

HULL

HOUSING NEWS



Hull
City Council

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

Summer 2025 In this issue

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Come along to our Guildhall Drop-in

**Are you interested in finding out more about
your home and Hull's Housing Services?**

**Do you want to have your say and get
involved in how these services are run?**

Do you want to meet new people?

If so, why not come along to The Guildhall on
Wednesday 13 August, 10am to 1pm.

The Tenants' Forum, an organisation
independent of Hull City Council, is inviting
council tenants to drop-in at The Guildhall. The
purpose is to encourage more people to engage
both with the Forum and the council so we can
hear your views and aspirations about how
homes, services, and neighbourhoods can be
improved.

Getting involved in tenant activities can have a
beneficial effect on your wellbeing too. Tenant
volunteers often hear of people who feel
isolated and lonely in their homes. As a council
tenant, everyone is welcome to get involved
with the Tenants' Forum.

From project groups, estate walks, Tenants'
Forum discussions, pop-in coffee mornings
on your estate, to social activities, workshops
and skill sessions via the Housing Academy,
and forging friendships with fellow tenants are
just some of the activities on offer. There's so
much to discover, so come along to the Tenants'
Forum event. You don't need to book – just
drop-in.



Chat with the Chair

Loneliness seems to be the scourge of modern day living, especially since the Covid pandemic, and it can affect people of all ages and lifestyles.

What's more it can have a negative effect on our physical and mental wellbeing. Our Tenants' Forum has become increasingly aware there are people living on Hull's estates who are lonely, and we want to do something about it.

Our first step is to organise a Drop-in (see page 1) on Wednesday 13 August at The Guildhall. There you can meet other tenants who can tell you what's going on in local neighbourhoods, what they enjoy about being involved in Tenant Forum activities, and how by doing so they've helped bring about changes which benefit tenants. You can meet our friendly Tenant Participation Team who will be happy to

talk to you about the range of activities on offer. They will stress that your involvement is welcome, and it doesn't matter how much or how little time you can give. If you do come along to the Drop-in, I can assure you that there will be a warm welcome and a cuppa waiting for you!

If you can't make the Drop-in, you can always get in touch with the Tenant Participation team by email on tenant.resident@hullcc.gov.uk or 01482 612 010. They will be happy to chat about opportunities on offer with you and, if desired, can arrange to meet you for further discussion. They can also tell you how you can get involved digitally with social media, which is an area we are seeking to expand with surveys, general chats, and online meetings.

Activities don't just happen at a city level. We have active



local Tenants' and Residents' Associations all over Hull. Many of their activities are social. For example, there are often weekly drop-ins for coffee, knit and natter groups, marking celebrations such as for the coronation and the recent VE80 parties, bingo, and other games sessions.

As well as Tenants' Forum related activities, you'll get a friendly welcome at the council's Community Hubs (see page back page) too, and during the colder months at the many Warm Spaces located across the city.

Maureen
Tenants' Forum Chair

Performance Focus: Tenant Satisfaction Measures submitted

This is the second year that by the end of June all social housing providers, including Hull City Council, had to provide the Regulator of Social Housing with performance information on 22 Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs). 12 of these are based on your opinions as tenants on various landlord responsibilities. The other ten are measures of key performance information. Many of the measures show good improvements and a few have also dropped back, but we

invite you to have a look and judge for yourself. All these TSMs have been added to the council's website, alongside the figures we provided a year earlier, so you can see for yourself what has gone up and what has gone down. Just search "performance focus" on the website hull.gov.uk

We have also been sharing the TSMs with tenant volunteers involved in Tenants' Forum activities and there will be an



opportunity to discuss them in detail at the August meeting of the Tenants Forum, which will be held at The Guildhall – why not come along? See back page for details.

Ask Mark

Trying to get a council house – or similar social housing – seems almost impossible these days. Just how do you allocate council housing? Jim

Local Authorities must follow legislation and statutory guidance when allocating their available homes. This requires us to have an Allocations Policy which sets out who will qualify for our housing and how our homes will be allocated. Allocations Policies must give people who fall into certain categories some level of priority on housing lists over people who do not fall into those categories; these include those who are homeless, those needing to move on medical grounds, or those living in unsatisfactory or insanitary housing conditions (amongst others).



Hull City Council's Allocations Policy can be found on www.hull.gov.uk by searching "Allocations".

Unfortunately, even having a priority on our housing list does not mean a person will be offered a council home. There are lots of reasons why it is much harder to get a council home than it used to be. The Right to Buy has significantly decreased our stock over the years – in the 1990s we used to have over 46,000 council homes in Hull whereas now we only have around 23,000. The stock we do have does not become available as often as it used to either, as people choose to 'stay put' instead of moving. Last year we let 1,250 properties, compared with around 2,200 per year just 10 years ago.

The number of people needing social housing who are in urgent housing need has increased drastically over the last few years. In the past, many people may have resolved their housing needs through private renting or home ownership, but these options are simply not affordable for many people anymore.

Unfortunately, all of these issues mean that not everyone who wants a council home will get one, and this is a very difficult message to deliver.

