

Housing Matters

Newsletter Summer 2025



A welcome message from your councillors

Cllr Jackie Hollywell - Cabinet Member for Housing and Housing Development



As we are all enjoying the summer, I want to thank all our tenants who have taken the time to engage with us over recent months – through surveys, meetings and day-to-day conversations. Your voices help shape the services we provide, and your feedback has led to real change, including new contractors for some specialist type repairs such as roofing and understanding your thoughts about how we make sure the homes in our high rise are safe.

This summer, we'll be consulting with you on our new Rent Policy – your views matter and will help ensure that our approach to rent setting is fair, transparent and sustainable. You'll find more information on this and other important updates throughout this newsletter. As ever, we are committed to putting you – our tenants – at the heart of everything we do.

Cllr Nigel Williams – Cabinet Member for Co-operative Council and Tenancy Involvement



As the newest member of the Cabinet, I'm pleased to be writing to you in my first newsletter. I know how important it is to work with and listen to residents and utilize your feedback to shape the decisions we make.

Over the coming months, I'll be working closely with councillors and officers to champion your resident voice in all areas of our work. I look forward to meeting many of you at local events this summer – you'll find a full list in our events calendar. Thank you for making Stevenage such a strong and vibrant community.

A new rent policy – We want to hear from you

As you may know the government, that sets the overall approach to setting rents for our homes, has been updating some of its information and so we now need to update our local policy on rents. We will be consulting tenants over the summer to hear your views. To ensure our rent setting approach is clear, affordable and sustainable in the long term.

Rents help us fund essential services and maintain your homes. We know we need to be clear on our approach, and how we can support tenants who need assistance with paying. This policy will help us to invest in homes and neighbourhoods while offering tenants good value for money. Your feedback will directly influence how the policy is shaped.

We'll be sharing more information as to how you can get involved in the consultation over the coming weeks.

Meet the Team:

We'd like to introduce you to Alex Pelling, our Head of Building Safety.

Alex leads the teams responsible for making sure your homes are safe and fully compliant with current building safety laws. This includes identifying and managing fire safety risks, overseeing regular inspections and ensuring that remedial works are carried out properly. The role also involves working closely with residents to keep you informed and involved, particularly through building safety meetings and updates.

"My job is to make sure tenants feel safe in their homes and confident in the way we look after our buildings."

"That means listening to your concerns, staying on top of safety checks and planning ahead so we can invest wisely in the homes we manage.

I am pleased to report that we are performing strongly across all key areas of building safety compliance, demonstrating our ongoing commitment to maintaining the highest standards".

"Following recent engagement sessions with our high-rise residents, we've taken on board your feedback to improve communication and clarity around fire doors, communal areas, and emergency procedures. These conversations are invaluable, and we're planning further sessions in September.

"We're also continuing our building safety inspections and fire risk assessments to ensure every block meets the highest standards. Residents in some flat blocks will soon receive updates about their building by post, email or on noticeboards in buildings."

E-bikes and lithium batteries – fire safety advice

Some of you may have recently purchased or received an e-bike or other device powered by a lithium-ion battery. While these items can be a great way to get around, they also carry a risk if not charged correctly.

- To reduce the risk of fire:
- Always charge in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Don't leave devices charging unattended or overnight.
- Unplug your charger once the battery is full.
- Avoid charging near flammable materials.

In some cases, batteries can overheat and cause fires which spread rapidly.

Useful resources:

- Government e-bike/e-scooter fire safety advice: www.gov.uk/firekills
- Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service safety video: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/fire
- Fire safety information on our website: www.stevenage.gov.uk

Got a question or concern about your building's safety? Let us know - Alex's team is here to help.

E-mail: building.safety@stevenage.gov.uk

Telephone: 01438 242666

You can also report concerns to your Housing Officer.

Thank you for working with us to help keep everyone safe in your homes. Your support, especially by providing access to your property for essential safety checks is vital in maintaining the safety of all our residents.

