

# Housing Matters

Autumn / Winter 2025



## A welcome message from your councillors

### Cllr Jackie Hollywell- Cabinet Member for Housing and Housing Development



Welcome to the fourth edition of Housing Matters. I hope you have enjoyed the newsletters and the contents so far. If there are any topics that you would like including, please email suggestions to [ResidentVoice@Stevenage.gov.uk](mailto:ResidentVoice@Stevenage.gov.uk).

I hope you all enjoyed the summertime and are looking forward to the cozy evenings that are now upon us. Stevenage has lots of events planned over the coming weeks for everyone to take part in, please see page 3 for further details of how you can get involved.

You'll also find advice to help you keep your home safe as we go into winter and an explanation around some changes in the way we will deal with some of the repairs that can occur in homes, as well as how we will be responding to these, following feedback from you!

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



It's been fantastic working with lots of new colleagues over the last few months, as I start to plan for the year ahead. There are lots of planned engagement opportunities for you to offer your feedback on coming up in the next few months and to aid this process, please ensure your contact details are up to date.

You can do this by logging into your online [Housing Customer Account](#) and updating your details directly. A consultation is launching soon about our care-taking service so do look out and tell us what you think. This is a service that we provide to our residents and leaseholders who live in blocks of flats, with internal communal areas.

## Local Government Review Update

Did you know there are 11 councils in Hertfordshire, with district and borough councils, providing services such as housing, planning, environmental, refuse and recycling, car parks and leisure services, whilst Hertfordshire County Council is responsible for schools, libraries, roads, and social services. Under the Government's plan, these councils are to be replaced by new unitary councils, that will deliver all services currently provided by the two separate types of local authorities.

You can find further details here on the [Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation](#) part of the website or on the dedicated [Shaping Hertfordshire's Future](#) website.

## How to contact us

There are lots of ways to get in touch:

**Online** at [www.stevenage.gov.uk](http://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

# New taster Health Walk starting in Pin Green

Boost your mood, increase your energy levels and improve your fitness by joining a free Health Walk.

There are five walks available to choose from, starting in Bedwell, Fairlands Valley Park and the town centre Library. Led by Herts Health Walks they are **GRADED** by terrain and length, so you can always find one that is right for you.

Herts Health Walks are led by their fabulous local walk leaders, and they have set up a series of eight taster walks at Pin Green, starting at Hampson Park Community Centre.

Visit [Stevenage Health Walks Timetable Sept - Dec 2025](#) to view the full timetable of walks this autumn.

If you are new to walking, you can find out more [Advice for new walkers](#) and further information on what to expect here.

Keep up to date with Health Walks on the Herts Health Walk Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/hertfordshirehealthwalks](http://www.facebook.com/hertfordshirehealthwalks) Or, subscribe to the 'Walking in Hertfordshire' monthly newsletter.

Alternatively, you can contact a member of our friendly team on [healthwalks.cms@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:healthwalks.cms@hertfordshire.gov.uk) or 01992 555 888.



## November's Movember

November is dedicated to men's health, especially mental health. This is a global campaign, which aims to highlight and promote awareness and challenge stigmas around masculinity. This is a time when it is encouraged for men to speak up and share their mental health worries.

There is a wide range of support out there such as:

**MANUP?** Mens Mental Health Charity [www.manup.how](http://www.manup.how)

**Mind in Mid Herts;**

Call 03303 208100

Email [admin@mindinmidherts.org.uk](mailto:admin@mindinmidherts.org.uk)

**Spectrum Drug and Alcohol Recovery Services**, a service to empower you to set yourself goals and achieve them. They are a free and confidential service for anyone who has a problem with drugs or alcohol. They offer advice, guidance and support during your recovery period.

