

RESIDENT NEWSLETTER

Creating places that people love to come home to
Spring / Summer 2025 Issue



Great Places, Great Service, Great Business and Great People

Cornerstone board, Resident Engagement Panel and staff visiting a new development in Okehampton.



CONTACT US



Postal
Cornerstone House
Western Way
Exeter
EX1 1AL



Customer Service
01392 273462
(Option 3)

mail@cornerstonehousing.net



Repairs
01392 273462
(Option 1)

repairs@cornerstonehousing.net

Our phone lines are open
Monday to Friday from
9.00am – 5.00pm.

What you can do on our website

- Report an ASB Incident
- Report a repair
- View your tenant handbook
- Apply for a mutual exchange
- Make a complaint, give feedback or a compliment

Out of hours

If you have an emergency with your home outside of our normal opening hours, you can call **01392 273462** (option 1) and your call will be diverted to our out-of-hours team.

Please contact us on 01392 273462 or mail@cornerstonehousing.net if you need this in a different format or language or if you need help reading or understanding it.

WELCOME FROM KEITH



Hi everyone! My name is Keith Killingback, and I'm really happy to be writing to you as the new Chair of the Resident Engagement Panel (REP).

Let me tell you a little about myself. I was born in Harlow in 1955, but when I was 6 years old, my family moved to the Isle of Wight. I grew up there with my parents and three brothers. In 1988, I left England to work in Saudi Arabia, helping train people in the Royal Saudi Air Force. I came back to England in 1996 and did lots of different jobs—like working in call centres, helping with IT, teaching people to drive, and even being the chairman of a parish council!

Now I live in Dawlish and I'm part of REP. When Janet, our last Chair, decided to step down after doing a great job, I put my name forward and was chosen to take her place.

People often ask me about my unusual last name. It comes from a village in Yorkshire and goes all the way back to a knight named Walter de Kelingbec in the year 1275! But that's enough history for now.

As Chair of REP, I want to help make sure everyone feels heard. Your voice matters! We can't help with personal problems, but we do look at bigger things that affect lots of people—like gardening, cleaning shared spaces, and looking after car parks.

We'd love more residents to join us and share their ideas. Together, we can make our community even better!

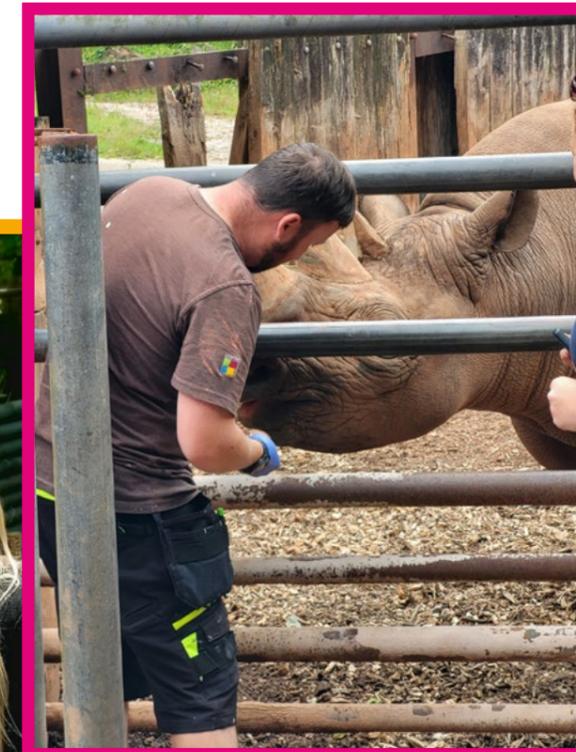
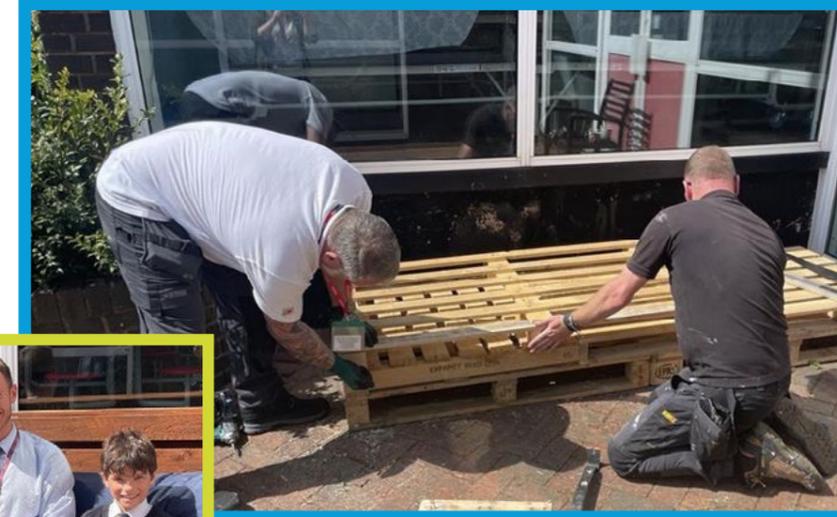
Keith Killingback
Chair, Residents Engagement Panel

