

November 2025

house proud

The magazine for St Leger Homes' customers



St. Leger Homes
OF DONCASTER



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A message from our Chief Exec



Hi everyone, as we move into the winter months, I'm pleased to introduce this latest edition of HouseProud, packed with updates, advice and stories from across our communities.



This issue marks a special milestone – our 20th anniversary. We're proud to reflect on two decades of working alongside customers, delivering services, and building stronger neighbourhoods. Inside, you'll find a feature celebrating key moments and achievements, as well as a look ahead to what's next.

With colder weather approaching, we've also included tips to help you prepare your home for winter and the festive season.

A few small actions can make a big difference – helping you enjoy a stress-free winter while allowing our teams to focus support where it's most needed. Plus, don't miss our links to the Council's winter resources and advice on where to get help if you're struggling to heat your home.

Thank you for being part of our community. I hope you enjoy reading this issue and find it both useful and inspiring.



Tenants' takeover

Hello everyone, my name is Therese Kennedy, and I'm the new Chair of the Tenant Scrutiny Panel (TSP). It's a great pleasure and privilege to be writing this column for the first time.

I first got involved with TSP in 2013 because I wanted to make a difference. Being part of the panel gives us the opportunity to scrutinise and investigate services and policies, helping ensure that St Leger Homes delivers high-quality services that meet the needs of our customers.

We're currently looking for new members to join the TSP. You're welcome to observe a meeting to see if it's something that interests you. You'll receive full support and training, and all members are fairly rewarded for their time thanks to our new Rewards and Incentives Scheme—developed following a Scrutiny Review we carried out.

Right now, we're completing a Scrutiny Review on the Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy, and we look forward to sharing the findings with you soon.

Customer views are vital in helping us improve services. If you're interested in joining the TSP, you'll be warmly welcomed, and there will always be someone to meet you and help you feel at ease.

For more information about joining us or any other group, please contact the Customer Involvement Team at:



customer.involvement@stlegerhomes.co.uk
or call us on



01302 862743

Tenancy Agreement update:

What you need to know

Important changes are coming to your Tenancy Agreement from 1 January 2026 – and they are designed to better protect your rights, reflect new laws, and support safe, well-managed homes across Doncaster.

What's new?

As a result of your feedback we've made the following key changes:

- **Succession rights:** Clearer guidance on who can take over a tenancy if a tenant passes away.
- **Subletting:** You can't sublet your whole home. Partial subletting needs written permission from SLHD.
- **Domestic abuse:** The agreement now includes a detailed definition of abuse, including physical, emotional, economic, and online abuse. Tenants must not engage in any form of abuse.
- **Anti-social behaviour (ASB) and hate crime:** Strengthened rules on ASB, harassment, and hate crime, covering both in-person and social media conduct.
- **Access for repairs:** Stronger focus on taking action where there is repeated refusal to allow access and abuse towards staff.
- **Animals:** Dangerous animals and banned dog breeds are not allowed without proper certification.

Why the update?

The agreement hasn't had a major refresh since 2016. Since then, several new laws have come into effect, including:

- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Fire Safety Act 2021
- Awaab's Law (effective from 27 October 2025), requiring landlords to fix hazards within set timeframes.

These updates make sure your agreement is legally up to date and easier to understand.

- **Pest control:** You must report rat or mouse infestations to the City of Doncaster's Pest Control Team. SLHD will arrange treatment, but if the issue is linked to lifestyle, you may be recharged. Tenants are responsible for treating other pests like cockroaches, bed bugs, and fleas.
- **Vehicles:** Parking caravans, motorhomes, boats, or trailers on SLHD-managed land is prohibited if it causes a nuisance or blocks access.
- **CCTV and Ring doorbells:** Clarification on their use to ensure compliance with Data Protection laws.
- **Loft areas:** Lofts are not to be used for storage due to safety risks.
- **Gardens:** Must be kept tidy. SLHD may recharge for neglected maintenance.
- **Tenant voice:** New section on how you can get involved and shape services. To find out more visit the Get Involved page on our website www.st.legerhomes.co.uk.

Cabinet approved:



Notice of variation:



New agreement starts:



Have your say

We've worked closely with customers to ensure the agreement reflects your needs and we really appreciate this feedback.

You said, we did:

"Letter being sent 1st class so customers have plenty of time to feedback."

"Having a list of abbreviations at the end of the Tenancy Agreement."

"Showing a copy of the tracked changes and a clean copy on our website - we're planning to do this shortly."