Repairs service update

We undertake approximately 19,000 repairs each year. The majority of which are completed within expected timescales.

Sadly, this is not always the case and you have also told us there is room for improvement, so as part of our commitment to continuously improve our repairs service we have appointed some new contractors to support our in-house team. We're pleased to be able to introduce you to them:

Contractor	Workstream
TCL	General Repairs
Principle Group	Damp & Mould
N & P Windows	Windows & Doors
Specialised Group	Roofing
Dalrod	Drainage
CBM Group	Out of Hours (OOH)

If you have a problem with your home, please report it to us in the usual way. These companies cannot respond and you will be advised to contact the council to arrange for any repairs, which will be carried out by the in-house team wherever possible.

These changes reflect our commitment to improvement and to ensuring that your homes are safe, warm and well maintained.

Repairs tips:

Now is the perfect time to take care of small repairs and maintenance tasks that can prevent bigger problems down the line.



Check doors and windows

Make sure windows and doors close securely - particularly if you leave them open during hot weather.

Test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms

With more time spent at home during summer break, it's important to make sure alarms are in good working order. Smoke detectors should be tested once a month and batteries replaced at least once a year, or sooner if the alarm starts to beep intermittently (this could mean the battery is low).

Clean and inspect window, vents and extractor fans

Dust and debris can build up in vents and fans. Cleaning them helps improve airflow and reduces the risk of mould.

Report minor plumbing issues

Check for dripping taps, slow drains or running toilets. These can waste water and lead to bigger issues if ignored.

Looks out for signs of damp and mould

Summer is a good time to open windows and air out rooms. Keep an eye on bathrooms and kitchens – early action can stop it from spreading.

Need a repair?

If you spot an issue, report it promptly using the details below. Acting early helps us fix problems quickly and prevent further damage.

Online via your Housing Online Account

Phone 01438 242 666

Emergency - immediate risk or danger to people or property (outside office hours)
01438 314 963

Celebrating progress: Tenant satisfaction survey results 2024/25



Why do we do the surveys?

Throughout the year we carry out satisfaction surveys designed to give you a voice and help us as your landlord to focus on what matters to you most. This feedback helps us to understand what you think we are doing well and, just as importantly, where we need to improve.

Your opinions guide our decisions, shape our services, and help ensure we're not just staying as we are but also continually looking to improve.

Who took part?

Over 2024/25 988 people responded – either via a telephone interview or an online survey. This means that more than 12% of tenants gave us feedback, which is well above the level required. This is in addition to other surveys we carry out to gather your views on specific topics or services too.

Headline results

We are pleased to report that overall tenant satisfaction increased by nearly 11% compared to last year's results. This is a strong step forward and a reflection of the work we've done – and will continue to do – to improve your experience

Indicator	2023/24	2024/25	Change
TP01 – Overall Satisfaction	56.0%	66.9%	▲ 10.9%
TP02 – Repairs Satisfaction	50.0%	58.2%	▲ 8.2%
TP03 – Time Taken to Complete Repairs	42.5%	54.5%	▲ 12.0%
TP04 – Well Maintained Home	59.0%	63.5%	▲ 4.5%
TP05 – Home is Safe	67.1%	75.6%	▲ 8.5%
TP06 – Listens to Views and Acts	46.7%	52.1%	▲ 5.4%
TP07 – Keeps Informed	60.0%	65.0%	▲ 5.0%
TP08 – Treated with Respect	62.2%	71.0%	▲ 8.8%
TP09 – Complaint Handling	40.3%	45.0%	▲ 4.7%
TP10 – Communal Areas Satisfaction	53.0%	58.0%	▲ 5.0%
TP11 – Neighbourhood Management	55.0%	60.0%	▲ 5.0%
TP12 – Anti-Social Behaviour Handling	48.0%	52.0%	▲ 4.0%

“The staff are polite and responsive”

What you told us

We received some great feedback including:-

- Prompt, efficient repairs – “Repairs were done quickly and well”
- Friendly, helpful customer service – “The staff are polite and responsive”
- Feeling respected and safe in your home – “A great foundation for well-being”

We also heard about areas where we can do better, including:

- Complaints handling – Some of you reported delays and lack of resolution.
- Listening and acting on feedback – A crucial area we are committed to improving.
- Anti-social behaviour (ASB) – While some progress is being made, we know this remains a concern in certain areas.

