

house proud

July 2021

The magazine for St Leger Homes tenants



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A message from the Chief Executive



Hello everyone and welcome to the July 2021 issue of our tenants' magazine HouseProud. I do hope that you are all well and ready to enjoy a much more pleasant summer than we had last year.

One person who definitely has cause to celebrate this summer is our apprentice gas fitter Owen Cooper, who has picked up the Apprentice of the Year trophy at the Doncaster Business Awards. I must say I am proud St Leger Homes is able to offer an apprenticeship training programme that has given so many people the chance to learn a trade and then use their skills to provide a high quality service for tenants. You can find out more about Owen's award success on page four and how he has been making a positive difference locally.

Speaking of awards, it's not just our staff members who are receiving honours this year. Starting on page six you can read about the fantastic finalists in this year's Tenants' Choice

Awards – our regular awards ceremony which pays tribute to those special people in our communities whose selfless hard work has made a lasting difference where they live. I encourage everyone to have a look and cast your vote as soon as possible.

Finally, on page 10 we have news of our external wall insulation programme which is helping to reduce fuel costs for 1,800 homes across the borough. Better insulated homes also lead to lower carbon emissions which is great news for the environment – and lower bills which is great news for tenants!

I hope you enjoy reading this issue of HouseProud – have a great summer!

Dave

Dave Richmond, Chief Executive

Coronavirus update

After a year living under coronavirus restrictions things are now getting back to something a little closer to normal. However, to help make sure we all stay safe it's important for as many of us as possible to get vaccinated.

The coronavirus vaccine is safe, effective and gives you the best protection against coronavirus. All vaccines used in the UK have met strict standards of safety and effectiveness set out by the independent Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency. Your local medical practice will get in touch by phone, letter, text or email to invite you for your vaccinations, so please do take this opportunity to protect yourself and others.

Repair requests soar

Due to concerns about coronavirus, over the past year tenants have reported fewer repairs

and the ability of our staff to deal with them was sometimes reduced because of the need to work safely. Now that lockdown is lifting a lot more repairs are being reported and we have seen a 25% increase in the number of repair jobs we are carrying out compared to before the pandemic.

This means our appointment slots are booking up fast, unfortunately resulting in long wait times for repairs. We are scaling up our response to deal with this increase, but please bear with us as we seek to get on top of this pent up demand for repairs and improve the time you are having to wait. We will get there.



Cover image: Gas fitter Owen Cooper with his Apprentice of the Year trophy from the Doncaster Business Awards 2021.

Tenants' and Residents' Involvement Panel (TRIP) Chair Betty Clayton updates us on TRIP and the Tenants' Appeal Panel.

I can't believe half the year has gone already as I write this! The good news though is that the vaccination programme has progressed rapidly and so far has been a resounding success. This is due to the hard work of those involved in producing the vaccine, delivering the jabs and the response from the public in general. The road map is working so far so here's hoping the gradual restrictions being lifted are successful and we can enjoy a lovely summer, weather permitting for those choosing to holiday in Britain, and those

going abroad can enjoy themselves in the sun.

As I put pen to paper we are still only meeting virtually, but nevertheless we still have our finger on the pulse and are looking after the interests of all tenants. I am also pleased to report that our member who contracted coronavirus is well and back in the fold joining us for our online meetings. However we can't wait to be able to meet face-to-face and conduct the business round the table again.

The Tenants' Appeal Panel is over a year old and progressing well. I'm sure that tenants who have an issue and make an appeal will be reassured that their appeal is being heard by two tenants, as well as St Leger Homes' employees.

TRIP are beavering away looking at different aspects of St Leger Homes for scrutiny from a tenant's point of view whilst being a critical friend to the organisation. St Leger Homes is also involving TRIP in consultations for updating their existing services and standards.

Enjoy your summer whatever you choose to do, but be vigilant and remember hands, face, space – and let's not spoil what we have achieved so far.



Tenants Take Over

Introducing our Customer Charter

We want to provide a high quality housing service that makes a difference for people living in our town, so we have spoken to customers to find out what matters most to you about our services.