STAFF SUPPORTING THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Over the past few months, our dedicated team members have been rolling up their sleeves and making a difference in the local community. At St Gabriel's School, two of our staff volunteered their time and skills to build a brand-new bench, providing a welcoming spot for children to sit, relax, and enjoy their surroundings.

Meanwhile, three other team members headed to Paignton Zoo, where they helped refresh and maintain several animal enclosures with a fresh coat of paint and some much-needed upkeep. Their efforts not only supported the zoo's ongoing conservation work but also helped create a more vibrant and enriching environment for both animals and visitors.

We're proud of our team's commitment to giving back and look forward to more opportunities to support our community.



GREENER WAYS STRATEGY

Our vision for supporting warm homes that are fit for purpose for the future

Cornerstone wants to make more energy-efficient, cost-effective homes and healthy communities, enhancing quality of life while supporting a more sustainable future for all. Our new strategy, called the Greener Ways Strategy, runs from 2025 to 2030 and helps us prepare for a cleaner, greener future by 2045.

Why are we doing this?

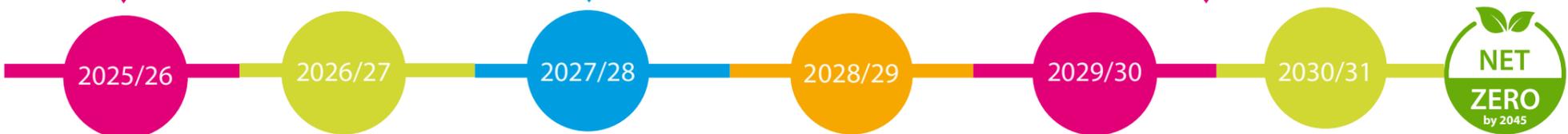
Because climate change is a big problem, it's making the planet hotter and causing more storms and floods. Cornerstone recognises that homes consume a significant amount of energy, so we aim to implement changes that benefit both the Earth and the people living in our homes.

How we will make a difference.

- Establish a carbon footprint baseline
- Supply chain sustainability impact in our contracts
- Start sustainability training programme
- Wildlife and edible planting schemes
- Become a recognised disability employer.
- Seek partnership to support Greener Ways strategies
- Communication Plan to raise awareness of energy efficiency and climate change
- Revise our Design Guide to set new standards for new build properties introduced from 2025

- Retrofit and renewables into our homes
- Green projects focussed on reuse or recycle
- A Waste Minimisation Plan based on reducing our use of materials, choosing more sustainable materials,
- Reusing materials where possible so that less goes to landfills and more is recycled.