If you have questions or feedback, please contact your local housing team or visit our website.

It's St Leger Homes 20th anniversary!

In October we celebrated a very special birthday – it was the 20th anniversary of St Leger Homes!

That's right, we've been delivering high-quality services, providing safe and comfortable homes, and doing all that we can to make a difference for local communities since we first opened our doors on 1 October 2005.

Whether you made a home with us two months ago, two years ago or have been a tenant for the full 20 years, we hope you will all join us in celebrating this momentous occasion!



Here's a look back at what's happened...

2006

In 2006 we began work on the Decent Homes Programme which saw £300 million being invested to improve your homes. This made sure every home had modern facilities, upgrading kitchens and bathrooms, improving heating and insulation to make homes warmer, and repairing or replacing old components like roofs, walls, windows and doors.

2007

In 2007 we held our first Tenants and Residents Day at Doncaster Racecourse. This was a chance to celebrate everything local Community Groups and Tenants and Residents Associations do to support their communities. The spirit of this event lives on with our annual Tenant Celebration Events, with the next one happening in November this year.



2010

In 2010 we were proud to be named as one of just 22 housing providers in the UK to be awarded a three-star rating by the Audit Commission for offering "excellent services with promising prospects for improvement".

2011

The following year in 2011, we were awarded a five-star health and safety rating from the British Safety Council, showing our commitment to high standards of safety for customers and staff. In the years since we have since gone on to achieve this five-star rating a total of 14 times!

2017

After the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower in 2017, we installed sprinkler systems in our nine high rise buildings to provide even more protection and security for people living there.

2019

We had dealt with flooding in 2007 with Toll Bar being particularly hard hit, but in 2019 floods struck again! This time Bentley and Fishlake were some of the worst affected areas and we were there to support people through this very difficult time.

2020

When Covid hit in 2020 we all had to adapt quickly, so we found new ways to keep delivering high-quality services for customers and even helped deliver food and medicines to those in need.

As you can see there have been highs and lows over the last 20 years, but throughout it all we've remained dedicated to providing excellent homes and services for you – and that's something we promise to keep doing for the next 20 years and beyond!



Discover the missing word!

p	l	a	c	e	p	z	r	a	r	a	t
e	r	f	g	y	e	p	e	e	g	r	w
r	z	i	n	c	o	w	l	x	n	b	e
f	h	b	d	h	p	c	a	s	s	t	n
o	o	e	m	e	l	i	i	e	o	b	t
r	u	f	l	b	e	o	r	r	e	k	y
m	s	l	x	s	a	h	s	v	g	v	y
a	i	a	u	h	i	c	a	i	e	q	e
n	n	t	w	y	n	e	c	c	l	n	a
c	g	s	t	a	v	m	j	e	t	u	r
e	a	n	v	e	k	o	t	s	s	d	s
d	e	c	e	n	t	h	o	m	e	s	z

We are giving one lucky customer the chance to win a £50 shopping voucher!

All you need to do is find the word that doesn't appear in the wordsearch from the list below. Once you've spotted the missing word, simply send it to us along with your name, address, and phone number.

Send your entry to:

✉ communications@stlegerhomes.co.uk

📍 Comms Team, St. Leger Homes, Civic Office, Waterdale, Doncaster, DN1 3BU.

Deadline for entries is Friday 28th November.

pride
services
people
place
stleger
housing
van

tara
twentyyears
decenthomes
rent
performance
flats

Good luck – and thank you for being part of our journey!

Paying the price for property damage



At the end of last year we revised our policy around charging people who had left their home in a poor condition when they moved out, or caused damage to their home.

Why?

We did this because unfortunately we have seen a big increase in the number of homes that have been returned to us in such a poor state that they need extensive repair work before they can be relet to the next customer. We're even seeing some cases where properties have clearly been damaged deliberately.

Since we brought this revised policy in, we have so far recharged almost £100,000 to customers who were responsible. This just goes to show how serious the damage that has been caused was and how big an issue this is.

Everyone's Tenancy Agreement now states that when your tenancy is over and you leave the property, it must be left in good condition.

This includes:

Removing all items from the property and garden (including the loft), making sure it is clean and that all fixtures and fittings are in good condition.



We know that most of us love our homes and do our very best to look after them. It's only fair that when people do cause intentional damage, that they pay the cost to make it right for the next person who will be living there.

Repair appointment waiting times



What you need to know

We understand how important timely repairs are, and we're committed to keeping you informed.

