

house talk

Spring 2026 • The exclusive magazine for Portsmouth Homes tenants and leaseholders

**Your new
rent charges**

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opportunities*
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activities!**

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**Portsmouth
Homes**



**Portsmouth
CITY COUNCIL**

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Resident Engagement Team

We're here for you! We can answer your questions, help you get involved in a community group, can listen to your suggestions and millions of other things. Plus it's really easy for you to get in touch with us.

How to contact us

Write to us at **The Resident Participation Centre, 37 Sharps Rd, Havant, Hants, PO9 5QJ**

Email housing.engagement@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or call **023 9283 4835**.

Follow us

Be the neighbour in the know by heading to our Facebook page at [facebook.com/yourportsmouthhomes](https://www.facebook.com/yourportsmouthhomes)

Competitions

Competitions in House Talk are open only to residents who live in a Portsmouth Homes property. They aren't open to Portsmouth City Council employees. One entry per household.

Recycle

House Talk is printed on 100% recycled paper using vegetable inks. Please recycle this magazine.

Leaseholder services

Paulsgrove & Wecock Farm..... **023 9283 4561**
 Buckland, Landport & Portsea **023 9283 4845**
 City South **023 9284 1486**
 Leigh Park **023 9284 1741**

Housing teams

Somerstown..... **023 9260 6300**
 Leigh Park **023 9230 6900**
 Paulsgrove **023 9260 6030**
 Out-of-hours **023 9282 4244**

You might have noticed this list has changed. Don't worry - you just need to call whichever one is nearest to you.

Learn more about the changes on page 4.

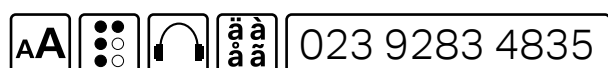
Know anyone who needs this in a different language?

Chcesz mieć ten magazyn w innym języku?

想要这本杂志的不同语言版本吗?

একটিভিন্ন ভাষায় এই পত্রিকা চান?

Call/Dzwonić/称呼/কল: **023 9283 4835**



House Talk is produced by Portsmouth City Council.
[portsmouth.gov.uk](https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk)



“
Hello!

It's Syed and Kirsty here.

*The people who manage
your housing offices.*

You may already know about some of the changes we've made recently to our housing teams. If not, you'll find all the info on page 4 explaining what's changed, why it's changed, and how it'll benefit you.

One change is the introduction of our new roles. Because so many of you live outside of Portsmouth, we've split our responsibilities. One of us supports on-island tenants and the other off-island tenants - meaning you'll get the same level of service, wherever you live.

We hope the changes make a positive difference, and we're looking forward to getting to know more of you and learning what matters most in your communities.

That's it from us - enjoy this Spring issue of House Talk! You've got lots of important updates inside, including information about your new rent.

Syed Ali

Senior Housing Manager (on-island residents)

Kirsty Pearce

Senior Housing Manager (off-island residents)

Just so you know...

When we say on-island, we mean homes on Portsea Island (the main part of Portsmouth). Off-island refers to any homes on the mainland areas - like Cosham, Paulsgrove, Waterlooville for example.

Meet the latest TSM survey winners

"I was so happy!

I never win anything"

Thank you to everyone who took part in the 2025 Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) survey. While we review your feedback, we're pleased to announce this survey's prize draw winners.

£50 prize winners:

- **Sharon, Somerstown**
"It made my day"
- **Tracey, Landport**
"I'm glad I filled in the survey"
- **Laura, Leigh Park**
- **Victoria, Paulsgrove**

£250 prize winner:

- **Ann, Leigh Park**
"It was definitely worth it!"

The TSM survey is a legal requirement that helps us understand how you feel about your home and our services. The next one launches late summer 2026 - find out more at portsmouth.gov.uk/tsm



Shaping our service to suit you



The way we deliver our services to you has changed this year - based on what you told us. Most of you said you don't visit housing offices to talk to a housing officer, report a repair, or pay your rent. You mostly get in touch with us online, over the phone, or ask for in-person visits.

So, we've changed our service to include:

- ✓ More at-home visits
- ✓ More community drop-in sessions
- ✓ More housing officers in your neighbourhoods

We've also repurposed Landport and Buckland housing offices to provide more homes for people on the housing register.

Important info:

- You'll have had a letter to tell you who your housing officer is and how to get in touch with them. If not, please call one of our housing teams (page 2).
- On-island housing teams are now based in the Somerstown office.
- Off-island teams are now based in the Paulsgrove and Leigh Park offices.
- You can find more about the community drop-in sessions by searching 'housing team' on our website.

"I think it's great. The housing officers are back to being out and meeting tenants more." - Gordon, Portsmouth Homes resident

Help us update some policies

You've continued to play an active and meaningful role in shaping our policies. Since the last House Talk, you've helped us create the policy feedback survey and reviewed nine policies!

Here's some of the new policies coming up:

- Pets (we know this one is taking longer than some others, but that's because we want to get it right, and we want to make sure it reflects all the feedback you've given us)
- Mobility Scooter safe storage
- Fire Safety
- Asbestos

If you want to be involved, get in touch:

☎ 023 9283 4835

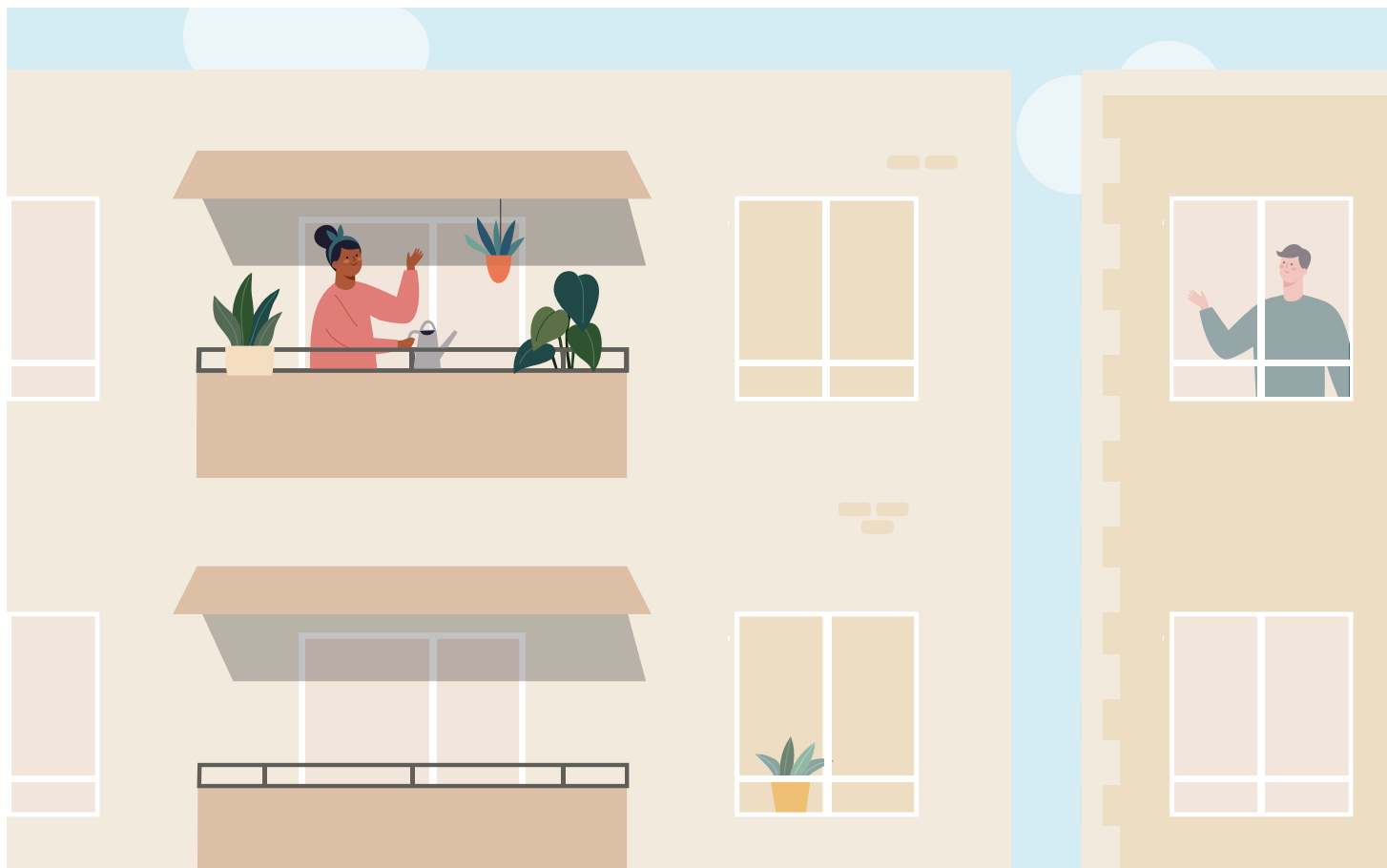
✉ housing.engagement@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

📱 Find all our policies scan the QR code or visit portsmouth.gov.uk/housingpolicy



"Have your say! Your thoughts count, come and see for yourself" - Portsmouth Homes resident





Improving your homes

As we mentioned last issue, at Portsmouth Homes we're making major investments to make sure your home is safe, decent, and meets the latest national standards.

What's happening?

By 2030 we expect to have completed - or be in the process of completing - improvements to most of our 22 high-rise buildings across the city.

Why are you doing this?

We're doing this work to make sure your homes continue to be safe and up to the correct legal standard well into the future.

When will this happen?

Work is already underway on some buildings, and more homes will be added to the programme over the next few years.

If you live in a high-rise, we will contact you well ahead of time (around 6 to 12 months before work is due to start) to talk about arrangements for the works, and we'll try to keep any disruption to a minimum.

You may also benefit from a new bathroom or kitchen as part of the planned works.

Will I have to move out?

Every building project is different, so we can't tell you now whether you'll need to move out for a little while or if you can relocate permanently, but each project will involve us talking to every resident to understand your needs.

I don't live in a high-rise, do I need to do anything?

We'll need access to all homes so we can carry out safety checks and inspections. This includes electrical inspections, stock condition surveys and any follow-up visits if repairs are identified. Please let us in when we ask you!

How do I find out more?

You can read more about current projects by searching '**building improvement projects**' on our website.



**Your
new gas
servicer**

Meet Sureserve

Using all of your feedback, we've been busy finding a new gas repairs contractor - one that works for you and your home.

We're pleased to introduce that Sureserve Compliance South will take over all gas servicing and repairs for Portsmouth Homes from 1 April 2026.

You can now book appointments within a three hour time slot, which should reduce the need to rearrange.

These slots are:

- 8.30am–11am
- 11am–2pm
- 2pm–5pm

They will also:

- provide an emergency service outside these hours
- contact you directly to arrange your annual gas service (so please ensure they can access your home!)

Repairs will continue to follow our existing policy, with emergencies attended within 24 hours, urgent repairs within three days, and routine repairs within 20 working days.

"We're delighted to be Portsmouth City Council's dedicated gas compliance. Sureserve Compliance South are focussed on safety and customer service for the residents of Portsmouth" - David Greenfield, Managing Director of Sureserve Compliance South

If you need repairs to your heating or hot water system, or have any questions about the new contract, please call our customer repairs team on **023 9284 1311**.



Some of the Portsmouth Homes residents whose feedback helped us in finding the right contractor.



Visiting your home

We're carrying out surveys across all of your homes to make sure they meet safety standards – but we need access to your home to complete them.

When will I get a survey?

We're trying to do them as quickly as possible, but we can't give you an exact timeline. When we need to carry out a survey on your home, you'll be contacted by either us or a company called Ridge to arrange an appointment. Or, if we visit you in person and you're not home, we'll leave a card so you can arrange another time.

Who is Ridge?

They're a specialist consultancy supporting us with stock condition surveys. We brought them onboard as we must complete 12,000 surveys by September 2026, and outsourcing helps us do this more quickly.

Ridge works with many councils and will always carry ID.

"I was worried about getting blamed for issues but that didn't happen. It's a really friendly process."

- Andy, Portsmouth Homes resident

What are the surveys for?

They help us understand the condition of your home, keep it safe, and plan future improvements before any issues get worse.

How long do they take?

Around 30-60 minutes, and they aren't invasive.

We'll raise any emergency or urgent repairs identified during the survey so they can get sorted for you.

If you have questions, contact us on **023 9284 1311**
or email **ams@portsmouthcc.gov.uk**.



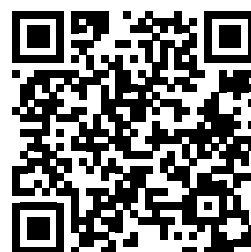
Get the latest updates, local events, and helpful tips straight to your inbox and feed.

