



The Resident Board on a visit to Cardo offices

# Housing HIGHLIGHTS

Housing Services newsletter

[www.slough.gov.uk](http://www.slough.gov.uk)  
**Slough**  
Borough Council

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Issued by Slough Borough Council  
for our tenants and leaseholders

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# Introducing Cllr Robert Stedmond

Lead Member for Housing, Temporary Accommodation and Estate Renewal

**In my first Housing Highlights as the new Lead Member for Housing, Temporary Accommodation and Estate Renewal, I'd like to say thank you to Cllr Kelly for the great work he has been a part of during his time as Lead Member, and how excited I am to take on this role.**

I have spent my first few months seeing all the hard work the team does and have been working hard to move forward with the progress that has already been made.

In June, all housing staff attended a 'Complaints Handling' training, delivered by Housing Quality Network (HQN), who offer training and resources on complaints handling, aiming to improve the processes for housing providers. This

was a really great session to attend, allowing me to understand the issues that residents and the council face and how we can best respond to your concerns.

Since April, I am delighted to say that we have been progressing well in our work reducing housing voids. This is vital in allowing us to have a quicker turnaround, providing housing for those who need it. This is ongoing work that the team are dedicated to, and I look forward to telling you about the updates in the future.

I am particularly proud of the improvements we have made in the processing of applications. We have been working to streamline the process, which is ensuring that we are more efficient in our work. I

know how difficult it is for many of those who are waiting for applications to be processed, and I want to reassure you, the team is working tirelessly through every application.

Another great development is the improvements we have made to our IT systems. We have been working with the IT department to ensure that they are fit for purpose. These systems are vital in how we process the work that we do, so the investment in them is extremely important.

I am very aware of the progress yet to be made and I am committed to working alongside the great team here to make even more progress as the year progresses.

## Gas canister WARNING

**Residents are reminded never to store gas canisters in gardens shed, cupboards or communal areas as they are a potential serious hazard.**

Recently a gas cannister stored in a garden shed at a private property caused a fire after heating up in the sun and exploding. This affected four other properties, including one belonging to the council.

The Health and Safety Executive has advice on the proper handling and storage of gas canisters and cylinders at [www.hse.gov.uk/comah/sragtech/techmeascylinder](http://www.hse.gov.uk/comah/sragtech/techmeascylinder)



**Could you use your creative talents to help the council's tenancy management team design a poster?**

It would be used as a background designed to be displayed in all council owned blocks in Slough and would give key information to residents about their senior neighbourhood officers and upcoming estate inspections.

**Closing date: Monday 4 August.**

The winner will be announced on our website and published in the next Housing Highlights newsletter.

**What you need to do**

Draw anything inspired by council homes, council estates or Slough. As colourful as you like!

**To enter**

You must be aged 4-11 and could win 4 tickets to Jumpin Slough, with pizza and drinks.

Send a copy of your design to [\\_eastteam@slough.gov.uk](mailto:_eastteam@slough.gov.uk), hand it in at any council library or send to Tenancy Management, Observatory House, 25 Windsor Road, Slough, SL1 1EL.

Don't forget to put your name and contact details on the back!

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# Resident Involvement

## Meet your new resident involvement team

**We are excited to introduce our brand-new Resident Involvement Team, here to work with you to make sure your voice is heard!**

Whether you are a tenant or leaseholder, your views matter. Our team is here to listen, support, and help you get involved in shaping housing services. That might mean giving feedback, joining a group, taking part in events, or simply having your say on things that affect your home and community.

### Who are we?

We are a team of friendly staff who care about working with residents to make things better. We will be out and about in your neighbourhoods, and always happy to chat.

### What do we do?

- Support resident panels and forums
- Help you get involved in decision-making
- Share your feedback with housing managers
- Facilitate events and consultations
- Provide training and support for involved residents
- Provide updates on changes, improvements and policies.