After hearing your opinions we have now created our new Customer Charter, a commitment to you about the things you can expect from us as your landlord.

Our Customer Charter is made up of four service standards, which are:



Friendly and polite staff

– all our staff members and contractors should be helpful, respectful, polite, friendly and professional.



Safe and secure

– we will make sure that you feel safe in your home, neighbourhood and community.



Easy to do business with

– we will always aim to deal with your enquiries quickly and

effectively, and will be easy to contact using your preferred communication method – whether that is phone, email, letter, social media or any other way.



Keeping promises

– we will offer you an appointment that is the most convenient

for you within the times that we deliver our services. We will keep our promises to you and always do our best to get it right first time, every time.

To make sure we continue to provide excellent services for you we are monitoring our performance and measuring it against targets that we have set in each service area.

For example, we aim to complete 92% of repairs appointments on the first visit, and to answer 95% of your telephone calls within 20 seconds.

To read our Customer Charter and find out more about our commitments to meet your needs, visit our website at www.stlegerhomes.co.uk/about/our-service-standards/our-customer-charter/

If you want to see how we are performing, you can see our latest service standards performance reports at www.stlegerhomes.co.uk/about/our-service-standards/

Helping you back into the World of Work

If you are looking for the opportunity to get back into work or start some training, then our World of Work scheme is here to help you! World of Work has a general employment course which will give you some extra help and support with job searching, CV writing and job applications - as well as providing you with full job interview preparation.

We also offer an award winning Support and Learn scheme which gives you the chance to complete a short Doncaster College course and then come to work for St Leger Homes in a full time paid training role for six months.

Anthony, David and Neil have taken this route and after completing a short college course they began a six month training role working as External Property Maintenance Operatives in Denaby. This enabled them to put their new skills into practice and by the end of their training role all three had applied for permanent positions within St Leger Homes. The good news is they were successful at interview and are now looking forward to the future having secured permanent employment!

The World of Work scheme is free and voluntary, you decide what help you need. If you are interested in joining, search for World of Work on our website, or call **01302 734384** or **07817 124351**.

Gas fitter Owen named Apprentice of the Year



Apprentice gas fitter Owen Cooper is celebrating after being named Apprentice of the Year at the Doncaster Business Awards.

Owen received the honour in recognition of the incredible dedication, hard work and professionalism he has shown throughout his time at St Leger Homes. Through his work Owen has made a real positive difference for tenants across the borough including going to great lengths to fix a boiler for a vulnerable tenant who had been left without heat during winter due to a fault, and providing much needed support to another tenant who was struggling with social isolation.

"I'm very thankful for even being nominated for the award, and even more so for winning it", said Owen. "St Leger Homes have provided immense support and training throughout my apprenticeship journey, which I am very grateful for. I am really proud to win this award and to be playing my part helping the local community."

Dave Richmond, Chief Executive of St Leger Homes, said: "We are all really pleased for Owen – this award is fully deserved, and he is a fantastic ambassador for St Leger Homes. Owen is conscientious, hard-working and a real team player, eager to learn and help those around him who are in need.

"We believe our apprentice scheme sets a high standard for others to follow by helping to improve the lives of local residents and the wider Doncaster area, as well as bringing real improvements for those who are participating in the scheme. That has been seen more than ever over the last 12 months with the important role our trades operatives have played supporting local communities through the coronavirus pandemic." **Well done Owen!**

Thank you for your feedback!

Over the last year we have carried out several different surveys asking tenants to share their thoughts about the services that we provide.

We received hundreds of responses, so we would like to say a big thank you to everybody who has taken the time to fill in these surveys. Your views are very important to us and really do play a huge part in making sure that we continue to improve our services and meet the needs of all our customers.

Here are some examples of the feedback we received about how we communicate with you:

You told us our HouseProud magazine is one of the best ways we have to keep you informed about what is going on at St Leger Homes. 68.3% of tenants who responded to our surveys said that HouseProud is their preferred way of finding out important information about St Leger Homes and our services – with 92.5% saying they were very satisfied with the stories and information they get in the magazine.

