



Housing HIGHLIGHTS

Housing Services newsletter

Slough www.slough.gov.uk
Borough Council

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Issued by Slough Borough Council
for our tenants and leaseholders

Residents at the heart of everything we do

A message from Councillor Stedmond, Lead Councillor for Housing

Welcome to the January edition of Housing Highlights.

Over recent months, I have been really pleased by the level of involvement, feedback, and commitment shown by tenants and leaseholders across Slough. Our Housing and Resident Involvement teams have been out in our communities, listening carefully and working alongside residents to improve the services that matter most to them.

Residents have played a key role in shaping the future of housing services, taking part in discussions about housing priorities and sharing views directly with senior housing leaders. This open and honest engagement has helped us better understand what's working well and where we need to do better.



Many residents also joined us on estate inspections, walking in the neighbourhoods with Senior Neighbourhood Officers, raising concerns, and highlighting what makes a good place to live. These conversations helped strengthen our shared approach to improving estate standards and maintaining pride in our communities.

We also worked closely with residents to look at how the repairs

service feels from a tenant and leaseholder perspective. By sharing real experiences, residents helped identify practical improvements to make the process clearer, quicker, and more responsive. This feedback is already helping to shape service changes.

Community events continued to provide valuable opportunities for residents to speak openly about issues such as repairs, grounds maintenance, and anti-social behaviour. Your views have been taken seriously, and teams are working together to respond and make improvements.

I was particularly grateful to residents who took part in discussions around Awaab's Law and the importance of tackling damp and mould. Your engagement reinforced our shared commitment to making sure every resident lives in a safe, healthy home.

Your voice truly matters. Resident involvement is not an add-on, it's central to how we deliver housing services in Slough. Thank you to everyone who has taken the time to get involved. By working together, we are building stronger, safer communities where residents come first.

Damp and Mould Policy consultation

We want to hear from tenants about our Damp and Mould Policy and how well it works in practice.

This survey is about whether our policy is clear, easy to understand, and explains what both the council and tenants are responsible for. It also looks at whether the timescales, processes and actions set out in the policy feel realistic and fair, based on your experiences.

Your feedback will help us to understand what is working well and where improvements are needed, so that damp and mould issues are identified, reported and are dealt with properly. We aim to use your responses to improve how we manage damp and mould across council homes.

To access the policy and share your views in the survey, please visit [Citizen Space \(slough.citizenspace.com/housing/018cc384\)](https://slough.citizenspace.com/housing/018cc384).

Closing date Saturday 28 February.

Resident engagement update.....

Our resident involvement team want to thank all residents who have been getting involved with the housing team, making visits, attending meetings and giving feedback on policies.

This year, we will continue to work together to improve services, strengthen compliance, and create positive experiences for our communities.

Resident Board members were invited to attend in-person sessions this month, including to visit to Hawker House to view compliance records and processes and to the council's customer services call centre to shadow and get an overview of a session at the call centre.

Resident Board recruitment sessions have also taken place at The Curve. These were held on 24 and 27 January, but don't worry if you missed out. You can get involved anytime.

What does the Resident Board do?

- Has **6-8 meetings per year** to review performance, operations and improvement plans (mostly online, some in person at Observatory House).
- **Monitors progress** and ensures the delivery of the Resident Involvement Strategy and Action Plan.
- **Collaborates with senior council officers** to make real change happen.
- **Represents residents' views** in shaping housing policies and services.

Get involved to...

- **influence decisions** that affect your home and community
- **gain new skills** and experience in a supportive environment
- **meet other residents** passionate about improving local services

- **ensure resident voices** are heard at the highest level.

Resident Board members receive an induction, as well as training, including travel and childcare, to ensure participation is accessible. Expenses are covered.

Who can apply?

Any tenant or leaseholder living in council-managed housing who wants to make a positive difference for their community.

If you are interested in becoming a board member, or being part of our various scrutiny panels, please email getinvolved@slough.gov.uk and a member of the Resident Involvement Team will contact you.

Or call 01753 475111 (option 3) ask for the Resident Involvement Team.

Find out more about resident involvement on the [council's website](http://www.slough.gov.uk/housing/resident-involvement) (www.slough.gov.uk/housing/resident-involvement).

any resident would like to become more involved with being the go between the resident and council to highlight problems.

Christine added: "We also did a walkabout round Spackmans Way. Noting any fly tipping we saw and taking pictures on Photo Book. Sunny also walked us around to a couple of new houses built further around nearer to Chalvey High Street.

"I found the whole experience very interesting. Sunny was professional and very passionate about his work."