- Less than 5% of waste goes to Landfill because of our waste minimisation plan
- 70% of all our waste is recycled from office and depot



- Retrofit and renewable skills training staff
- 100 % of new homes have renewable energy
- Van fleet moving to a renewable energy source
- A Low-Carbon Transport Plan for commuter and business travel
- Cornerstone offices powered by renewable energy

- All procurement and buying activities consider carbon reduction and sustainability

- EPC C rating or higher all for Homes
- 80% reduction has been achieved in operational CO2
- 100% of the van fleet has moved to a renewable source
- Bee-friendly planting and edible gardens thrive across our community land

This plan is just the beginning. By 2045, Cornerstone wants to be Net Zero, which means we won't add any extra pollution to the air.

To read the full strategy visit www.cornerstonehousing.net/greener-ways-strategy



ONLINE SUPPORT DIRECTORY

Did you know that we have a support directory on our website, highlighting services across Devon that residents can access? These include services on

- Addiction
- Gambling
- Eating disorder
- Anti social behaviour
- Bereavement Counselling
- Education & Skills
- Energy Bill support
- Finance
- Foodbanks - We can make referrals
- Mental health
- Wellbeing

Visit www.cornerstonehousing.net/support-directory to find support available



RESIDENT SUPPORT FUND

Did you know we have a resident support fund? We use this to help residents who are in financial hardship. If this is you, and you need some support, please get in touch with us on **01392 273462**, **mail@cornerstonehousing.net** or pop into our office in Exeter (Monday to Friday 11am to 12noon).

We can also refer you to Homemaker Southwest, who can offer you support with debts, maximising your income from benefits, benefit claims and appeals, and budgeting.

Some companies including South West Water, energy and broadband companies offer social tariffs at lower amounts for residents, ask your company about that or let us know if you need some help with it.

Food bank vouchers are also available if you need them for all the local areas.

We understand that reaching out for help with financial worries can be difficult. We want to assure you that we are here to support you, without judgment. We all need help from time to time, and we're here to provide it. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with us.



WHAT IS AN EPC

Eco

An EPC, or Energy Performance Certificate, is a document that assesses a property's energy efficiency.

An EPC includes:

- Energy Efficiency Rating: Graded from A (most efficient) to G (least efficient).
- Estimated Energy Costs: For heating, lighting, and hot water.
- Recommendations: Suggestions for improving energy efficiency, like insulation or double glazing.
- Environmental Impact: CO2 emissions and how they could be reduced.

How Long Is It Valid?

An EPC is valid for 10 years from the date of issue.

How do I find out what EPC I have or if it's still valid?

To find out what Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) your property has and whether it's still valid, you can use the official government service. Here's how:

How to Check Your EPC Online

1. Visit the Official EPC Register:

Go to www.gov.uk/find-energy-certificate

You can search using your:

- Postcode
- Street name and town
- EPC certificate number (if you have it)

2. View Your EPC:

Once you find your property, you can view the full EPC, including:

- The energy efficiency rating (A to G)
- The date of issue
- The expiry date (EPCs are valid for 10 years)
- Recommendations for improving energy efficiency

We are currently undertaking EPCs on all our properties that do not have a valid certificate. We will then be looking to get all our properties to an EPC rating of C by April 2031.

OUR PROPERTIES

Did you know we have a selection of A-rated Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) properties which are highly energy-efficient, offering numerous benefits:

1. Savings - An A-rated EPC means the property uses energy very efficiently, which significantly reduces energy bills. This leads to substantial financial savings over time which our residents will benefit from.

2. Environmental Impact - These properties have a lower carbon footprint due to their reduced energy consumption.

3. Comfort and Health A-rated properties are typically well insulated and equipped with effective heating and cooling systems. This ensures improved comfort and healthier living conditions.

We currently have 20 properties which are A rated. The properties have achieved this by meeting the highest energy efficiency standards under the Building Energy Rating (BER) system. This means they have been assessed and found to be the most energy-efficient on the A to G scale, indicating superior performance in terms of energy consumption and environmental sustainability.

