



# Cambridge City Council Tenant Sign Up Pack

Advice and information  
for your new home

- 01223 457070 - Housing
- 01223 457060 - Repairs
- 01223 457300 - Planned Maintenance
- 01223 457900 - Environmental Services
- 0300 303 8389 - Out of hours

[www.cambridge.gov.uk/council-tenants](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/council-tenants)  
[www.facebook.com/cambridgecityhomes](http://www.facebook.com/cambridgecityhomes)  
[enquiries@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@cambridge.gov.uk)

# Useful Information

**Property address:**

Cambridge  
CB

**Contact:**

**Customer Service Centre**

Mandela House, 4 Regent Street  
Cambridge CB2 1BY

*Your My Cambridge account and  
your Housing Services account  
online* [www.cambridge.gov.uk](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk) (top  
right corner)

☎ 01223 457070

☎ 01223 457060

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Housing Officer

Assistant Housing Officer

Contact:

[housingofficer@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:housingofficer@cambridge.gov.uk)

Gas meter reading

Gas supplier

  

Gas meter location

Electric meter reading

Electric supplier

  

Electric meter location

Water meter reading

Water meter location

Stop cock location

Refuse collection day

Council Tax band    A   B   C   D   E

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# Welcome to your home

## About:

You're now part of a community of over 7000 Council homes in Cambridge. As your Landlord, the Council wants to make sure you get a great service for the rent you pay.

## Contact:

### Customer Service Centre

Mandela House

4 Regent Street

Cambridge CB2 1BY

✉ [enquiries@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@cambridge.gov.uk)

☎ 01223 457070

☎ 01223 457060

[www.cambridge.gov.uk](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk)

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The Council manages a variety of homes including houses, bungalows, flats, maisonettes and sheltered accommodation. These homes are spread across the city in a number of different estates. Your rent pays for the services provided to these homes, services like: repairs & maintenance, tenancy & estate management, advice & support, plus a dedicated team of staff on hand to help you with all your housing queries.

Cambridge City Council believes that you deserve an excellent quality of service for the rent you pay. That's why tenants are involved at the heart of the housing service, contributing through several different roles. Tenant Representatives help make big decisions alongside city councillors on the council's Housing Scrutiny Committee. Tenants also attend resident led meetings to help monitor and scrutinise estate and building maintenance services, ensuring high standards of delivery are maintained. They also play a key role in identifying areas on estates which could benefit from improvement and help communicate key service information to others across the city. If you would like more information about the opportunities available or how to get in touch, look at the Resident Involvement section of this pack.

We wish you every success in your new home.

With best wishes

David Greening- Head of Housing

# City Homes

## Quality Statement

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City Homes is committed to the delivery of customer centred Housing Services in accordance with the City Councils specification. In order to get it right the first time.....

**We invest in our people** by recruiting and training competent team members who support and act upon our Customer Care Pledge, and by putting into practice the principles of 'Investors in People'.

**We put our customers first** by publicising service standards which set out the high levels of service our customers can expect.

**We have listened to our customers** by inviting feedback whenever our services are used, through regular customer meetings and surveys. We publish service guarantees that clearly set out the standards of service which customers can expect, and when standards are not achieved, have an accessible complaints procedure which offers a prompt response.

**We monitor and review our performance** to ensure that we are achieving specified standards in service delivery.

**We act upon what we learn** by ensuring that customer feedback is reviewed by our Management Team and that improvements in practise are implemented.

# City Homes

## Our Pledge to Customers

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**As part of our commitment to providing a good service we will aim to achieve the following customer care standards:**

You will be greeted promptly and courteously. Our staff will always wear their name badges.

Your phone calls will be answered promptly and politely.

Your letters and emails will be replied to within 10 working days.

If you request a home visit, this will be arranged within 10 working days.

We will provide information in other languages, in large text or on audiotape, if requested.

We will publish and display information about our service standards and achievements.

We offer a clear and accessible complaints procedure.

All complaints are monitored, investigated and complainants provided with a full explanation.

# Customer Services

## About:

Many answers to your queries can be found online at

[www.cambridge.gov.uk](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk)

You can also see information about repairs, your rent account and submit applications here too- My Cambridge portal should be your first choice for accessing up to date information.

## Contact:

✉ [www.cambridge.gov.uk](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk)

☎ 01223 457070 - Housing

☎ 01223 457060 - Repairs

☎ 01223 457900 - Environment

☎ 0300 303 8389 - Out of hours



**Customer Service Centre**

Mandela House

4 Regent Street

Cambridge CB2 1BY

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## Customer Service Centre

Visitors to our Customer Service Centre are seen by appointment only, so please go to [www.cambridge.gov.uk](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk) and log into your My Cambridge portal to find the answer to your query, set up a direct debit or to make a service request. The portal is accessible through a link at the top right-hand side of the website. Assistance will be provided if you need extra help accessing services as well as how to use the self-service options.

Rent/council tax payments should be made online at [www.cambridge.gov.uk/pay-your-housing-rent](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/pay-your-housing-rent) by telephone 01223 457779 or through your bank by direct debit or bacs. Cash payments can be made at a Post Office with your rent card.

### **Customer Services are open for appointments only:**

- Monday to Friday 9am to 5.15pm

## Area Housing Office

The area housing office is located at 171 Arbury Road, Cambridge, CB4 2YG. At present the office is closed until further notice due to Covid-19. Any permanent changes to the building will be communicated when a decision is made.

Please note that Council buildings are closed at weekends and on public holidays.

# Rent

## About:

Paying your rent to your landlord is one of the most important outgoings you will have. Make sure you know the different ways you can pay your rent and the support available if you get into difficulty.