Out in the neighbourhood

Resident Board member Christine shadowed and did a walk about in Chalvey (South Estate) with Sunny, a senior neighbourhood housing officer, and Nikki, from resident engagement.

Christine said: "We visited Brook House residential home, which had just had a refurbishment of new carpets and walls decorated. We met a number of residents as they were to start a seated exercise class in the community room. Sunny was very approachable and

had a good friendly rapport with all residents that we met.

"We noted how cold it was in the main entrance to the building and the community area for the residents' class. Sunny enquired how long it had been without heating and said he would follow up with Cardo."

Christine made observations on site, such as a back gate being open, and the lift being out of order, which could have a negative impact on those with mobility issues. The team took those concerns away to follow up on.

Nikki promoted the opportunity of being a Resident Champion to see if

Housing Annual Report 2024-2025

Introduction from Lisa Keating, Director of Housing

I am pleased to introduce our Housing Annual Report for 2024-2025. This year has been one of significant change as we prepared for the new national Consumer Standards, strengthened our approach to resident involvement, and focused on improving the safety and quality of our homes.

Since joining Slough in summer 2024, I have seen the commitment of our teams to delivering better services and building trust with residents. This report provides clear information about what we have achieved, where we have fallen short, and how we will improve.

1 Listening to residents

Resident Involvement

- We launched our three year Resident Involvement Strategy (2024-2027).
- A Resident Involvement and Participation Manager joined in January 2024.
- Recruitment delays slowed progress on the first year action plan.
- All housing staff attended TPAS training on involvement, customer experience and the new Consumer Standards.
- Senior managers now attend Resident Board meetings to share performance and improvement plans.



Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)

- Surveys took place in October-November 2024.
- Results remain in the lower quartile nationally, though there were small improvements in repairs and listening to residents.
- The results show the need for continued and focused improvement.



2 Communicating with residents

Customer Contact

9,698

Housing calls with 79% answered and an average wait of 6 minutes 57 seconds



139,086
total contacts to Customer Services



Enquiry response times reduced from 10 days to 5 days

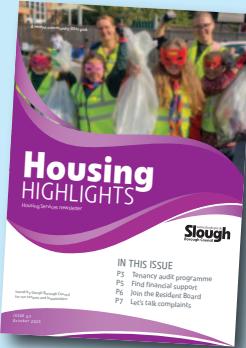


New 15 and 30 minute appointment slots introduced for residents needing additional support



Housing Highlights Newsletter

- Published quarterly online and delivered in hard copy to residents who need it.
- Our email database of residents continues to grow.





Improving homes and keeping residents safe



Major works

£12 million

invested in improvements including roofs, windows, doors, kitchens, bathrooms, boilers and solar panels



Darvills Lane:
full refurbishment completed

4 Repairs and maintenance

Repairs performance

22,294

repairs completed



£16.5m

of planned maintenance delivered



100%
gas safety compliance



85%
customer satisfaction



Average completion time for non urgent repairs:

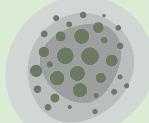
23 days

Challenges

- Recruitment and retention of skilled trades.
- High demand for plumbing and electrical repairs.
- Voids performance affected by staffing changes.

Damp and mould

- A dedicated contractor team was created to respond to damp and mould.
- Humidity sensors installed in several homes.
- Joint advice sessions held with NHS partners for families with young children.



Building safety



- High rise blocks (Broom and Poplar) brought up to compliance under the Building Safety Act.
- Thousands of safety checks completed across gas, electrics, fire safety, lifts, water safety and asbestos.

5 Allocations and Lettings

355 total lets

(including homeless households, transfers and private sector lets)



Housing register backlog reduced by
40%



6 Home ownership



- Processed more than 300 Right to Buy (following RTB discount reductions on 21 November 2024).
- Improved efficiency, streamlined processes, and faster access to leaseholder information.
- Introduced flexible payment options: direct debit, online, and telephone.
- Issuing Section 20 consultations.
- Strengthening arrears recovery processes.



8 Tackling fraud



- Two Tenancy Investigation Officers recruited.
- Focus on illegal subletting, false applications, abandonment and fraudulent Right to Buy claims.

6

7 Anti Social Behaviour (ASB)

Key actions



Clear, Hold, Build initiative launched in Langley, named Safer Langley

Strong partnership working with police, NHS and community groups

Enforcement this year included:

36 Community Protection Notice (CPN) warnings
7 full CPNs
5 Closure Orders
2 Civil Injunctions
1 Criminal Behaviour Order
1 PSPO for street drinking



9 Supporting vulnerable residents

- Support included benefits, budgeting, grants, adaptations and referrals.
- Focus on building trust and helping residents make long term positive changes.

