

HULL

HOUSING NEWS



Developed for tenants, by tenants, working in partnership with Hull City Council

Summer 2024 In this issue

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New and renewed council homes

New build starts, bringing empty homes back into use and retrofit improvements - the council is doing everything possible to increase its supply of modern, safe, energy efficient, and comfortable homes for social rent.

This spring, work got underway to prepare the site for 99 new homes at Dane Park. This will be one of the biggest council housing new build developments in Hull for many years. As well as providing much needed housing for rent, our partner Caddick Construction will ensure that increased energy efficiency and keeping running costs down feature prominently in the new build process. They will incorporate air source heat pumps and photovoltaic roof panels, as well as EV charging points to some properties. These are just some of the elements which aim to make the homes more sustainable and help reduce carbon emissions. Helping to achieve this there will be ample green spaces around

the site and some 250 trees planted in the surrounding area. The development is set for completion in 2027.

Empty homes blight communities, are a wasted resource and frequently they can also attract anti-social behaviour. Using income from its Right to Buy Fund (money received from tenants who bought their own council home) the council has made a grant to Giroscope to restore ten homes for use as social housing. West-Hull based Giroscope specialises in buying and renovating long term empty homes.

Warmer homes which cost less to run drives the council's Affordable Warmth Programme. More than 2,000 homes in the city are being retrofitted with external wall insulation, new rendering, and new roofs, which of course make them look better too. This programme has been running citywide since 2015. One resident whose home was completed recently told our



retrofit partner Fortem: "I am very happy with all the work. My home already feels a lot warmer, and the cost saving in the current cost-of-living crisis is very welcome."

Mark Nearney, Assistant Director for Neighbourhoods and Housing said: "Never before, nationally or in Hull has the gap between the supply and demand for council homes to rent been wider. It's therefore imperative that we use every tool at our disposal to provide as many houses as possible for social rent. As well as building our own houses, it makes sense for the council to work with partner organisations on opportunities to help reduce the shortfall."



Chat with the Chair

As many of you know, the Regulator for Social Housing has introduced new standards which social landlords must meet.

To identify what needs to be done, ensuring plans are in place to deliver positive outcomes in Hull, the council has set up a Housing Improvement Board, chaired by Chief Executive Matt Jukes and attended by senior management from a range of service areas which work with Neighbourhoods and Housing, including Customer Services, Community Safety, also KWL and a number of councillors. I'm delighted that I too have a place on the board. Having the Forum's Chair involved at this level demonstrates the high

regard the council has for the work of the Forum and tenants' opinions. You have my pledge that I will make sure that your voice is heard to influence decisions and achieve continuous improvement in services to us as the council's tenants.

Fingers crossed for Riverside resident Kathleen Elvin! She's on the shortlist in the Community category for the BBC Radio Humberside 'Make a Difference Awards'. Kath is one of our Community Champions and works tirelessly to improve the look and feel of her neighbourhood. Kath, herself, has raised over 700 estate management issues and has collected over 1,000 bags of general rubbish and

over 400 bags of recycling. Plus, Kathleen is totally committed to encouraging others to get involved. You may have heard Kath interviewed on the radio about what she does. Let's hope she's successful when the award winners are announced in September.

Talking about neighbourhoods – aren't ours looking great now people's gardens are in full bloom? I'm so pleased that our garden competition continues to grow in popularity. In fact, this year we've had a record number of entries. I'm really looking forward to seeing the winners in August.

Until next time.

Maureen.

Performance News: 22 Tenant Satisfaction Measures

Welcome to a new feature – Performance News. In each quarterly issue of Hull Housing News we will show you how we are doing in relation to the new Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) introduced by the Regulator for Social Housing.

We have always given you performance information in our Annual Report to Tenants, based on findings from our annual STAR satisfaction survey (see also the article 'STAR Satisfaction: Your Feedback Matters' in the last issue of Hull Housing News which can be found on the council website). Now, for the first time, all social housing landlords must provide the Regulator with performance information on the TSMs, twelve

of these are measures of tenant satisfaction.

The remaining ten measures relate to management information, for example our communications with you and the number of homes meeting the Decent Homes Standard (for more information about meeting the DHS, see "Ask Mark" on page 3), our responsibilities to protecting you, the council's 23,000 tenants, and improving the services you receive. For example, we will feed back on things like the number of complaints and anti-social behaviour cases per 1,000 properties.

Assistant Director for Neighbourhoods and Housing Mark Nearney said: "Your wellbeing and keeping you safe

and warm in your homes, are our top priorities. We know we don't get things right all of the time, and there's always room for improvement but we always welcome your feedback, both good and bad, and will learn from it, helping to steer and deliver better services. We welcome this new regulatory approach because, alongside the new inspection regime, it will drive up standards in social housing. A win-win for you and us as your landlord."