### Why get involved?

Getting involved is a great way to:

- Help improve services
- Build stronger communities
- Learn new skills and meet new people
- Make sure residents voices are part of the conversation.

We will be sharing more soon about how you can take part.



Anita Jan  
Resident Involvement & Information Manager

In the meantime, if you would like to learn more or say hello, you can contact us at [getinvolved@slough.gov.uk](mailto:getinvolved@slough.gov.uk)

**Together, we can make a difference!**

## Resident Board visit Cardo offices

**Board members had the opportunity to visit Cardo offices in Langley, where Cardo offered them space to host their face-to-face board meeting.**

Board members were given the opportunity to have a tour of the offices, see where residents' calls come in and understand the process to schedule in repairs.

The meeting focused on updates from Lisa Keating, the Director of Housing and Heads of Service for other areas relating to tenancy management and repairs.

The Social Housing Regulator was in attendance online.

Minutes of the meetings can be found online at [www.slough.gov.uk/downloads/download/1207/resident-board-meeting-minutes](http://www.slough.gov.uk/downloads/download/1207/resident-board-meeting-minutes)

## Building Safety Strategy: Broom and Poplar House

**The Building Safety Act 2022 requires all landlords to have a clear High-Rise Building Safety Strategy in place. This strategy sets out how we will engage with residents, share vital safety information, and involve you in decisions that affect your home.**

We've developed our approach to reflect the unique needs of our high-rise residents, and that's why we've been out speaking directly with tenants at Broom House and Poplar House in recent weeks.

Our teams have been carrying out a tailored survey, designed to gather residents' views on how we communicate safety matters, what concerns are most important to residents and how we can improve.

This is just the beginning, we'll continue engaging with residents

throughout July and beyond, as your feedback is essential in helping us shape how building safety is managed and delivered in future. We are focused in building a safer and more informed community.



# Leasehold update

## Leaseholder virtual event - book your space

You will be pleased to hear we are holding a Leasehold online event on 19 August, from 6.30-8.30pm. We plan to provide an overview of how service charges are calculated, why they are recharged, explain section 20 consultation and major works. This is an open meeting for all Slough Borough Council leaseholders.

Please note the meeting will not be to discuss individual cases, however we will provide you an opportunity to let us know your areas and details of this will be sent to you nearer the time.

## New Leasehold Forum

We will also be looking to create a core group of leaseholders that we can continue to engage with on a quarterly basis, possibly in the early

evening, mainly through online meetings, with at least 10 leasehold representatives from different areas of the borough. We will discuss the forming of the meeting more at the online event in August.

If you are interested in attending the virtual event or being part of the core group, please email [getinvolved@slough.gov.uk](mailto:getinvolved@slough.gov.uk) and details of how to join will be sent to you.

## Leasehold Accounts

As you may be aware, the computer system on which service charges are managed, has been updated.

Due to the change, since March 2024 homeowners have a new 16 digit service charge account number, to which service charge payments need to be made. The new number

can be found at the top of your service charge invoice and letter. Please ensure your new service charge account number is used when making service charge payments.

## Actual Service Charges

The Actual Service Charges for the financial year 2024/25 will be sent to leaseholders at the end of September as usual. Once the Actuals have been sent, we are hoping to hold virtual leasehold surgeries this year, to discuss leaseholders' queries in relation to the Actual charges received. Surgery spaces can be booked with us in October, once you receive the service charges. Details of how to do this will be included in the Actual Service Charge pack sent to you in September.

## Damp and Mould Policy HAVE YOUR SAY

**The council has drafted a new damp and mould policy which sets out how we will tackle damp and mould in your homes.**

The consultation was launched online on 6 June.

To ensure this policy meets the needs of the service and is fit for purpose, we would welcome your views.

Visit the survey at [slough.citizenspace.com/housing/damp-mould-policy](https://slough.citizenspace.com/housing/damp-mould-policy) to review the policy and complete the short survey before 31 July.