118 tenants

supported by Tenancy Sustainment Officers



10

Housing Management



Estate Management



631

estate inspections completed; 91% rated "good"



Tenancy audits introduced to confirm occupancy and identify support needs.

Voids

- Backlog reduced from 153 to 96 empty homes.
- More properties made ready to let.



11

Homelessness



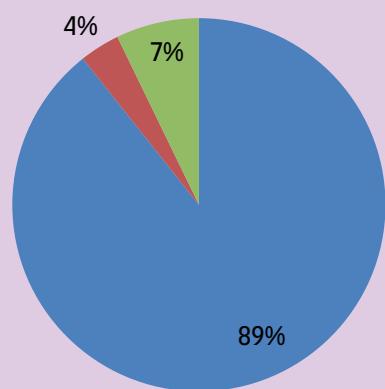
171

preventions achieved (a 43.7% increase)

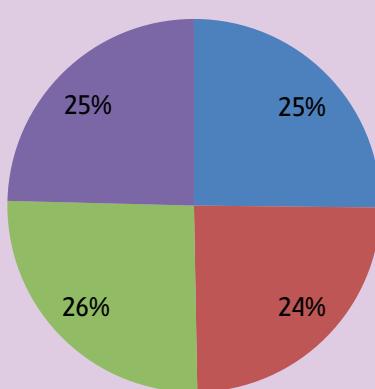
Pressures include cost of living, lack of affordable homes and staffing shortages

Repairs and Maintenance and Housing Revenue Account Budget

Income



Expenditure



■ Dwelling Rents

■ Garage Rents

■ Service Charges

■ Debt Charges

■ Major Works

■ Management

■ Repairs

Conclusion

This has been a year of progress, but also a year that has highlighted where we must do better. The new Consumer Standards set clear expectations for safety, quality, transparency and resident involvement. Our Tenant Satisfaction Measures, complaints, inspections and resident feedback show that we still have work to do to meet those expectations consistently.

We are committed to making the necessary improvements. We will continue to strengthen our systems, invest in our homes, improve communication, and build a stronger culture of involvement across housing. Most importantly, we will ensure residents have more opportunities to influence decisions and challenge us where services are not meeting the standard they should.

We are fully up to the challenge. With clear plans, dedicated staff and a renewed focus on accountability, we will continue working to deliver the safe, high quality and transparent housing service that residents in Slough deserve.

Don't flush wet wipes

.....
Drainage issues are being caused by people flushing wet wipes down the toilet.

Our repairs contractor Cardo is finding an increase in blockages because of wet wipes, and this is costing more money to deal with.

There is no such thing as a 'flushable' wipe, because they still contain plastic, which takes hundreds of years to break down properly.

Thames Water also encourages residents to only flush toilet paper - not wet wipes, period products or cotton pads as they can clog pipes, block sewers and cause flooding in your home.

Their top three tips are:

- only flush the three Ps - that's pee, poo and (toilet) paper

- put fats, oils and grease in the bin, and bin your food leftovers too. Hot water and washing up liquid won't stop scraps building up in your pipes. Just remember to let anything hot cool down before you throw it away
- get rid of hazardous waste safely - take any chemicals, solvents, engine oil and paint to your local refuse or recycling site. Medicines, syringes and needles should go to your pharmacist, hospital or health authority.

According to Thames Water, blockages cause more than 60% of all sewer floods and they clear 75,000 blockages every year.

A national campaign focuses on this issue, stating 'Flushing wipes blocks pipes. Bin the wipe.'

Find out more at binthewipe.org

Flushing wipes blocks pipes.
Bin the wipe.

Find out more
binthewipe.org



Complete the budget survey

.....
Residents can find out more about initial budget proposals and comment on them in an online survey.

The survey explains more about different directorates within the council and what services each of them provide, as well as some of the initial proposed savings in the directorates.

Councillor Puja Bedi, deputy leader and lead member for finance, said: "Setting a balanced budget is part of our legal duty and requires close working with departments across the council.

"We must also factor in ongoing challenges, including rising demand and costs for high-pressure services such as temporary accommodation and adult social care.

"We are continuing to look carefully at where savings and service efficiencies can be made, while ensuring we deliver value-for-money services for residents. This work will help us develop a balanced budget proposal for 2026/27 that protects the most essential services and remains financially sustainable.

"The survey gives residents the opportunity to see how their money is spent and to share their views on some initial proposals."