## Contact:



[www.cambridge.gov.uk](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk)  
**Customer Service Centre**



Mandela House  
4 Regent Street  
Cambridge CB2 1BY



01223 457070

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## Housing rent and how to pay it

As a council tenant you must pay your rent in advance every week, fortnight or month, according to your tenancy conditions.

Your rent is set every April. If we have to change your rent for any reason, we will tell you in writing at least four weeks in advance.

## How to pay your rent

You can pay your rent in the following ways:

### Pay by monthly direct debit

If you would like to pay your rent by direct debit, please contact the Council for a form or find one online at:

<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/pay-your-housing-rent>

### Pay online

Pay your rent online using our online payments service. This is a convenient, secure way to pay and is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week:

<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/pay-your-housing-rent>

### Pay in cash can be made at any Post Office

### Pay by telephone

Call 01223 457779 to pay your bill by telephone. You will need your housing rent account number and your debit or credit card.

## Extra help

If you have difficulty paying your rent, find information relating to debt support and advice on the next page. For a more detailed discussion you can also contact Customer Services on 01223 457070.



# Debt Support & Advice

## About:

If you are having problems paying your rent on time, please let us know as soon as soon as possible. We can help you plan your finances and ensure you are receiving the benefits to which you are entitled.

## Contact:

[www.cambridge.gov.uk](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk)  
**Customer Service Centre**  
Mandela House  
4 Regent Street  
Cambridge CB2 1BY  
☎ 01223 458418/456948

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## Financial Support and Advice

Once you are settled into your property, your Assistant Housing Officer will contact you to ensure you are maintaining your financial commitments as well as identify any additional assistance you may need.

## Debt advice service

If you are concerned about your rent or Benefits, visit the Council's own Financial Inclusion Officers. Call 01223 458418 or 01223 458345 to book a friendly, confidential meeting to help you plan your finances and ensure you are receiving all the benefits you are entitled to.

## Citizen's Advice Bureau at the City Council

There are self-help kiosks at the Customer Service Centre for general advice from the CAB.

You can visit CAB at their offices at 66 Devonshire Road, Cambridge CB1 2BL on Mon-Fri, 9.15am-12.45pm. Or phone their Advice line at 0844 848 7979 or visit them online at [www.cambridgecab.org.uk](http://www.cambridgecab.org.uk)

## Credit Unions

If you're looking for better ways to save and borrow, contact your local credit union:

- [Rainbow Saver Anglia Credit Union](#)
- [Eastern Savings and Loans](#)

Credit unions are co-operatives that are typically run by volunteers, which means any profits are put back into the union to fund loans to members.

# Housing Cost Support

## About:

You may be eligible for help if your income is not enough to pay your rent.

### Contact for Universal Credit:

#### Department for Work and Pensions

73-79 Chesterton Road  
Cambridge CB4 3BQ

[www.gov.uk/universal-credit](http://www.gov.uk/universal-credit)

☎ 0800 328 5644

### Contact for Housing Benefit:

[www.cambridge.gov.uk](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk)

#### Customer Service Centre

Mandela House  
4 Regent Street

Cambridge CB2 1BY

☎ 01223 457721

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## Universal Credit

If you are under state pension age, you may get help to pay your rent as part of a Universal Credit claim. To make a claim for Universal Credit from the Department for Work and Pensions, you can claim online here [www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit](http://www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit).

More information on Universal Credit can be found here:

- [www.gov.uk/universal-credit](http://www.gov.uk/universal-credit)
- Free Universal Credit Helpline 0800 328 5644
- [www.cambridge.gov.uk/universal-credit-information-for-claimants](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/universal-credit-information-for-claimants)

## Housing benefit

If you (and any partner you may have) are of pension age or you are currently already receiving housing benefit, you may get housing benefit to help you pay your rent.

Claim housing benefit online at [www.cambridge.gov.uk/make-a-benefit-claim](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/make-a-benefit-claim)

If you are currently claiming housing benefit and are moving, please let us know.

[www.cambridge.gov.uk/tell-us-about-changes-in-your-circumstances](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/tell-us-about-changes-in-your-circumstances)

## Am I eligible?

You may claim Universal Credit or housing benefit if you pay rent and your income, savings and investments are below a certain level but you cannot usually get help if:

- you have savings of over £16,000, unless you are a pensioner and getting the 'guarantee credit element' of pension credit
- you live in the home of a close relative
- you are a full-time student, unless you are disabled or have children
- you are an asylum seeker or are sponsored to be in the UK

Continued...

If you live with a partner or civil partner both of your incomes and savings will be looked at to see if you qualify for Universal Credit or housing benefit.

If you are single and aged under 25 the amount of help is restricted.

## Council Tax

You may also get help towards your Council Tax if you have a low income. If you claim housing benefit, we will also look to see if we can help you with your Council Tax at the same time.

If you are claiming Universal Credit, you will have to make a separate claim online at [www.cambridge.gov.uk/council-tax-reduction](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/council-tax-reduction).

# Repairs

## About:

During your time living in your property, you may need to request a repair if something is broken. This will either be an emergency, urgent or routine repair, or it may be part of a long-term planned maintenance plan

## Contact:

[www.cambridge.gov.uk](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk)  
**Customer Service Centre**  
Mandela House  
4 Regent Street  
Cambridge CB2 1BY  
☎ 01223 457060  
☎ 0300 3038389 (Out of hours)

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## Request a housing repair

You can request a repair to your property online at [www.cambridge.gov.uk/repairs](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/repairs), or you can call 01223-457060 / Out-of-hours emergencies: 0300-303-8389

You can also request a repair online on your MyCambridge portal, accessed from the top right hand side of the Cambridge City Council homepage.

If you have a caretaker, they will also be able to log a repair to the communal area on your behalf.