If you would prefer to receive a hard copy of the survey, please email [vikki.swan@slough.gov.uk](mailto:vikki.swan@slough.gov.uk).

## JOIN TPAS FOR FREE

**The Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) promote, support and champion tenant involvement and empowerment in social housing across England.**

Membership is made up of local tenants and landlord organisations, covering three million homes.

Slough became a member of TPAS in 2024, and part of the membership package includes the opportunity for volunteers to become a Resident Member of TPAS.

Signing up entitles you to the following and much more.

- Receive invites to TPAS virtual and in person roundtables, focus groups and workshops.

- Participate in live free webinars and access pre-recorded member webinars.
- Newsletter to keep up to date with engagement news.
- Advice on engagement issues via their enquiry service.
- Attend free virtual and in person member only events throughout the year.
- Opportunities to share your experiences and opinions.

### Interested in becoming a member?

Email [getinvolved@slough.gov.uk](mailto:getinvolved@slough.gov.uk) and we will ensure you get the relevant link to sign up.



# Regulator for Social Housing:

## Inspection results are in and there is work for us to do!

In our last edition of Housing Highlights, we let you know that we had been visited by The Regulator of Social Housing to undertake an Inspection of our landlord services.

All social landlords will be inspected by the Regulator to check how well they are delivering the four consumer standards, which came into force in April 2024. The standards lay out the expected levels of service landlords must provide for residents.

### Safety and Quality Standard

- Stock Condition
- Safety
- Repairs service
- Adaptations

### Neighbourhood and Community Standard

- Communal Areas
- Stakeholder Engagement
- ASB and Hate Incidents
- Domestic Abuse

### Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard

- Fairness, respect and diverse needs
- Information
- Engagement with residents
- Complaints

### Tenancy Standard

- Allocations and Lettings
- Tenancy
- Tenancy Sustainment
- Mutual Exchange

The Regulator has rated the service **C3**, the third of a possible four ratings with the judgement *'There are serious failings in the landlord delivering the outcomes of the consumer standard and significant improvement is needed.'*

Under the safety and quality standard the report noted that "Slough Borough Council has a good understanding of the condition of its homes and that... overall, it is delivering an effective, efficient, and timely repairs service for the homes

and communal areas for which it is responsible."

The change in repairs contractor in October 2023 was also noted, with the inspectors writing they saw evidence of resulting improvements in tenant satisfaction.

Under the neighbourhood and community standard the report noted that evidence had been provided of partnership working with other council departments, the police and relevant organisations to tackle anti-social behaviour and hate incidents in neighbourhoods.

In the tenancy standard and transparency, influence and accountability standard, the inspectors found 'serious failings' in how the council manages its properties, allocations, how it takes tenants' views into account, provision of information and handling of complaints.

However, the report concludes that *"Since identifying the failings, Slough BC has engaged constructively with us, and we have assurance that there is a commitment to ensuring improved outcomes for tenants."*

*"Slough BC has provided evidence that it understands the issues it needs to address and is putting in place appropriate and resourced plans to rectify them. Task forces are already in place to address weaknesses in some areas, and we have assurance that action to complete outstanding Health and Safety remedial actions is already underway."*

Councillor Robert Stedmond, lead member for housing, said: "Our aim

is to put our tenants back at the heart of our service, engaging with them and listening to them to do much better and delivering the standards they deserve.

"We have been increasing the capacity and resources within the housing team and we will be using the results of this inspection to re-engage with our tenants as we implement plans to improve our services.

"We thank the regulator for a fair and thorough inspection and for continuing to work with us to improve with, and for, our tenants."

Councillor Dexter Smith, leader of the council, said: "Just a month ago, I chose to appoint councillor Stedmond as the lead member for housing, so our housing team and our tenants could get the specific attention and support they deserve.