Work is ongoing to present a balanced budget to Cabinet in February.

Comments on the survey are open for three weeks, until Friday 30 January. [Access the survey via Citizen Space \(slough.citizenspace.com/corporate/budget-26-27/\).](http://slough.citizenspace.com/corporate/budget-26-27/)

Budget Cabinet is on 16 February, with Budget Council on 26 February.

The final 2026/27 budget must legally be set by 11 March.

Questions about the survey can be sent to budgetconsultation@slough.gov.uk

Complaints: lessons learned

For the last three months, the housing team has been reviewing complaints cases to identify lessons learned, as part of weekly complaints task force meetings.

As part of this exercise, responses to Stage 1 and Stage 2 housing complaints, across all service areas, have been reviewed.

These reviews aim to improve responses by considering how the response would make the resident feel and assessing if the key points and desired outcomes of the complaint have been addressed. The reviews identify what went well, what went wrong and what could be improved. The key aim of this exercise is to identify key lessons learned from complaint responses and improve the quality of responses.

During this process we have identified some key areas of success throughout our responses. These have included: acknowledging the key concerns of the resident to demonstrate understanding and validating the complainant's concerns, providing detailed

descriptions of any decided actions to rectify the issue and promising to use complaints cases as an opportunity to improve service delivery, demonstrating honesty and accountability.

Some reoccurring themes for improvement have been identified. Some of these include assuring all key points of the complaint have been addressed to ensure residents don't feel dismissed, prioritising empathetic and sympathetic language where appropriate to add a human response, prioritising explaining and apologising for the reason for a failure in service to demonstrate accountability and ensuring that the structure of complaints is logical and easy to understand.

Throughout the past three months, the quality of responses has noticeably improved.

This weekly exercise will continue, aiming to improve the customer service and complaints handling of the housing team at Slough Borough Council.

How to tell us about your complaint

You can:

- complete the [Housing complaints form](http://www.slough.gov.uk/xfp/form/179) (www.slough.gov.uk/xfp/form/179). This is our preferred way of contact, as we ask you for all the information we need. Once submitted, you will receive a reference number, so you know we have received it.

But if you would rather not or cannot complete the form, you can tell us about your complaint by:

- calling us on 01753 475111 and selecting option 3. We will ask you to tell us your complaint and send it to the Team to be logged on your behalf
- visiting a [Community hub](http://www.slough.gov.uk/directory/1/council-buildings/category/6) (www.slough.gov.uk/directory/1/council-buildings/category/6) to make your complaint. Or if you can book an appointment through our [Customer access book an appointment form](http://www.slough.gov.uk/xfp/form/158) (www.slough.gov.uk/xfp/form/158)
- through social media; [X](http://www.twitter.com/sloughcouncil) (www.twitter.com/sloughcouncil), [Facebook](http://www.facebook.com/sloughcouncil) (www.facebook.com/sloughcouncil) and [Instagram](http://www.instagram.com/sloughcouncil) (www.instagram.com/sloughcouncil).
- in a letter sent to Housing Complaints, Slough Borough Council, Observatory House, 25 Windsor Road, SL1 2EL
- through an advocate, friend or family member where the resident's authority to do so has been obtained.

Tenancy Audit Programme

The tenancy audit programme is underway, which involves members of our housing team visiting all residents across the borough.

The purpose of these visits is to:

- ensure we have accurate and up-to-date information for every household
- better understand our residents' needs so we can tailor the services we provide.

These visits will take place over the next six months (and may be extended if required) to make sure every resident has the opportunity to be seen.

Leaseholder updates

We would like to bring to your attention a few updates for council leaseholders.

Leasehold Forum

We are in the process of setting up a Leasehold Forum.

The purpose of the Forum is to give you, the leaseholder, a voice and allow you to have an input into areas affecting leaseholders at Slough Borough Council. The forum will not look at individual cases but will look at the wider issues affecting all leaseholders.

The forum will meet quarterly in the evening.

We welcome those who would like to be part of the Leasehold Forum to email us at LeaseholdForum@slough.gov.uk, briefly explaining why you would like to be part of it.

Meet the Homeownership Team in person

We are holding Leasehold Surgeries at The Curve Library in Slough.

Leaseholders are welcome to book an appointment to discuss issues affecting them in person.

To book an appointment, please email LeaseholdSurgeries@slough.gov.uk, with your:

- Name
- Address
- Telephone Number
- Brief description of your query.

Once you have contacted us at LeaseholdSurgeries@slough.gov.uk with the above details, we will contact you to arrange a date and time for your appointment.