Our monthly Portsmouth Homes newsletter brings you useful info without the spam, and our Facebook page is full of quick updates, videos, and community news.

Go to **portsmouth.gov.uk/PortsmouthHomes** or scan the QR codes to sign up and follow us.

Follow us

on Facebook



**Sign up for
our newsletter**



Neighbourhood Services



We've made a small change that means a lot: Estate Services is now called Portsmouth Homes Neighbourhood Services.

Why? Because you told us that 'neighbourhood' feels more positive and better reflects the work we do in your community, and so we listened.

Nothing is changing except the name. You'll still get all the same services from us!

As always, if you need to tell us about anything cleaning or gardening related in your neighbourhood, reach out:

☎ **023 9268 8444**

✉ **housingdepot@
portsmouthcc.gov.uk**

How we're improving your housing services

How we're improving your housing services

Every month we meet with the Regulator of Social Housing to update them on the work we're doing to improve your homes and services.

They've recently recognised some real progress, including:

✓ More up to date electrical safety checks

✓ More stock condition surveys (so we understand what each home needs)

✓ Faster progress with contractors

✓ Better tracking of fire safety work, which continues to be a top priority

Looking ahead

We've still got work to do especially in making sure our information about every home is complete and accurate. To help with this, we're:

- Investing in better systems
- Carrying out more home visits (see page 7)
- Bringing in more staff to support this work

Major projects, including improvements to our taller buildings (see page 5), are also moving forward.

Thank you for your patience as we continue this journey. Our goal is simple: safer homes, quicker repairs, and clearer communication for every tenant.



Your rent update: From 1 April...

Rent

- **Your rent will increase by 4.8%**

If you get housing related benefits and your personal circumstances haven't changed, your rent increase will be covered.

General Service Charges

- **£7.49 pw for houses and bungalows**
(35p increase)
- **£21.77 pw for flats, bedsits and maisonettes**
(70p increase)

Sheltered Housing Charges

- **£21.67 pw for tenants in category 1**
(£1.16 increase)
- **£69.75 pw for tenants in category 2**
(£2.83 increase)
- **£127.93 pw for tenants in category 2.5**
(£5.43 increase)

Garages and parking

- **Your charges will increase by 3.8% if you live near to where you park**
- **Charges will increase by 5% for 'non-locals'**

Laundry

Your laundry token charges will stay the same:

- £3 for the washing machine
- £2 for the tumble dryer

Heating

- **14.2% increase** in the Edgbaston and Tipton blocks
- **0.5% reduction** in the sheltered blocks
- **0.6% reduction** in the Dickens blocks

How was all of this decided?

Each year we consult with you when setting rents and other charges.

- In December 2025 we sent you a letter, put an article in House Talk, and invited you to an online consultation event. The aim was to get your feedback on proposals for next year.
- At the beginning of February 2026, we gave our Cabinet Member for Housing and Tackling Homelessness, councillor Darren Sanders, the information you shared with us to help set the new rents and charges.

Thank you to everyone who shared their views.

What happens next?

You should've received your formal notice letter by now. This leaflet explains your new charges and how the changes will have applied from 1 April 2026.



Cost of living support

If you're struggling to pay your rent, get in touch with your housing officer for support and guidance.

You can also contact our Money Advice and Benefits Team on **023 9284 1047** or visit **portsmouth.gov.uk/costofliving** for support with things like energy bills, council tax, food, furniture, white goods, school meals and more.

Resident recipe

PASTA PRIMAVERA

A springtime classic!

Packed with seasonal veggies, this pasta primavera is a simple, fresh spring dinner.

The tarragon is optional, but we recommend it - it's what makes the dish really shine.

 **Prep time: 10 mins**

 **Cook time: 20 mins**

 **Serves 4**

What you'll need (serves 4)

- 285g penne pasta
- 2 tbsp olive oil, plus more for drizzling
- 4 garlic cloves, sliced (or garlic paste if you want to save time)
- 1 courgette, sliced into thin half moons
- 1 bunch asparagus, chopped into 1 inch pieces
- 150g cherry tomatoes, halved
- 100g red onion, thinly sliced
- 1 tsp sea salt
- 75g frozen peas, thawed
- 75g grated pecorino cheese (or dried grated hard cheese for a cheaper alternative)
- 3 tbsp lemon juice
- Pinch of red pepper flakes
- 5g fresh tarragon (optional)
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

What you need to do

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to the boil. Cook the pasta according to the packet instructions until al dente. Drain and toss with a little olive oil to stop it sticking.
2. Heat the olive oil in a large, deep, frying pan over medium heat. Add the garlic, courgette, asparagus, tomatoes, red onion, salt, and a few grinds of pepper.
3. Sauté for 3–4 minutes, or until the vegetables are just tender.
4. Add the cooked pasta, peas, pecorino, lemon juice, and a pinch of red pepper flakes. Toss well to combine.
5. Stir in the tarragon (if using).
6. Taste and adjust seasoning. Serve!

One person serving option

Here's the scaled down ingredient list for a single serving (¼ of the full recipe):

- 70g penne pasta
- ½ tbsp olive oil (plus a small drizzle for the pasta)
- 1 garlic clove, sliced
- ¼ courgette, thinly sliced
- A handful of asparagus tips, chopped (about 4–5 spears)
- 35–40g cherry tomatoes, halved
- ¼ tsp sea salt
- ¼ small red onion, thinly sliced
- 20g frozen peas, thawed
- 20g grated pecorino (or hard cheese)
- 2–3 tsp lemon juice
- Pinch of red pepper flakes
- A few leaves of tarragon (optional)
- Black pepper, to taste

Foodie tip

Near Somerstown and want a good bite to eat? Head to the Café inside Somerstown Hub! They're always serving a range of fresh meals - hot or cold - that won't break the bank.

Get a spring in your step!

It's springtime and the days are getting longer and the weather is (hopefully!) looking brighter.

Here are our top tips for making the best of the new season.

Love your space

Tips to declutter like a pro!

○ TRY MAKING IT INTO A GAME

Can you get rid of ten things in ten minutes?

○ SELL OR DONATE UNUSED ITEMS

If you haven't worn it in the last year, it doesn't fit, or you don't love it, get rid!

Charity shops and selling apps mean someone else can love it after you have.

○ DONATE OLD SCHOOL UNIFORM

Your child's school or local library may well accept donations of preloved kit.

