.



---

If you have any comments on this newsletter or any suggestions on what you would like to hear about please contact us by [email](#)

---