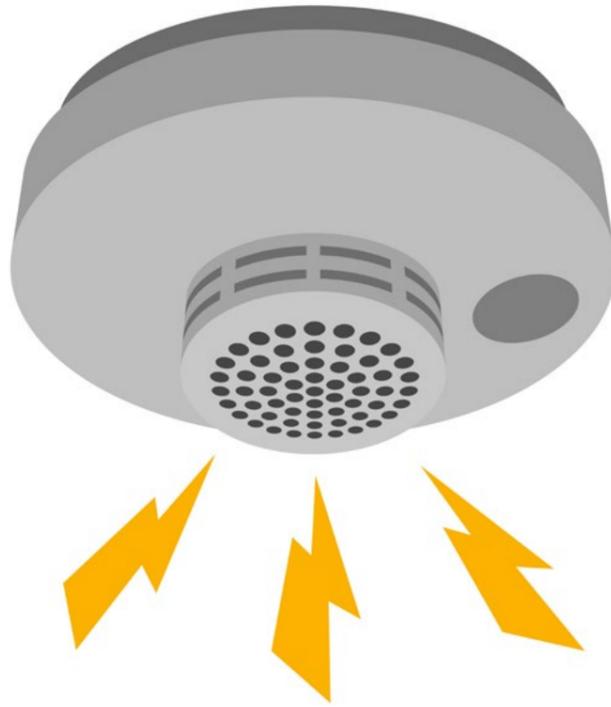
The A-rating is awarded based on several factors, including the building fabric, heating and hot water systems, ventilation, and lighting. Key criteria for achieving an A-rating include high levels of insulation, efficient heating and cooling systems, the use of renewable energy sources, airtightness to reduce heat loss, a good ventilation system, and energy-efficient lighting and hot water systems.

We are proud to be growing our homes into more energy-efficient properties. In this issue, we launch our Greener Ways strategy, which outlines some of our development plans for the next 5 years and how we are moving to get more of our homes to be A-rated in energy performance.

SMOKE DETECTORS

Your safety is our top priority, and smoke and carbon monoxide (CO2) detectors play a vital role in protecting you and your home. We're asking all residents to please avoid tampering these devices and to let us know if you experience any issues on 01392 273462 option 1.

Tampering with smoke or CO2 detectors—such as removing batteries, covering them, or disabling them—can put lives at risk. These devices are there to alert you to danger and must remain fully operational at all times.



Support is available if your detector is:

- Beeping or going off frequently
- Causing concern or confusion
- Difficult to reach or test

Please contact us right away if you are concerned.

Test Regularly

We recommend testing your detectors once a month to ensure they're working properly. Most detectors have a test button—just press and hold it until you hear a beep.

Need a Pointy Stick?

If your detector is out of reach and you need a tool to test it safely, let us know! We can provide a suitable device or offer assistance with testing.



LEGIONELLA

What is Legionella?

Legionella is a type of bacteria that can grow in water systems and cause Legionnaires' disease, a potentially fatal form of pneumonia. It is contracted by inhaling small droplets of water (aerosols) that contain the bacteria—not by drinking water.

Why Are Unoccupied Properties at Risk?

When a property is left unoccupied, water can become stagnant in pipes, tanks, and appliances. This creates ideal conditions for Legionella to grow, especially if water temperatures are between 20°C and 45°C and there is little or no water movement.

In an occupied building where taps and showers are regularly used; there is very little risk of water stagnating in the pipes and therefore legionella bacteria has little chance to grow.

What can you do to stay safe?

If you are returning after a long absence (over a week):

1. Run all taps and showers for at least 2 minutes – with the shower head as low as possible to prevent inhalation of aerosols.
2. Flush toilets with the lid down
3. Clean showerheads and taps regularly
4. Report any issues with water temperature or discolouration to our repairs team

Who Is Most at Risk?

People at higher risk of Legionnaires' disease include:

- Older adults (especially over 50)
- Smokers and heavy drinkers
- People with chronic respiratory or kidney conditions
- Those with weakened immune systems

What Are the Symptoms?

Symptoms can appear 2–10 days after exposure and include:

- High fever and chills
- Cough and shortness of breath
- Muscle aches and headaches
- Sometimes diarrhoea or confusion

If you experience these symptoms and suspect Legionnaires' disease, seek medical help immediately.