○ CONSIDER USING BULK COLLECTION SERVICES

You might get a free one with council tax allowance.

○ DISPOSE OF LARGE ITEMS AT YOUR LOCAL TIP

Or Google '**scrap collection**' and someone may pick it up for free.

Spring into action

○ DO SOME PLANTING

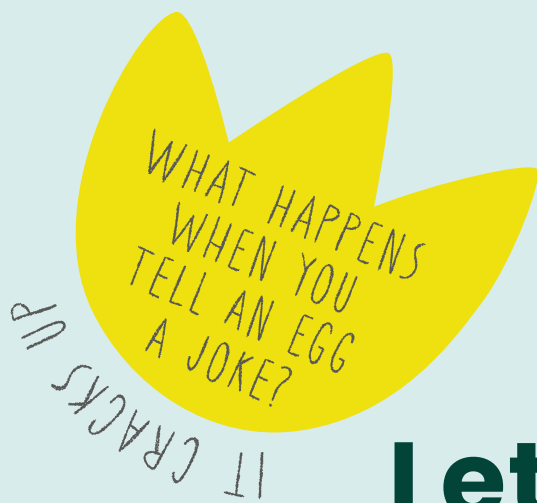
Planting some bulbs in a garden, allotment, or window box brings colour as the season changes.

○ GO ON A WALK

How about a nice spring walk to supercharge your mood? Google '**good walks near me**' for some strolling inspo.

Around the house you can also:

- Look for damp, mould, or leaks
- Check your windows and doors for damage
- Inspect your walls and ceilings for cracks
- Test your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms
- Report any repairs to either your housing office (page 2) or repairs team at **customerrepairsteam@portsmouthcc.gov.uk** or call **023 9284 1311**.



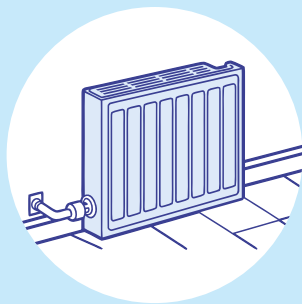
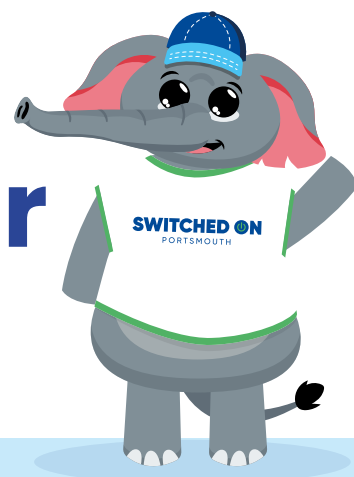
Let's laugh!



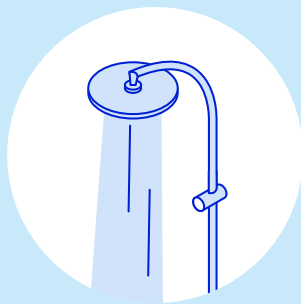
Can you draw your favourite thing about Spring?



Guide to keeping the heat in and your energy bills low



Radiator panels



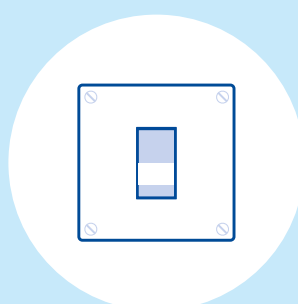
Shower aerator



Hot water cylinder jacket



Draught proofing*



Standby plug/remote controlled socket

** Windows, doors, letterbox brush, external door brush and internal draught excluder.*

You could get these for FREE via a LEAP (Local Energy Advice Partnership) referral if you're eligible.

To find out more, call our team on **0800 260 5907** or email **hello@switchedonportsmouth.co.uk**

Want to chat to us in-person?

Our team has drop-in sessions at the Civic Offices, Portsmouth, the first Wednesday of every month. Upcoming dates: 6 May, 3 June and 1 July.

No need to book - just turn up and find out how we could help you.

SWITCHED ON
PORTSMOUTH

Some of our lovely Scrutiny Panel residents!

Join our new

Resident Scrutiny Panel

We're launching a new Resident Scrutiny Panel, and we're looking for tenants and leaseholders who want to help improve the services we provide. Plus, we'll train you how to do it!

Members of the panel will get free, professional training in:

- ✓ contractor and senior staff interview skills
- ✓ how to scrutinise services effectively
- ✓ healthy conversation skills and so much more.

These skills are valuable, transferable, and great for building your CV and confidence.

Panel members will work closely with our staff to:



Review and scrutinise services



Visit sites and get resident views



Interview contractors and staff



Explore strengths and areas for improvement



Suggest changes

Interested in joining?

Email housing.engagement@portsmouthcc.gov.uk
or call **023 9283 4835**. The closing date is Tuesday 30 June.

Neighbourhood Walkabouts

Which one are you joining?

They're accessible to all and will involve us looking around a specific part of your neighbourhood - alongside you and other tenants who live nearby.

You'll benefit from being able to ask questions, point out things that need attention, and learn more about what we do.

Upcoming dates:

Time and location will be updated on our Facebook page and website.

- **Somerstown**
14 April, 21 October
- **Leigh Park**
23 April, 1 October
- **Landport**
14 May, 23 September
- **Portsea**
21 May, 14 October
- **Wecock**
5 May, 29 September
- **Buckland**
2 June, 15 October
- **Paulsgrove**
10 June, 7 October
- **Crookhorn**
9 June, 6 October

No need to book - just turn up!

🔍 Search '**neighbourhood walkabouts**' on our website

📘 facebook.com/YourPortsmouthHomes

Interested in any of the dates above, or want us to do a walkabout in your area?

Contact us

What's on at...

Your Resident Participation Centre

📍 37 Sharps Road, Havant, PO9 5QJ

✉ housing.engagement@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

☎ 023 9283 4835

Craft Club

📅 Every 2nd Monday of the month, 11am–1pm

Try new creative projects in a relaxed space. No experience needed - just come along and enjoy making things with others.

Mindful Moments

📅 Every 4th Monday of the month, 11am–1pm

A quiet break from the day. Colour, do light puzzles, or simply take time to unwind.

Garden Club

📅 Every Tuesday, 11am–1pm

Help refresh our community garden. A chance to be outdoors, learn simple gardening skills, and see your work grow.



Members of the lovely Garden Club.