Leasehold questionnaire

Please complete and return the [resident questionnaire](#).

You can also scan the QR code to access the survey.

We strongly encourage leaseholders to complete the questionnaire as it is important for us as a landlord, to know who our residents are, to help improve our service to you.



HOUSING SURGERIES BRITWELL HUB

Britwell Centre, Wentworth Avenue, SL2 2DS

10am-4pm

This is a drop-in session for council tenants and leaseholders to discuss enquiries about their property, tenancy or neighbourhood with a senior neighbourhood officer.

Scan to register your interest for opportunities to monitor and influence service improvements



Dates

22 January	23 July
26 February	27 August
26 March	24 September
23 April	29 October
28 May	26 November
25 June	17 December



HOUSING SURGERIES CHALVEY COMMUNITY HUB

Ladbrooke Road, SL1 2SR

10am-4pm

This is a drop-in session for council tenants and leaseholders to discuss enquiries about their property, tenancy or neighbourhood with a senior neighbourhood officer.

Scan to register your interest for opportunities to monitor and influence service improvements



Dates

22 January	23 July
26 February	27 August
26 March	24 September
23 April	29 October
28 May	26 November
25 June	17 December



HOUSING SURGERIES LANGLEY HUB

Langley Library, Trelawny Avenue, SL3 7UF

10am-4pm

This is a drop-in session for council tenants and leaseholders to discuss enquiries about their property, tenancy or neighbourhood with a senior neighbourhood officer.

Scan to register your interest for opportunities to monitor and influence service improvements



Dates

21 January	22 July
25 February	26 August
25 March	23 September
22 April	28 October
27 May	25 November
24 June	16 December



Safety in your home

Tragedies happen every year across the country because of unsecured windows and people falling through or falling from balconies.

Often it is children, or vulnerable adults, who end up hurt.

Window restrictors are installed in properties above ground level to prevent unnecessary falls. They only open a certain amount, so it's important not to tamper with them.

Figures from the National Child Mortality Database show that in the last six years, there were 16 deaths of children under 11 years in the UK. Of these, 12 were under five years old and four were aged 5-10.

The deaths occurred across the year, with six in spring, four in summer, four in autumn and two in winter.

No window restrictor lock was present in four cases, and in eight cases, it was present but broken, disabled or not in use.

The Child Accident Prevention Trust has the following advice:

- keep low furniture away from windows so that children can't climb up and fall out - even on the ground floor
- if you can, install window restrictors (to limit how far they can open) or locks
- if you opt for a lock, keep the keys somewhere you can find them in case there's a fire and you need to get out

- if your window won't lock or you need to open the window wider because of heat or cooking, don't leave young children alone in the room
- keep young children away from balconies unless they are supervised and keep balcony doors locked when not in use.

Remember the restrictors or locks are there for everyone's safety. Check on yours today.

Council officers will be checking window restrictors for their correct operation during visits.

If you live in a property above ground level, tenants should report any issues or damage to their window restrictors as soon as possible to Cardo on 0800 915 1215.



Open windows warning

-  **Keep low furniture away from open windows so that children can't climb up and fall out**
-  **Install window catches (to limit how far they can open) and locks if you can**
-  **If you opt for a lock keep the keys somewhere you can find them in case of emergencies**



capt.org.uk

[@ChildAccidentPreventionTrust](https://www.facebook.com/ChildAccidentPreventionTrust)

[@capt_charity](https://www.instagram.com/capt_charity)



Grow your family with adoption



Can you give a loving home to a child?

Coram Ambitious for Adoption welcomes people with a whole range of backgrounds and life experiences, who are able to reflect and support the needs of the children waiting for adoption.

When you adopt with us you won't be alone. We'll guide you through the adoption process - all the way to becoming a family, and beyond.

If you want to find out more, scan the QR code or visit coramadoption.org.uk today.

**Slough Children First are proud to be part of the regional adoption agency
Coram Ambitious for Adoption.**



coramadoption.org.uk

FIND OUT MORE

Visit www.slough.gov.uk/housing where you'll find lots of information for council tenants and leaseholders, including:

- council home rent
- council home repairs
- social housing
- homeless or at risk

- council leaseholders
- housing benefit
- private housing
- living independently
- low-cost home ownership
- renting a secure garage
- resident involvement
- and more!

Our website has a wealth of information about all council services.

In the report section at www.slough.gov.uk/report you can use the online forms at any time to raise issues, including with bins, highways, anti-social behaviour, streetlights, fly-tipping, fraud and abandoned vehicles.