"The report is clear we need to do more, and we will be doing more to proactively work with our tenants, learn about them and from their experiences so we can be better for them."

We will be working hard with and listening to our residents in the coming months and years to continue to improve services and drive up satisfaction with our performance as a landlord.

The full report from the Regulator for Social Housing is available at [www.gov.uk/government/publications/slough-borough-council/slough-borough-council-00md-regulatory-judgement-25-june-2025](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/slough-borough-council/slough-borough-council-00md-regulatory-judgement-25-june-2025)

# Measuring Standards

**The Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) Standard requires all social housing providers to collect and report 22 performance measures. Twelve of these will be via perception surveys and 10 relate to management performance.**

We submitted our results to the Regulator of Social Housing on 27 June (see infographics on the next two pages). The Regulator for Social Housing will be publishing results of all social housing providers and local authorities.

The survey questions and management performance information required is listed here.

## **TP - Satisfaction measured by tenant perception surveys**

**TP01:** Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by your landlord?

**TP02:** Has your landlord carried out a repair to your home in the last 12 months? If yes, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall repairs service from your landlord over the last 12 months?

**TP03:** Has your landlord carried out a repair to your home in the last 12 months? If yes, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the time taken to complete your most recent repair after you reported it?

**TP04:** How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that your landlord provides a home that is well-maintained?

## **RP - Keeping properties in good repair**

**RP01:** Homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard measured by: landlords' management information.

**RP02(1):** Proportion of non emergency repairs completed within target timescale measured by: landlords' management information.

**RP02(2):** Proportion of emergency repairs completed within the landlord's target timescale.

**TP05:** Thinking about the condition of the property or building you live in, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you that your landlord provides a home that is safe?

## **BS - Maintaining building safety**

**BS01:** Gas safety checks measured by: landlords' management information. This measure will be based on the percentage of homes that have had all the necessary gas safety checks.

**BS02:** Fire safety checks measured by: landlords' management information. This measure will be based on the percentage of homes in buildings that have had all the necessary fire risk assessments.

**BS03:** Asbestos safety checks measured by: landlords' management information. This measure will be based on the percentage of homes in buildings that have had all the necessary asbestos management surveys or re-inspections.

**BS04:** Water safety checks measured by: landlords' management information. This measure will be based on the percentage of homes that have had all the necessary legionella risk assessments.

**BS05:** Lift safety checks measured by: landlords' management information. This measure will be based on the percentage of homes in buildings where the communal passenger lifts have had all the necessary safety checks.

## **Respectful and helpful engagement**

**TP06:** How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that your landlord listens to your views and acts upon them?

**TP07:** How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that your landlord keeps you informed about things that matter to you?

**TP08:** To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following? "My landlord treats me fairly and with respect."

**TP09:** Have you made a complaint to your landlord in the last 12 months? If yes, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your landlord's approach to complaints handling?

## **CH - Effective handling of complaints**

**CH01:** Complaints relative to the size of the landlord measured by: landlords' management information. This measure will be based on the number of complaints the landlord receives for each 1,000 homes they own.

**CH02:** Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales measured by: landlords' management information.

**TP10:** Do you live in a building with communal areas, either inside or outside, that your landlord is responsible for maintaining? If yes, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you that your landlord keeps these communal areas clean and well-maintained?

**TP11:** How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that your landlord makes a positive contribution to your neighbourhood?

**TP12:** How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour?

## **NM - Responsible neighbourhood management**

**NM01:** Anti-social behaviour cases relative to the size of the landlord measured by: landlords' management information. This measure will be based on the number of anti-social behaviour cases opened for each 1,000 homes the landlord owns, including the number of cases that involve hate incidents.



# TENANT SATISFACTION SURVEY 2024

The Regulator of Social Housing requires all social housing providers, including local authorities, to gather resident feedback using their Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) framework, starting in the financial year 2023/24.

Tenant satisfaction measures are intended to make our performance more visible to you our tenants, and help you to hold us as your landlord to account.