Foodie Friends

📅 Every 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month, 10.30am–12.30pm

Cook easy, tasty meals together. Ideal for anyone who wants budget-friendly recipe ideas and a friendly group to share them with.



Making tasty treats at Kids Club!

Monthly Bingo

📅 Every 3rd Wednesday of the month, 11am–1pm

A fun, lively session with prizes and good company.

Kids Club

📅 Every Tuesday during school holidays, 11am–1pm

Free activities including crafts, games, baking, and gardening. Perfect for keeping children busy and creative.

Can't get to Havant? Try these out:

Paulsgrove Community Centre

📍 5 Marsden Road, PO6 4JB

☎ 023 9284 1555

Paulsgrove Community Cuppa

📅 Every Tuesday, 1–2.30pm

Drop in for a warm drink and a chat.

Acorn Centre

📍 3 Eagle Avenue, Waterlooville, PO8 9UX

☎ 023 9225 8423

Crafts

📅 Tuesdays, 10am–12pm

Friendly craft sessions with plenty of creative ideas to try.

Plus our community centres in Cosham, Somerstown, and Landport! Head to pycportsmouth.co.uk for more info. Outside of Hampshire? Head to connecttosupporthampshire.org.uk

Spotlight on: Crookhorn

We have a lot of great residents living in Crookhorn, and we're always hearing lovely things about their community spirit - so we thought we'd shout about one of them today: the **Bus Stop Café** at Crookhorn Lane! It was set up by The Church of the Good Shepherd with a simple goal: to create a friendly place where anyone passing by could stop for a chat, a bite to eat, or a warm drink.

What's on offer?

Every **Wednesday from 9–11.30am**, right at the bus stop on Crookhorn Lane, you'll find:

- ☕ Full English breakfasts
- 🥪 Bacon, sausage, and egg sandwiches
- 🍰 Homemade cakes
- 🥤 Hot and cold drinks

Whether you're waiting for a bus, heading to work or school, killing time before toddlers' group, meeting a friend, or simply in need of a friendly face, the Bus Stop Café is there to welcome you.

And the best bit? If money's tight, don't worry - everything is by donation only.



The Bus Stop Cafe has become well loved by the community.

Find out more

✉ office@cogs.org.uk

☎ **023 9225 6814** or **07726 550169**



From left to right: Stephanie, the Lord Mayor, John, and James Hill (director of housing, neighbourhoods and building services for the council), backstage at the Inspiring Volunteer Awards.

Celebrating local community volunteers

Every year there's an Inspiring Volunteer Awards in Portsmouth which recognises amazing people across the city - and we wanted to shine a light on two of our own tenants who were nominated last year - **John Gaskell** and **Stephanie Jennings** from the Australia Blocks Residents Association.

John has spent over 20 years volunteering to support his neighbours, from running community meals to tackling local issues and bringing residents together. Stephanie has also given many years to organising community events, running weekly activities, and helping make the area a more connected, supportive place to live.

Their commitment continues today, and we're proud of the difference they make in their community.

Want to know more about the Inspiring Volunteer Awards? Search 'Inspiring volunteers' on hiveportsmouth.org.uk

Why should you join a...



"We had a big impact on the Domestic Abuse and Hate Crime focus group. Our shared experiences shed light on how older people experience domestic abuse, and this went into shaping the new policy."

...focus group

- 👍 Small groups (on average 8–10 people)
- 👍 Short, one off sessions on a specific topic (like repairs, complaints)
- 👍 Made to get your detailed feedback and personal experiences
- 👍 Relaxed and informal - just a chat with a purpose
- 👍 Great if you want to give your views but prefer small-group conversations

Upcoming dates

Policies

- Thursday 9 July, 11am–1pm, Somerstown Hub, room 4
- Thursday 9 July, 6–8pm, online

Repairs

- Thursday 16 July, 11am–1pm, Somerstown Hub, room 4

Neighbourhood services

- Thursday 23 July, 11am–1pm, Somerstown Hub, room 4

How to get involved

Contact us using the details on the next page.

...Resident Consortium

- 👍 Larger group of tenants and leaseholders
- 👍 Meets more regularly
- 👍 Looks at broader housing issues, updates, and service improvements
- 👍 A chance to hear what's happening, share ideas, and shape decisions at a wider level
- 👍 Good if you want to stay involved and see the bigger picture across Portsmouth Homes

Upcoming dates

Tenant satisfaction and resident engagement

- Thursday 14 May, 6–8pm, Somerstown Hub, room 4

Buildings and complaints

- Thursday 4 June, 11am–1pm, Somerstown Hub, room 4

Fire safety

- Thursday 2 July, 6–8pm, Somerstown Hub, room 4

How to get involved

You can just turn up! But if have any questions, contact us using the details on the next page.

...Housing Depot visit

- 👍 A guided, behind the scenes look at how we run neighbourhood services
- 👍 See how calls are handled and jobs are prioritised
- 👍 Meet the teams who work across the city
- 👍 Understand how we operate day to day
- 👍 Ideal if you want to see the process in action and ask questions

Upcoming dates

- Tuesday 9 June, 10am–12pm, Housing Depot, Port Royal Street
- Tuesday 28 July, 10am–12pm, Housing Depot, Port Royal Street

How to get involved

Contact us using the details below.



Free drink voucher

Spring 2026 issue

When you attend a resident consortium.

Get this signed by a member of the resident engagement team on arrival to get your free tea or filtered coffee at the Hub Cafe!

Signed: Date:

To get involved, email housing.engagement@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or call **023 9283 4835**.

Can't make those any of the above dates or times? Still get in touch. We can gather your feedback another way. Need help getting to the Hub or Depot? Let us know and we can arrange a taxi for you.

