



SHINES

YOUR HOUSING NEWSLETTER

May 2026

Why SHINES?

SHINES sets out the 6 key principles of our service: **S**afe **H**omes, **I**nclusive **N**eighbourhoods, **E**nvironmentally **S**ustainable.

It's all about ensuring your homes meet our high standard - we want to ensure your homes are safe, that you enjoy where you live, and that we're helping you save money through ongoing improvements to your homes. SHINES is our promise to you to make sure your homes and our services are the best they can be.

Your Housing Newsletter

Welcome to the may Tenant Newsletter from Winchester City Council.

From now on the newsletter will be published quarterly. We can give clearer updates about performance, priorities and what matters most to tenants.

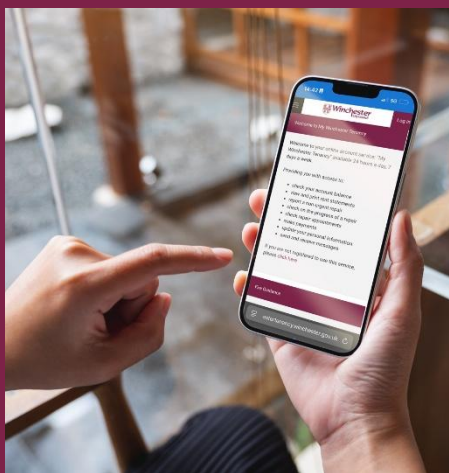
Tenant and Council Together (TACT) Board shared feedback on areas where we can improve. One key message was about improving how tenants help shape meeting agendas. We have already started making improvements by working closely with the Chair and Board members. The discussion was constructive and insightful, and we value the time and commitment Board members continue to give to shaping our housing services.

Your feedback plays a vital role in helping us improve our services. This newsletter gives up to date information on how we and tenants work together on performance, service improvements and wider activity, and shows how tenant voices continue to influence our work.

Thank you, as always, for your continued engagement and involvement.

Karen Thorburn

Corporate Head of Housing



Sign up now for My Winchester Tenancy

With **My Winchester Tenancy**, you can easily make payments, check your balance, report non-urgent repairs and more online!

[Sign up today](#)

Helping you save money



ENERGY
SAVING HOMES

Retrofit update

Our Retrofit Programme continues to make good progress, helping homes become warmer, more comfortable and cheaper to run, while also reducing carbon emissions.

This year:

- 13 homes received full 'Whole-House Retrofits'
- 39 homes received a mix of insulation, ventilation and energy-saving improvements

These works include better insulation, improved heating controls and ventilation to reduce damp and condensation.

Conservation Area Windows

In conservation areas this month, we are installing heritage-appropriate windows or secondary glazing instead of standard replacements. So far, improvements have been completed in 22 homes, helping to reduce draughts, noise and heat loss while protecting the historic look of buildings.

Ventilation fans and door undercuts

New ventilation fans are being installed that run quietly in the background. They increase airflow when needed, such as when cooking or showering. Door undercuts help air move more freely around the home, lowering the risk of damp and mould.

One tenant said the new fans have *“really reduced the damp and condensation”* in their home.

Solar Panels and Battery Storage

Where suitable, we continue to install solar panels and battery storage. These help households use more of their own electricity, reduce energy bills and cut carbon emissions.

By the end of March:

- 36 solar systems had been installed
- Over 9,000kg of CO₂ saved

One tenant's electricity bill dropped from £50 to £8.84 in their first full month.

Thank you to Tenants for your cooperation, and to staff and contractors for supporting the Programme.

Be vigilant about scams

Very often we might hear about or talk to someone who has been affected by 'scamming' whether via email, phone call or text or WhatsApp message.

We want to make sure you are safe in the digital world and wise to potential scammers and we hope this online article is helpful to you to make sure you aren't affected by fraudsters:

[More help & advice on fraud](#)

Free Wok Cooking Classes in Winchester

The Carroll Centre in Winchester is running **free wok cooking classes** on 4, 11 and 18 June 2026, from 3.30–5.30pm.

Led by an experienced tutor, the sessions will help participants learn how:

- Cook delicious meals
- Manage food budgets.
- Eat what you cook
- Take home a bag of ingredients to continue cooking at home.

