



home extra

Spring 2026



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Hello

Welcome to the Spring update edition of your Customer Magazine

As spring arrives across Cornwall, it's a good time to look ahead and share the progress we're making together. Over the past year, our focus has been on improving the basics - making homes safer, improving repairs and listening more closely to what residents tell us.

In this edition, you'll find updates on the investment being made in homes, the changes to our repairs service and how we're working more locally in neighbourhoods.

You'll also see how resident feedback is helping to shape the way we do things.

We know there is still more to do and improvements won't happen overnight. But we are committed to making steady, long-term changes that make a real difference to your home and your community.

Thank you for your patience and for working with us. I hope you enjoy this Spring edition of Home.



Su Spence
Managing Director

A fresh season of support at the Kinsman Hub

As spring arrives, the Kinsman Community Hub continues to help bring neighbours and local services together with a friendly monthly drop-in for residents.

Our staff regularly attend the sessions so residents can speak directly with the team. At the latest drop-in, Housing Officer Helena Rance, Community Safety Officer Adam Kerecsenyi, and Rents Management Officer, Felicity Gronkowski were there to chat with residents and offer advice.

Residents were able to ask questions about things like rent, Universal Credit and community safety, or simply stop by for a friendly conversation.



Helena said meeting residents face-to-face makes a real difference.

“It's a great opportunity for residents to speak to us in a relaxed setting and get advice or support with anything they need. It's also lovely to hear positive feedback about the work happening in the community.”



The drop-ins also bring together other local support, including Bodmin Way Community Health and Wellbeing workers and the Grace Project, who are planning to attend regularly and bring clothing for children and families who may need it.

The sessions take place on the first Tuesday of every month, and everyone is welcome to pop in, have a chat and find out what support is available.

Putting safety first in every home

Keeping residents safe is our number one priority. Over the next year, we will complete all outstanding fire, gas, electrical and water safety checks across homes.

This work won't stop there. Regular safety checks will continue, and we'll work closely with residents - especially those who may need extra support - to make sure homes stay safe.

You may see more safety visits taking place, but these are important and help us keep everyone protected.

What this means for you

- All safety checks kept up to date
- Faster action on serious risks
- Support if you find appointments difficult



Brighter homes start here

We regularly carry out electrical safety checks in our homes to help keep you safe. These checks are called an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR).

An EICR is a professional inspection of your wiring, sockets, fuse board and any electrical equipment we provide.

Following updated expectations for social housing, we are relaunching our EICR programme to make sure every home receives an EICR at least every five years. This helps us maintain consistent, high safety standards and ensure your home continues to meet current regulations.

What does this mean for you?

When your home is due a check, a qualified electrician will arrange a visit. The inspection is routine and designed to make sure everything is safe to use. After the visit, you'll receive a copy of the report so you know the outcome.

If any problems are found, we must arrange repairs - usually within 28 days - to make sure your home stays safe.

Why are these changes being made?

Electrical faults are a major cause of house fires and accidents. These new rules are part of a wider effort across England to improve housing safety and protect residents.

You can help by reporting issues like:

- Loose or damaged sockets
- Flickering lights
- Burning smells from plugs or appliances

Key dates



1 May
2026

Homes with existing tenancies must meet the new standards



1
November
2026

All required checks must be completed

Don't ignore signs that something isn't right - reporting early helps keep everyone safe.

Garden of the Year 2026 : Dig In!



Spring has sprung, and it's thyme to show off your green fingers! Whether you're growing flowers, veg, or just making a small space bloom, we want to see your garden grow.

Open to all

Big or small, wild or neat, we love all kinds of gardens. Categories:

- Best overall garden
- Best creative space
- Best communal space

Kids' Garden Competition (under 12)

Little sprouts can join in! Sign up early for free sunflower or tomato seeds. Watch them grow, get muddy, and maybe even leave a little mark on the world. Certificates and prizes up for grabs and family helpers are welcome!

How to enter

- Email: myviews@cornwallhousing.org.uk
- Phone: 0300 1234 161 (ask for Julia Walsh)
- Social media: Private message on our Facebook page



DEADLINE

17
July

A stronger neighbourhood presence



You told us you want to see housing staff out and about more - and we've responded.

Housing officers and estate rangers are now working more locally which helps them understand the area better and respond faster to issues like communal areas, anti-social behaviour and tenancy support.