Call 0300 652 3169

Email [Herts@cgl.org.uk](mailto:Herts@cgl.org.uk)

**Samaritans of North Herts and Stevenage**

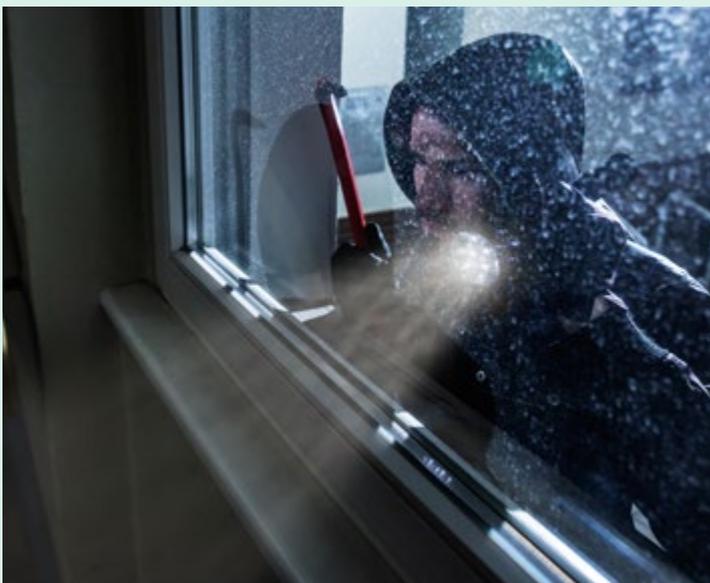
Call 116123



### Home security tips

As the nights draw in, Hertfordshire Police tell us that they do see an increase in residential burglaries. Here are a few tips to keep your home safer and deter any unwanted visitors!

- Consider putting lamps and lights on a timer, if your home is going to be empty when it is dark outside
- Keep your windows locked
- Consider investing in a camera doorbell
- Ensure your sheds and garages are locked
- Keep wheelie bins secure, to prevent them from being used as a climbing aid
- If you live in a flat with a communal door entry system, do not prop the door open.



### Door entry systems

If you live in a block of flats, with a door entry system, please remember that when someone buzzes you, only grant access to the block of flats if they are visiting you. We take your security seriously and ensuring that only permitted people in the block will not only protect yourself but your neighbours as well.

Please remember these doors are open and close automatically so please do not pull the doors as this will damage the closing mechanism.

### Christmas fire safety

During December many residents will decorate their homes with trees, lights, baubles and candles. Here are a few tips for minimising the fire risk during the festive period.

- Keep candles away from Christmas trees, curtains or other flammable items
- Check the lights you have meet the British Safety Standards and remember to always turn them off before going leaving your home or going to bed.
- If you use an extension lead, do not overload it.
- Do not leave any cooking unattended
- Test your smoke alarm and report any issues to us on-line via your Housing Online Account, using this link.
- If you smoke, ensure that it is fully extinguished once you have finished.

### Events calendar

Saturday 15 November – Sunday 31 December	Stevenage Christmas Market
Saturday 22 November	Stevenage Christmas Light Switch On
Saturday 22 November	Christmas special
Saturday 29 November	Old Town Christmas Lights
Month of December	Christmas Trail
Saturday 6 December	Christmas Special: Kid Zone

Don't forget to follow us on Facebook, X or Instagram to keep up to date with what's happening. Find out more at [www.stevenage.gov.uk](http://www.stevenage.gov.uk) or [www.stevenagetowncentre.com/](http://www.stevenagetowncentre.com/)

# Keeping your home safe over the winter months

## Burst Pipes

Try not to leave your home empty in the colder months when visiting friends and relatives.

It may seem harmless but leaving your home unoccupied in the colder months for long periods of time, can lead to big problems. When the temperature drops, water pipes can freeze, causing the pipes to expand and burst. This can result in damage to your home and belongings.

Burst pipes can cause flooding, structural damage and even mould growth, making it important to try to stop pipes bursting in the first place.



## How to prevent burst pipes

### Keep the heating on low whilst you are away

If you prefer not to keep the heating on low, turn the water supply off at the stop cock. This is usually located underneath the kitchen sink or by your washing machine connection.