Have a complaint? Here's what to do

No matter where you live, if you're one of our tenants, leaseholders or shared owners, and you feel unhappy with any part of our services, we're here to listen to you and make the process as easy as possible. You can reach us in several ways:

📞 **023 9260 6383**

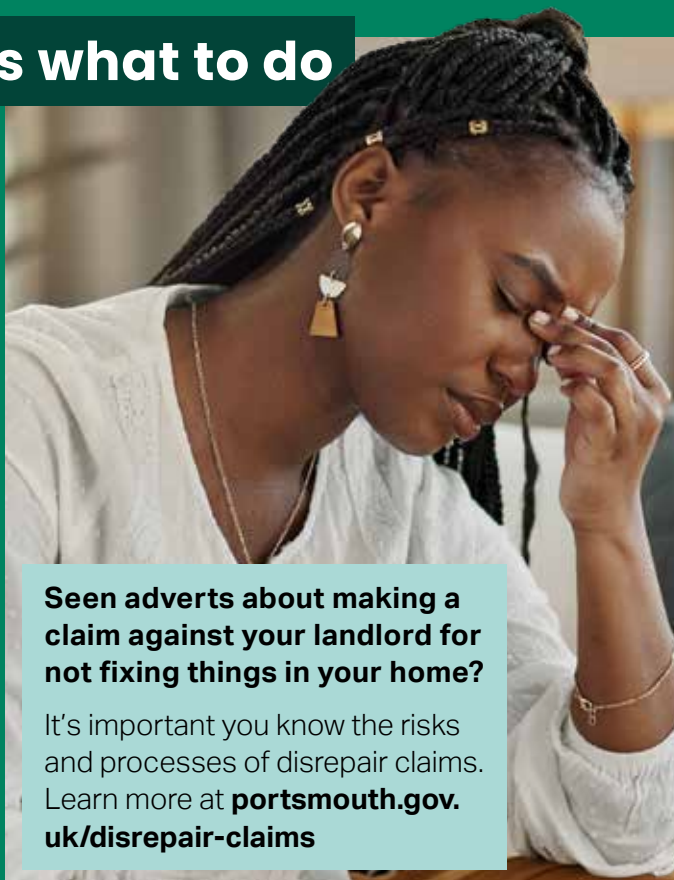
✍️ **Write to:** HNB Landlord Complaints, Portsmouth City Council, Floor 2, Core 2–3, Civic Offices, Portsmouth, PO1 2EP

✉️ hnblandlordcomplaints@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

🌐 portsmouth.gov.uk/housingcomplaints

Psst... you can also give a compliment too!

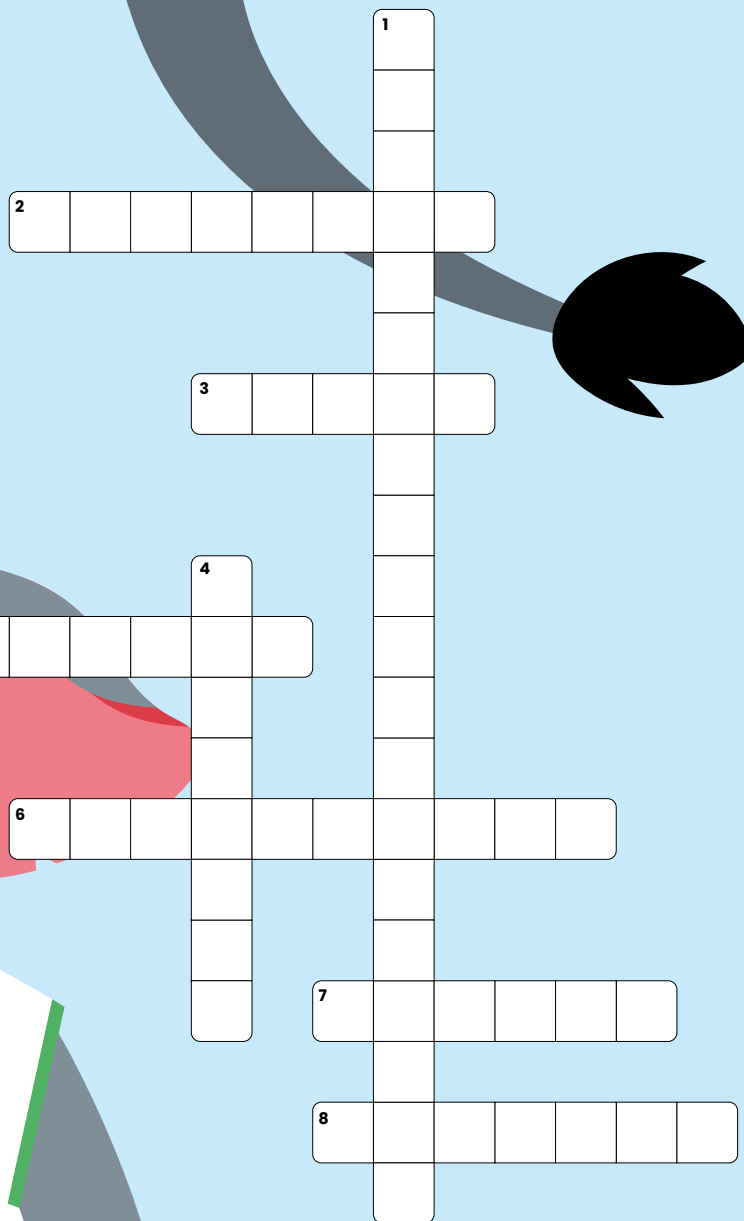
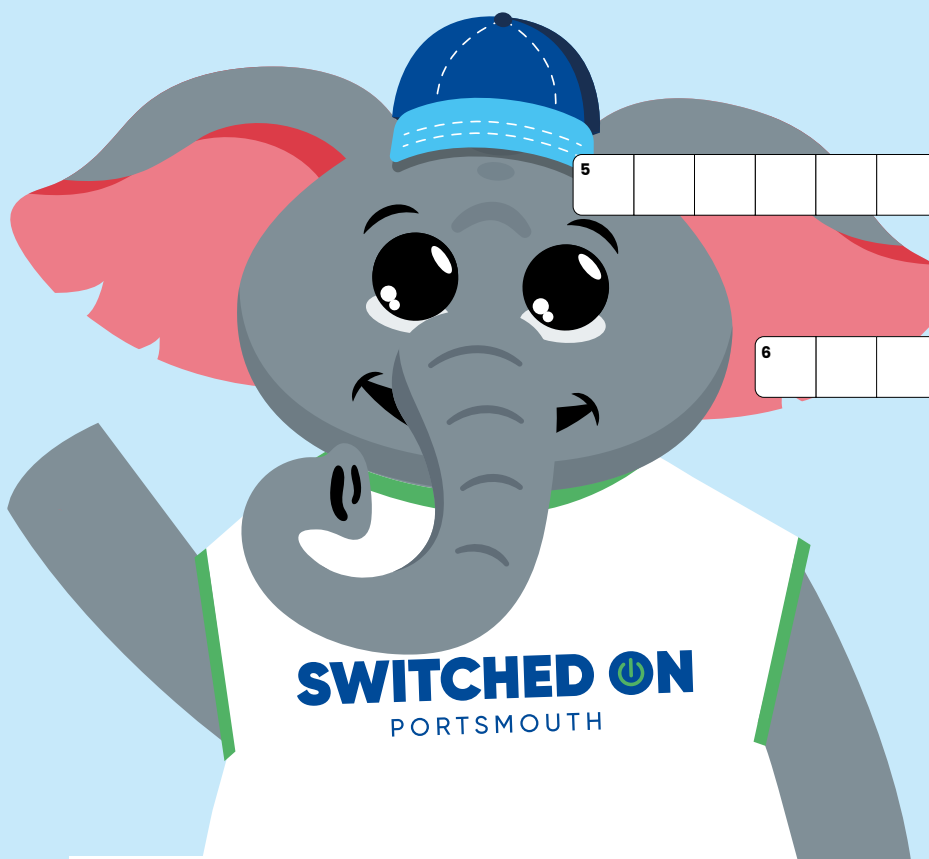
It's also helpful to know when we're getting things right, and our staff love reading your positive experiences. So, if you fancy brightening someone's day by saying thank you, please let us know using the contact details above!