## When the repair will be done

For routine repairs, we will offer you either a morning appointment (8am to 12noon) or an afternoon appointment (12noon to 16:00). Up to date information about any changes to these services will be on the City Council website.

If we give you an appointment this should be within twenty working days of ordering the works.

Your repair will fall into one of these categories.

- Emergencies - Dealt with within 24 hours
- Urgent repairs - Dealt with within 3 working days
- Routine repairs - Dealt with within 20 working days
- Long-term planned maintenance – Added to long-term maintenance plan

# Repairs Responsibilities

## About:

Though the Council will maintain the structure of your home, as well as some of the fixtures and fittings, it's important to know which things in your home you are responsible for.

## Contact:

[www.cambridge.gov.uk](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk)  
Customer Service Centre  
Mandela House  
4 Regent Street  
Cambridge CB2 1BY  
☎ 01223 457060  
☎ 0300 3038389 (Out of hours)

## Some things we are responsible for

- Drains, gutters and outdoor pipes
- Roofing, outside walls and chimneys
- Outside doors and windows
- Outside paintwork
- Steps and paths to the front door and around the property to the back door
- Marking the boundary of a property
- Outside sheds and stores which we provided
- Inside walls, ceilings, floors, skirting boards, door frames and kitchen units
- Heating and hot-water units
- Electric, gas and water services and fittings, including basins, sinks, baths, toilets, pipes and wiring

## Some things you are responsible for

- TV aerials – However, on blocks of flats 3 storey and above the council is responsible.
- Tap washers
- Inside doors
- Window glass
- Replacing fuses, plugs and light bulbs
- Decorating the inside of your home\*
- Sweeping your chimney
- Repairing any item that you fitted yourself or that was fitted by a past tenant
- Shelves
- Your garden
- Cleaning waste-water gullies outside your kitchen
- Repairing tiles around fire surrounds
- Renewing door handles, hinges and latches on inside doors
- Repairing your own washing lines, posts and rotary driers
- Replacing gate fittings
- Repairs to back-garden paths
- Renewing curtain rails
- Renewing a broken toilet seat
- Renewing waste plugs and chains on sinks and baths
- Unblocking baths, wash basins and sinks
- Blockages inclusive of the waste gully
- Repairing internal plaster is the tenant's responsibility unless the damage has been caused by a leak that was not the tenants' fault

**\*Please refer to page 15 for information about Asbestos and page 31 for information about Lead Paint**

# Alterations

## About:

If you want to make alterations to your home, you must get permission from the Council first. The Council also provides adaptations for tenants who need them. To apply for either, contact the Council for a form.

## Contact:

[www.cambridge.gov.uk](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk)  
**Customer Service Centre**  
Mandela House  
4 Regent Street  
Cambridge CB2 1BY  
☎ 01223 457060  
☎ 0300 3038389 (Out of hours)

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## Making alterations to your Council House

You must contact the Council for permission and advice about making alterations to your home, otherwise you will be asked to remove it or the council will remove it and charge for the cost. You'll need to fill out a form and planning permission may be required.

If you are an introductory tenant, you aren't allowed to make alterations.

## Examples of required permissions

- Installing a satellite dish
- Changing the bathroom suite
- Installing new kitchen units
- Laying laminated or wood floors
- Changing external doors
- Installing or removing a water meter
- Removing or building internal walls
- Building a conservatory
- Installing roofing over a passageway
- Building an extension
- Changing electrical, heating, gas or plumbing works

## Home Adaptations for older or disabled Council Tenants

The Council will supply and install disabled adaptations free of charge to tenants who need them.

If you are a council tenant and need grab rails, lever taps, half-steps or second banister rails you can ask for these at our customer service centre. These items do not require an occupational therapy assessment.

Larger adaptations to your home can also be carried out but require an occupational therapy assessment. The occupational therapist will visit you at home and assess your needs, then contact the Council requesting any necessary adaptations.

# Asbestos

## About:

Asbestos is a mineral that was commonly used in building materials in the past. Buildings constructed or refurbished before the year 2000 may contain asbestos. It was commonly used in walls, drains, flues, roofing, guttering, airing cupboards and floor tiles. It is usually safe if not disturbed. If asbestos materials are damaged and fibres are released, they can pose a risk to health.

## Contact:

[www.cambridge.gov.uk](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk)  
**Customer Service Centre**  
Mandela House  
4 Regent Street  
Cambridge CB2 1BY  
☎ 01223 457060  
☎ 0300 3038389 (Out of hours)

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## How will I know if there's asbestos in property?

We will make all asbestos survey information in our possession available to you when you occupy the property. This information will assist you and others in avoiding disturbing any known asbestos containing material during maintenance or if you wish to decorate or make alterations to your property. Remember it only poses a risk to health if damaged or disturbed.

## What if no survey information is available or I misplaced the information?

Please contact us and we will review our records and if available we will supply it to you.

If you would like to decorate or make alterations to your property, please ensure to follow the tenants, alterations procedure. For certain activities you may need our permission at which point we can obtain an asbestos survey. You may not need permission to decorate however if you are likely to sand down or prepare surfaces you need to be aware that asbestos might be present.

## Tenant Alterations and Asbestos

Any asbestos material identified within the scope of your alteration will be your responsibility and all the conditions for the safe removal or encapsulation will be agreed as part of the permissions within the tenant alterations procedure. Any known asbestos containing material to be encapsulated or painted will need to be identified with an asbestos labelled/sticker to prevent accidental exposure for future maintenance or repairs.

## **What if a known asbestos containing material is damaged or deteriorating.**

Please get in contact with us to make an assessment of the risk and any remedial work that may be required.



# Reconnecting your gas

## About:

Your new home will not be connected to a gas supplier when you move in. To get your gas supply reinstated, make sure to follow the instructions below.