Data was gathered between 9th October to 24th November 2024, thank you to those of you who have responded to the survey. We are required to submit the data to the Regulator by 30 June 2025.

The results will be used to drive service improvements. Senior management are currently working on an improvement plan, this will be published later this year.

A sample of tenants were invited to take part either online or by telephone.

Sample of tenants who  
responded

**714**

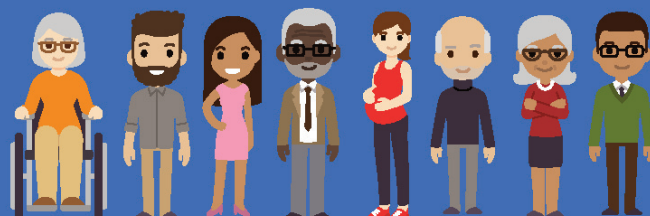
Data relating to Health and  
Safety checks of all stock

**5955**

TP01

**45.1%**

satisfied with the overall service  
provided by Slough Borough  
Council Housing



TP02

**52.6%**

satisfied with the overall repairs  
service



TP03

**44.9%**

satisfied with the time taken to  
complete most recent repair

RP01

**4.3%**

of homes do not meet the  
Decent Homes Standard



RP02(1)

**80.3%**

of non emergency repairs  
completed within the  
landlord's target timescale  
(20 days)

RP02(2)

**99.7%**

of emergency responsive  
repairs completed within  
the landlord's target  
timescale (24hrs)



**49.5%**

satisfied that the council provides a  
home that is well maintained

TP04



**58.7%**

satisfied that the council  
provides a home that is safe

TP05

BS01

**100%**of required gas  
safety checks  
carried outout, of 5,890  
properties

BS02

**100%**of fire risk  
assessments  
carried outon the required  
2,947 properties

BS03

**100%**of required  
asbestos  
management  
surveys or  
re-inspections  
carried out  
on 2,257, of 2,257,  
properties

BS04

**100%**of required  
legionella risk  
assessments  
carried out298 of 298  
properties

BS05

**100%**of communal  
passenger lift  
safety checks  
carried outcovering 273  
properties**37.4%**satisfied that  
the council listens to  
their views and acts  
upon them

TP06

**42.3%**satisfied that  
the council keeps them  
informed about things that  
matter to them

TP07

**53.3%**agree that  
the council treats  
them fairly and with  
respect

TP08



TP09

**19.8%**satisfied with the council's  
approach to complaints  
handling

Stage

**55.9**stage 1 complaints received per  
1,000 homes**1****30.0%**of stage 1 complaints responded to  
within the housing ombudsman  
complaint handling code timescales

CH01 &amp; CH02

Stage

**8.7**stage 2 complaints received per  
1,000 homes**2****32.7%**of stage 2 complaints responded to  
within the housing ombudsman  
complaint handling code timescales

CH01 &amp; CH02



TP10

**53.1%**satisfied that the council keeps  
communal areas clean and well  
maintained**42.0%**satisfied that the council  
makes a positive  
contribution  
to their neighbourhood

TP11

**40.0%**satisfied with the council's  
approach to handling anti-social  
behaviour

TP12

**14.3**of anti-social behaviour cases  
opened per 1,000 homes \***0.0**of anti-social behaviour cases that  
involve hate incidents opened per  
1,000 homes \*

NM01

**Important to note:****Anti-social behaviour and complaints \***

Data relating to tenant stock of 5,955 homes

**Weighting applied to survey responses, was age  
of respondent interlocked with building type.**



# COMPLAINT HANDLING

Each year social landlords must submit a complaints self-assessment to the Housing Ombudsman.

