



Tenant Newsletter

Welcome to our tenant quarterly newsletter where you can read up to date information that might be useful for your tenancy and home.

Customer Service Standards



We are pleased to share with you our finalised customer service standards which give much greater clarity on what tenants can expect when interacting with Papworth Trust. We start with our organisation-wide Customer Charter which shows that as a customer you have the right to...



- communicate with us in a way that works for you
- be treated with fairness and respect
- be listened to
- a high quality service

Each of our Papworth Trust services – Housing, Employment, Care and Day Opportunities – has a set of customer service standards which sit beneath the Charter. These will tell you what to expect when joining our Papworth Trust service, how to contact us, how we will support you, and how you can take part and get more involved at the Trust.

We have been working collaboratively with tenants to develop the Housing Customer Service Standards – please find a copy enclosed and these are also available on our website along with an easy-read format.

Repairs phonenumber



We introduced a new telephone system earlier last year and hope you have seen the improvement to how we handle your repairs calls. We are now publishing our performance each quarter.

January - March 2024



Average number of calls per month
(excluding out of hours)

388

(last quarter 407)



Average waiting time for your
call to be answered

53 seconds

(last quarter
1 minute 19 seconds)

We will be using this information to plan how we use our staff to ensure your calls are answered quickly.

Our new system allows us to see how long tenants are waiting for their call to be answered before they give up and terminate the call. We have noticed there are a high number of tenants who are putting the telephone down after less than a minute of waiting.

We understand that everyone is busy and would like calls to be answered quickly, so this is a request for tenants to hold on a little while longer so you can speak to a member of the team. We are answering calls on average in under 1 minute and the team may be busy with calls at peak times from other customers.

Tenant Information Leaflets

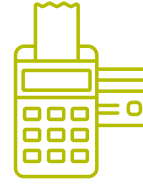


You have been sent information on **cracks** in your home. Please read this information carefully and if you require any further information please contact us by:

- emailing: repairsandmaintenance@papworthtrust.org.uk
- calling: **0330 678 0008, option 1.**

In our last newsletter (January 2024) you were sent information on **fire safety**. We hope you found this informative and useful. Please remember you can access this at any time on our website: <https://www.papworthtrust.org.uk/housing/tenants-policies/>. If you do not have internet access or require documents in a different format, please contact us on: **0330 678 0008, option 2.**

Service charge consultations



From 2024/25, the Trust is launching a three-year programme of consultations on service charges. This means if you live in accommodation and pay a service or household charge for shared facilities or services we will work with you to ensure that the services we deliver are fit for purpose, deliver what the majority of tenants want and offer value for money.

We will be engaging with you in a variety of ways including by letter, email and in person to make this as accessible as possible.

If you are due to be part of one of these consultations, you will be contacted separately soon.

Handyperson services in Cambridgeshire



Age UK operates a Handyperson Service supporting disabled and older people in their own homes to live independently and safely for longer. It also completes minor DIY tasks, the jobs you maybe did in the past but feel unsafe to do so now. The Handyperson Service supports people living in Cambridge City, East Cambridgeshire, South Cambridgeshire, Huntingdon and Fenland.

Further information can be found here:

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/bp-assets/globalassets/cambridgeshire--peterborough-/original-blocks/cambridgeshire-handyperson-service.pdf>

To find out if there is a handyperson in your area please visit the Age UK website: www.ageuk.org.uk or call the Age UK Advice Line on **0800 678 1602**.



Cost of Living



As we move into the next financial year we recognise that there remains a continuing struggle with the rising cost of living. We are here to help and if you need advice about paying your rent or if you are worried about your finances then please get in contact with us. You can do this by:

- calling your Housing Officer on **0330 678 0008, option 2**
- emailing - housing@papworthtrust.org.uk

Please do contact us if you are experiencing any problems with paying your rent or other household bills. We can arrange to speak to you in a way and at a time that suits you.

Scrutiny Panel



The Scrutiny Panel is an independent team of tenant volunteers who work closely with the Trust to review the housing and maintenance service and the policies and performance in these areas. The Scrutiny Panel play a key role in ensuring that the Trust offers a service that represents good value for money.

There are currently 5 tenant Scrutiny Panel members, 3 of which joined in 2023. The Panel has an annual programme of work which includes quarterly meetings, conducting deep dive scrutiny reviews, and providing feedback on other service specific areas on an ad hoc basis.

Our Scrutiny Panel members recently told us why they wanted to be involved with us:

Linda Moss, Chair

“I decided to join the tenant Scrutiny Panel as I thought it was better than sitting at home and complaining. Being on the Panel allows me to challenge, change and improve the housing service that Papworth Trust provides for their tenants.”

Colin Hayward

“I remember reading this when I was thinking about being on the tenant scrutiny Panel:

- **Remember, every voice matters and your active involvement can contribute to positive changes in housing services.**

So, this why I am in. Coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress, working together is success.”

Jenny Victor

“I joined the Scrutiny Panel because I wanted to understand how the Trust is run and to engage in open and honest dialogue while reviewing its housing and maintenance service and analysing its policies and performance. I believe tenant representation is key for enjoying a mutually rewarding relationship with the Trust and putting systems in place designed to meet the needs of tenants.”

Margaret Parker

“I am on the Scrutiny Panel to help make a difference to the community where I live and to keep my brain active.”

To support the Panel members Papworth Trust provides a programme of informal and formal training. We work in partnership with TPAS (external tenant engagement organisation) who support us to provide the Panel with training and development to assist them in their roles.