## Contact:

[www.cambridge.gov.uk](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk)  
**Customer Service Centre**  
Mandela House  
4 Regent Street  
Cambridge CB2 1BY  
☎ 01223 457060  
☎ 03332 070766 (Mears)  
☎ 0800 111 999 (Gas Emergencies)

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## Getting your gas supply reinstated

Contact the energy company who currently supplies the gas to the property. Your housing officer will inform you of the energy company to call. You do not have to stay with this company to pay for gas, but you must contact them initially and register as a new account holder in order that the gas can be reconnected. Make sure the gas meter is read when you move in and you can give that reading to the energy company straight away (so you only pay for the gas you use in the property).

## Prepayment meters

**If there is a prepayment meter, ask for a new prepayment meter key or smart card**

- Ask for the best rate – energy suppliers will not automatically give it to you
- Ask about arrangements for a temporary meter card if needed

**The energy company will advise you on:**

- The nearest shops and Post Office locations as well as their opening times
- How to top up your new prepayment meter key or smart card
- What to do if you lose your new prepayment meter key or smart card

**Top up your new prepayment meter key or smart card with credit (the meter will give you onscreen instructions).**

## Getting the best tariff

Once you have registered a new account with the energy company, compare prices with different energy companies to find the best tariff (both for gas and electricity). One way to do this is using price comparison websites – for help and information look at

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/energy/energy-supply/get-a-better-energy-deal/choosing-energy-tariff/>

## Contact the Council's gas servicing contractor, Mears

Mears (tel. 03332 070766) will arrange for a gas engineer to service the boiler, reinstate the gas and instruct you on how to use your heating system. Ask the Mears gas engineer to show you their Gas Safe Registration card. Always view proof of ID before allowing access.

# Gas Safety Information

## About:

There are some important things you need to know about using gas in your home. If you think there is a gas leak and can smell fumes, you should call the gas emergency service on 0800 111 999

## Contact:

[www.cambridge.gov.uk](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk)  
**Customer Service Centre**  
Mandela House  
4 Regent Street  
Cambridge CB2 1BY  
☎ 01223 457060  
☎ 03332 070766 (Mears)  
☎ 0800 111 999 (Gas Emergencies)

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## Inspecting gas appliances

Under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, Cambridge City Council must inspect all gas appliances in Council homes once a year. The Council's gas contractor carries out all repairs, services and inspections on the gas appliances we own. They will need to enter your home once a year to carry out work.

## Appointments

Our contractor, Mears will let you know when they are going to call. If the appointment is inconvenient, call Mears on 03332 070766 to rearrange it. If you miss your appointment, Mears will ask you to make another appointment urgently.

If you fail to keep the second appointment, we will gain entry anyway and charge you for this work, up to £100.

When the gas engineer's visit, please:

- Refrain from smoking in the same room as the gas engineer
- Keep all pets secured safely
- Ensure clear access to the boiler, appliances, central heating and gas meter.

## What to do if you smell gas?

1. Extinguish any naked flames
2. Turn off the gas supply at the gas meter by turning the valve handle downwards.
3. Open doors and windows to ventilate the building
4. Phone the gas emergency service immediately FREE on **0800 111 999** (telephone lines are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

# Energy & Water

## About:

If you have questions or concerns about energy or water in your new home, you can ask the Council's Home Energy Officers. They give advice on the phone or make home visits.

## Contact:

**Home Energy Officer**

Mandela House

4 Regent Street

Cambridge CB2 1BY

✉ [homeenergy@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:homeenergy@cambridge.gov.uk)

☎ 01223 457676

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## When you move in

- Make sure you know what the meter readings are for gas and electricity, and water if you have a water meter – ask your housing officer if you don't know.
- Follow the instructions for gas reconnection on a previous page.
- To pay for electricity there are three options to pick from:
  1. contact your previous supplier (if you paid for electricity at your last address) and tell them you have moved – if you want to continue on the same tariff
  2. use the supplier the previous tenants used by contacting the company to set up a new account – you can then choose one of their tariffs
  3. look around for a new supplier and tariff (for help and information on how to do this look at <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/energy/energy-supply/get-a-better-energy-deal/choosing-energy-tariff/>)
- These options are the same regardless of how you pay – if you have a pre-pay meter or not.
- You may save a little more (and it will be less complex) if you have gas and electricity with the same supplier.
- You must give the energy company the meter reading from the day you move in so you only pay for the energy you have used.
- Contact Cambridge Water on 01223-706050 to set up a customer account at your new address to pay for water. Ask about payment options and the different tariffs as you may be eligible for reduced, special tariffs.
- The quicker you set up your energy and water accounts, the more accurate your bills will be and the less likely you are to have problems with bills in the future.

## Settling in to your home

- Check you understand how to use your heating and hot water, for example how the thermostat works (if its digital) or how to set the programmer. If you are not sure or would like extra help to keep your bills down, contact the council's home energy officers.

**Below are some tips on saving energy and water (to help keep your bills down):**

- Turning your thermostat down just 1% could save you up to £75 per year.
- Your hot water cylinder only needs to be a maximum of 60 degree Celsius. Save money by keeping your water at this temperature.
- Always remember to draw your curtains at dusk - this will reduce heat loss.
- 5% of your energy bill will come from lighting your house. Fit A+ rated LED light bulbs – they use 85% less electricity than halogen bulbs - and adjust curtains and blinds to let in as much light as possible during the day.
- Fill fridges and freezers as they use less energy when full and defrost your freezer regularly.
- When buying appliances look for A+ energy efficiency ratings.
- Wash clothes at 30 or 40 degrees as most of a washing machines energy is used to heat water.
- Spin clothes on high before tumble drying them, and dry outside when possible.
- Don't leave water running while brushing teeth or shaving
- When you can, use cold water rather than hot – it will save energy and money.
- Use a washing up bowl to wash dishes, vegetables, etc. rather than a running tap.
- Get a drip or leak fixed as quickly as possible.
- Use a watering can rather than a hose in the garden

For more help and information on energy and water at home, especially if you are struggling with your bills, contact the council's Home Energy Officers.