When carrying out last year's submission it was highlighted there were a number of areas where we were non-compliant. [Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code - self assessment 2024 - Slough Borough Council](https://www.slough.gov.uk/housing-complaints/housing-ombudsman-complaint-handling-code-self-assessment) ([www.slough.gov.uk/housing-complaints/housing-ombudsman-complaint-handling-code-self-assessment](https://www.slough.gov.uk/housing-complaints/housing-ombudsman-complaint-handling-code-self-assessment))

Since then, we have been looking at our processes and procedures to

ensure we meet the criteria set out by the Housing Ombudsman. The 2025-26 self-assessment will be published online in Autumn 2025.

## Help shape our new complaints policy

We have been reviewing the complaints policy and before we officially roll out the revised policy, we're opening it up for feedback. This is your chance to tell us what you think and help make sure the new approach works well for you as our tenants and leaseholders.

You can get involved by scanning the QR code or following [Housing](#)

[Services Complaints Policy Consultation - Slough Borough Council - Citizen Space](#) ([slough.citizenspace.com/housing/housing-services-complaints-policy-consultation](https://slough.citizenspace.com/housing/housing-services-complaints-policy-consultation)) to have your say.

The consultation will be open until 1 August.

We've made some important updates in how we deal with complaints and have put together a flow chart to give you a better understanding of the process and timescales.



### Complaint received but not limited to via phone, face-to-face, email, the council's website, or Advocate

- This should include:
- What we did wrong and when
  - What should have happened in your opinion
  - What policy or procedure has not been followed and why (if known)
  - How we can put it right
  - And any other outcomes you are wanting

### Stage 1 logged

Handled by designated officer  
Acknowledged within 5 working days  
Response issued within 10 working days of acknowledgment

### Is the Tenant or Leaseholder satisfied?

Yes - Complaint closed  
No - Stage 2

The Housing Ombudsman is available to provide independent advice and support. They can be contacted at any point during the complaint process.

### Stage 2 logged

Handled by a senior member of staff - The senior officer considering the complaint at stage 2 will not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage 1.  
Acknowledged within 5 working days  
Response issued within 20 working days of stage 2 acknowledgment, including details of how to escalate the matter to the Housing Ombudsman should the individual remain dissatisfied.

### Extensions

Where it is not possible to meet the timescales outlined above, due to annual leave or sickness absence etc, an extension of time should be agreed with the complainant and the date they can expect a full response confirmed with them in writing.

# ESTATES cleaning services

**We are preparing to reprocure our estates cleaning and window cleaning services. This is part of our ongoing commitment to maintaining high standards across all communal areas and ensuring best value for residents.**

Over the coming weeks, we will be reviewing service requirements and seeking proposals from qualified contractors. Our goal is to secure providers who deliver a reliable, efficient, and high-quality service.

Services will continue to be provided as usual by Cardo, until the new service provider is in place, which is anticipated to be early 2026.

We will keep you updated and thank you in advance for your patience and support during this time.

## Housing Ombudsman Service



We can help if you live in social housing and have a problem complaining to your landlord.

Our statutory Complaint Handling Code sets out how a landlord must respond to a complaint, including timescales.



We are free, fair, and impartial and can make orders to landlords to put things right.

Contact us via our online webform at [www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk) or send an email to [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)



You can call **0300 111 3000** or write to us at:  
**Housing Ombudsman Service,  
PO Box 1484, Preston, PR2 0ET**



## Contact information

### Housing Management

- North Slough email:  
[\\_northteam@slough.gov.uk](mailto:_northteam@slough.gov.uk)
- South Slough email:  
[\\_southteam@slough.gov.uk](mailto:_southteam@slough.gov.uk)
- East Slough email:  
[\\_eastteam@slough.gov.uk](mailto:_eastteam@slough.gov.uk)

#### North team:

- Haris Syed
- Sam Sharif
- Cleo Lewis
- Caroline Shannon (TSO)

#### South team:

- Sundeep Sharma
- Neil Weightman
- Lauren Hamilton
- Julia Costello (TSO)