These days more and more people of all ages are using our website and social media channels to keep up-to-date on what is happening in their communities and access services online. 91.8% of people surveyed told us they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the information that we provide online – and 94.3% said they were satisfied or very satisfied that our social media channels offer useful information that matters to them.

We are always keen to hear what you have to say, so if you would like to ask a question or leave a comment please do get in touch through our website **www.stlegerhomes.co.uk**, our Facebook page at **www.facebook.com/stlegerhomes** or on Twitter at **www.twitter.com/StLegerHomes**.

Of course if you prefer you can speak to us by telephone on **01302 862862**.



Customer Service Excellence Accreditation Secured For Eleventh Year

We are proud to announce that we have been awarded the Government's Customer Service Excellence accreditation for the eleventh year in a row!

The Customer Service Excellence scheme thoroughly tests the areas of an organisation that are the greatest priorities for customers – such as timeliness, quality of service, information provided, professionalism and staff attitude.

After investigating St Leger Homes the assessor said: "Throughout the pandemic, despite the move to home working by most staff, the emphasis has been on striving to deliver all the usual services to the customer, as permitted by government guidelines, with the same customer service standards, but sometimes in a different way or taking a little longer than usual.

"Staff have risen to the challenge admirably – they are very committed, helpful, supportive, knowledgeable, positive, approachable and hard working. The Covid Survey in June 2020 found that 82.48% of customers were happy with the level of service during the first lockdown period.

"St Leger Homes is to be congratulated for maintaining accreditation to the Customer Service Excellence Standard for eleven years, which is an excellent achievement. St Leger Homes is notable for being fully compliant in all aspects of the Standard, with an impressive total of 32 Compliance Plus elements (out of a total of 57)."

We never forget that all of the work we do is designed to support you, our customers, so here's to another eleven years of providing you with excellent customer service!

Tenants' Choice Awards 2021

Over the past few months you have been sending in your nominations for this year's Tenants' Choice Awards and we are pleased to say that we now have our list of finalists!

To pick your winners in each category: go online to www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/SLHDTCA2021 and cast your vote; telephone our Customer Involvement Team on **01302 862743**; or send an email with the names of the people you have chosen to customerinvolvement@stlegerhomes.co.uk

Tenant of the Year

Janet Atkinson

Janet has been a member of Barnby Dun TARA for many years and during the pandemic she took a leading role in supporting people in the local community. She stopped at nothing to make sure everyone received the help they needed – from co-ordinating food deliveries, to checking in with residents daily by telephone to see if there was anything they wanted. She looked out for others despite her own needs, and her regular contact with people helped to reduce the social isolation many had been feeling.

Nothing was too much trouble if it meant that people felt safe and supported. Janet has a heart of gold and always puts others first, she was incredible before the lockdown but has really gone above and beyond to look after everyone through these difficult times.

Ron Rickwood

Ron is a member of the St Leger Homes Tenants' Appeal Panel and an active member of the Get Involved Group, regularly taking part in focus groups and training sessions to improve services for tenants. Despite shielding through the pandemic, Ron found many ways to stay involved with his community. He is always ready to go that extra mile to get the very best outcome for everybody.

Ron uses his natural talent to engage with people in his writing for the It's Our Community publication. Ron has embraced this role and also taken on the responsibility of printing and delivering the publication to his neighbours, and is now typing and sending in their contributions as well. Ron truly embodies the spirit of involvement and brings a little sunshine and sparkle wherever he goes.

Best Green Initiative

Balby and Hexthorpe Community Interest Company (CIC)

The CIC run many projects to help the local environment. They complete a weekly litter pick in Balby and Hexthorpe and are creating a flower bed to attract wildlife, in particular to help bees and other insects in need of wild flowers.

Throughout the lockdown they have been able to help volunteers increase their daily exercise by carrying out daily walks in the estate to get rubbish removed, collecting over 400 bin bags of rubbish during the pandemic. They are helping to stop fly tipping and are aiming to look after the community by making the estate a welcoming place to visit for all.

Denaby Social Well Bean

This group of pensioner volunteers have come together to improve the old community allotment and turn this open space into a warm, welcoming, friendly environment for all to use. The sheds have been mended, paths laid, benches painted, and vegetable and flower seeds are growing.