Seen adverts about making a claim against your landlord for not fixing things in your home?

It's important you know the risks and processes of disrepair claims. Learn more at portsmouth.gov.uk/disrepair-claims

Eli the Elephant's Crossword!



Across

2. Unwanted indoor breezes
3. A device that measures how much gas or electricity you use
5. The company you pay for your gas or electricity
6. Thick material added to lofts or walls to keep heat in
7. A gas appliance used for central-heating
8. Turning appliances fully off instead of leaving them on this setting



Down

1. The organisation in Portsmouth offering free energy advice
4. Alternative to halogen

Answers. Across: 2. draughts, 3. meter, 5. supplier, 6. insulation, 7. boiler, 8. standby. Down: 1. Switched on Portsmouth, 4. led bulbs.



Craft activity

Turn your odd socks into cute spring bunnies!

What you'll need:

- **Socks one per bunny** (make as many as you want!)
- **Bag of rice** (or other dry grain)
- **Rubber bands**
- **Glass**
- **Ribbon**
- **Black felt tip pen and/or googly eyes**

**Takes
15-20
mins!**

What you need to do

- 1 Stretch a sock over the glass.
- 2 Fill at least half the sock with rice (or other dried grain).
- 3 Remove the sock and close the top with a rubber band.
- 4 Place another rubber band two thirds up the filled sock to create the head and body of your bunny.
- 5 Make the tail at the lower back of your bunny with a rubber band.
- 6 Trim the top of your sock to the desired length for your bunny's ears.
- 7 Cut down the middle to create the ears and shape by cutting each half into a curve from the base to the tip.
- 8 Draw on your bunny's facial features and add googly eyes if using.
- 9 Tie ribbon around your bunny's neck.
- 10 Hop hop - your bunny is done!

Adventures for children!

FREE!

Have daring fun on the giant climbing frames, zip wire, basket swings and slides!

Encourage the kids to make the most of our city's adventure playgrounds (aka hidden gems hiding in plain sight) this summer...

Safe exploration

- Expert and friendly staff on-site
- Something for all ages and confidence levels
- Special visiting times for parents with younger children

A place to grow

- Unique projects at each playground
- New skills to learn
- New friends to make

📱 Visit pycportsmouth.co.uk/play to discover a summer of fun!

Score big discounts with free leisure cards

Portsmouth Leisure Card

If you get means-tested benefits and live in PO1-PO6, this card unlocks up to 50% off at loads of facilities like sports centres, pools, golf, museums, beach huts and more. Just pop by your local library or housing office with proof of benefits to apply, or head to portsmouth.gov.uk/leisurecard

Horizon Leisure discounts

This is Havant Borough Council's discount scheme, and works in a similar way. Find out more at horizonlc.com. Live elsewhere? Search 'leisure card' on your local council's website.



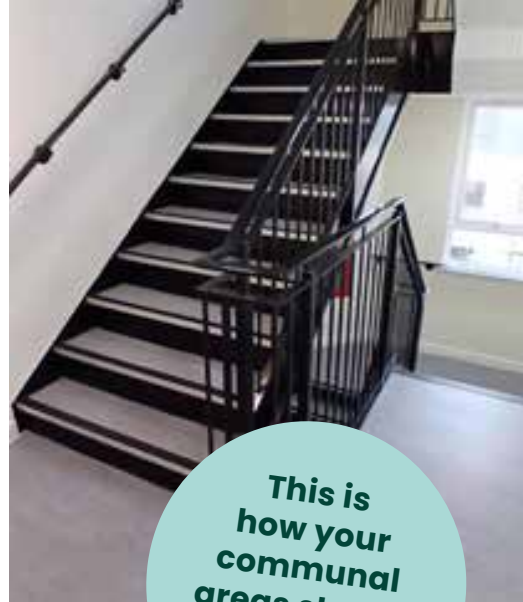
Kids getting creative with tote bags at one of last year's Connect4Families sessions.

Connect4Families

Connect4Families is a programme of free holiday activities for disadvantaged children and families. They run a series of 'Family Fun Days' in the summer at Park Community School (Havant) and the Acorn Centre (Wecock) which you can book onto.

Our Resident Engagement team had a fantastic time attending and supporting last year's events, and they're excited to do the same this year.

To find out more, visit connect4.org.uk



*This is
how your
communal
areas should
look at all
times*

No items allowed in communal areas

Your questions answered

If you live in a home with a communal area – like a shared hallway, landing or balcony – it's really important not to leave any personal items out. We know it can feel inconvenient, but these rules exist to keep you and your neighbours safe.

Question

**Why can't I put anything on my front door?
I don't see how it's a fire hazard!**

Answer: Fire doors are designed to keep smoke and fire out for a short length of time. Anything attached - even a lightweight wreath - can stop the door from closing fully, damage the door surface, or affect the seals that keep smoke out.

Question

What about Ring doorbells - am I allowed one?

Answer: If it needs drilling into the door or frame, then no. Anything drilled will compromise the fire door's ability to keep smoke and fire out. If you feel you need one for safety reasons, please speak to your housing officer.

Question

I've got a neighbour who leaves stuff in communal areas - what will you do if I report it?

Answer: We'll speak to the resident involved - explaining the risks and asking them to remove the items. We will also issue fines if needed.