### East team:

- Rachel Fox
- Catherine Kivuva
- Razwan Khan
- Chris Prempeh
- Michael Balogun
- Jessica Bunyan (TSO)

### James Elliman Homes

Officers: Nadia Marhri/Ade Naiwo  
Email: [\\_jehomes@slough.gov.uk](mailto:_jehomes@slough.gov.uk)

### Rent queries

- Queries about your rent direct debits, or refunds:  
[rentaccounting@slough.gov.uk](mailto:rentaccounting@slough.gov.uk)
- Queries about rent arrears:  
[rentrecovery@slough.gov.uk](mailto:rentrecovery@slough.gov.uk)

### Leaseholder enquiries

- Day to day issues email:  
[Homeownership@slough.gov.uk](mailto:Homeownership@slough.gov.uk)
- Service charge invoices and payment queries email:  
[revenues@slough.gov.uk](mailto:revenues@slough.gov.uk)
- Service charge costs/calculation queries email:  
[neighbourhoodrecharges@slough.gov.uk](mailto:neighbourhoodrecharges@slough.gov.uk)
- Right to Buy queries email:  
[rtb@slough.gov.uk](mailto:rtb@slough.gov.uk)

### Repair reporting and caretaking

- Call Cardo: 0800 9151215
- Email:  
[booking.slough@cardogroup.co.uk](mailto:booking.slough@cardogroup.co.uk)
- Web: [www.slough.gov.uk/xfp/form/177](http://www.slough.gov.uk/xfp/form/177)
- Follow up enquiry relating to repair/caretaking:  
[\\_RMIComplaints@slough.gov.uk](mailto:_RMIComplaints@slough.gov.uk)



# Financial support through Lightning Reach

**A single mother of two from Slough has spoken of how help from the Lightning Reach financial portal has changed her life.**

Our housing team is taking part in a trial with Lightning Reach and will be helping residents to access support.

Nidhi and her two children had experienced domestic abuse, and when her ex-partner stopped paying child maintenance, they were left in a vulnerable position. As household costs continued to rise, keeping up with day-to-day expenses became increasingly difficult.

Nidhi knew she needed support with rising costs and her reduced income. With a background in teaching, she looked for support available to those in education. An email from the council referred her to the Lightning Reach portal, which enabled her to quickly find and apply to the Teaching Staff Trust.

Nidhi said: "When I was applying for it, it didn't take me more than 10 minutes. It was so quick, and I have never seen anything more efficient and accessible in England yet."

She soon heard she had been awarded £1,500, of which £750 was paid directly to her council tax account, £500 was used to reduce outstanding debt and £250 was used to cover essential day-to-day costs for her family.

She said: "It was amazing - I received the email, they called me, they said this is happening. It has made a huge impact."

Thankful for the support and stability it gave her when she needed it the most, it allowed Nidhi to take control of her finances and focus on her family's future.

It also gave her the confidence to start supporting others. She now volunteers with two organisations helping women affected by domestic violence, offering guidance shaped by her own experience.

She said: "It gives me a sense of relief that I'm helping people with my experience. There is always a chance to bounce back and there are people out there who can help you. So, you are not alone."

To join Lightning Reach and find out what support you may be eligible for, you need to complete a simple 10-15-minute questionnaire.

Once the profile is complete, you will be able to see the available support you may be eligible for in one place, get updated when more support is added, and apply for multiple sources of support directly through the portal.

This can include targeted help with energy bills, home improvements to boost energy efficiency, warm clothing, and essential supplies.

Visit the Lightning Reach website to find out more ([www.lightningreach.org/application-portal?referral=sloughemail](http://www.lightningreach.org/application-portal?referral=sloughemail)).

## Review OUR POLICIES

**We are reviewing our policies within the housing directorate, and we are keen to get residents involved in this process.**

We will have a range of options to get involved, which could include in-person and online sessions, and surveys.