# Domestic Abuse:

## Information and Advice for Tenants

### About:

The Council is committed to providing support to those affected directly and indirectly by domestic abuse.

### Contact:

[www.cambridge.gov.uk](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk)  
**Customer Service Centre**  
Mandela House  
4 Regent Street  
Cambridge CB2 1BY  
01223 457070

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### What is domestic abuse?

The government definition of domestic abuse is:

“any incident, or pattern of incidents, of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.”

### What will we do to help?

We will respond confidentially, sympathetically, and effectively to any customer who discloses that they are experiencing domestic abuse:

- Staff can arrange to meet tenants in private interview rooms or at an agreed choice of safe venue with the safest method of contact agreed
- Translation services will be provided where required
- Housing Advice drop-in service offers free, confidential advice offering assistance with a range of housing issues
- Information can only be shared on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with the Council's Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy and staff can discuss concerns with a Safeguarding Designated Officer
- You can tell staff in confidence if your need for repairs have been caused by domestic abuse.
- The council will assess for target hardening works

The Council respects the right of the customer to make their own decision on what, if any, action is to be taken. However, if there are safeguarding concerns, we have a legal duty to share information with relevant agencies.

**Domestic abuse is a crime. Always call 999 in an emergency.**

## More Help and Advice

**Domestic abuse is a crime. Always call 999 in an emergency.**

### **The Bobby Scheme (for home security)**

Tel: 01480 413311 or 07866 602100

Website: <http://www.thebobbyscheme.org/>

You can request support individually or by a support worker.

### **Cambridge City Council Advice for people affected by domestic abuse**

Website: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/advice-for-people-affected-by-domestic-abuse>

### **Cambridge Rape Crisis**

Helpline Tel: 01223 245888                      Office Tel: 01223 313551

Local Website: <http://cambridgerapecrisis.org.uk/>

Email support service: [support@cambridgerapecrisis.org.uk](mailto:support@cambridgerapecrisis.org.uk)

National Helpline Freephone: 0808 802 9999

National Website: <https://rapecrisis.org.uk/>

### **Cambridge Women's Aid**

Tel: 01223 361214 Website: <http://cambridgewa.org.uk/>

National email: [helpline@womensaid.org.uk](mailto:helpline@womensaid.org.uk) - response within 5 working days

National Helpline Freephone 24 hour Tel: 0808 2000 247

National Website: <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/>

### **Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence (DASV) Partnership**

Website: <http://www.cambsdasv.org.uk>

#### **Childline**

Tel: 0800 1111 Website: <https://www.childline.org.uk/>

### **Domestic Abuse National Helpline**

Tel: 0808 2000 247

Website: <http://www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk/>

### **Men's Advice Line**

National Helpline Tel: 0808 801 0327

Website: <http://www.mensadvice.org.uk/>

### **Muslim Women's Network UK**

National Helpline Tel: 0800 999 5786

Website: <http://mwnhelpline.co.uk/>

### **National Stalking Helpline**

Tel: 0808 802 0300

Website: <https://www.suzylamplugh.org/Pages/Category/national-stalking-helpline>

**Respect Phone line – Help & Information for domestic abuse perpetrators**

National Helpline: 0808 802 4040

Website: <http://respectphoneline.org.uk/>

**Galop - LBGT + anti-violence charity**

National Helpline Tel: 0800 999 5428

Website: <http://www.galop.org.uk/>

**Karma Nirvana - supporting victims of 'honour' crimes and forced marriages**

National Helpline Tel: 0800 5999 247

Website: <https://karmanirvana.org.uk/>

**Restored – help & Information for survivors within the Christian faith**

Telephone: 02039063922

Website: <https://www.restoredrelationships.org/>

# Your Tenancy

## About:

The Council aims to provide you with a safe and comfortable home. It is important that you understand the rules regarding your tenancy and how this relates to your household

## Contact:

[www.cambridge.gov.uk](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk)  
**Customer Service Centre**  
Mandela House  
4 Regent Street  
Cambridge CB2 1BY  
☎ 01223 457070

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## Tenancy agreement

Your tenancy agreement is a legal contract between you and Cambridge City Council (the landlord). It sets out the rights and responsibilities of tenants and of the landlord. A copy of your tenancy agreement can be found at-

<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/7507/tenancy-agreement.pdf>

The agreement explains that you will need to ask the Council's permission for certain things, like carrying out home improvements or taking in lodgers. It also sets out your responsibilities – like arranging your own contents insurance. Along with our responsibilities as your Landlord.

## Joint tenancies

If your tenancy is held jointly with someone else, the tenancy conditions apply equally to both of you. You will both be responsible for paying the whole rent (not just your share of it), any missed rent payments and for keeping to the tenancy conditions.

## Introductory tenancies

If you are a new tenant you will have signed an introductory tenancy agreement. This means that for the first 12 months you don't yet have all the rights of a secure tenant (i.e. the right to exchange, sublet or buy your home), and could be evicted more quickly and easily if you break your tenancy agreement. These can also be extended to an 18 month period if we have concerns about the tenancy.

After the introductory period, you will be a secure tenant - which means you will only be evicted, if you break your tenancy conditions or fail to pay your rent.

## Ending your tenancy

You must give at least four weeks' notice if you are going to end or exchange your tenancy. Sometimes a tenancy can be passed on to a partner or close relative if the existing tenant dies. The Council may not allow the tenancy to be passed on if the property is bigger than the partner or relative needs.