Places are limited. To book, email courses@itchen.ac.uk.



May Half-Term Football Coaching

Children can enjoy fun, affordable football coaching this May half-term, thanks to **Winchester City Council and ActiveMe 360**. Running from **26–29 May 2026**, sessions include games, matches and skill-building in a friendly, supportive setting.

The coaching costs just **£1 per day or £5 for the week**.

To book, visit bookings.activeme360.co.uk/list and search 'Winchester', or email hello@activeme360.com.

Book Half Term Football



Save the Date - Party in the Park is back!

Party in the Park returns on **Saturday 22 August, 10:00–16:00** at Somers Close Recreation Ground, Stanmore (next to the Carroll Centre).

Formerly Access All Areas, this much-loved community event brings tenants, families and residents together for a relaxed, inclusive day. There will be activities for all ages, including an inflatable assault course, human table football and more, as well as food and drink and live entertainment.

Council officers and partner agencies will also be there to chat, offer advice and listen to feedback.

If you'd like a stall, contact Tobias Mason at TMason@winchester.gov.uk



Consider Downsizing

A mutual exchange, often known as a home swap, is one of the quickest and most flexible ways to move. It puts you in control, allowing you to find a home that better matches your needs, whether that's a different area, a more suitable layout, or a change in size. Many tenants find it a simple and practical alternative to waiting for a transfer, and with the right support, the process can be easier than you might think.

We're here to help every step of the way. From exploring your options to guiding you through the application, Housing Services will support you throughout. We'll carry out the necessary checks and keep things moving, so you can feel confident and informed. If all parties meet the criteria, mutual exchanges are a great way to move more quickly into a home that works for you.

If your current home feels too large, a mutual exchange can also help you downsize to something more manageable, reducing costs and day-to-day upkeep while freeing up larger homes for families in need.

To find out more, about [Moving Home or Changing Your Tenancy - Winchester City Council](#) visit our website or contact Housing Services on 01962 848

[More information on downsizing](#)

Keeping your home safe



Changes to our Heating and Electrical Servicing and Repairs

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After a long tender process **Signix** have now been awarded both the Heating servicing/repairs and electrical servicing contact starting on the **11 May**.

Legionella – What you need to know

Legionella is bacteria that can grow in water systems and cause a serious lung infection. The risk at home is low, but it is higher for older people, smokers and those with health conditions.

What the Council Does

- Maintains communal water systems
- Carries out regular checks
- Sets boilers to 60°C during annual gas safety checks.

What You Can Do

You can help keep yourself safe by

- Keeping hot water set to 60°C
- Using taps and showers regularly
- Cleaning and descaling taps and shower heads every **3 months**
- Flushing taps if you've been away for a week or more

For more information on Water Hygiene



Damp & Mould - Two New Officers

As part of our commitment to managing **damp and mould** in tenants' homes, we have created two new Damp and Mould Case Officer roles.

These officers will be responsible in overseeing progress of our **damp and mould** cases as well as visiting tenants' properties to assess and prioritise works required to manage and resolve the associated repairs.

Information on Damp & Mould

Stock condition update

Stock Condition Surveys are an important way for Winchester City Council to understand the condition of your home so we can plan future repairs, improvements, and investment.

During surveys we check things like:

- Kitchens and bathroom
- Heating systems
- Windows and roofs

These surveys help keep homes safe, warm and well maintained. If you have not yet had a survey, look out for contact from Pennington Choices Ltd, who are carrying these out for us.

Allowing access for a survey helps us look after your home now and in the future and ensures we can continue to improve the quality of housing for all residents.

Delivering the best services we can

Rent Arrears - one of the best performing local authorities

Over the last three years, rent arrears have reduced by over **£230,000** and are now below 1% uncollected out of a total of £36 million, placing us as one of the best performing local authorities in England!

This has been achieved by offering personal support, reducing standard letters and helping tenants:

- **Maximise benefit**
- **Set up affordable repayment plans**

The Tenancy Sustainment Team has also helped tenants claim over £1.8 million in benefits and grants in the last two years.

