

News



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Delivering the best for our customers and communities

We're celebrating our 20th birthday with the launch of a new corporate plan

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Our 'My Voice Matters' website is now live!

Our 'five days of prizes' launch saw over 200 tenants sign up in the first week! Find out how to get involved

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Recognising and reporting damp and mould

If you've spotted damp or mould, please tell us so we can visit your home to inspect your concerns

Ways to get in touch



Reception

Our customer reception is now open from Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm. The Good Help Hub is also based in our reception every weekday from 9am-5pm, so don't forget to drop in to your one-stop shop for health, wellbeing, housing, cost of living, safety, employment and skills, community and environmental support when you visit us.



Live chat

You can speak to a customer service officer online through live chat on our website and social media on Monday-Tuesday (9am-5pm), Wednesday (9am-3pm) and Thursday-Friday (9am-5pm).



MyCobalt

Report a repair, pay your rent, check your rent balance and send a message to our customer service team 24/7. Visit www.cobalthousing.org.uk/mycobalt to sign up today.



Telephone

Call us on **0330 303 2222** to speak to our customer service team, or to report an emergency, including out of hours. If you are in a queue, you can follow the instructions to use our call back feature to avoid waiting on hold.

Staff training closure

Please note our offices and reception will be closed on **Friday 16th June** for staff training. If you have an emergency (i.e. loss of power, major leak or a break-in), you can call **0330 303 2222** and you will be put through to our out of hours contractor who will help to resolve your issue wherever possible.

Our offices and reception will reopen for normal service on **Monday 19th June**.



Delivering the best for our customers and communities

This year we're celebrating our 20th Anniversary with a **new corporate plan**, which sets out what we want to achieve over the next five years.

We are ambitious and are embracing change so we can deliver the best services possible, and we've developed the plan together with colleagues, customers and partners.

We have developed four new corporate priorities which will help us focus on delivering our ambitious plan.

Please take a look at the booklet inside your rent statement to hear more about our plans, and follow us on social media for the launch of the full document.

We plan to hold an event later this year to celebrate, so stay tuned for more info!

"2023-2028 will see us investing significantly in our existing, and new homes, new technology and systems, and we will also be refurbishing our current HQ to provide a new community based collaborative hub for our customers, colleagues and the wider community.

Our plan sets a new vision for the coming years. We know it will be challenging to deliver, but we are positive and excited to be in a strong position to do so."

Claire Griffiths,
Chief Executive Officer

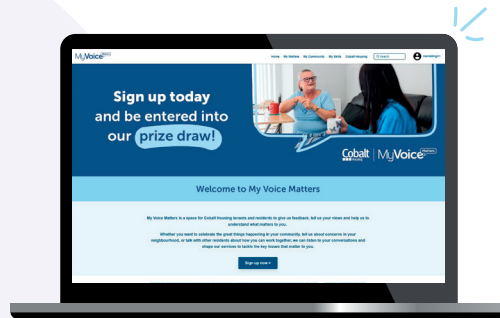
Sign up to My Voice Matters today!

MyVoice Matters

On Monday 3rd April, we launched our new engagement portal, My Voice Matters!

Whether you want to celebrate the great things happening in your community, tell us about concerns in your neighbourhood, or talk with other residents about how you can work together, we can listen to your conversations and shape our services to tackle the key issues that matter to you.

My Voice Matters will also offer a new space for us to engage with tenants



and residents about our services, inviting feedback on new service offers or proposed changes, new policies and strategies, and other areas we need your feedback to shape our decisions.

We'd like to say a big thank you to our involved tenants for supporting this project and helping us to get it to where it is now.

Sign up today!

for a chance to win

We will be running a monthly prize draw for tenants and local residents who have signed up to My Voice Matters.

Visit www.myvoicematters.org.uk to sign up today.



A **big congratulations** to all the prize winners from our 'Five days of prizes' launch event, which saw us give away bikes, a smart phone, vouchers, charity donations and even an airfryer!

Bringing new homes to Croxteth



We are delighted to announce that we have signed an agreement with national regeneration housebuilder, Lovell Partnerships, to deliver 88 new homes as part of a mixed tenure scheme in Croxteth. This contract will make a significant contribution to our ongoing regeneration proposals for the wider Stonedale neighbourhood.