Our reception opening times

Our opening times are 11.00am to 12.00 noon, Monday to Friday.

A member of staff will be available to discuss any concerns you might have. These include welfare concerns, tenancy queries and issues in your community.



STAIRLIFTS

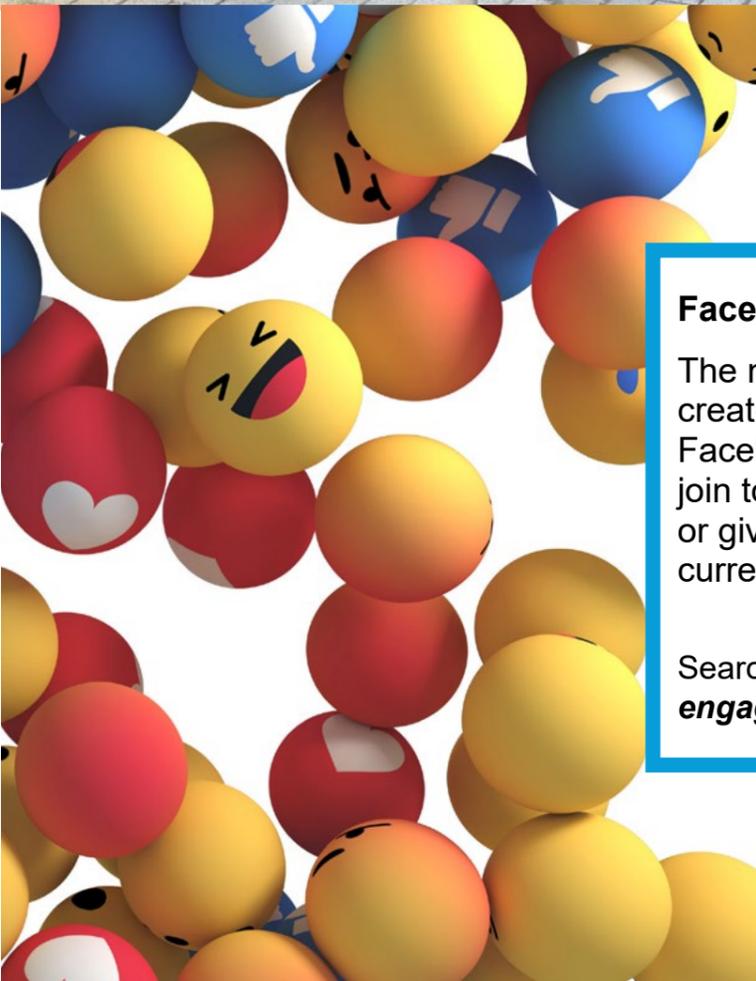
Do you have a stairlift in your home? Please Let Us Know!

We're asking all residents to notify us if they have a stairlift installed at their home. This is not because there is a problem. We simply want to ensure that our records are up to date and that we can confirm all relevant safety aspects for your home.

Why It Matters:

- **Safety First:** Knowing about stairlifts helps us ensure that your home remains safe and accessible.
- **Maintenance & Support:** If any future work is needed in your home, having this information helps us plan appropriately.
- **Accurate Records:** It's important for us to keep an accurate record of any adaptations made to properties
- **Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP):** If you or members of your household need support to evacuate in the event of an emergency, if we know you have a stairlift we can put extra measures in place.

If you or someone in your household has had a stairlift installed—whether recently or some time ago—please get in touch with us at your earliest convenience.



Facebook Group

The members of REP have created a residents only Facebook group. Anyone can join to ask the panel questions or give feedback to a policy currently being reviewed.



Search **Cornerstone Housing residents engagement panel** to join



Drop-in Service

Free Service

**Tuesdays & Thursdays
9:30 am - 1.30 pm**

At Southernhay URC Church, EX1 1QD

Welcomes people from ethnically diverse backgrounds, whose first language is not English.

Get friendly, confidential and informal help with completing forms, dealing with utility companies or other public services.