Universal credit is becoming more generous for families with children from April 2026 so many more households will be eligible. You can use an online calculator to check if you qualify or contact the Tenancy Sustainment Team if you need any assistance.

We can also support with:

- All benefit applications and appeals
- Budgeting
- Debt Advice
- Grant applications
- Emergency food support
- Fuel vouchers

If you need support with benefits, debt, budgeting or fuel, please contact:

- [Email us](#)
- **01962 848 230**

[Online Benefit Calculator](#)

Feedback from the Regulator of Social Housing

As part of our ongoing service improvement work, colleagues from the [Regulator of Social Housing](#) (RSH) attended our [TACT Board](#) meeting in January 2026.

The RSH gave positive feedback about the strong tenant engagement, with all Board members able to speak and ask relevant questions.

They also highlighted areas to improve, including how tenants help shape meeting agendas. This is already a priority for us, and we are working with the Chair and Board members to develop agendas in partnership.

Tenant Satisfaction Measure (TSM) Plan by Locality

We are reviewing action plan priorities from the recent [Tenant Satisfaction Measures](#) results and how we can use this feedback and other opportunities to engage with tenants on what matters to you at a local level. We want to work in partnership with you to identify the things that really matter in your communities.

Where we want to work at a local level to improve things that matter to our tenants and communities.

How do we gather intelligence across our teams – estates, housing, APS, estate improvements,

Using [TSMs](#) to inform some of the areas for improvement based on satisfaction
How do we engage internally and externally

[Find out how to get involved](#)



Keeping you updated on Housing Performance

We believe it's important to be open about how our housing services are performing. That's why we publish [monthly housing performance information](#) on our [website](#). This includes key areas such as repairs, safety checks, complaints and overall service performance.

You can find the latest updates by visiting our website, [insert link] where performance information is refreshed each month so you can see how we're doing and where we're focusing our improvements.

Performance webpage



Complaint Handling Improvements

Our **Complaints Focus Group** meets monthly and brings tenants and staff together to help improve how we handle complaints.

Working together, the group has already helped us make several important improvements:

- Agreed clear Terms of Reference, so everyone understands the group's role, purpose and how it works
- Reviewed complaint response letters at both Stage 1 and Stage 2, checked our responses against the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code to make sure we are fully aligned
- Improved acknowledgement letters so tenants know clearly what will happen next
- Improved "complaint withdrawn" letters, making them clearer and more respectful

The group has also helped us develop a complaint closed feedback survey, which was introduced on 1 April. This survey gives tenants the chance to tell us about their

experience once their complaint is closed and will provide valuable insight into how well we are handling complaints and where we can improve further.

We are Introducing a complaint learning tracker and action log, helping us record learning, track actions and make sure improvements and actions are followed through.

If you would like to be involved in the **Complaints Focus Group**, please [email](#) us.

To make a complaint use the online complaint form on the website

Complaints Website

A stronger, Safer approach to Tackling - Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), Hate crime and Neighbour Issues

We have launched updated Housing policies to improve how we respond to neighbourhood concerns.

Residents can report **Anti-Social Behaviour**, neighbour issues, or hate incidents using our online reporting form, which is the quickest and most efficient way to raise a concern.

Our teams will ensure all reports are assessed and managed consistently using an improved triage and case management system.

A programme of Housing Services drop-in sessions will also take place in late spring 2026 across sheltered housing and extra care schemes.

The new approach:

- Supports residents to resolve low-level issues early
- Takes action on anti-social behaviour
- Treats hate crime as a priority

It provides clearer guidance for residents, strengthens partnership working, and ensures a fair, consistent and victim-centred response.

The existing online reporting form remains live and will be promoted as the primary route for residents , please continue to use this form.

Please also ensure that for all Housing related incidents you direct them to the new and improved [Housing Services webpages](#) and specifically the [Report Anti-Social Behaviour - Winchester City Council](#)

A resident-friendly summary has also been published.

Tenant Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Data

We're working to improve the information we hold about who lives in our homes, so we can provide services that work for everyone.

Why this matters

We know that people have different needs, experiences and ways of communicating. When we understand this better, we can:

- Make sure our services are fair and accessible
- Tailor how we communicate with you
- Provide the right support at the right time
- Improve how we design and deliver housing services

This helps us make decisions based on real tenant experience, not assumptions.