You can see the full results of 2023 STAR satisfaction survey now on the council's website www.hull.gov.uk - just search 'Performance focus'. From early July, you will also be able to see all the information we have submitted to the Regulator.

This time, the Ask Mark question is about the Decent Homes Standard

I keep hearing about the Decent Homes Standard. What is it and what does it mean for me? Ceri, West Hull

The government introduced the Decent Homes Standard (DHS) in the early 2000s to set minimum standards for the condition of social housing. It covers such items as roofs, electrical wiring and boilers, and combinations of maximum lifetimes for your bathroom and kitchen.

The priority for our tenants, is that you live in a 'decent' home and having the DHS in place means you can have confidence that your landlord is working hard to keep you safe and comfortable in your home. There are about 4.5 million 'social housing' homes across England, provided by around 1,600 landlords - these are housing associations, local authorities, and a few profitmaking companies. All these organisations adhere to the DHS, private sector housing does not.

Hull City Council currently owns and manages just over 23,000 social housing homes across the city. Since April, all providers are required by the Regulator of Social Housing to ensure 100% of their homes meet the DHS, as part of one of the four new Consumer Standards.

Decent Homes comes under the new Safety and Quality Standard. This requires us to ensure the safety and quality of your homes and your well being. Detailed records must show each home's compliance with health and safety requirements, the DHS, carrying out repairs and maintenance and how we allocate homes appropriately.

By the end of June, we must let the Regulator know how we are doing against the DHS.



We add up the number of the homes which do not meet the DHS once a year, in April. The non-decent figure quoted for the end of March 2023 was 3.52% of council homes not meeting the standard. We are still examining this year's figures, ahead of submitting our report to the Regulator. It is vital we establish an accurate picture of the works needed, when and where, and making sure old fittings or fixtures are removed and replaced in a timely manner.

Due to a new IT system, which holds all the data and greater management scrutiny, we expect our 'non-decency' figure to be higher than last year. Our improved officer oversight also means we are working much more closely with colleagues and partners, closing any gaps in data and improving how and when we deliver work in your homes. We do have a sustainable and robust plan in place to secure 100% decency, but this will take a little time to fully deliver.

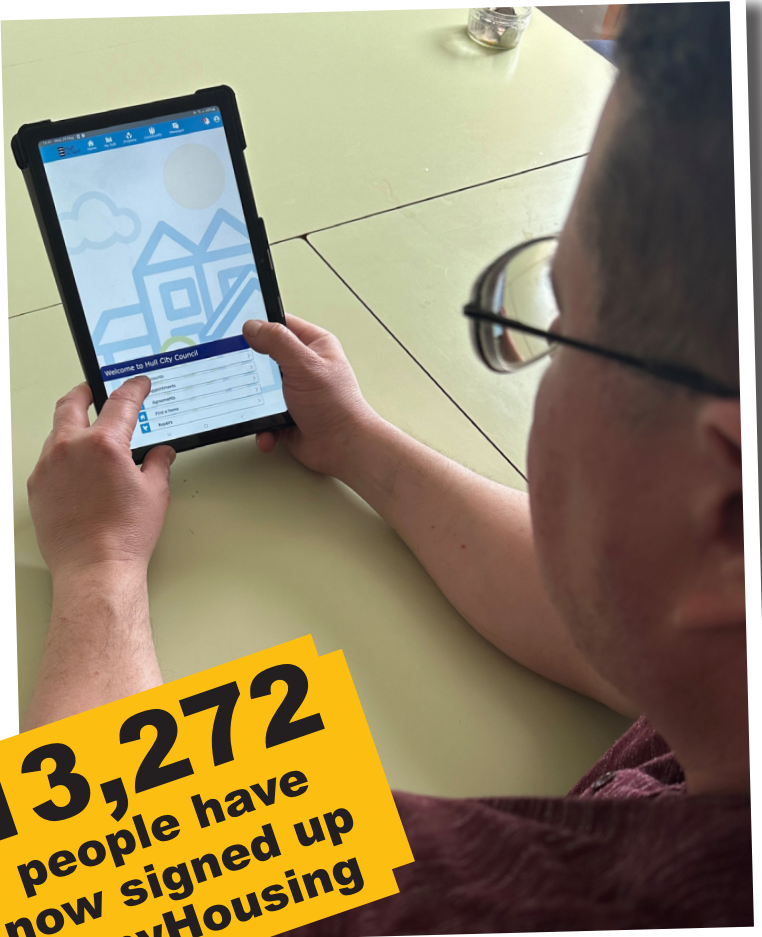
This plan includes additional surveying programmes and delivering more capital works this year, such as an additional 400 plus heating system upgrades and a further 700 plus domestic electrical tests and appropriate repair works. If your home is on the list for DHS improvement works, we will write to you about the work required and arrange a mutually convenient date to carry it out.