In the past 12 months we've handled over **44,500** emergency repair requests, and we're working hard to improve scheduling and increase capacity.

Due to high demand, our teams are currently prioritising emergency and urgent repairs that affect tenant safety and wellbeing. To help us respond as quickly as possible, we're asking customers to consider whether the repair they're reporting is truly an emergency before getting in touch.

This helps us make sure we're responding to the most critical issues first, while still keeping appointments for non-urgent repairs.

What's considered emergency or urgent?

These are issues that pose a risk to health, safety, or security:

- No heating or hot water (especially in winter)
- Major leaks or flooding
- Unsafe electrical faults
- Broken external doors/windows affecting security
- Blocked drains or toilets
- Faulty smoke or carbon monoxide detectors

What's considered non-urgent?

- Dripping taps
- Internal door adjustments
- Cosmetic plastering
- Cupboard or drawer issues

Even for non-urgent repairs, you'll still receive an appointment so you know when to expect a visit. If your situation changes — for example, if the issue worsens or starts affecting your wellbeing — please contact us so we can reassess the priority.

Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Is your smoke alarm beeping intermittently?



We know that random beeping from your smoke alarm can be annoying – but it's often a minor issue, and help is at hand.



A new process for faster support

Since 1st April, we've responded to nearly **800 smoke alarm callouts, costing over £30,000.**

Most of these alarms were still working – they were just beeping due to dust, battery warnings, or minor issues.

To reduce unnecessary visits and ensure our teams are available for urgent repairs, we're changing how we respond to smoke alarm issues. We've put together these simple fixes which you can do to help reduce unnecessary visits.



Try this first

Before contacting us, if safe to do so:

1. Press the test button to check the alarm.
2. Hoover around the alarm to clear dust.

These steps often stop the beeping!



Important Info

- Intermittent beeping isn't an emergency – your alarm still works.
- Don't tamper with the alarm – damage may result in a charge.
- If the alarm works, the issue is likely the battery, and we'll book a standard appointment to replace it.



Still need help?

Just give us a call on **01302 862862**, Monday to Friday 8am – 5pm, if these simple fixes don't work. We'll offer advice or arrange a visit – but this won't be treated as a call-out unless there's a safety concern.

Help us help you



Treat our staff with respect

A big thanks to the majority of our customers who treat our staff with kindness and respect – it really does make a difference and helps us provide the best service we can.

Unfortunately, recent research by Inside Housing magazine shows that assaults against housing staff are increasing across the country.

In 2024, over 3,000 verbal, physical or sexual assaults were reported by housing teams in 188 local authorities – nearly three times more than in 2020.

While this isn't something we see often at St Leger Homes, we want to remind everyone that abuse, threats or violence towards staff are never acceptable. These behaviours are a breach of tenancy and will not be tolerated.

Our staff are here to help – whether it's with repairs, housing support, or advice. We ask that everyone treats them with the same respect you'd expect in return.

Thanks again to all our customers who help us keep our teams safe and supported.

Winter repairs and maintenance tips



Get your home ready for the cold – and the festive glow!

As the chill sets in and the festive lights begin to twinkle, it's the perfect time to prepare your home for winter. A little planning now can help prevent common seasonal issues – keeping your home safe, warm, and running smoothly all season long.

From protecting pipes and checking heating systems to staying safe with Christmas lights and electrical decorations, we've got practical tips to help you minimise the need for repairs and enjoy a stress-free winter.



Christmas lights and electrical safety

Keep your home merry and safe this festive season with these quick electrical safety tips:

- ✓ **Don't overload sockets** – avoid plugging too many high-powered items into one outlet.
- ✓ **Switch off before bed** – always unplug decorations when you go to sleep or leave the house.
- ✓ **Check your cables** – inspect wires and plugs for fraying, damage, or signs of overheating.
- ✓ **Use extension leads wisely** – fully unravel them before use to prevent overheating.
- ✓ **Keep walkways clear** – make sure cables aren't creating trip hazards.
- ✓ **Avoid fire risks** – never cover lights or lamps with decorations.



Rain, leaves and gutters

Help your home handle the wet and windy weather with these simple outdoor maintenance tips:

- ✓ **Clear gutters and drains** – fallen leaves and debris can cause blockages, leading to overflow and water damage.
- ✓ **Trim overhanging branches** – reduces the risk of storm damage and keeps gutters clearer.