What this means for you

- Staff who know your area
- Faster responses to local issues

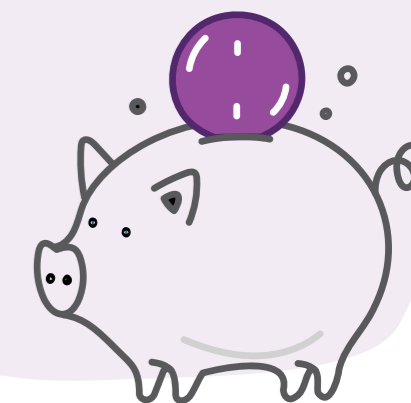
Two-Child Limit on Universal Credit to Be Lifted in April 2026

The Government has confirmed that the Two-Child Limit on Universal Credit (UC) will be removed from April 2026. This change means that families receiving UC will be entitled to the Child Element for all dependent children, including those who were previously excluded due to the limit.

Currently UC only provided a child element for the first two children born after April 2017 in a household, unless exceptions applied. The upcoming change reverses that rule, offering additional financial support to larger families.

However, some households may not see an increase in their overall income if they are affected by the Benefit Cap. The cap restricts the total amount of benefit a working-age household can receive, and any entitlement above the cap is deducted from Universal Credit.

For more information on the Benefit Cap, visit: <https://www.gov.uk/benefit-cap>



Repairs service update

Over the past year, we've been working with three repair partners to improve the service you receive in your home. Here's what we've been doing, where we are now and what's next.

We'll continue listening and improving. Thank you to everyone who has shared feedback, it's helping us build a repair service that works better for you.

What we've been doing

Over the past few months, we've been working hard to improve how we deliver repairs. During the winter, we saw a big increase in the number of requests coming in between November and January. This is something we expect every year as colder and wetter weather can cause more problems in homes. This winter, however, demand was even higher than usual. This was partly due to new legal requirements around damp and mould (Awaab's Law), which led to more residents getting in touch for help. We are fully committed to meeting these requirements, but it did mean that some other repairs took longer than we would have liked.

The January storms also caused a lot of damage, especially to roofs. Ongoing high winds made it unsafe for our teams to carry out some of this work straight away, which added to delays. We know this has been frustrating, and we really appreciate your patience while we made sure our staff could work safely.

To help us respond more effectively, our repairs service is organised into three local areas, supported by local offices. We're also working closely with our contractors, who are bringing in more staff to help us deal with demand.

Where we are now

We still have some repairs to complete, and our teams are working through these as quickly as possible. We are prioritising the most urgent and high-risk cases first, but we understand that every repair matters and we're doing all we can to get to everyone as soon as we can.

What's next

Over the next year, our aim is to get back to a more consistent, standard repairs service. We'll continue to strengthen our teams, improve how we work locally, and make sure we're meeting all legal requirements.


We'll keep you updated on our progress and remain focused on providing a service you can rely on.

A brighter welcome at Anvil Court

Residents at Anvil Court in Camelford can now enjoy a brighter, safer outdoor environment following the completion of a new exterior lighting upgrade.

The improved lighting has been carefully installed around the building to make coming and going easier and more comfortable, especially during the darker evenings and early mornings. Whether residents are returning home, welcoming visitors, or simply enjoying the outdoor spaces, the new lights help create a clearer, more reassuring setting.

This upgrade reflects our ongoing commitment to maintaining our Independent Living Schemes as safe, comfortable and pleasant communities for everyone who calls them home.



These sleek new bollard lights are now lighting the way!

Hot off the wing!

A message from John Harris, Chair of the CHL Monitoring and Governance Panel



John Harris
Chair of the
CHL Monitoring
& Governance Panel

“

There has been a change to the Tenants' Forum — we are now the Monitoring and Governance Panel (MGP).

The Forum originally discussed landlord services, but members felt our work had become much more focused on actively monitoring CHL and supporting strong governance. National guidance also encourages residents to play a bigger role in shaping decisions, policies and service standards.

The MGP will now concentrate on monitoring how CHL performs. We will review data CHL must share with residents, such as Tenant Satisfaction Measures, and speak with CHL and Cornwall Council officers, repair contractors, and residents to get a full and balanced view. Our findings will be written into reports for CHL/CC management and shared publicly with residents.