They want to create a welcoming, friendly and peaceful environment to share with everyone, including a sensory garden to support people with dementia, autism and who are partially sighted to help improve mental health and physical wellbeing. They want to make a green impact in the community, educate others and teach them how to grow their own produce.

Friends of Martinwells Lake

This used to be a no-go area with a history of vandalism and fly tipping, but the group are developing it into a hub of activity where people can have a peaceful walk, do a spot of fishing or have a picnic.

The group have worked to tidy the area up and prune trees and undergrowth. They applied for funding to install outdoor gym equipment and have renewed the fishing pegs for people to use. They organise community days and promote water safety in partnership with South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue, and have received the Duke of York community award for all their hard work.

Community Group of the Year

Barnby Dunn TARA

This group support the community with a range of activities. Pre-Covid they held coffee afternoons, special Easter and Christmas events, lunch clubs, and craft and dance sessions.

During the pandemic they helped to keep people going by staying in touch with them to reduce social isolation and support one another through difficult times. They organised food parcels and made sure that everyone had deliveries from the local shops. Afternoon tea was sent to all members during the summer and they even delivered gifts at Christmas. They have an amazing community spirit and have made such a difference to so many people that would have been on their own if not for their support.

Toll Bar TARA

This group hold community events including coffee mornings, bingo, craft classes and children's dance classes. Some members are flood wardens and regularly attend flood watch walks with the Environment Agency, which enables them to share their ideas or concerns.

They arrange galas at Easter, Christmas and the school holidays, and always get into the spirit of things for special occasions like the Tour de Yorkshire. During the pandemic the group continued to support residents and held meetings outdoors when it was safe to do so. They even dressed one of their vehicles up as Santa's grotto and an Easter bunny hut and drove around the estate giving free gifts to the local children.

Hyde Park TARA

Throughout the pandemic the TARA continued to put others' needs ahead of their own. Despite the community house being closed, they continued to support people by delivering supplies to those in need.

The TARA have always held events for key holidays such as Easter and Christmas, and rely on these events to fundraise. Due to the pandemic such events had to be cancelled so they used their own funds to bring cheer and support to the community. They delivered Easter eggs to children in hospital and on the Hyde Park estate. At Halloween they made goody bags and held competitions for local children on the estate to give them something to get excited about.

Best Community Project

Greenwood TARA – Community Support Walk

During the pandemic Julie, Chair of Greenwood TARA, wanted to help the most vulnerable and elderly members of the community so they came up with the idea for Community Support Walks. By walking around the community twice daily the TARA offered help and support to people, especially those who were older or more vulnerable and did not have internet access to get the latest information or support telephone numbers. The Community Support Walks fulfilled a great need within the community by giving people the help and support they needed, showing that others cared and were looking out for them, improving peoples' mental health and forging stronger links between the community and Greenwood TARA.

Community Ambassadors

These young people worked on a number of projects with St Leger Homes during lockdown. They all pledged to complete the Level 2 Youth Health Champion qualification, which will give them a qualification and help them become ambassadors for health and wellbeing in their communities and schools. They have shared wellbeing information with their peers, created buddy networks at schools, raised awareness of mental health wellbeing and written newsletters for other young people. They have taken part in training and are continually developing themselves. They have supported many young people across the borough and are working hard on ideas and projects for their community again when it is safe to do so again.

Balby and Hexthorpe CIC

Over the last year the CIC have sent out over 10,000 food parcels; supported over 6,000 residents on a weekly basis; collected prescriptions for people; and created a 'free from' food parcel range for those with specific dietary requirements. They also supported Riverside Homeless Shelter with daily food donations and hygiene products. The team started a period poverty support hub to help young ladies who are struggling to buy the most basic products. Up to 50 young women attended the hub every week, which goes to show the need for this kind of support. The team have provided a huge amount of support for people in the local community.