- ✓ **Tackle moss and algae** – clean paths and driveways to prevent slips, trips, and falls



Draughts and heating

Stay warm and energy-efficient this winter with a few simple checks:

- ✓ **Not all draughts are faults** – warm air movement from radiators can cause airflow that feels like a draught.
- ✓ **Seal the gaps** – use draught excluders and check around doors and windows for any cold air sneaking in.
- ✓ **Check your heating settings** – make sure your timer and thermostat are set correctly to suit your routine and save energy.



Repairs and self-help

A few small actions can go a long way in keeping your home running smoothly this winter:

- ✓ **Small steps, big impact** – clearing leaves or checking your heating timer can help prevent common issues.
- ✓ **Help us help others** – avoiding unnecessary repairs means we can focus support where it's most needed.
- ✓ **Need advice?** – if you're unsure, contact us before logging a repair. We're here to help!

Let's work together to keep homes safe, warm, and ready for winter.

Condensation, damp and mould

During the winter months we're more likely to notice condensation and damp in our home. This most commonly appears on windows, external walls and cold surfaces – as well as in kitchens and bathrooms due to the steam caused by cooking and bathing.

If not dealt with this can lead to mould growing, but fortunately our dedicated Damp and Mould Team are here to help you. Over the last year they have supported around **2,500 customers** who were having damp problems in their home.

They can give you advice to help you reduce condensation build up and deal with it quickly when it does occur, stopping mould from developing. Where it does appear we can give you our Mould Check spray which can be used to safely and effectively get rid of any mould, bacteria or spores.

If you report a damp or mould issue which is potentially a significant hazard, then we will come out to investigate it within 10 working days and following that we will make it safe within five working days if a significant hazard is identified.



Remember, if you have damp and mould issues then we're here to help you. There's lots of practical advice on our website at **www.stlegerhomes.co.uk/damp** which you can start doing straight away.

If you're concerned, please contact the team:

 **info@stlegerhomes.co.uk**

 **01302 862862.**



Your One-Stop Guide for winter

During the winter months, many of us may need a little extra support and advice.

City of Doncaster Council has brought together a wide range of information from across the city to help you, your family, and your local community stay safe and well during the colder months.

You'll find guidance on:

- Cost of living
- Energy advice
- Staying well this winter
- Winter weather
- Local groups, events and activities

You can find all this and more by visiting: **yourlifedoncaster.co.uk/winter** or by scanning the QR code.



Make sure you're signed up to receive updates straight to your inbox by completing the mailing list form on the winter webpage or visiting: **doncaster.gov.uk/EmailSignUp**.

If you don't have access to the internet and need further support this winter, call the City of Doncaster Council's dedicated winter phoneline: **01302 736999**.

Winter fuel scam texts

We've received reports of scam text messages being sent to customers about claiming Winter Fuel Payments.



- Winter Fuel Payments are applied automatically by the government.
- You do not need to fill in a claim or provide personal details – especially via text message.

If you're unsure or want to check eligibility, visit: **www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment/how-to-claim** 0800 731 0160.

Please share this with your friends and family to keep them safe from scams!

Help stop the stigma

Join the movement with St Leger Homes

At St Leger Homes, we're proud to support the national, tenant-led Stop Social Housing Stigma campaign. This important initiative aims to challenge outdated stereotypes, change perceptions, and celebrate the value of social housing and its tenants.

Social housing provides safe, secure, and affordable homes for millions of people. Yet, it's often misunderstood or unfairly judged. This campaign is working to change that – and we want you to be part of it.

Share your story – Your voice matters

Every tenant's experience matters. Whether your journey has been positive, challenging, or somewhere in between, your story can help break down stigma and shape real change.

We're inviting you to complete a short online survey. It only takes a few minutes, but your feedback could make a big impact.

Take the survey:

Scan the QR code or
www.surveymonkey.com/r/SSHtenantsurvey

Let's celebrate your story

Over the coming months, we'll be sharing stories from tenants across our communities. If you'd like to share yours, please email us at communications@stlegerhomes.co.uk

Be inspired

Visit the campaign website to read real stories from tenants across the UK. These inspiring accounts show just how important social housing is – not just as a place to live, but as a foundation for thriving lives and strong communities. Together, we can help stop the stigma and build a future where social housing is respected, valued, and celebrated.



Learn more: www.stopsocialhousingstigma.org

Together, we can help stop the stigma and build a future where social housing is respected, valued, and celebrated.

Manage your tenancy online – anytime, anywhere

Did you know you can manage your tenancy with us online, 24/7?