### Ask a relative or friend to pop in and check on your home while you are away.

This could be if you are away over the season, visiting friends or other reason

To report a burst pipe, please contact the Customer Service Centre on 01438 242 666. **For all out of hours heating, hot water, frozen/burst pipes and flooding emergencies please call 01438 314 963.**

Please remember household content insurance is your responsibility, we have teamed up with Thistle Tenant Risk. You can contact them directly to arrange your contents home insurance. [Home Contents Insurance - Tenants and Leaseholders](#)

## Reporting a general repair for your home

When reporting a repair, whether routine or an emergency, please let us know if you or any member of your household is vulnerable due to age, disability or health condition. This information will help us modify our service to meet your needs effectively.

You can request a housing repair through your Housing Online Account [Housing Customer Account](#) If you haven't done so already, you will need to create an online or by phone.

We aim to rectify repairs in the following timescales;

**Emergency repairs**, we attend within 24 hours but in some cases it may only be possible to make safe with a full repair taking longer. Please call us directly to report this repair.

**Urgent repairs**, this is typically completed within 7 calendar days. Please call us directly to report this repair.

**Routine repairs**, typically completed within 28 calendar days. Please use your Housing Online Account.

**Other repairs** – Please see our [Responsive Repairs and Maintenance Policy](#). This breaks down] who is responsible for certain repairs, either the council or the resident.

## Reporting a repair to your garage.

If you need to report a repair, please use the online form [Housing Customer Account](#). Please note that you will need your garage reference number, which starts with a 1 and is located on the offer letter or any other letter we have sent you, about the garage you rent from us.

Please note, that if you have misplaced your garage keys, this is a chargeable repair, at a cost of £149.73. This will need to be paid in advance of the lock change being carried out. Alternatively, you can arrange your own lock change, as long as there is no damage caused to the garage, the new lock is left in its original place and the keys are returned as normal when terminating your tenancy. In these instances, you do not need to report anything to us.

## Damp and Mould

We take great pride in maintaining your home, however if you notice any signs of damp, condensation or mould, please report this to us. We have a dedicated and experienced team dealing with these issues, who will work with you to solve the problem(s). Please report this via [www.stev-nage.gov.uk/housing/council-housing/repairs/report-a-repair](http://www.stev-nage.gov.uk/housing/council-housing/repairs/report-a-repair)

Or by calling the team directly on 01438 242666

For further information and helpful guidelines, please see the following [Damp, Condensation and Mould](#)

Would you like to have your say?

## Would you like to have your say in how the housing service is run at Stevenage Borough Council, if so, let us know!

Getting your feedback and views on our services is important, and to help with this we are increasing opportunities to interact, engage and consult with our residents. We want to hear from residents who would like to make a difference to their local community.

If this appeals to you, please email [ResidentVoice@stevenage.gov.uk](mailto:ResidentVoice@stevenage.gov.uk) and we will be in touch with details of events and new opportunities.

### Why become involved?

- You're a tenant in one of our homes and know what is important
- Your voice matters on how SBC develops, adapts and develops the housing service
- You will gain a better understanding of how SBC manages the housing service
- We want to make it as easy as possible to get involved with SBC, and there is a whole range of methods to do so, from on-line activities to completing surveys, attending events or coming to meetings
- You will have an opportunity to provide your views on issues that are important to you and your local community.

### How are we doing?

Every three months we publish details of how we are performing, as we think it's important for you to have this information. We have included some details here, however you can find more information on the [website](#) where it explains why we gather this information, how we use it and why it's important.

There two types of information that we gather; some is collected via feedback and comments from our residents and the other is from our own information and data.

Throughout the year we carry out Tenant Satisfaction Surveys which are designed to give you a voice and help us as your landlord to focus on what matters to you most.

There are 12 areas where we ask our residents directly to tell us what they think of us and how we are doing, and for all of these areas you have told us that we are doing better than we were last year, which is great so thanks for that positive feedback!