Located next to the Showcase cinema on the East Lancashire Road, the 'Abbeystead Gardens' scheme which includes funding from Homes England and the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, will create 88 two, three and four-bed homes which will be available for affordable rent, Rent to Buy and shared ownership, which broadens the types of tenures we will offer.

Home ownership might be more affordable than you think

Shared ownership and Rent to Buy can help tenants access an affordable route to home ownership. Shared ownership means you part-buy and part-rent your home, helping you to buy a share of a home you can afford. Rent to Buy helps you to save for a deposit to purchase your home. The rent you pay is discounted, leaving you with money each month to save up for a deposit for a mortgage.

If you'd like to hear more, please register your interest by emailing developmentandregeneration@cobalthousing.org.uk, and we can provide you with some information about the Abbeystead Gardens site and some illustrations on how much it might cost you. It might be less than you think!

Recognising and reporting damp and mould

Damp, mould and condensation can cause serious health problems for you and your family, as well as damage to your home and your belongings. That's why it's important to understand the different types of damp, what causes it, and how to report it to us as quickly as possible.



Rising damp rises up from the ground into the walls of your home.



Penetrating damp gets through the walls via missing pointing, roof leaks or other building defects.



Defective plumbing is caused by faulty plumbing, commonly occurring in bathrooms and kitchens, or from defective guttering.



Condensation happens when moisture in the air collects as droplets when it comes into contact with a cold surface. Repeated condensation can cause mould to grow.



How to report it

If you have any concerns about damp, mould or condensation in your property, please report it to us immediately. Please email your details, and any images, to homerepairs@cobalthousing.org.uk



Celebrating the success of 'Our Croxteth'

In May last year, 20 local groups and community projects successfully bid for up to £5000 through the 'Our Croxteth' initiative, made up of £50,000 worth of funding from Liverpool City Council, Mersey Care, Cobalt Housing and Merseyside Police's proceeds of crime.

They came forward with ideas to initiate community walking groups, a community choir, armchair exercise for people with dementia, art for wellbeing, football, boxing, a women's group, educational plays for schools and much more.

The 'Our Croxteth' finale event was a great opportunity to celebrate the success of these community

projects and the people behind them, demonstrate how the funding has impacted the local community, and showcase a number of the activities local residents are getting involved in, including performances by the Communities 'Together' Choir and Perspective Theatre Company.

We'd like to say a huge thank you to the individuals and groups behind these community projects for their hard work and enthusiasm, alongside the 'Our Croxteth' working group made up of people living and working in the community who are committed to ensuring Croxteth's success in the future.

Your neighbourhood plan is now available!

Your neighbourhood plan has been developed in partnership with Cobalt's neighbourhood teams, tenants and stakeholders to give you an insight into how we plan to continue to improve your neighbourhood and surrounding areas.

It aims to provide an overview of your local community, identify your local priorities and how we will deliver these and inform you about how you can get involved with Cobalt.

To read your neighbourhood plan and learn more about your neighbourhood team, visit www.cobalthousing.org.uk/neighbourhood.

Paper copies of each neighbourhood plan are also available in our customer reception on Lower House Lane.

Good Help Hub extends service for another 12 weeks

The Good Help Hub runs from the reception of our Lower House Lane office and brings together partners including Merseyside Police, NHS teams, Job Centre staff, Liverpool City Council and Citizens Advice Bureau.

People can come in to talk to us about everything from housing and cost of living advice, to jobs and mental health support.

It's a great place for information sharing, meeting people, getting support, and activities including knit



and natter take place there too... not forgetting the now infamous 'bacon butty Friday' which is a great way of reducing social isolation with no age barriers, and filling your boots for free!

Visit www.cobalthousing.org.uk for more information about what's on and when, or call us on **0330 303 2222**.

Youth activities in your local area

If you are looking for free or low-cost clubs and activities for your children to get involved with after school, over the weekends or during the school holidays, why not get in touch with your local community group, or follow them on social media to see what's on?

- **Autism in Motion**
Email: aimautism@hotmail.com
Telephone: **0151 525 2225**
- **Norris Green Community Alliance**
Email: norrisgreencommunity@btconnect.com
Telephone: **0151 226 2672**
- **Croxteth GEMS**
Email: jean@gemscentre.org.uk
Telephone: **0151 547 2664**

We share community news and events on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, so don't forget to follow us @CobaltHousing.



Planning on making some changes to your home? Check with us before you do!

We have recently seen an increase in the number of tenants removing banisters, handrails and internal doors.