It is vital that the Council's Allocations Policy accurately reflects current pressures to ensure that the homes that do become available go to those most in need of them.

Many aspects of our current Allocations Policy are historic, reflecting issues that were pertinent at the time they were introduced but are no longer so due to the changed landscape.

We are embarking on a full-scale review of our Allocations Policy this year to ensure it is up to date and fit for purpose. We will be carrying out a full consultation exercise on our proposals in the next few months and you will be able to comment on these so look out for more information about this.



Reclassification of repair categories

For some time, the repair service offered to our tenants was split into two categories – an emergency repair (within 24hrs) and a routine repair (within 28 days).

From 2 June, some repairs have been reclassified and some changes have been made, which have fed into the creation of a new “urgent” category.

The new 5-day appointable ‘urgent’ repair category will allow you to report more types of repairs online with the aim that many works will be completed within 5 days.

An urgent order is any maintenance issue that is causing serious inconvenience to the occupants or likely to cause further problems to the property. So, it’s not an emergency but does require attention within up to 5 days.

The priority of all repairs is diagnosed through the repair finder service on the myHousing App, so log on and report your repair and we will be able to let you to know what to do next.



You can find a helpful breakdown of the kind of repairs that fall under each category in the housing section of the Hull City Council website.

For more information and to download the myHousing App, visit www.hull.gov.uk/housing or call 01482 300 300.

Window Safety Check

As part of our ongoing efforts to maintain safety in your homes, we are asking all residents to carry out a quick check of your windows and to let us know if you are having any safety issues with them.

All opening windows above ground floor level where there is a risk of falls to children and/or vulnerable individuals, should be fitted with safety restrictors that prevent the windows opening too wide and stops the possibilities of accidental falls.

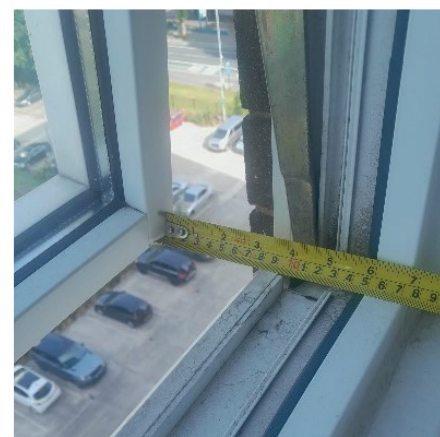
There are many types of restrictors installed in many types of windows, however, they are usually located within

the inside of the window frame and may have a button marked with “press to open”.

The purpose of a restrictor is to provide greater safety, especially for children, and the override is to allow adults to open the windows for cleaning and or ventilation purposes.

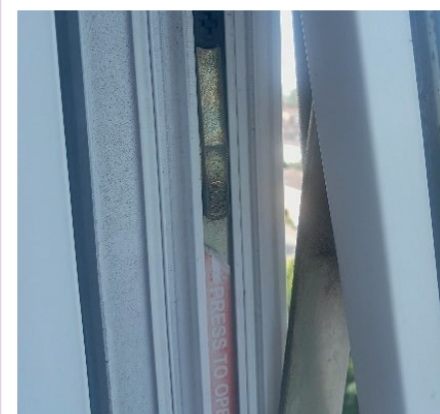
When activated, these restrictors only allow the window to be opened roughly around 10cm, which for reference, is around the size of a standard coffee mug.

If your window above ground floor level does not have a restrictor and you feel there is a risk of falls to children and vulnerable individuals, or has a restrictor, but you find that it opens further than 10cm when switched on, then please contact us via the myHousing App, www.hull.gov.uk or 01482 300 300 to arrange a visit and a possible repair.



Above: Approx opening distance of a working restrictor

Below: An example of a restrictor



A day in the Life of Lisa Broom, Tenancy Officer

Lisa Broom is a Tenancy Officer working in the West Area Team and has been in post for just over a year.

Previously Lisa worked in the council's Customer Service Team and brings excellent people-skills to her role. We asked Lisa to tell us about a typical working day.

I usually start my working day at 7.30am. I really like to get straight down to work, and the first thing I do is sit in one of the quieter rooms so I can focus on the day ahead, make sure I have what I need for my appointments/visits for that day, catch up with emails, and prepare for the following day's appointments.

When not working from home, I am out and about on my patch in the Boothferry South area to carry out appointments/visits to tenants. Sometimes these visits are ad hoc or even emergencies, and once a month a street is chosen for a patch walk with myself, Area Team colleagues, fire brigade representative, Anti-Social Behaviour Officer, and ward councillor to make sure the area in general is in a good state.

The range of issues which we deal with is endless and can be quite complicated, from the physical environment around our estates to domestic violence, mental health, anti-social behaviour, and drugs, as well repairs and other problems with the fabric of the home.



A lot of these issues can be picked up during our programme of routine tenancy visits. These visits are a vital part of a Tenancy Officer's role, and we aim to visit every secure tenant on our patch every five years. This is to see how you are, whether you need any help, and to give you information on any services that could help you or give more support. We check that contact details are up to date and have a look to see if any repairs need doing. We will always make an appointment with you before we visit.