The first quarter of this year has been a busy time for the Scrutiny Panel, they have:

- Been receiving training from TPAS to support them in their roles on the Panel, delivered over 3 separate workshops in January, February and April
- Held a quarterly Panel meeting on 14 March, the next meeting will take place on 27 June
- Reviewed and made changes to existing housing policies such as the tenant alteration policy and CCTV in Papworth Trust Housing policy
- Reviewed and made recommendations to the tenant information leaflet about cracks in your home
- Received updates about the Trust's Net Zero strategy, contractor tenders and the planned works programme including information about how the tenant consultation events for this programme went
- The Panel continue to monitor the action plan from their first scrutiny deep dive and are working to conduct their second scrutiny review in 2024
- The Panel continue to monitor the performance data for the housing and maintenance service and challenge us where we are not meeting the targets



**Scrutiny Panel meeting
March 2024**

The Panel will also be involved in a project to refresh the housing tenant handbook with their first session taking place in March. This project will not only refresh the content in the handbook but the Panel will be making recommendations for how the handbook looks in terms of visuals and how it is presented to tenants going forward.

The Scrutiny Panel has a dedicated area on the website where you can find out more about their work, who the current members are, minutes for Panel meetings and scrutiny review action plans.

Following feedback from tenants the Panel have made some changes to help increase the visibility of their work on this page.

You can view this by going to www.papworthtrust.org.uk select the housing tile, select the tenant involvement tile and click on the Scrutiny Panel tile or by going to:

www.papworthtrust.org.uk/Scrutiny%20Panel/



If you are interested in joining the Scrutiny Panel and would like more information about the recruitment and application process please contact Tracey Croucher by email at tenantengagement@papworthtrust.org.uk or by calling 0330 678 0008 option 2.

Time for Tenants



Over the last 2 years the Executive Team has been holding monthly face-to-face sessions in Papworth Everard where tenants could attend to speak with them directly about absolutely anything. We have received valuable feedback from tenants who attended these sessions and have been able to make some positive changes to our housing service.

For 2024 the Executive Team would like to provide tenants that live outside of Papworth Everard to have the same opportunity therefore the schedule will be a mix of face-to-face and virtual sessions. The face-to-face sessions will be from venues in Papworth Everard and the virtual sessions will be held using Microsoft Teams. Details are as follows:

Face-to-face drop-in sessions – tenants can attend any time in the time slot advertised:

- Saturday 18 May, 10am to 12noon – Bradbury Court, Westfields, Papworth Everard
- Wednesday 24 July, 5pm to 7pm – The Studio, Pendrill Court, Papworth Everard
- Saturday 28 September, 10am to 12noon – Turnhill room, Southbrook Field, Papworth Everard
- Thursday 28 November, 5pm to 7pm – Bradbury Court, Westfields, Papworth Everard

Virtual sessions, all 6pm to 7pm – tenants will need to book

- Tuesday 30 April
- Tuesday 25 June
- Tuesday 27 August
- Tuesday 29 October

If you wish to attend one of the virtual sessions you will need access to a smart phone, tablet, laptop or PC and have an email address. If you would like to book onto a virtual session email Tracey Croucher at tenantengagement@papworthtrust.org.uk or telephone **0330 678 0008 option 2** and you will receive a Microsoft Teams link to join.

Employment Support



A new Work and Health Programme called Pioneer is now being delivered in Cambridgeshire by Papworth Trust. This exciting new programme is designed to support economically inactive people into work using a method called place and train.

If you would like to discuss the support available then please get in contact with:

- **Scott Twinn**
- **Email:** Scott.twinn@papworthtrust.org.uk
- **Telephone:** 07707 290969

Social media



Did you know you can follow Papworth Trust on social media? We use Facebook and X to keep our customers updated with the latest information.

Follow us here:



Rent statement



Please find your quarterly rent statement for the period 1 January to 31 March 2024 enclosed.

A reminder that you can find our video on how to read your rent statement that was created for tenants by tenants on our website here:

<https://www.papworthtrust.org.uk/housing/>

We have also provided the frequently asked questions below to assist you in reading and understanding your statement.

How do I read my rent statement?

Your rent statement shows your weekly rental charge and any payments that have been made on your account between the two dates:

first column - date

second column - details of the payment or charge, e.g. the payment type and for any Housing Benefit/direct Universal Credit any period that the payment covers.

fifth column - the balance, a credit will have 'pre' after the amount, an arrears will have an 'arr' after the amount.

third column - if it is a payment the amount will be shown here

fourth column - if it is a charge the amount will be shown here

fifth column - the balance, a credit will have 'pre' after the amount, an arrears will have an 'arr' after the amount.

Question:

Do I have to do anything?

Answer:

No, the statement is for your records only. If any further action is required on your account you will be contacted by a member of the housing team. If you do have any queries please either contact the housing team by email at housing@papworthtrust.org.uk or by telephone on **0330 678 0008 (option 2)**.

Question:

Why does the final balance of my statement show an arrear?

Answer:

This may be due to when you pay your rent. Under the terms of your tenancy agreement you are responsible for ensuring that your rent is paid in advance so that there is never an arrear on your account. A member of the housing team will contact you, in due course, if any further action is required on your account.

Question:

My account is showing a credit, can I have a refund?

Answer:

There may be a credit on the account depending on when you pay your rent. You are required to pay your rent in advance so you are not automatically entitled to a refund even if there is a credit showing on your account. If you are due a refund you will be contacted by a member of the housing team.

Papworth Trust is consciously considering our impact on the environment, we will be making an active effort to reduce the amount of paper we use. If we hold a email address for you we will send you future newsletters by email, If you would prefer to receive a hard copy, or require any other adjustments, please let us know at:

tenantengagement@papworthtrust.org.uk