Keeping your information up to date

You can help us by keeping your details up to date, including:

- Contact details
- Household information
- Any health, accessibility or support needs
- How you prefer us to contact you

This is especially important when we're arranging visits, responding to repairs, or sharing important information about your home.

How to update your details

You can update your information at any time using the My Winchester Tenancy portal.

If you don't have an account, you can register [here](#):

If you'd prefer, you can also contact us, and we'll support you to update your details. Sharing this information is voluntary. It won't affect your tenancy or the services you receive. huh@winchester.gov.uk 01962 848 400

We use it to understand who we're reaching, who we're not, and how we can improve our services. All information is handled securely and in line with data protection laws.

- You can read more about how we use and protect your data on the link below
- Referrals to local support services

[More information on data protection](#)

New systems - why this is a good thing

We are investing in improved systems so staff can resolve issues faster and more efficiently.

Improvements include:

- Better case management
- Bring customer and property information together in one place. Fewer repeat calls
- Faster responses
-

This means staff can see the full picture straight away and customers get quicker, better service. Secure digital access will also allow updates to be made in real time, reducing delays and improving how we support you.



Working with tenants to improve services

We want tenants to have clear and varied ways to get involved and shape services. We hold **four Housing Improvement workshops each quarter** across the district, as well as online evening meetings, so more tenants can take part. Topics change throughout the year and are chosen by tenants at the sessions. Actions and outcomes are published on our [website](#)

Tenant feedback from the HRA (**Housing Revenue Account**) consultation led to a key change, reviewed by TACT Board (**Tenant and Council Together**).

Funding identified from Wardens has been redirected to provide more anti-social behaviour support, where satisfaction is currently lower. This change was made directly because of tenant feedback and recommendation” from the TACT Board.

Tenants and leaseholders also work with us through our policy co-creation group, reviewing and helping to write key housing policies. To make information easier to access, policies are now also produced as a short “Policy on a Page” summary, so that each document can be read quickly and easily for those who prefer or need a simpler way to access the information. **17 policies** have been reviewed by the Armchair Reviewers Tenant Group since July 2025.

We value working in partnership with tenants to improve our policies and procedures.

You said, we did as request at January TACT

You told us how important it is to see the impact of your feedback. Instead of a separate update this quarter, we've included all recent "You said, we did" actions in our [Tenant Partnership and Influence Report 2025–26](#), which will be published at the end of May.

The report shows how tenant feedback and activity surveys have shaped services over the past year.

Here are some highlights:

	You said	We did	Making the difference
Improving how we communicate with tenants	Some of our webpages and online content were difficult to understand.	Tenants worked with staff through Housing Improvement Workshops to rewrite key webpages, including the Report a Repair page and Tenant Partnership pages, focusing on clarity and plain English.	Information is now easier to understand and use, helping tenants access services more confidently.
Making engagement more accessible	Not everyone can attend meetings in person.	We introduced an online Housing Improvement Workshop and expanded opportunities to take part remotely through Armchair Reviewers.	More tenants can now get involved in ways that suit their needs, improving accessibility and inclusion.
Improving how policies are written and understood	Housing policies can be too complex and difficult to understand.	We worked with tenants through the Policy Co-Creation Group and Armchair Reviewers to develop and review policies in plain English.	Policies are now clearer, more accessible and better reflect the needs and experiences of tenants.

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The full report will be published at the end of may.

Remembering Monica Gill – A valued Voice in Our Community

We were very saddened to hear the passing of Monica Gill. Monica was a much-valued and long-standing member of our tenant community. She played an important role in shaping tenant involvement with Winchester City and as Chair of the Tenant and Resident Association. Her commitment, warmth and determination made a lasting difference, not only to her local community but to housing services across the district.

Monica will be deeply missed by all who knew her. We extend our sincere condolences to her family, friends and fellow Association members. The Tenant Partnership Team is available to support the Association in continuing their work if needed.

If you have any feedback or suggestions for future articles, or if you are interested in being involved in shaping our services, please contact the [tenant partnership team](#)



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