How we'll use your feedback

Your feedback isn't just collected and stored – it drives real action. Based on what you've told us, our priorities for the coming year include:

- Improving our complaints process – Simplifying it, speeding it up, and making sure outcomes are clearly communicated.
- Engaging more with tenants – Ensuring your views are not just heard, but acted upon.
- Tackling ASB more effectively – Working closely with community partners to improve safety and quality of life.

We're also improving how we communicate – not just internally within the council, but directly with you.

What happens next?

Here's what we're doing now, based on the 2024/25 results:

- Action Planning: We're using the results to build a focused improvement plan, targeting the areas you've said matter most.
- Sharing Results: We're publishing this article and further updates to keep you in the loop.
- Making Changes: Whether it's faster repairs, better follow-up on issues, or improved service, change is already underway.

Have your say

This survey is just one way we hear from you. In every issue of this newsletter, we want to know what information you'd like to see more of. Whether it's updates on housing repairs, ASB, community events, or sustainability – let us know.

Thank you

To every tenant who took the time to complete the survey – thank you. Your voice matters. And because of your feedback, we're making real progress together.

Housing Matters Summer 2025

Events calendar

Come join us at one of the many fantastic events happening across Stevenage. There's something for all ages and all are completely free to attend:

1 – 31 August –

Summer Beach – Town Centre

Saturday 13 September –

Stevenage International Day

Wednesday 1 October –

International Day of Older People

Saturday 25 October –

Halloween-Tastic

Wednesday 5 November –

Stevenage Fireworks Display

Safety tips

It is a great time to enjoy the outdoors and spend time with neighbours, but it's important to stay safe at home and in the community. Here are a few simple tips to help everyone stay safe and comfortable

Fire safety first

- Never leave barbecues unattended and keep children and pets well away
- Always use barbecues outdoors and away from buildings, fences and trees
- Keep balconies and communal walkways clear from clutter and anything flammable
- Dispose of cigarettes and matches safely in the bins provided in communal areas, ensuring they are fully extinguished - never drop them in dry land or in shared outdoor areas.

Window safety

- If you have young children, make sure windows are restricted or locked
- Avoid placing furniture under windows to reduce climbing risk
- Keep windows and doors locked when you're out or asleep, even in warm weather

Stay cool indoors

- Drink plenty of water and check on neighbours who may be vulnerable in the heat
- Keep blinds or curtains closed during the hottest part of the day to reduce indoor temperatures
- Never leave electric fans running unattended



Save water

Using less water helps the environment – and can save you money too.

Easy tips to save water:

- Turn off taps when brushing teeth
- Use a watering can instead of a hose
- Collect rainwater in a water butt for garden use
- Keep showers short and sweet

How to contact us

There are lots of ways to get in touch:

Online at www.stevenage.gov.uk

You can report repairs, make payments, and find information about your tenancy anytime online.

Telephone on 01438 242666

Our Customer Service Team is available Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm, except bank holidays.

In person

Our offices are located in Daneshill House between HSBC bank and Mecca Bingo. Our doors are open Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm, except bank holidays.

To see an adviser, you will need an appointment which you can book using an online form.

Emergency out of hours telephone on 01438 314963

If you have an emergency repair such as a leak, no heating or electricity, or serious damage to your property, you can contact us on the above telephone number if our offices are closed.

We're here to help – please don't hesitate to reach out.

Have a great summer!