We recommend you make an appointment if possible, as time can be restricted

☎ 07360 813133

admin@inclusiveexeter.org.uk

We are here to help

Inclusive Exeter offers a weekly free Drop-In Support Service for those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities to provide informal help with form filling and IT.

We recognise that people from these backgrounds can often face challenges like language and social barriers, as well as not being overly familiar with the bureaucratic systems of mainstream services.

We can help people with completing different kinds of forms and similar support, for example:

Benefits like Universal Credit, Personal Independence Payment (PIP), child benefit etc.
Document applications like passport, driving license etc.
Other applications like social/council housing, tenancy forms, bus pass etc.
Changing utilities, dealing with bills etc.



Amicus Law offers a free one-hour consultation for beneficiaries of Inclusive Exeter's Drop-In Support Service on such matters as immigration, wills, probate and property transaction related enquiries.



For more info & details, please visit; Inclusive Exeter Website - www.inclusiveexeter.org/ or email; Admin@inclusiveexeter.org.uk Leave a message on - 07360813133



Drop-in and see if we can help!



SURVEY OF YOUR HOME

From time to time, we need to survey your home to make sure it is in a good state of repair. The information we gather will tell us about the condition of your home and the individual components in it, such as kitchens, bathrooms, windows, insulation and heating.

We will use this information to plan our programme of improvements to your home. For example, when the kitchen or bathroom will need replacing.

This is a change from how we used to plan improvements, which was based on the age of the component. The new way is based on the condition rather than age, so it could be replaced sooner or later than originally planned, depending on the condition of it.

In general, the surveys take approximately 1.5 to 2 hours to complete, depending on the size and type of your home.

We will write to you with an appointment for this, please tell us if the appointment isn't convenient for you, or if you are worried about anything.



TEXT MESSAGES

Cornerstone will only text you from 2 numbers
07700 144960 or 07491 163432

If you receive a text from any other number saying they are from Cornerstone please contact us before clicking any links.

CALL 159 - BANKING FRAUD

159 is a UK-wide telephone number that you can use to contact your bank's fraud department. It works similar to how 111 is used for the NHS and 101 for non-emergency calls to the police. They can help you check on potential scams, and verify the legitimacy of a call or message you may have received claiming to come from your bank. You can also use this number for added reassurance, prior to taking part in any new financial transaction.

If you receive a suspicious call or message, involving any type of financial transaction, including those claiming to be from your bank, your telecoms provider, HRMC, the police, STOP. Then call 159 to check on the call or messages authenticity.

159 is a safe and secure way to contact your bank, helping to protect you from financial fraud. The service is supported by major UK banks and telecommunications companies.

159 will never call you.

If you wish to report a Fraud or Cyber Crime please visit:
www.actionfraud.police.uk



TENANT SATISFACTION MEASURES 2024/2025

Tenant Satisfaction Measures' (TSM) are a way for tenants to understand how we perform against key service areas.

The measures form part of a system for enabling tenants to see how well their landlord performs and hold them accountable.

There are 22 measures covering areas like repairs, safety and complaints.

12 customer perception measures: These show satisfaction with our services, for example, how well we've managed repairs or resolved complaints.

10 performance measures: These measures are based on our performance, for example, how many fire risk assessments we have carried out and how many cases of anti-social behaviour have been reported to us.

Below are the results for the year 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025.

Building safety measures

- 100% of homes for which all required gas safety checks have been carried out
- 100% of homes for which all required fire risk assessments have been carried out
- 100% of homes for which all required asbestos management surveys or re-inspections have been carried out
- 100% of homes for which all required legionella risk assessments have been carried out
- 100% of homes for which all required communal passenger lift safety checks have been carried out

Anti-social behaviour measures

- 59.3 cases of anti-social behaviour were opened per 1,000 homes
- 2.1 cases of anti-social behaviour involved hate crime per 1000 homes

Decent homes standards

- 99.1% All our homes meet the decent home standard
- 92.6% of our properties had emergency repairs completed within our 24-hour target
- 83.3% of our properties had non-emergency responsive repairs completed within target timescales. Target timescales are: Urgent repairs – 5 days, Routine repairs – 20 working days, Non-urgent repairs – 65 working days

Within 2024/2025 we completed 3555 responsive repairs

Complaints

Stage one complaints

- 62.6 stage one complaints were received per 1000 homes
- 76.7 % of these were responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaints Handling Code timescales.