If you are interested in finding out how you could help and give feedback, please email [getinvolved@slough.gov.uk](mailto:getinvolved@slough.gov.uk)

## HOUSING SURGERIES

**Senior Neighbourhood Officers from the tenancy management team will be at local community hubs once a month, so residents can talk about their property, tenancy or neighbourhood.**

The housing surgeries will be running on the fourth Thursday of each month in Britwell and Chalvey, and on the fourth Wednesday of each month in Langley, from 10am-4pm.

The next dates are:

- **23 July/27 Aug/24 Sep/22 Oct/26 Nov/17 Dec:** Langley Hub, Langley Library, Trelawney Avenue, SL3 7UF
- **24 July/28 Aug/25 Sep/23 Oct/27 Nov/18 Dec:** Britwell Hub, Britwell Centre, Wentworth Avenue, SL2 2DS
- **24 July/28 Aug/25 Sep/23 Oct/27 Nov/18 Dec:** Chalvey Community Hub, Ladbroke Road, SL1 2SR

The screenshot shows the Lightning Reach website. At the top, it says 'Lightning' with a logo and 'lightningreach.org'. Below this is a heading 'Do you need some extra support with your bills and cost of living?'. A subtext explains: 'Lightning Reach is a free online portal that connects you to financial support from various sources, quickly and securely - all in one place.' There are two columns of information. The left column, 'How does it work?', lists three steps: 1. Sign up (Create a secure profile in just 10-15 minutes), 2. Support Match (Discover what support you have been matched with), and 3. Apply (Provide supporting evidence and submit your application(s)). The right column, 'How can this help me?', lists four benefits: Easy to find and apply for support, Trusted and secure portal, Minimise form filling & paperwork, and Apply from any device. Below these are logos for 'Some of our support providers' including Charis, NCA, and TST. At the bottom left, there is a QR code and a 'Sign up today' button. At the bottom right, there is a testimonial from Lynn: 'I was in debt with my electric and was worried to heat my home in the winter. Now I can heat my home this winter.' and mentions she received over £200 towards her energy bills from British Gas Energy Trust.

# CARDO in the community

## Industry electrical placement



An electrical trades student at Langley College, Hisham, joined Cardo Slough for some work experience with the electrical operatives.

After interview, completing his safety induction and personal risk assessment, and being issued with uniform, PPE and ID, Hisham was soon out and about with his mentor carrying out repairs and safety checks in the busy responsive repair's workplace. Hisham gained valuable work life learning and experience, building confidence and adding positive content to his CV. Langley College representative Fiona Doherty, Industry Placement Adviser, attended while Hisham was presented with his certificate, gift voucher and a card signed by the Cardo Slough team.



## Work experience placement



Slough Children First helped arrange a two-week plumbing work experience placement for Jasman with Cardo. Jasman said: "I worked with a few operatives, Billy, Paul, Ahmed, Jitesh and Ray. Everyone I worked with were polite and had great knowledge which I took in from all of them. They were good mentors, and I appreciate their time in guiding me. I had a really great time at Cardo, and I hope to have more. I really enjoyed learning something new every day and helping people."



## New apprentices



Two young people who excelled during their industry work experience placement with Cardo Slough, have now joined as apprentices, after completing their college courses and obtaining excellent results. They have been placed with the same operative mentors as they had during their work experience placements. Welcome to Adam, whose mentor is Jack Dexter, and Mia, whose mentor is Ray Wiggins.

## Langley College guest speakers



Cardo staff gave a talk to a room of prospective apprentices at Langley College where they shared their experiences, the benefits apprenticeships have brought to the business and answered questions.

In a thank you message to the team, Charlotte McLoughlin, Business Development Team Leader - Apprenticeships, said: "The talk was a real success, and the students found it incredibly valuable. We've already had some great feedback from them. It was a real pleasure to have Cardo's presence at the open day - it made a strong impression and really brought the session to life for the students."