On the day I wrote this article, I visited a tenant in the afternoon to discuss a breach of tenancy. Most people are lovely, but in these circumstances, I have to make a professional judgement as to whether I need to attend with a colleague or not, just from a safety perspective. Thankfully, on this occasion it is dealing with dog fouling in the back communal area of a block of flats. A verbal warning is given, as well as advice but if the issue persists then further action will be taken by the Hull City Council Environmental Enforcement Team.

I genuinely love my job even if it is a roller coaster of a ride, demanding, with a challenging workload at times. I love waking up in the morning knowing that my days are going to be crammed full of new unexpected situations and events.



TARA Spotlight – Women’s Voices of Thornton Estate

Women’s Voices grew out of the Great Thornton Street Estate Tenants’ and Residents’ Association, set up by Sana, a British citizen who came from Libya 14 years ago as a student. Sana recognised that there were many women from multi-ethnic backgrounds living on the estate who, mainly for cultural reasons, were leading quite isolated lives.

Having little to no English and a lack of confidence inhibited many of them from understanding essential aspects of their new lives. This includes their rights and responsibilities, housing situations, including rent, tax and benefits, and safeguarding within families and communities.

Sana made it her mission to help many of the women learn

English and exchange cultural information to encourage a better understanding of their new home city, Hull.


In September 2024, Women’s Voices started with six people. Now there are 46, and the number is growing, embracing nationalities including Afghan, Arabic, Iranian, Kurdish, North African, Eastern European, and English. The group encompasses a diverse range of religions and speaks 24 languages. As Sana hoped, gaining more knowledge has brought more freedom for the women, isolation has been reduced, and friendships have been made.

Activities have been varied, from cooking clubs to talks on safeguarding, understanding your tenancy, and domestic abuse. There are social events,

including trips to the sea-side, cultural evenings, and plans are afoot to set up homework clubs for children and more sessions introducing people to online communication. Also, the group has helped prepare people for their ceremonies to achieve British Citizenship.

This year, the group participated in Hull’s Refugee Week with an event called “Who I Am,” whereby many of the women told their personal stories, most wearing traditional dress, and enjoyed delicious ethnic food.

Sana is delighted – and rightly so – that Women’s Voices has been recognised by the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS), the UK’s leading tenants’ engagement experts, and has been awarded its Tenant Recognition Certificate.



Summertime is BBQ time

A BBQ is one of the UK's favourite, summer pastimes. It's great to enjoy outdoor cooking in the company of family and friends during the long, warm days of summer.

Meanwhile, there are a few guidelines to bear in mind which will help you enjoy your barbie cook-off.

Safety

When you light a BBQ - whether it is coals, gas, or electricity, you are lighting a fire - so there are a few safeguards to consider.

- only use your BBQ outdoors. Flames, sparks, and hot embers can cause a fire which can spread quickly
- position your BBQ on level ground (not decking and never on a balcony) and keep it well away from anything that may catch fire such as sheds, fences or trees
- never light a barbecue in an enclosed space, and do not use accelerants to get it going
- avoid distractions from people around you and never leave the BBQ unattended

- keep children, pets, and garden games a safe distance from the BBQ. Have a bucket of water, fire extinguisher, and/or sand nearby for emergency use
- after cooking, let it cool and make sure it is properly out – smouldering ashes can give off dangerous carbon monoxide fumes which can be fatal.

Remember your neighbours

While you may love a barbie, not everyone does, so have a thought for your neighbours.

- if you are planning a BBQ warn your neighbours well in advance. Why not invite them and create some community spirit?
- encourage your guests to be respectful. Keep your music down and other noise levels low, particularly on a weekday, when your neighbours may have to get up for work early or have school age children
- keep the barbie a safe way from fences and neighbouring property
- consider the wind direction. You do not want smoke and cooking smells to blow over to adjacent properties

Community Hubs

Our local Community Hubs are informal places in your neighbourhoods that sees several different organisations and communities come together to provide a range of valuable services for residents, alongside our own Hull City Council customer service staff.

Council advisors, with an expertise in key issues, attend each site on a regular basis to help residents deal with things such as housing enquiries, repairs, council tax, and other issues.



With the Hubs being located at the heart of the communities they serve, they help bring the services to the community, which cuts down on the need for residents to travel to get the help they need.

They also provide a place for those with specific needs, including financial constraints, health limitations and language

barriers, to talk to people who understand those issues and can work in partnership with Hull City Council to get the support they need.

The full list of sites can be found online, and it is advisable to check these before visiting as opening times can vary.

Go to hull.gov.uk and search community hubs.

Tenants' Forum Meetings

Date	Time	Guest Speaker / Agenda
22 July	10am – 12pm	Complaint Process and how the council handle the complaints External Relationship Manager
13 August	10am – 2pm	The Tenants' Forum Drop-in day
21 August	1 – 3pm	Housing Performance against Business Plan Business Insight & Quality Manager Performance Manager
24 Sept	10am – 12pm	The Tenants' Forum Annual General Meeting

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

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