Question

Why did you take up the floor mats in communal areas?

Answer: Mats can trip people during an emergency evacuation and can stop doors closing properly. They also make it harder for mobility aids, prams or wheelchairs to move safely through the building.

Question

I've seen things in communal areas and on people's doors that you haven't taken down. Why isn't it the same rule for everyone?

Answer: We apply the same safety rules in every block, but sometimes we're already investigating an issue or waiting for items to be removed. If you've spotted something unsafe, please report it using the details below - it helps us act faster.

**Have any questions or concerns?
Let us know:**

☎ 023 9268 8444

✉ housingdepot@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Debt – who can you turn to?



1. Your Housing Officer

They can put you in touch with the right people in our housing teams to give you specialised help.

Whether it's debt, money worries, unsafe living conditions, or anything that could put your tenancy at risk, we have specialists ready to give you practical and personalised support.

They'll help you make a simple plan and connect you with other support services if needed - all you have to do is make that first step and contact your housing officer.

Not sure who to contact? Details of your specific housing officer were in your recent Rent Increase Notice, or you can find your nearest housing team on page 2.

"They were absolutely brilliant. I was in dire straits with money, and they knew exactly how to help me. They're fully clued up."

Please call your housing officer (page 2) or email your nearest office.

 portsmouth.gov.uk/housingoffice

2. StepChange

StepChange is one of the UK's biggest debt-advice charities. They offer free, confidential debt advice, help you make a personalised plan, and provide solutions like Debt Management Plans, IVAs or help with arrears. Their support is non-judgemental and available online or by phone.

 stepchange.org

 **0800 138 1111**

3. National Debtline

National Debtline offers free, independent and FCA-regulated debt advice by phone, webchat, or through their online tool 'My Money Steps'.

They help with everything from bailiff action to negotiating with creditors and understanding debt options.

 nationaldebtline.org

 **0808 808 4000**

Changes to cost-of-living help

The government is making changes to how people across the country get help with the cost of living.

The Household Support Fund is ending, and from April it will be replaced with a new Crisis and Resilience Fund.

Support won't disappear, but it may look different.

This fund is to support people on low incomes who suddenly find themselves in financial difficulty. It doesn't remove your ability to get crisis help - it just changes how it's provided.

If you live in Portsmouth, you can find more info at portsmouth.gov.uk/crf

If you live outside of Portsmouth, your local council will have its own schemes, rules and support available. Search 'cost of living support' on your council's website to find out more.

Alternatively, you can call your housing officer (page 2) if you have any questions.



People who stop smoking feel happier

Here's why

Feeling happier is just one of the benefits of quitting, and it can start in a few weeks.

You might think lighting a cigarette helps you calm down, but that's not true - the nicotine just tricks your brain into thinking that. In reality, it steals your happiness.

When you quit

Research has shown that when you stop smoking, it can reduce stress and anxiety. It can also rebalance your dopamine levels (your natural happy hormone).

Don't let smoking rob you of your happiness.

You can quit for free with the help of our wellbeing service. A healthier, less stressed you is just a few weeks away. To stop smoking in a way that works for you, go to wellbeingportsmouth.co.uk/stop or call **023 9229 4001**.





Who's looking out for your block in the evenings?

Community Wardens

Learn how our community wardens are keeping you safe.

When the usual working day ends, our community wardens are out across your housing blocks during evenings and weekends - here to help reassure you and reduce anti-social behaviour (ASB). Wardens respond to things like ASB and rough sleeping, and they work closely with you and your housing officers to sort problems quickly and safely. They also watch for potential risks - like items left in communal areas.

Take action to keep buildings safe. If you ever need advice or support, they can point you in the right direction. By patrolling shared areas and checking known hotspots, community wardens help keep your block safe, well managed and welcoming for everyone who lives there.

Need to contact our community wardens?

☎ 080 0085 3840



Selling an ex-council home?

We'd love to hear from you

Portsmouth City Council is actively looking to buy back ex-council homes to help meet the growing need for temporary accommodation. In 2024/25, demand rose by 54%, which put pressure on services and budgets.

To tackle this, the council is investing in 200 homes over the next two years to provide better, more affordable housing for those in need. If you or someone you know is selling a former council property, please get in touch.

Head to portsmouth.gov.uk/sellmyhome for more info.

Six gardening opportunities for you this spring



1. Resident Participation Centre gardening club

Help other residents maintain and grow the gardening space at our Resident Participation Centre in Havant. Become a regular volunteer or pop along to find out what gardening projects are coming up.

📍 37 Sharps Road, PO9 5QJ

☎ 023 9283 4835



2. Somers Orchard Community Garden

Nestled in the former site of the Horatia and Leamington blocks, this is a beautiful new garden space where you can volunteer, meet new people, and grow your own produce.

📅 1-3pm on Mon, Weds and Fri or 9-11am on Tues and Thurs

📍 Park Street, Somerstown, PO5 4AG

☎ 079 0302 4588

3. Landport Community Garden

A vibrant space where everyone is welcome to volunteer, help with gardening projects, apply for your own grow bed, or come and see the chickens!

📅 9–11am on Mon, Weds and Fri or 1–3pm on Tues and Thurs

📍 Fyning Street, Landport, PO1 1JS

☎ 079 0302 4588



4. Help with weeding in Portsea

Join our Community Gardener, Matt, and local residents for an hour or two of light weeding, fresh air, friendly conversation. No experience needed.

📅 17 April, 15 May, 19 June, 17 July, 10am–12pm

📍 Meet at the flower beds outside Sarah Robinson House, Queen Street

☎ 079 0302 4588

5. Help with weeding in Buckland

Exactly the same as the sessions in Portsea.

📅 1 May, 5 June, 3 July, 10am–12pm

📍 Meet at the car park on the corner of Hanway Road and Seymour Close

☎ 079 0302 4588

6. Arthur Dann Court greenhouse

Become a volunteer and help us grow a variety of produce for the benefit of local residents.

No experience needed.

📍 Gurnard Road, PO6 3HW

☎ 079 0302 4588





Department
for Education



Portsmouth
CITY COUNCIL



WHERE
EVERY
DAY'S A PLAY DAY

THROUGHOUT
THE EASTER
SCHOOL HOLIDAYS



To book, scan the QR code or
go to eequ.org/haffunpompey

 FamilyLifePompey  HAF@portsmouthccc.gov.uk