## Social Housing Fraud

We really hope that you will enjoy your new home, but it is important that you understand that there are some reasonable limitations. The law states that it may be illegal for you to abandon or sub-let the property without permission. If you are found guilty of either of these criminal offences in court (under the Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Act 2013) you will lose the property and have to serve the sentence - which can include imprisonment or very substantial financial consequences.

# Fire safety in flats

## About:

Purpose-built flat blocks have been designed to protect you in the event of a fire. If a fire breaks out, make sure you know what to do.

## Contact:

In the event of a fire, dial:

☎ **999 or 112 from a landline or mobile phone**

## At all times

- Make sure all smoke alarms in your home are working – we recommend you do a weekly test.
- Do not store anything in communal areas - these could catch fire and/or prevent your escape
- Use the fixed heating system in your home. If this is not possible, only use a convector heater in your hall/corridor
- Do not use radiant heating, especially a flame (gas or paraffin) or a radiant element (electric bar fire) heater
- Do not store things in the cupboard(s) where the gas and electricity meters are.
- Do not block access roads to the building

## If the fire is not in your flat

- Stay in your flat unless you are affected by heat or smoke

## If the fire is in your own flat

- Warn everybody in your flat that there is a fire
  - Ensure Everyone Leaves the flat
  - Close the front door behind you to stop the fire
  - If there is a lot of smoke, stay low or crawl along the floor where the air is clearer
  - Do not use the lift (unless it is a designated evacuation lift)
  - CALL THE FIRE BRIGADE – even if it is a small fire:
1. Dial **999 or 112** from a landline or mobile phone
  2. Give the telephone number you are ringing from and ask for FIRE
  3. Tell them clearly the address where the fire is
  4. Do not end the call until the fire brigade have repeated the address to you and you are sure they have got it right. The fire brigade cannot help if they do not have the full address

# Estate Services

## About:

Part of your rent/or service charge pays for the upkeep of your building and estates by caretakers, cleaners and external contractors.

## Contact:

[www.cambridge.gov.uk](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk)  
**Customer Service Centre**  
Mandela House  
4 Regent Street  
Cambridge CB2 1BY  
☎ 01223 457070

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## Your Estate Services

These include: caretaking, cleaning shared areas, window cleaning to communal areas (including lifts), communal lighting, grounds maintenance and more.

These services are monitored by various staff and residents– including independent living facilitators, housing officers, the estates champion and volunteer resident inspectors.

## Maintenance calendar

The estate maintenance calendar gives information about when various estate services will take place during the year. These include communal window cleaning at flats, grass cutting and shrub-bed re-planting. The calendar can be found here:

<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/estate-services>

## Estate champion

Many Council properties in the city are covered by an Estate Champion. This role includes monitoring and coordinating feedback to contractors on the maintenance of the estates and day to day management of the caretakers.

## Community Engagement Officers

The Community Engagement Officers provide a street-level, face-to-face contact point to raise any cleanliness and public safety issues in your neighbourhood. Residents can also nominate projects for a tidy up by community payback in their area.

## Bulky Waste Collection

If you cannot take your items to a recycling centre, we offer a bulky waste collection service for items like fridges, freezers, bulky garden waste and old furniture - starting at £30 for up to three items. To arrange a collection date, call 01223 458282.

# Anti-Social Behaviour

## About:

You are responsible for the behaviour of every person within your household and those who visit your property. If you or any member of your household commit Anti-Social Behaviour, you could be evicted.

## Contact:

[www.cambridge.gov.uk](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk)  
**Customer Service Centre**  
Mandela House  
4 Regent Street  
Cambridge CB2 1BY  
☎ 01223 457070

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## What is Anti-Social Behaviour?

Anti-social behaviour covers a wide range of unacceptable activity that affects the lives of people on a daily basis. Terms such as 'nuisance', 'disorder' and 'harassment' are also often used to describe this type of behaviour.

ASB is defined as "Behaviour by a person which causes or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household as the person".

## ASB Categories

Personal - Targeted at an individual or group rather than the community at large

Nuisance - Causing trouble, annoyance or suffering to the community at large rather than an individual or group.

Environmental - Not aimed at an individual or group but targets the wider environment, e.g. public spaces/buildings.

## Your Responsibilities

You must ensure that you, or anyone living in or visiting your home (including children) do not cause a nuisance, annoyance or disturbance to other people.

If you, or anyone living with you, take part in any Anti-Social Behaviour, the Council will take legal action which can include eviction.

If you are evicted from your home due to anti-social behaviour, the Council is unlikely to offer you accommodation in the future unless there have been major changes in your circumstances. The Council will also inform other landlords that you have been evicted for anti-social behaviour if they ask us.

# Resident Involvement

## About:

Involved tenants are already making big decisions, helping to get better services for tenants and improve their street, estate or block. Why not join them? It can take up as much or as little time as you want and earn you Time Credits.

## Contact:

### Resident Involvement

City Homes

171 Arbury Road

Cambridge CB4 2YG

✉ [resident-](mailto:resident-<u>involvement@cambridge.gov.uk</u>)

[involvement@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:involvement@cambridge.gov.uk)

☎ 01223 458323

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## Resident Engagement

We want to deliver an excellent service to all our customers. To do this, we believe that residents should have input into the development and delivery of policies, services and decisions which impact them. We are always looking for new ways to involve residents at a level that suits the individual so if you have ideas let us know. Here are some of the ways you can take part.