Our aim is to be open, proactive, and work closely with CHL and the Council to improve housing services and ensure accountability.

”

Did you know there's a group of residents strengthening our service from home?



Our Communications Crew e-Panel give a little bit of time, on an ad-hoc basis, to review information before it goes out to all residents. Their role is simple but incredibly important: they check that what we write is clear, accessible and easy to understand.

What have they been working on?

Over the last six months, our Communications Crew has helped us improve four key pieces of work:

- The Annual Rent Statement
- Updated wording in our Interim Repairs Policy (damp, mould and condensation)
- A new online form for home alteration requests
- A new satisfaction survey for our Tenancy Sustainment Service

Residents reviewed drafts, highlighted confusing wording, suggested improvements, and helped us make information clearer and easier to use.

Why it matters

By improving letters, policies, forms and surveys, our Crew helps residents:

- Understand important information
 - Access services more easily
 - Avoid confusion and stress

It's a simple way to make a big difference—no meetings, no long commitments. Members are contacted only when something needs reviewing, and they choose when to take part, all from home.

Could you help?



We'd love to welcome more voices. If you want to help shape how we communicate and make our services more accessible, our e-Panel could be a great fit. No special skills needed—just your lived experience.

Get in touch:



myviews@cornwallhousing.org.uk



0300 1234 161 (ask for the Engagement Team)

Making homes warmer, safer and better to live in

Over the next few years, we're investing more money than ever before into improving our homes. This means moving away from quick fixes and instead planning work properly so homes stay in better condition for longer.

You'll start to see more planned improvements such as new kitchens, bathrooms, windows, roofs and heating systems. There's also a big focus on tackling damp and mould, improving insulation and making homes warmer and cheaper to heat.

We know many homes need work, and we're being honest that it will take time. But this investment is a big step forward - and it means real, visible change for residents.

What this means for you



Fewer repeat repairs



Homes that are warmer, safer and healthier



Better planning and clearer communication about works

Rent changes from April 2026

Each year Cornwall Council review our rents to make sure we can continue to maintain and improve our homes while keeping rents as affordable as possible.

From April, rents will increase by 4.8%. For a typical 3 bedroom home, this will mean an increase of around £5 per week.

Your views

223 residents took part in our rent survey earlier in the year.

You said



Opinion is split about the proposal to increase rent by 4.8% and invest the additional funds on repairs and maintenance. About a third agreed with the increase, and another third disagreed, with the other third neither agreeing or disagreeing

There are concerns about affordability with people struggling financially - most people don't know where to access support for everyday essentials



We should promote support by email and on the web, but also use traditional methods for those who are not online

Helpful information

Keeping your rent account up to date is the best way to protect your home.

Paying your rent on time and in full each week or month helps avoid arrears building up and ensures your tenancy remains secure. Even small missed payments can grow quickly, so staying on track is really important.

We're here to help.

If you're finding things difficult or worried about falling behind, your Rent Officer is always available to offer advice and support. We can work with you to set up affordable repayment plans, check benefit entitlement, and make sure you're getting all the help you're entitled to. Please reach out early, we can do far more to help before arrears start to grow.

Important reminder for Universal Credit claimants

With rent changes coming into effect in April, you must update your Universal Credit account with your new rent amount on or after 6 April. If you don't update it, UC may not pay the correct amount, which could leave you with unexpected arrears. It only takes a few minutes online and helps keep your rent account correct and up to date.

Together, we can keep your tenancy secure and your rent account healthy.

If you need any help at all, just contact your Rent Officer, they are here to support you.

You should have received a rent letter at the start of March, outlining your individual rent charge which will take place from April. If you've not received yours, contact your Rent Officer.



Alternative formats:

If you would like this information on audio CD, audio tape, Braille, large print, any other format or interpreted in a language other than English, please contact:

**Cornwall Housing
Chy Trevail
Beacon Technology Park
Bodmin
PL31 2FR**

Call: 0300 1234 161

**Email:
info@cornwallhousing.org.uk**

**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](http://www.cornwallhousing.org.uk/residents-area/paying-your-rent)**

**Need to
contact us?**



Call us: 0300 1234 161



Email us: info@cornwallhousing.org.uk



Message us: search Cornwall Housing on Facebook or LinkedIn