From early July you can see how we are doing against the DHS at March 2024. Performance regarding other measures we have reported to the Regulator will also be available on the council's website www.hull.gov.uk - just search 'Performance News'.

Voice of Tenants



myHousing – the easy, safe, and flexible way to do business



13,272
people have
now signed up
to myHousing

“Thankfully, with the myHousing app I’m not confined to making contact during opening hours!” That’s the verdict of Craig from Ings on his experience of using the myHousing app. He goes on to say, “I can do what I need to do anywhere , any time by just picking up my smartphone.”

Craig’s view is echoed by so many people who have signed up to the myHousing app. They all agree that it saves so much time and effort. For example, just tap the app to report a repair and track its progress in having it resolved. However, it’s not just for reporting repairs. You can pay and check your rent account, bid for a home on Homesearch and chat to customer services and we will be introducing more features over the coming months. If you have a smartphone, laptop, tablet, or home computer, it’s a safe, easy to use way to do business with the council about your home.

Having introduced the myHousing app, we are providing people with a better alternative from phoning the contact centre unless it is an emergency. We don’t want people wasting their

time and money while they wait in a queue for an operator to answer. It’s not in your, our or urgent callers’ interests. By cutting the volume of calls, we can free up a phone for our more vulnerable customers who need our help and actually need to speak to an operator. Plus, contacting us online is the most efficient way and sometimes your enquiry can be dealt with quicker than when you call us.

To find out more about downloading the myHousing app, scan the QR code, go to the Hull City Council website and search myHousing, or go on YouTube and find the Hull City Council channel.

As Craig concluded, “Having the MyHousing app is a no brainer!”



Enjoy the school holidays on a budget

With the long summer school holidays just weeks away, keeping the kids entertained and occupied can be costly – but it doesn't have to be. In Hull, many holiday activities are free. Take a look at these tips for happy holidays.

1. First stop for information about what's on in the school holidays is Healthy Holidays Hull. Information about activities for school-aged children and young people taking place across the city can be found at www.healthyholidayshull.org.uk It's part of the Holiday Activities and Food Programme, which has already seen thousands of children, young people and families benefit from free, fun, healthy activities, in numerous locations across the city, as well as providing food and nutrition to families.
2. If you fancy a cultural day out, the city's museums – Hull and East Riding, Wilberforce House, Streetlife, the Hands on History museums – and the Ferens Art Gallery are all free to visit. Check out their websites for special activity sessions - you may need to book places and sometimes pay a small charge.
3. Hull has some fabulous parks! Pearson, East and West Parks, as well as smaller parks across the city, all of which offer a green haven for play and relaxation. The bigger parks all have their own attractions including East Park's splash boat and animal education centre, West Park's wildlife aviary and skate park, and Pearson Park's Victorian splendour. Check out the council's website for more information www.hull.gov.uk
4. Ice cream is a must on a hot summer's day – but have you seen the prices? So why not make your own. All you need is one pint of whipping cream, and a 14 ounce can of condensed milk. Beat the cream until soft peaks form. Then add the condensed milk until the mixture is thick and well combined. Pour into a shallow dish and freeze until solid (about six hours). Yum, yum! You can add fruit, chocolate chips, caramel pieces, or whatever tickles the taste buds. All for a fraction of the cost in the shops!
5. Libraries aren't just about books. From Hull's 12 libraries you can also borrow printed music, language courses, CDs, DVDs, books on tape/ CD, ebooks, and get free computer use too. Hull Libraries organise lots of activities and events for all ages, most of which are free. For information go to www.hulllibraries.co.uk and/ or follow them on Facebook.
6. A trip to the cinema is an ideal way to spend a rainy day. Most cinemas offer lower priced tickets on some days/ times.
7. Free swimming for children during the summer holidays. Keep an eye on the Healthy Holidays website for more details.
8. Hull offers free guided walks ranging from discovering heritage and ghosts to film locations and Larkin trails. Or you can do your own thing, such as following the Fish Trail. As well as themed routes, Hull has several scenic and urban walks. Go to the council's website www.hull.gov.uk and search Travel Hull to see just a few of the ways you can explore your city on foot.