## Opportunities to get involved:

- **Stand for election as a Tenant Representative:** Every 4 years five new representatives are elected by tenants to sit on the council's Housing Scrutiny Committee
- **Resident and Officer Asset Management (ROAM)/ Void Meetings:** Getting an insight into maintenance conducted by the City Council and reviewing/scrutinising the planned works program.
- **Resident Associations and community groups:** Located at various sites across the city. Officers can also provide assistance if you would like to set up a new group or apply for funding.
- **Resident's Panel:** Meets at least 4 times a year to provide two way communications for consultation and insight between residents and city council officers.
- **Volunteering as a Resident Inspector or Green Inspector:** Inspecting internal and external areas of City Council owned residential blocks/land to assess maintenance standards.
- **Garden competition:** Annual event in mid-July. Garden entries cover a variety of categories regardless of the size of your green space.

## Skills and knowledge

You don't need any previous experience in housing to get involved, you will be fully supported by staff and provided with training depending on the role. Expenses will also be paid if any cost is incurred from taking part.

# Communal Areas

## About:

If you live in a block of flats, there are a number of communal areas you will have access to including corridors, stairwells and gardens. Make sure you know what your responsibilities are for these areas.

## Contact:

[www.cambridge.gov.uk](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk)  
**Customer Service Centre**  
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## Fire Safety

If you live in a block of flats, your communal staircase or hallway must never be used for storage, even overnight.

If a fire broke out and your escape route was obstructed, items stored on stairs or in hallways can be a death-trap. In the smoke, panic and stampede of a fire, wrongly stored items can mean death, especially for children, the elderly or the disabled.

Firefighters need a completely clear path to bring in their hoses at top speed. Stored bicycles, furniture, loose carpets or flower pots can delay them, or trip anyone trying to get out.

Service cupboards in communal areas are for council staff access only. Please do not use these cupboards for storage, as this is also a fire risk.

Smoking is strictly forbidden in these areas. You must also be careful about where you store combustible items like wheelie bins and paper for recycling.

## Communal Gardens

Most flat blocks include communal gardens. These are for the use and enjoyment of all tenants living in the block and do not belong to individual tenants. Even in low rise two or three storey blocks, these gardens are for the use of everyone – not just those tenants whose flats back directly onto them.

Please do not leave any items anywhere in the communal garden, it can prevent access for the grounds maintenance team.

Any residents wishing to make changes to their communal gardens must get permission from the council first.

# Lead Paint

## About:

Up until the mid-1960s, lead was used in certain paint - so old paintwork is one particular source of lead that you may still come across in your home. Make sure you know how to deal with it.

## Contact:

[www.cambridge.gov.uk](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk)  
**Customer Service Centre**  
Mandela House  
4 Regent Street  
Cambridge CB2 1BY  
☎ 01223 457060

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## How will I know if there's lead in my paintwork?

The age of your home is a good guide. If it was built before the 60s and has original coats of paint, there could be lead around. It can also be locked in older layers of paint.

## Am I or my family at risk?

The groups most at risk are young children and pregnant women but only if there is a risk of lead paintwork being disturbed and ingested.

If you think your home does have lead paintwork, especially if it's in bad condition, or if you are planning any redecoration, it's best to take some simple precautions.

## How can I minimise any risk?

If the paint is in good condition - seal it with an over coat of modern paint.

### Use methods that don't create dust/fumes

- solvent or caustic-based liquid stripper
- Hot-air gun - use it just enough to soften the paint - don't burn it
- Its recommended to keep the heat gun set below 450°C

### Follow simple good practice guidance

- Wear protective clothes, gloves and a good quality face mask with a filter - just ask your DIY dealer
- Isolate the work area and cover carpets and furniture
- Use waterproof sandpaper and moisten the surface - don't use dry sandpaper
- Clean the room and any coverings used with water and detergent

## What next?

If you're not sure you can deal with the paintwork safely by yourself, call in a qualified firm of decorators.

# Garage Rentals

## About:

We have garages available to rent at various sites across Cambridge, available to tenants, leaseholders and commuters. Some areas are more popular than others, so there may be a waiting list.

## Contact:

### Customer Service Centre

Mandela House

4 Regent Street

Cambridge CB2 1BY

✉ [enquiries@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@cambridge.gov.uk)

☎ 01223 457070

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## Weekly Garage Rents

You can rent a garage for as little as £9.37 per week if you are a council tenant. For more information on prices for private tenants or commuters and the difference between low and high demand areas please visit the website.

## Size

The approximate dimensions of our garages are:

- Length 4.9m
- Width inner 2.33m
- Width door 2.14m

## Apply

You can apply online at: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/rent-a-garage-or-parking-space>

You can also apply by post – contact us for an application form and return it to our housing office.

Priority is given to council tenants and applicants with restricted mobility. You will be placed on a waiting list if there is no available garage at any of your preferred locations.

If you are offered a garage you will be required to sign a Garage Agreement, which outlines your responsibilities on usage of the garage. We will not issue an agreement to Cambridge City Council tenants or leaseholders who are in arrears with their rent or service charges.



# Complaints

## About:

We want to know when we get things wrong. If you have a complaint about any of the services that we provide, please let us know.

## Contact:

**Customer Service Centre**

Mandela House

4 Regent Street

Cambridge CB2 1BY

✉ [enquiries@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@cambridge.gov.uk)

☎ 01223 457070

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## Tenancy agreement

How we will deal with your complaint

The Council aims to reply to all complaints within 7 working days. If you have raised an issue with the Council before or are not happy with the reply, you can ask for your complaint to be passed to a service manager to be looked at again.

## The Independent Complaints Investigator

If you are not satisfied with how we have dealt with your complaint, you can ask for it to be passed to the Independent Complaints Investigator who will investigate the complaint for you.