These fixtures are in place for your safety. Your banisters are designed to prevent you, your family, visitors and pets from falling from height, and your internal doors reduce the risk of a fire spreading quickly in your home.

Please note that removing fixtures and fittings is a breach of your tenancy agreement.

If your banister, handrail or internal doors need repairing, please get in touch with us as soon as possible by visiting our customer reception, sending us a message via live chat or calling us on **0330 303 2222**.

We're investing £2.7 million to improve the energy efficiency of our homes

Our **£2.7million** investment will improve the energy efficiency of 287 properties which currently have an energy performance certificate (EPC) rated below SAP Band C. We will be delivering works including cavity wall insulation, loft insulation, ventilation, solar PV panels, low energy lightbulbs and HomeLINK digital sensory technology.

The energy measures installed as part of the programme will also improve the thermal comfort, improving affordable warmth for tenants and reducing carbon emissions from our properties.

Dave Woods,
Director of Operations said:

"We are at the early stages of our sustainability journey, and by 2030 all our homes will achieve an EPC C rating, helping to reduce carbon emissions and our tenants' energy bills. These works complement the wider investment we will be making in our existing homes, in which we plan to spend **£110m** over the next ten years."

Read the enclosed Corporate Plan booklet for more information on our plans for investing in quality homes.

ASB Awareness week 2023 event in Norris Green

As part of our ongoing commitment to supporting thriving communities and tackling ASB in our neighbourhoods, we recently welcomed Emily Spurrell, Merseyside's Police and Crime Commissioner, to run a surgery from our Lower House Lane reception.

We will be working closely with Merseyside Police to champion ASB Awareness Week 2023, in which we will be raising awareness of hate crime in our communities and encouraging local groups, businesses and residents to sign up to the 'Safe to say' charter.



We're also holding a **community event on Monday 8th July in the Ellergreen Sports Centre, Norris Green**. Follow us on social media for the latest information!

Events in Fazakerley and Sparrow Hall coming soon!

Our Fazakerley and Sparrow Hall neighbourhood team are busy arranging two community impact days bringing support, skips, and lots of fun activities to your area!

Sparrow Hall: Wednesday 26th July | Fazakerley: Wednesday 23rd August

From face painting to ping pong, follow us on social media for the latest information on what's happening, or call us to find out more!

Our Community Fund is now open for applications!

Our Community Fund is designed to support local community groups and organisations to run projects that will benefit residents living in our neighbourhoods. Community groups and organisations with a business bank account are invited to apply for funding if their projects address one or more of the following priorities:

- **Healthy, Happier, Fairer**
- **Educated and Skilled to Succeed**
- **Safe and Thriving Neighbourhood**
- **Low Carbon and Accessible**
- **Strong and Inclusive**
- **Exciting and Inclusive City**

Applicants can apply for a grant of up to **£3,000 per project** during the financial year (April 2023-March 2024). If you are applying for over a certain amount, you will be expected to attend a virtual panel review before a decision can be made.



To apply to our Community Fund, visit www.cobalthousing.org.uk/communityfund or scan the QR code.

If you have any innovative ideas or need help setting up a new community group in one of our neighbourhoods, please email our Partnerships Development Officer, Rona, via rona.heron@cobalthousing.org.uk.

Green fingers? Get involved!

If you have a garden to be proud of, enter this year's garden competition for the chance to **win a £50 bonus bond prize**. This year's categories are best garden, best eco garden (making use of recycled materials), best young gardener (open to children aged 12 and under with a small section of garden, hanging basket or planter), and best hanging basket or individual planter.

For more information and to register your interest, email michael.phillips@cobalthousing.org.uk. You must notify us by **Friday 30th June** if you want to take part.

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F	L	B	P	W	O	S	A	S	D	E	E	S	L
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L	S	S	N	W	T	L	O	A	E	E	E	T	D
O	O	S	V	E	G	E	T	A	B	L	E	S	E

While you're waiting for your blooms to flourish, have a go at this wordsearch!

Blossom

Plant pot

Watering can

Seeds

Soil

Wheelbarrow

Trowel

Flowers

Compost

Vegetables

Spade

Rake

Chance to win!

Do you prefer to read outside in the garden or local park, or with your feet up on the couch? Send us a photo of yourself reading this newsletter wherever you are for a chance to win a high street voucher!

Email it to marketing@cobalthousing.org.uk or share it online and tag in @CobaltHousing to enter.