Young Person of the Year

Samuel Finn

Samuel is an incredible young person who is a volunteer with St Leger Homes, part of the Doncaster Youth Council, Scouts group and much more. Samuel has worked hard to complete a Youth Health Champion qualification with Street Games so he can support his peers further. Samuel has a real passion to get involved and help services to develop and work well for young people. He really wants to make a difference within his community and help young people to be seen differently to their stereotypes. He promotes the hard work of himself and his peers through social media to inspire others and show the amazing work that young people can do.

Trinity Philips

Trinity is an extremely hard working young person who volunteers with St Leger Homes to learn new things and expand her skills and knowledge. During the last year she has taken part in webinars for Dementia Friends, Safeguarding Awareness, Money Management, Five Ways to Wellbeing, and completed a three month Youth Health Champion course about health and wellbeing. Trinity was actively involved in designing the Keeping Safe leaflet which will be distributed across Doncaster to raise awareness of safeguarding and how to report concerns about abuse. Trinity also took a lead role in the Doncaster Keeping Safe week where she delivered a Safeguarding Awareness session on Facebook Live which was viewed by over 200 people.

Melissa North

Melissa is an amazing young person with a real passion for helping others. During the pandemic she wanted to find a way to engage with others and learn new skills to give something back to her community. She joined several St Leger Homes training sessions including the Dementia Friends course, Safeguarding Awareness and Youth Health Champion training. Melissa joined the Pen Pal Christmas card project which involved writing cards for older people in the community to help them feel less socially isolated during this last Christmas under lockdown restrictions. She also developed her own project where she sent out 'feel better' boxes to help people who were struggling with their mental health and wellbeing.

Community Champion

Julie Adams

Julie is Chair of Greenwood TARA. She is always coming up with new ideas to entertain people and keep them informed, including race nights; fish and chip suppers; Valentine's afternoon tea; knitting, sewing and craft sessions; and day trips out to Bridlington and Whitby.

Julie has a great sense of humour and encourages people to give time and volunteer. She is the go to person in the community when help is needed or people have questions – and if she doesn't know, she will get the answer. She has been an amazing support during the pandemic and the floods, for the community and TARA alike.

Fenulla Brammer


Fenulla has a passion to support people and is always willing to go that extra mile to put people of the community first. During the pandemic she delivered lunch parcels to the community, checked on local people who are vulnerable, helped those in need to access benefits, and provided a door-to-door service for people who needed to get their vaccines.

Fenulla belongs to a number of local groups and has worked digitally during the pandemic to support them – writing funding bids for groups, which were successful, and helping set up bank accounts. She has a desire to help people and support communities in Conisbrough and Denaby.

Joanne Wood

Joanne helped people during the pandemic by delivering over 4,000 food parcels and collecting food donations from local supermarkets on a weekly basis to deliver to communities. She even worked on weekends to help.

Joanne will always make the time or people and go that one step further to help a resident in need. She completed a sponsored bike ride from Balby to Cleethorpes to raise funds for the local support hub, raising £500. She does this despite working full time, showing pure dedication to the local community. Her support has been so important to Balby and Hexthorpe CIC and everyone loves Joanne!



Send us your snaps!

Now that long, sunny summer days have arrived we would like to give everyone an extra reason to get outside in the fresh air, so we are launching our St Leger Homes photography competition!

We want to see your photos showing the best things about life in Doncaster. It could be flowers blooming in your garden, the views from your high rise building, or your family playing in the local park – so long as it shows something you love about your life in our town anything goes. Our favourite photos will even win a prize!

You may remember from the last issue of HouseProud that we are also inviting you to take part in the National Federation of ALMOs photo competition which has the theme of 'pulling together'. If you would like your photo to be entered into both competitions just let us know in your email.

Your photo should be in the best quality possible on your phone or camera. If there is anybody appearing in the photo you will need to provide their contact details and permission from them for us to use the image.

Please email your photo, along with a line or two explaining what it is showing, to **SLHDCompetitions@stlegerhomes.co.uk** before Friday 1st October 2021.



Pay it your way!

Whether you pay your rent weekly, fortnightly or monthly, we want to make the process as quick and easy as possible for you. There are many ways you can pay without having to speak to our advisors, just pick the one that suits you best!