Stage two complaints

- 11.7 stage two complaints were received during the year per 1000 homes
- 87.5 % of these were responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's complaint Handling code timescales.

Visit our website to view our complaints self-assessment and the the Housing Ombudsman complaints handling code guidance

Tenant perception measures

- 86.7% of residents were satisfied with the overall service provided
- 88.2% of residents were satisfied with the overall repairs service over the last 12 months
- 89.1% of residents were satisfied with the time taken to complete their most recent repair
- 87.6% of residents were satisfied that their home is well maintained
- 87.9% of residents were satisfied that their home is safe
- 73.3% of residents were satisfied that we listen to their views and act upon them
- 81.4% of residents were satisfied that we keep them informed about things that matter to them
- 86.8% of residents agree that we treat them fairly and with respect
- 58.9% of residents were satisfied with our approach to complaints handling
- 70.1% of residents were satisfied that we keep communal areas clean and well-maintained
- 71.4% of residents were satisfied that we make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods
- 64.0% of residents were satisfied with our approach to handling anti-social behaviour

Additional information we gather

The following measures are not required by the regulator, but we gather information on them to help us better understand what residents think of customer service and value for money.

- 86% of residents were satisfied that we are easy to deal with
- 83% of residents say their rent is value for money
- 63% of residents say their charges were value for money

Visit our website to view our summary of approach, which explains how we gathered and assessed the data.





**Resident
Engagement
Panel**

www.cornerstonehousing.net/rep

**Get involved in your
neighbourhood!**

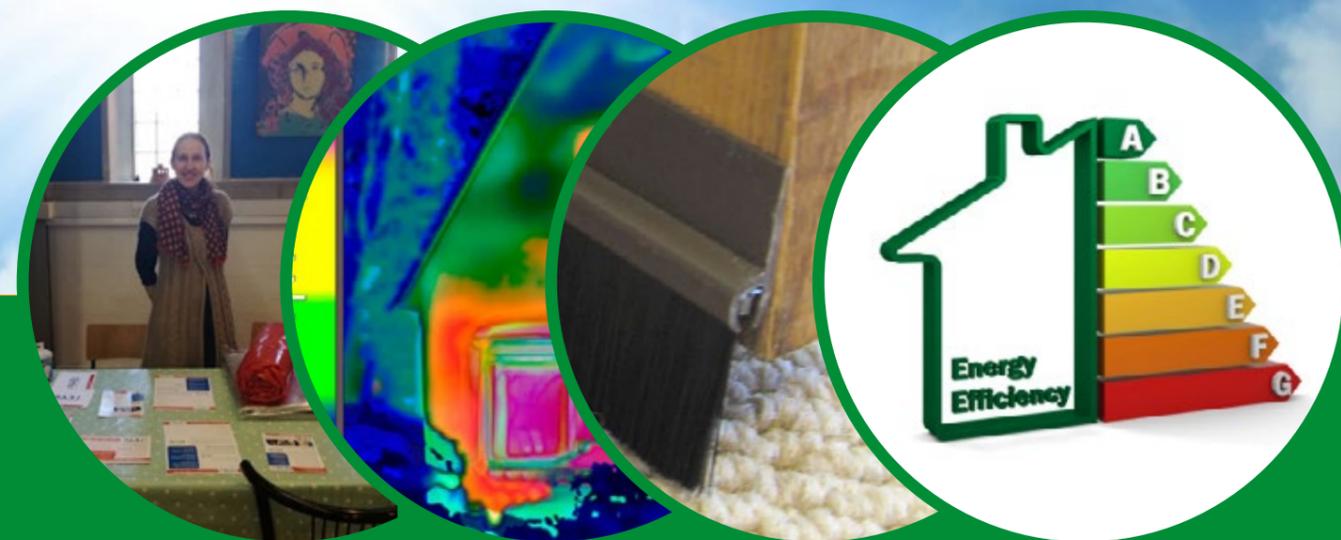
Our resident engagement panel is looking for new members. REP is open to all and we would love to have more residents from a diverse range of backgrounds involved. If you would like to engage with the REP but don't want to come to meetings, get in touch, we'd still love to hear from you.