You can contact the Independent Complaints Investigator by on-line form at [www.cambridge.gov.uk/contactus](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/contactus) or by emailing [Independent.Complaints.Investigator@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:Independent.Complaints.Investigator@cambridge.gov.uk) or by phoning 01223 457072

## Contacting the Housing Ombudsman

If the Council and the Independent Complaints Investigator has not been able to put things right, the next step is to contact an MP, a local councillor or tenant panel – these are called ‘designated persons’. If the designated person cannot help they can refer a complaint to the Ombudsman.

Complaints to the Ombudsman do not have to be referred by a designated person, but if they are not there must be at least 8 weeks from the end of the landlord's complaint process before the Ombudsman can consider the case.

If you would like to refer a complaint to the Ombudsman please use their online complaint form: [www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/complaint-form](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/complaint-form) or call 0300 111 3000.

# In the bathroom

## About:

Don't flush things like wipes, nappies or cotton buds down the toilet. This could block your drain, flooding you and your neighbours.

## Contact:

[www.cambridge.gov.uk](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk)  
**Customer Service Centre**  
Mandela House  
4 Regent Street  
Cambridge CB2 1BY  
☎ 01223 457070

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## Wipe out blocked drains

The waste water drain which runs from your house to the public sewer is usually about 4 inches wide, which is less than the diameter of a DVD.

Flushing things like wipes, nappies or cotton buds down the toilet can cause drains to block, flooding you and your neighbours.

It's easy in the bathroom just follow our Three P's rule and only flush pee, poo and toilet paper.

## 'Never flush' items

Everything else should go in the bin, not down your toilet- check out the bathroom checklist of never flush items below-

- All wipes (baby, personal cleansing, toilet and household cleaning)- even if the pack says 'flushable'
- Sanitary items (sanitary towels, tampons, liners, applicators and backing strips)
- Cotton wool, cotton buds, disposable nappies and nappy liners
- Condoms, incontinence pads, colostomy bags, used bandages and contact lenses

Keep a bin in the bathroom for you to quickly, safely and hygienically dispose of all the 'never flush' personal items, special disposable bags are available at most pharmacies and supermarkets.

# In the kitchen

## About:

Fat, oil and grease in liquid form may not appear to be harmful but as they cool they harden and stick to the insides of drains, which can cause drains to block, flooding you and your neighbours.

## Contact:

[www.cambridge.gov.uk](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk)  
**Customer Service Centre**  
Mandela House  
4 Regent Street  
Cambridge CB2 1BY  
☎ 01223 457070

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## Oil doesn't make everything run smoothly

Fat, oil and grease in liquid form may not appear to be harmful as they don't get stuck in the plughole, but as they cool they congeal, harden and stick to the insides of drains and sewers, which can cause drains to block, flooding you and your neighbours.

## Did you know?

- All fats are equal. Whether it is saturated fat (like lard), mono-unsaturated fat (like olive oil) or vegetable oil- the all congeal and harden.
- It is an offence under the Sewerage (Scotland) Act 1968 to dispose of fat, grease or oil down your sink.

## Your kitchen checklist:

- Fat, oil and grease- leave to cool and then scrape into a sealable container and put it in the bin
- Give plates, pots, utensils and containers a quick scrape or wipe with some kitchen towel before washing and use a sink strainer in the plughole to catch any bits of leftover food going down the sink
- Believe it or not soup, stocks, sauces and milk products all contain fat, which can also congeal and harden in your drains- leave these to cool/harden, scrape into a container and put them in the bin
- Peelings- put any waste food and peelings into your household rubbish.

# Recycling and waste

## What goes in your blue bin?

Yes

**Recycle** ✓ Clean ✓ Empty ✓ Don't bag it



Cardboard



Paper & magazines



Tins, cans & foil



Aerosol cans



Glass bottles & jars



Cartons



Plastic pots, tubs, trays & bags



Plastic bottles



Shredded paper (in envelope of clear sack)



Please put used batteries in a clear plastic bag. Tie the bag to the handle of the blue bin. Batteries must not be put inside the bin. Small portable household batteries can be put in the clear bag - e.g. AA, AAA, 6v, 9v, D, C, button, laptop and mobile phone batteries.

No

- ✗ Black bin bags or rubbish
- ✗ Nappies, tissues, kitchen paper, wipes & sanitary waste
- ✗ Polystyrene
- ✗ Glasses, flat glass or glass dishes
- ✗ Mirrors, Pyrex, plates/crockery
- ✗ Foil-lined plastic pouches e.g. from pet food

The following can be recycled elsewhere - check our website.

- ✗ Clothing and textiles
- ✗ Food, liquid or garden waste
- ✗ Wood, plasterboard & DIY waste
- ✗ Furniture or electricals
- ✗ Scrap metal e.g. pans
- ✗ Hard plastics e.g. bucket
- ✗ Crisp packets

## What goes in your green bin?

Yes

**Compost**



Cooked/uncooked food waste (including meat, fish and dairy)



Untreated wood and sawdust



Garden waste



Used paper tissues and kitchen paper

No

- ✗ Plastic & plastic bags
- ✗ Compostable bags e.g. Biobags
- ✗ Nappies, wipes and sanitary waste
- ✗ Soil or stones
- ✗ Painted or treated wood
- ✗ Cat or dog waste
- ✗ Plant pots and seedling trays

## What goes in your black bin?

Yes

**Reduce** Please try to reduce other rubbish that cannot be recycled or composted



**General rubbish** including nappies, wipes, sanitary waste, polystyrene, crisp packets, pet food pouches, drinks pouches, broken crockery or glassware (wrapped)

No

- ✗ Rubble/bricks
  - ✗ Soil
  - ✗ Very heavy items
  - ✗ Electrical items
  - ✗ Batteries
- Take these items to Household Recycling Centres at Milton or Thriplow

Not sure if it can be recycled? Check the 'What goes in your bins' page on our website, via [www.scams.gov/bins](http://www.scams.gov/bins) for hundreds more items



# Notes:

