


home extra

Christmas 2025 update


**Who is your
Neighbourhood
Housing
Officer?
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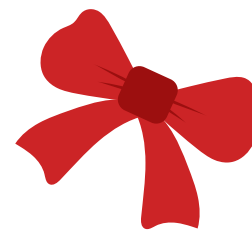
**Find out how your
views are shaping
our Customer Service
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Hello

Welcome to the Christmas
2025 edition of your Customer Magazine



As we reach the end of another busy year, I want to thank you for being part of our Cornwall Housing community. So much has happened over the past twelve months and while we've had to take some difficult decisions, our focus has never shifted from our core purpose: safe homes in strong communities for one and all.

We're beginning to see encouraging progress. Our partnerships with contractors are stronger, repair times are improving and our new locality teams are helping us respond more quickly and build better relationships across our neighbourhoods. These are steady but meaningful steps forward and we are committed to keeping that momentum going.

Next year promises to be just as full, with new projects including our Neighbourhood Strategy and continued work to meet the national Consumer Standards. We remain focused on improving our services and achieving the outcomes that matter most to you.

This winter magazine brings together a wide range of useful and uplifting content – practical tips, safety advice, support resources, updates on what's happening across Cornwall Housing and some lovely stories about what residents have been up to.



Su Spence
Managing Director

Wishing you a warm, peaceful festive season and a happy, healthy year ahead.

Christmas opening hours

Christmas Eve: 9am–5pm

Christmas Day: closed

Boxing Day: closed

29 – 31 December: 9am–5pm

New Year's Day – closed

Friday 2nd – normal hours resume

Our 'Out of Hours' team are still here for those unexpected emergencies. Call 0300 1234 161. If your enquiry isn't an emergency repair, please wait until office hours to get in touch or email info@cornwallhousing.org.uk



**Our Christmas card
competition was a
jolly success!**



We held workshops in Falmouth's Dracaena Centre, Bude's Community Café and Looe's Millpool Centre, where young artists let their festive imaginations run wild. The designs were full of colour, cheer and Cornish Christmas magic. After much excitement, the winners have been revealed: Benjamin, 7, Kyla, 11, and Piran, 14, who received arts-and-crafts packs as prizes!

Local support, right where you are

Over the past year, we made some important changes to the way we work. After listening closely to what residents told us, we reshaped our services based around our repairs services to become more local, more responsive and easier for you to access.

We introduced locality working – a new way of organising our teams to better reflect the needs of each neighbourhood. Our housing services are now based around three area patches: West Cornwall, North East Cornwall and South East Cornwall.

Since making these changes we have already begun delivering services more efficiently, responding faster and strengthening our presence in communities across Cornwall. Most importantly, this approach has helped us work more closely with residents to shape the future of your communities.



Community Drop-In Sessions

Our teams regularly attend local sessions. Speak directly with Housing Officers, Community Safety Officers, and partner services.

[Find more details on our website](#)



Meet your Housing Officers

Each Neighbourhood Housing Officer has a dedicated “patch” – giving you direct access to the person who knows your community best.



South East Cornwall

- Richard Lewis** – St Austell, Polruan, Lerryn, Dobwalls and Liskeard Moors
- Paula Harripersad** – Looe and Polperro
- Kim Williams** – Callington and Calstock
- Cassie Felton** – Half of Saltash, St Mellion and surrounding villages
- Anna Deeble** – Torpoint, including Millbrook
- Donna McEvoy** – Half of Saltash, Cargreen and surrounding villages
- Georgia Davies** – Liskeard



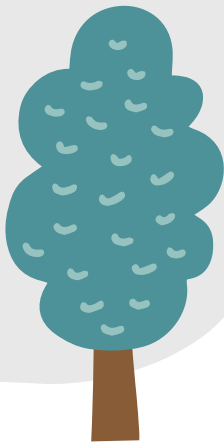
West Cornwall

- Cale Ivins** – Threemilestone, St Agnes, Perranporth and surrounding villages
- Beverley Coumbe** – Falmouth, Constantine, Frogpool and Gwennap
- Amy-Jo Frost** – Penryn, Mylor Bridge, Carnon Downs and surrounding villages
- Tracey Lawrence** – Falmouth
- Robyn Hingley** – Truro, Shortlandsend and Playing Place

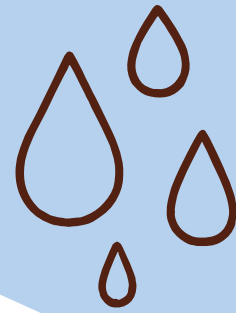


North East Cornwall

- Helena Rance** – Bodmin
- Dillon Centini** – Wadebridge, Padstow and surrounding villages
- Courtney Whiting** – Bodmin
- Richard Eves** – Bude, Kilkhampston and surrounding villages
- Ray Holder** – Launceston and surrounding villages



Damp and mould awareness: Keeping your home healthy



Damp and mould can make your home feel uncomfortable and unpleasant – and if left untreated, can even affect your health.

The good news is that most damp and mould problems have simple causes and can often be improved with a few small changes.

Why does mould appear?

In many homes, condensation is the most common cause of mould. Condensation happens when warm, moist air meets a cold surface – like a window, wall or ceiling – and turns into water droplets.

Everyday activities such as cooking, showering, drying clothes and even breathing add moisture to the air. If that moisture can't escape, it builds up and creates the perfect environment for mould to grow.

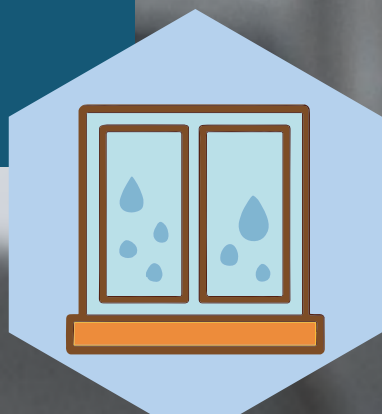


[Visit our website for more advice, including how to report problems with damp or mould.](#)



Steps to reduce condensation

- Wipe down surfaces where moisture settles, especially windows and tiles.
- Cover pans when cooking and use extractor fans or open windows while cooking – and for about 20 minutes afterwards.
- Dry clothes outside whenever possible. If you must dry them indoors, choose one small room, open the window and close the door.
- Make sure tumble dryers are vented outside so steam doesn't build up.
- Leave space between furniture and walls so air can circulate freely.
- Don't overfill cupboards and wardrobes – air needs to move around to stay dry.
- Keep air vents and trickle vents open and unblocked to allow fresh air in.
- Close kitchen and bathroom doors when cooking or bathing to stop steam spreading.
- Maintain a steady, low level of heat during cold or wet weather – this helps keep walls and surfaces warm enough to prevent condensation.
- Cover fish tanks to reduce evaporation.





By January 2027, all landlines in the UK will switch from the old analogue system to a new digital one. But don't worry - your landline isn't going anywhere!

The Digital Switch

What's changing?

Instead of plugging your phone into the wall socket, you'll plug it into your broadband router. Your phone provider will contact you before the change and explain what to do, including if you need new equipment like a router.

What you need to know:

- If you live in flats or blocks where Cornwall Housing provides services and equipment - like lifeline alarms, fire alarms, lifts, door entry systems, or CCTV - we'll work with system providers to make sure everything is ready for the switch.
- If you use telecare alarms, health monitors, or burglar alarms, check with your provider to make sure they'll still work with the new system.
- Always check with your phone provider if you have any questions.

What you can do:

For more information, visit [Digital Switchover](#). Remember, your phone provider will guide you through the process and help you get ready for the switch.

You can also [check to see when Ultrafast Full Fibre may be available at your address](#).

Your landline is here to stay, and with a few simple steps, you'll be all set for the digital future!

What you can expect next year...

In 2026, we will keep working to make homes and communities safer, warmer and better looked after. We'll focus on getting the essentials right and listening to what matters most to you.

Better repairs and safer homes

We'll continue fixing the most urgent issues first and improving safety in all homes. New repair teams are now in place and we'll be working closely with them to make sure jobs are done well and you're kept up to date.

Listening and learning from residents

Your views will help shape how our services work. We're creating new Customer Service Standards based on your feedback, and we're developing a new Neighbourhood Strategy with our residents to improve local areas, tackle issues together and support stronger communities. We'll keep asking for feedback and show you how your ideas lead to real change.

More support in your community

Our housing teams will be more visible and active in neighbourhoods, helping residents feel supported, safe and connected. We've already introduced locality working to build closer relationships, and we'll offer more help to residents who need extra support to manage their homes.

Putting residents first

We're making sure every member of staff understands what good service looks like - friendly, fair and respectful.

In short, 2026 will be about safer homes, better communication and services shaped by you.



Repairs and maintenance update



Since our new repairs and compliance partnership began in March 2025, we've seen real progress. Residents are telling us that repairs are getting done faster, homes are being re-let more quickly and the overall service feels more reliable.

What's going well



Resident satisfaction has risen to 82%, up from 72% earlier this year.



Urgent repairs are being made safe within hours, with targets on track to be met this autumn.



It now takes an average of 34 days to repair an empty home, down from 42.



First-time fixes have improved, meaning fewer return visits are needed.



Health and safety checks are stronger, keeping everyone safer.



Spending is on track and within our £15 million annual budget.

Areas we're working on



Improving how we collect and share data so it's accurate and up to date with new reporting systems being put in place.



Strengthening safety processes, making sure staff and contractors follow the highest standards.



Our goal?

A faster, safer and more reliable repairs service. We'll continue to listen to your feedback and keep you updated as our partnership grows stronger.

Tis the season for cozy treats!

Our wonderful resident from Hendra Park Independent Living is sharing her favourite Christmas recipe - fruit cake!



INGREDIENTS

150g of flour (plain or self raising)

150g of butter (at room temperature)

150g of brown sugar

150g of mixed fruit

3 eggs

A pinch of baking powder and cinnamon

NOTES

Mix all the ingredients together and place into a tin lined with baking paper or greased well.

Pop it into the oven for around 1 hour and 10 minutes at 150C (fan oven) and then take out to cool.

Your views are shaping our new Customer Service Standards

In September we:

Sent a customer service survey to **1,830 residents**



We shared the feedback with staff and it is being used to help shape our new Customer Service Standards

Residents were clear about what matters most:

Communication: Quick replies, call backs, and regular updates.

Repairs: Done properly, on time by staff who respect your home.

Being listened to: You want answers and not to be passed between departments.

More ways to stay in touch.



We'll launch our new standards from 2026/27 to 2028/29. Thank you again to everyone who took part - your voice really is shaping how we work.

Did you know we hold Estate Walkabouts?

Estate Walkabouts are an opportunity to join us to look at local issues together.

[Our 2025-2026 walkabout calendar is available here.](#)

Get warm, stay well and feel welcome this winter.



Winter support in Cornwall: Where to find help and hope

As winter draws in, food banks and community larders across Cornwall are a vital support network - offering emergency parcels, affordable groceries and warm community hubs.

[The Trussell Trust - Cornwall branch](#)

Use their postcode-based finder to locate your nearest food bank wherever you are in the county.

[Cornwall Council “Help with Food” map - community larders, fridges, and food access points](#)

The “Help with Food” map shows community larders, fridges and other local support hubs. Ideal if you want food or other help without voucher-based systems.

[The CHAOS Group Cornwall - Food-hub and community larders](#)

CHAOS runs a Food Hub in Truro and regularly distributes surplus food, fresh veg and essentials throughout Cornwall, working to cut food waste and support vulnerable households.

Charities and community groups across Cornwall have teamed up to create 35 Community Hubs, offering free, friendly winter support.

Each hub is different, but you’ll usually find:

- Warm spaces to sit and relax, often with hot drinks or food
- Activities like crafts, cooking sessions or help with basic IT
- Practical advice on money, energy saving and winter wellbeing
- Drop-ins for benefit checks and support with household costs
- A friendly chat with someone who can point you to the right help

[Find your nearest community hub offering support here.](#)

What’s new about the Winter Fuel Payment

For winter 2025 - 2026, most pensioners (those on State Pension age or older) with taxable income of £35,000 or less will receive the Winter Fuel Payment automatically.

If your taxable income is above £35,000, you may still receive it at first, but HMRC will recover the amount via the tax system.

You won’t usually need to apply - the payment will be made automatically if you’re eligible.

You can find out more via [GOV.UK](#) or contact the Winter Fuel Payment Centre.

NHS tips to help you stay well

1. Get your vaccines and boosters
2. Keep warm
3. Keep moving
4. Stay warm at night
5. Eat well
6. Have your medication ready
7. Stop the spread of germs
8. Look after your mental health

Taking small steps now can make a big difference to your health and comfort this winter. Keep warm, stay active and reach out if you need help — you’re not alone.



Beware of scams

You do not need to apply for the Winter Fuel Payment. If someone contacts you asking for this information, it is likely fraudulent.



Over the past few months, Cornwall Housing staff have been busy fundraising in all sorts of creative and inspiring ways. One of the biggest highlights was our daring skydiving team, whose bravery encouraged colleagues, friends and families to dig deep and donate to this incredible cause.

We were delighted to present a cheque to Rob Foster from the Cornwall Air Ambulance fundraising team, showing the total raised so far. It was a proud moment and a wonderful chance to celebrate the amazing effort our staff have put into supporting such an important local charity.



We're proud to support Cornwall Air Ambulance as our Charity of the Year.

Estate Champions

We're excited to announce that our new programme for working with our communities will officially launch in 2026. Over the past year, we've been listening carefully to our residents and it's clear that no one knows our neighbourhoods better than the people who live in them.



We need champions to help us turn your feedback into real improvements - working together to spot issues, share ideas and help us to understand the places and opportunities which will make sure our estates stay clean, safe and welcoming. They'll help shape local services, highlight ways to improve communal areas and bring people together to make their neighbourhoods great places to live.

If you care about where you live, enjoy getting involved and want to make a real difference in your community, you could be one of our first champions. Email myviews@cornwallhousing.org.uk



A fresh new look for Wyndhurst Orchard

Two old, unused ponds at Wyndhurst Orchard, Wadebridge, have been given a brand-new purpose - and the results are already bringing colour and life to the area.

Work began this winter by improving the soil, adding structure and planting shrubs and spring bulbs. These changes will help the garden grow well in the warmer months and create a welcoming space for insects and birds. Residents also added their own special touches by making bug hotels and painting ornaments, giving the garden personality and charm.

The project shows what can be achieved when staff, partners and residents come together. It has turned an unused area into a lovely spot for nature and a space the whole community can enjoy.

Safety first this winter

During the colder months, it's a good idea to carry out a few simple regular checks to keep your home safe, warm and comfortable. Below are tips on maintenance, energy saving and staying ahead of common winter problems.

Home safety and maintenance tips

Inspect pipes, gutters and drains

Make sure outside pipes are insulated or wrapped, gutters are clear of leaves and downspouts are directing water away from your home's foundations. Blocked gutters or frozen pipes can cause damage that's expensive to fix.

Seal draughts and gaps

Check around windows, doors and floors for any gaps where cold air can seep in. Use draft excluders, weather stripping, or simple foam filler to keep warmth in and reduce energy use.

Service smoke and CO detectors

Test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors regularly. Replace batteries if needed. These small devices can save lives.

Clear walkways and paths

Keep your paths, stairs, and entrances free of leaves, moss or debris. When frost or ice arrives, use grit or salt safely to reduce slipping risks.

Ventilate to avoid damp and mould

Even in winter, open windows for short periods (10–20 minutes) or use trickle vents. This helps reduce condensation, damp and mould — which can affect air quality and your health.

Lithium-ion battery fires are rare, but they can be severe and fast-moving. Taking these small steps can help keep you – and your home – safer all winter.

Simple fire safety tips for Lithium-ion batteries

Cold, dark evenings mean we all rely a little more on phones, tablets, e-bikes and e-scooters to stay connected and get around. Many of these everyday items use lithium-ion batteries. They're powerful and efficient - but if damaged or used incorrectly, they can cause fast-spreading fires.

Here's how to keep yourself and neighbours safe this winter:

Charge with care - follow manufacturer's instructions, using the correct charger.
Store safely - Keep e-bikes and e-scooters inside your own flat, not in corridors, communal areas or bin stores - these are escape routes in a fire.
Buy smart- Choose reputable brands with a CE or UKCA safety mark.
If something seems wrong - stop using! Recycle old or faulty items.





Ready to say goodbye to your Christmas tree?

If you're signed up for Cornwall Council's Garden Waste Collection, they'll come and pick it up. If not, you can drop your tree off at your local Household Waste and Recycling Centre to be composted. Or, if you're feeling green, chip and compost it yourself at home!

Our team is here to help over the festive season



Call us: 0300 1234 161

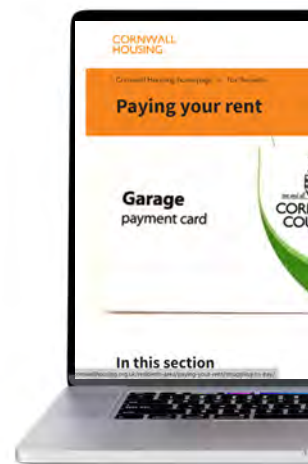


Email us: info@cornwallhousing.org.uk



Message us: search Cornwall Housing on Facebook.

I've got rent to pay



Pay your rent anytime using our 24/7 automated payment line: 0300 1234 200 (tenancy reference required) or online at

www.cornwallhousing.org.uk/residents-area/paying-your-rent

Not an emergency?

Our call wait times may be longer than usual over the Christmas period. Please email info@cornwallhousing.org.uk instead if you'd prefer not to wait!

We also expect the same longer waits during the week beginning 5 January, particularly on Monday and Tuesday. If your enquiry's not urgent, try emailing or give us a call later in the month.