If you are interested contact mail@cornerstonehousing.net



ecoe

exeter community energy



Exeter Community Energy 

Healthy Homes for Wellbeing

Do you want lower energy bills?

Is it hard to heat your home?

Free energy advice at our events.

Book a free energy and money saving advice call.

Contact ECOE's Energy Advice Team

healthyhomes@ecoe.org.uk 0800 772 3617

www.ecoe.org.uk/healthy-homes-wellbeing

ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR - HATE CRIME

What is hate crime?

Hate crime is a serious issue that affects individuals and communities across the UK. Legally, it is defined as “any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person’s disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, or transgender identity”.

Experiencing a hate crime can be deeply distressing. It can leave lasting emotional scars and significantly impact mental health and wellbeing. That’s why it’s vital for victims to know that support is available. Various agencies offer guidance, emotional support, and practical help throughout the reporting and recovery process.

At Cornerstone, we stand firmly against hate crime. Every resident’s tenancy includes conditions prohibiting criminal behaviour, and we will take enforcement action where necessary. Allegations of hate crime are treated with the utmost seriousness. We work closely with the police and other support organisations to ensure that tenants feel safe and supported.

Hate crime has no place in our communities. Together, we can foster a culture of respect, inclusion, and safety for all.

Any resident who commits a criminal act whilst a resident is subject to enforcement action, such as:

- Extension of or ending a starter tenancy
- Not renewing fixed term tenancies
- Anti-Social Behaviour Contracts
- Injunctions (with the power of arrest)
- Notice to terminate their tenancy
- Possession proceedings
- Eviction (a last resort where all other legal remedies have failed)

Hate crimes can take many forms—some are obvious, others more subtle—but all are harmful and unacceptable. These acts may be motivated by prejudice against someone’s race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity. They can be verbal, physical, or even digital.

Here are some examples of what hate crime can include:

- Threatening behaviour – Intimidation or gestures meant to cause fear.
- Verbal abuse – Insults, slurs, or name-calling targeting someone's identity.
- Physical assaults – Any form of violence or physical harm.
- Robbery – Stealing from someone with a bias-based motive.
- Damage to property – Vandalism or destruction of belongings or homes.
- Inciting others – Encouraging or pressuring others to commit hate crimes.
- Harassment – Repeated, targeted behaviour that causes distress.
- Online abuse – Offensive or threatening messages on platforms like Facebook, X, or other social media.

If you or someone you know is experiencing any of these behaviours, it’s important to speak up. Help is available, and no one should face hate alone.

What to do if you are the victim of a hate crime:

- Devon & Cornwall Police via 101 or online **Police.uk**
- Cornerstone via **01392 273462** or complete an online form Anti-social behaviour form – you can also visit our Western Way Office Monday to Friday between 11.00am and 12.00 noon.
- Report racially motivated incidents to Plymouth Racial Equality Council by calling **01752 224555** or by visiting their website at **www.plymouthanddevonrec.org.uk**
- If you are Jewish, report this to **cst.org.uk** via their website
- If you are Muslim, report this to **tellmamauk.org**
- If you are Gypsy, Roma or Traveller, report this to **www.reportracismgrt.com**
- If you are LGBT+, report this to Galop by calling 020 7704 2040, **hatecrime@galop.org.uk**
- Certain types of hate crime can be reported to **www.stophateuk.org**





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Contents Insurance

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quote today at

www.thistlemyhome.co.uk

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home contents from
**fire, theft and
water damage**

Contact My Home
on **0345 450 7288** or visit
www.thistlemyhome.co.uk