With a My Access account, you can:

- Report and track repairs
- Pay your rent
- View rent statements
- Update contact details
- Request refunds
- Set your preferred contact method

It's quick and easy to register – and once you're signed up, you can start using the portal straight away on any device.

Register now by visiting the My access button at the top of our website www.stlegerhomes.co.uk.



Need help?

Give us a call on **01302 862862** or email info@doncasterhomechoice.co.uk if you are struggling to find your reference number.

Landmark action to tackle anti-social behaviour at Balby Bridge estate



St Leger Homes has taken decisive action to improve safety and tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB) at the Balby Bridge estate in Doncaster, securing 37 separate Closure Orders at court.

These Orders apply to all high-rise and low-rise blocks across the estate and mark a groundbreaking move in civil enforcement – the largest of its kind by any housing provider in the region.

The Orders were granted in response to persistent misuse of communal areas, including drug use and other disruptive behaviour by individuals who do not live in the blocks. The Closure Orders now prohibit entry to shared spaces – such as lobbies, stairwells, lifts, and refuse rooms – by anyone without a legitimate reason to be there. Tenants, their families, and approved visitors remain unaffected.

This milestone is part of a wider multi-agency strategy involving South Yorkshire Police and the City of Doncaster Council, aimed at restoring safety and dignity for residents.

These Orders are a significant step forward in restoring a sense of safety, dignity, and pride for our customers and will help us create a more secure and welcoming environment for everyone who lives and works in these blocks.

You can find out more about our ASB Policy and how to report your concerns on our website www.stlegerhomes.co.uk.

Your information, your benefits – keep it up-to-date!

Keeping your personal details current helps us tailor services to meet your needs. Whether it's your contact info or preferred way to get in touch, accurate data means better support for you.

Here's how to stay up to date:



Log into My Access Portal – Quick, secure, and available anytime.
(Find out more on the opposite page).



Call our Customer Access Team on **01302 862862** – We're happy to help.

We're committed to protecting your privacy and keeping your personal information safe. By ensuring your data is secure and up to date, we can deliver the best possible service.

Find out more by visiting our website www.stlegerhomes.co.uk/data-protection

Meet our Access Team

Supporting safer homes together

At St Leger Homes, keeping your home safe is our top priority. As your social landlord, we're legally required to carry out regular safety inspections – like gas checks and electrical testing – to make sure everything is working properly, and your home remains secure.

Most customers kindly allow access for these essential checks, but sometimes access isn't possible. We understand that life can be complicated, and there may be genuine reasons why it's difficult to let someone in. That's why we've created a dedicated Access Team, working as part of our Tenancy Support Team, to help make things easier.

If you need help and support please contact our Tenancy Support Team. (details below)

Our Access Team is here to:

- Work with you to understand and remove any barriers to access
- Ensure safety checks are completed quickly and with minimal disruption
- Avoid legal action, which can be costly and stressful for customers
- Offer support with wider issues that may be affecting access

We want to work with you – not against you – to keep your home safe and your tenancy secure. Together, we can make sure every home is safe, secure, and supported.



Get mental health support

To celebrate World Mental Health Day on 10 October, we took part in the Walk For Wellness organised by local mental health support service People Focused Group. The event aimed to raise awareness, reduce the stigma around mental health, and promote healthy fun!

Joining the walk was our Mental Health Navigator team, who offer a free service providing support and advice to customers experiencing difficulties with mental health and wellbeing. This includes help with low mood, anxiety, stress, and sleep problems. The team works with individuals to create personalised support plans and offers both practical and emotional support to help people achieve their goals.

Here's some feedback from our customers:

"I received mental health support from my landlord and it wowed me – you don't really think they would put that in place."

"Without their help and support I would have struggled and spiralled downwards."

Our mental health navigators said:

"It's amazing being able to make such a positive difference to our customers' lives. We get a great deal of job satisfaction from our role and seeing the impact it can have."

If you'd like more information, visit our website at www.stlegerhomes.co.uk/mentalhealthnavigators or call the team on **01302 862050**.



If you would like help and support please contact our Tenancy Support Team:



Online by scanning the QR code



HOTS@stlegerhomes.co.uk



01302 862050



Do you require this publication in an alternative format, such as large print or audio? If so, please contact us on 01302 862862 or email info@stlegerhomes.co.uk



info@stlegerhomes.co.uk



01302 862862



www.stlegerhomes.co.uk

Join the My Access section on our website for easy access to our services.

Keep up to date with our news and events by following us on