## Management Information Measures – Q1 2025/26

Regulator for Social Housing Measures	Q1 2025/26 (Actual)	Q1 2025/26 (Target)
<b>BS01:</b> Percentage of dwellings with a valid gas certificate	100.00%	100.00%
<b>BS02:</b> Percentage of dwellings with a valid Fire Risk Assessment	100.00%	100.00%
<b>BS03:</b> Percentage of properties that require an annual asbestos inspection / survey	100.00%	100.00%
<b>BS04:</b> Percentage of sites with valid legionella inspections certificate	100.00%	100.00%
<b>BS05:</b> Percentage of domestic passenger lifts with an in date LOLER inspection	100.00%	100.00%
<b>CH01</b> (part 1): Number of stage one complaints made by tenants	134	-
<b>CH02</b> (part 1): Number of stage one complaints made by tenants and responded to within CH Timescale	125	-
<b>CH01</b> (part 2): Number of stage two complaints made by tenants	34	-
<b>CH02</b> (part 2): Number of stage two complaints made by tenants and responded to within CH Timescale	28	-
<b>Rep1:</b> Proportion of emergency responsive repairs completed within target timescale	98.3%	99.00%
<b>Rep2:</b> Proportion of non-emergency (Routine and Urgent) responsive repairs completed within target	94.88%	95.00%
<b>NM01</b> (part 1): ASB cases opened by or on behalf of the provider during the reporting year	44	-
<b>NM01</b> (part 2): ASB cases that involve hate incidents opened by or on behalf of the provider during the reporting year	1	-

● Meeting Target 
 ● Amber Status 
 ● Red Status 
 ● Baseline Measure

The area where you have said we have improved most is in the way we have made a positive contribution to your neighbourhoods. We know there are more improvements that we need to make, and your views are key to helping us understand what is important and where we need to focus our efforts going forward.

## TSM Scores



Ref	Question	2025/26	Previous year (2024/25)	Difference (+/-)
TPO1	Overall satisfaction (n 250)	70.4%	66.9%	3.5%
TPO2	Repairs service overall (149)	74.5%	70.8%	3.7%
TPO3	Speed of repairs (144)	68.8%	64.4%	4.4%
TPO4	Home is well-maintained (238)	68.5%	67.7%	0.8%
TPO5	Home is safe (238)	79.8%	76.4%	3.4%
TPO6	Listens to views and acts (210)	59.5%	55.1%	4.4%
TPO7	Keeps tenants informed (223)	68.6%	61.6%	7.0%
TPO8	Treats tenants fairly and with respect (232)	79.3%	73.3%	6.0%
TPO9	Complaint handling (57)	38.6%	34.1%	4.5%
TP10	Communal areas are clean and well-maintained (93)	64.5%	64.0%	0.5%
TP11	Contribution to neighbourhood (195)	78.5%	63.1%	15.4%
TP12	ASB handling (134)	67.9%	57.9%	10.0%

## Caretaking and window cleaning review

One of the areas that we are keen to work with residents on is our caretaking and window cleaning services. These are provided to residents who live in flats with shared areas. We will be asking for your opinion and recommendations on this and your feedback will be essential in helping us to carry out this review.

Please keep an eye out for further information and communication about the caretaking and window cleaning service review.

## Downsizing

Do you feel your home is now too big for your needs, costing too much to heat and maintain or would you like to move to a different area of Stevenage to a smaller property?

Did you know at Stevenage Borough Council we offer a scheme to support our residents in this process. Your housing register application will be prioritised; support can be offered on bidding for properties or help with removals can be arranged if needed. In certain circumstances painting and decorating vouchers can also be issued.

If you would like to discuss this further please contact the dedicated team either by phone 01438 242666 or email them directly on [residentservices.downsizing@stevenage.gov.uk](mailto:residentservices.downsizing@stevenage.gov.uk)