Here are the options:

1. Direct Debit

This is a hassle free way to pay. To set up a Direct Debit just call **01302 862862 (option 2)** – or download the form from our website **www.stlegerhomes.co.uk** – then your bank will send the rent payments when they are due.

2. Online

You can pay online through our website **www.stlegerhomes.co.uk** – just click on the 'Pay It' button or the 'My Access' button on our homepage.

3. Call our 24 hour payment line

Call **01302 862862 (option 2)** and you will be given the choice to pay using our payment line.

4. At any Post Office

You can use cash or cheque to pay your rent at the Post Office – cheques should be payable to Post Office Counters Ltd and you must write your name, address and rent number on the back.

5. By PayPoint

You can pay your rent at any shop displaying the PayPoint sign. Payments must be in cash and you will need your rent payment card or a rent letter with a barcode on it.

Struggling to pay your rent?

If things are getting on top of you and you are having difficulty paying your rent, then it is really important you tell us about it.

There are lots of ways we can try to help you such as giving advice on budgeting, paying bills, and claiming benefits or even agreeing a manageable payment arrangement with you.

Whatever you do don't ignore the problem, instead speak to an Income Management Officer by calling **01302 862862 (option 2)** or emailing **info@stlegerhomes.co.uk**.

Help protect the trees in your community

We know that most people love seeing trees in their local communities – not only do they bring a splash of colour to our day, they also filter out pollution in the air, improve our quality of life and can even reduce the risks of flooding.

Sadly, trees also need our protection from acts of malicious damage and we are asking you to report any incidents you may see where somebody is cutting or damaging trees on our estates.

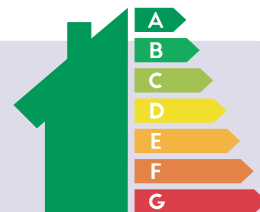
Whether it is vandalism or unauthorised pruning and felling by a private company, damage to trees can be a criminal offence and Doncaster Council will always prosecute and seek compensation from anyone found damaging trees on its land.

If you see someone damaging a tree please report it to South Yorkshire Police by calling 101, and Doncaster Council on **01302 736 000** (or outside office hours on **01302 323 444**). The police will give you a crime number and if you share this with Doncaster Council it will help them to follow up and investigate the incident.



Many trees have been alive since before we were born and will continue on long after we are gone, but only if we protect them. Let's all play our part and make sure future generations can enjoy the benefits of this natural wonder too!

Wall insulation programme cuts emissions and saves you money



Many tenants in Balby are feeling the benefits of better insulated homes and lower fuel costs, thanks to our external wall improvement programme.

Over the next four years this £15m programme will install external wall insulation to the 1,800 Council homes in Doncaster that have solid walls. This will increase the energy efficiency of homes and because less heat can escape they will be more comfortable to live in, with lower fuel costs.

On top of this, well insulated homes help to reduce carbon emissions, bringing down Doncaster's carbon footprint and reducing the impact of climate change which is all great news for our environment.

We are working closely with Doncaster Council to meet their target of all public institutions, businesses and communities delivering an 85%

reduction in net greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2040 in order to tackle the climate and biodiversity emergency we face locally, nationally and globally.

We are delighted that this environmental programme is already proving to be a great success for residents in Balby. By 2025 we aim to bring these benefits to tenants in Armthorpe, Woodlands, Thorne, Intake, Stainforth, Moorends, Mexborough, Edlington, Conisbrough, Tickhill, Adwick, Arksey, Carcroft, Scawthorpe, Skellow, Wheatley, Hexthorpe, Hyde Park and Doncaster Town Centre.

When the programme is finished the amount of greenhouse gas emissions will be reduced by 1,800 tonnes per year, and residents can expect to save in the region of £260 per year in reduced fuel bills.

Gas and electrical safety checks

We are carrying out our scheduled programme of annual gas and five year electrical safety checks in your homes and will soon be contacting some customers to arrange appointments.

These safety checks are a legal requirement which makes sure that your gas appliances and electrical wiring are in good condition. This helps to keep you and your household safe, so it is very important that you let us in to your home to carry out this work. If you cannot make your appointment please get in touch with us as soon as possible to rearrange.