Routine tenancy visits

As your landlord, we are always looking at ways in which we can support you and help you to get the best from your home and tenancy, which is why we introduced routine tenancy visits back in 2020. When we want to visit, we will always contact you to arrange a mutually convenient date and time to call in.

During the visit we will make sure that:

- your contact details are up-to-date
- everything is okay in your home
- we discuss any problems you may have with your tenancy
- your role as a tenant and help you find support if you need it
- you tell us whether you have any outstanding repairs or issues with your property

Tenancy Officer, Ibi visits Claire's home in East Hull



- you are aware of fire safety information for living in your home.

Mark Nearney, Assistant Director for Neighbourhoods and Housing said: "We're only wanting to come to check everything is okay. We care about you and your wellbeing, and want you to get the best out of being a Hull City Council tenant."

New-look website information about neighbourhoods

Recently we have been making changes to the neighbourhoods and community pages on the council website - hull.gov.uk

It's now more streamlined to reflect the changes in the council's democratic structure. Instead of seven Area Committees, we now have three - North Hull, East Hull, and West Hull. To compliment this we have created three community pages that will support the Area Committees and they will help local residents to get involved and influence decisions in their local communities.

Priorities are determined through the newly introduced Area Plans and you will find these on the site from August. They will reflect the needs of the community, by pulling together data and intelligence, and what we know locally through ward councillor meetings, and engagement.

Importantly the pages will be regularly updated to help ensure local residents are kept up to date with progress against the priorities.

We hope you will find it easier to use and much more informative. It's now easier to search for what you want, and a smart assistant is on hand if you can't find the answer to your online query. Don't forget information about what's going on in your area can also be found on the Area Team's Facebook pages.

Everything you need to know about Hull City Council and its services is just a click away!



Fancy a swap?

If you want to downsize, upsize, or move to be closer to friends and family, have you thought about swapping your home with another tenant?

If you are a secure tenant, a mutual exchange allows you to swap your home with another council or housing association tenant in Hull or anywhere in the UK, subject to both landlords' approval. The easiest way to arrange a swap is to register with House Exchange, which is a free to use, not-for-profit online service www.houseexchange.org.uk

There are 100s of properties nationwide on the site. As soon as you register, your home will be listed for other would-be swappers to get in touch.

You can access House Exchange from your smartphone, laptop, tablet, or computer. House Exchange also has a presence on YouTube, X (formerly Twitter) and Facebook. You can also download the House Exchange App from Google Play Store or Apple App Store. Caution! There are other home exchange websites, and you can advertise your home yourself in places such as

on community noticeboards in shops. But be very careful about the amount of information you share about your home and your personal circumstances, especially if you are doing this outside of the House Exchange website. We do not advise using social media platforms for this purpose. Those registered on the House Exchange website are verified by their landlords as being social housing tenants.

For more information about looking for a mutual exchange go to www.hull.gov.uk/housing-services/mutual-exchange

Voice of Tenants



Need a lick of paint?

You want to touch up a bit of paint work and it's not worth buying a whole tin of paint?

Then pop along to Community RePaint in West Dock Avenue, off Witty Street HU3 4RJ. For £2 a litre you can buy paint which has recently been passed on for reuse by local businesses, traders and/or waste contractors in the area. Stock does vary, so it's worth phoning to enquire what they have before you visit. Telephone 07963 028 560. Also phone if you are looking for large quantities of paint, such as for a community project.

Community RePaint opens Monday to Thursday 9am – 3.30pm, Friday 9am – 2.30pm. To visit on a Saturday phone for an appointment time.

If you are interested, Community RePaint also offer volunteering opportunities.

You'll find more information on the **Community RePaint website** communityrepaint.org.uk/i_need_paint/hull/

1 in 5 Hull children who catch measles may need a hospital visit.

Protect them with the MMR vaccine. Ask your GP today.

www.nhs.uk/mmr

Did you know?

The average price of a packet of 20 cigarettes in the UK is £14.59? If you usually smoke ten a day and quit smoking, you could save £2,663 a year. Get free help to stop including quitting aids. Search 'smokefree Hull' or call: 01482 977 617.

Tenants' Forum Meetings

Date	Time	Guest Speaker / Agenda
21 Aug	1pm to 3pm	Asset Planning Manager
23 Sep	10am to 12pm	Annual General Meeting
17 Oct	1pm to 3pm	Policy and Partnership Manager (StreetScene)

All Tenants' Forum meetings take place in The Guildhall, HU1 2AA. If you would like to attend, please let a member of the Tenants Participation Team know by emailing tenant.resident@hullcc.gov.uk or phone 01482 612 010.

This document can be made available in other formats (large print, audio, digital copy) and different languages. Email: tenant.resident@hullcc.gov.uk