Whilst in your home our gas engineers will be following any Public Health England coronavirus guidance that is in place at the time.

If you want to speak to the Gas Team, you can contact them by calling **01302 862862 (option 1)** or by email at **tenantrepairs@stlegerhomes.co.uk**.



Access your rent account online



Looking for a quick and easy way to make a rent payment? Just use your mobile phone or PC to go to **www.stlegerhomes.co.uk** and click on the My Access button at the top of the page!

Once you have registered on My Access you will be able to make payments, see your current rent balance and check your rent account. We will be adding even more new features to My Access in the coming months – look out for more info on this in future issues of HouseProud.

Mobility scooter fire safety advice

Recently there was a tragic incident where a mobility scooter that had an electrical fault started a fatal fire at a tenant's home. Whilst this type of fire thankfully does not happen very often, when it does occur the consequences can be extremely serious, as seen in this case.

To help make sure that you stay safe from the risk of an accidental fire we want to give you some mobility scooter safety advice from South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue.

Here are their safety tips:

- Always follow the manufacturer's guidance about charging and storing your mobility scooter
- You should avoid charging your scooter overnight or at any time when the owner is asleep – that way if there is a problem you will be awake and able to react to it!
- Once your scooter is fully charged you should unplug it to avoid overcharging. This will also help to keep your scooter's battery in good condition and avoid shortening its lifespan
- If you aren't going to be using your scooter for an extended period of time it is recommended to disconnect the battery until you are ready to use it again
- Think carefully about where you store and charge your scooter. You should always make sure that it is not blocking any doorways or passageways that somebody would use as an escape route in the event of a fire.

If you have any questions or concerns you can speak to our Customer Access Team on 01302 862 862.

Universal Credit update

Rent change reporting

Thank you to everybody who reported the change in your rent which happened on 5th April. Since then we have been busy verifying well over 2,500 Universal Credit (UC) claims to make sure you are all being paid the correct amount for your Housing Costs. If you notice that the rent amount on your UC account is wrong, contact your Income Management Officer on **01302 862862**.

Changes to the £20 UC uplift

In April 2020 the Government increased UC payments by £20 per week to give extra assistance during the coronavirus pandemic.

This £20 payment is now set to end from August 2021.

We know this may be a big change to your income, so if you need help to prevent you from falling behind on your rent please speak to our Tenancy Sustainability Team on **01302 862050** or email **hots@doncaster.gov.uk**.

Evictions ban lifted

In May 2021 the Government lifted the ban on evictions, which means that courts are now able to take action for non-payment of rent. Not paying your rent is a breach of your tenancy and failure to pay may result in the loss of your home.

If you are struggling to pay, here are some useful tips to help you:

DO:

Prioritise your debts and bills

Your rent and Council Tax is a priority. If you might struggle to pay contact us so we can help find a solution.

Claim benefits you are entitled to

Checking which benefits you are entitled to is quick and easy, just go to **www.entitledto.co.uk/**

Access help

Many organisations give free help and advice, including:

St Leger Homes – We can provide support with benefit applications, debt advice, grant applications and maximising your income. Contact them on **01302 862050**.

Citizens Advice – They offer a range of support such as access to debt relief orders and help with benefits. For more info contact them on **0808 278 7955**.

Stepchange Debt Charity

– Another great service that can help you to manage your money worries.

Seek employment

Your local Jobcentre Plus has lots of employment programmes available, and your Work Coach can provide you with all employment opportunities available to you

Access low cost credit

Community First Credit Union offer affordable loans for those who need additional financial support. Visit **www.communityfirstcu.co.uk/** for more info

DON'T:

Bury your head in the sand

Help is always available to you!

Pay non-priority debts before priority debts

If you need support with this please contact one of the organisations listed above

Use high cost money lenders such as doorstep lenders or fall into the trap of using loan sharks

Much more affordable credit with lower interest rates is available through Community First Credit Union



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If so, please contact us on 01302 862862 or email info@stlegerhomes.co.uk



info@stlegerhomes.co.uk



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