

# SPACE TO BREATHE



**THE  
ACORNS**





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# ABOUT SPACE TO BREATHE



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**“FEEL THE FEAR & DO IT ANYWAY” – LINDA, FELLOW ACORN.**

St Leger Homes founded Space To Breathe in March 2025.

We are a hoarding support group.

With an increasing number of hoarding cases becoming apparent, it was clear that there was little support out there for our clients.

Our Officers, Alex and Rebecca took it upon themselves to do market research around hoarding and find out what support was available in other areas. They were fortunate enough to attend other support groups in Barnsley and speak to likeminded people in Sheffield.

Following the research, St Leger Homes wanted to do more for our tenants and this led to our support group being created.

# ABOUT SPACE TO BREATHE



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**“FEEL THE FEAR & DO IT ANYWAY” – LINDA, FELLOW ACORN.**

We are here to provide support to all our tenants who are struggling with the amount of items in their homes.

We understand that it can be isolating, challenging and difficult to navigate through the clutter, especially on your own.

We host a support group at Doncaster Library for likeminded people, to offer a safe space, an escapism, and a place for a cuppa and a natter.

The support group looks at behaviours, provides tip and ideas, is a listening ear, motivation and can be whatever you would like it to be.

There is no judgement, we are here for you.

# TIPS & TRICKS

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## THE 5 IN, 5 OUT RULE

Every time you bring 5 new items into your home (clothes, books, decorations, etc.), choose 5 items to let go of.

This simple habit helps:

- Keep clutter from quietly building up
- Encourages mindful decision-making
- Reinforce that every item takes up space and energy

You can start smaller – 1 in, 1 out – this may be more manageable at the start.

A great starting tool to give yourself permission to take just 5 minutes to engage with a space.

Pick a tiny area (a worktop, shelf, corner etc) and set a 5 minute timer.

During this time, do any of the following:

- Sort items into piles: keep, donate and not sure
- Wipe or dust the space
- Put one item away

Once the timer is finished, you can stop.  
Small steps lead to big progress.

## THE 5 MINUTE TOOL



# POEM

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## BAGS

You have bags  
of bags

collecting bags  
must be your bag

because you have bags  
with nothing in them  
except bags,  
inside of which are other bags  
full of bags

you have enough bags for life  
for a hundred lifetimes  
if there was a prize for the total number of tote bags  
you would totes have it  
in the bag

dont know why you need so many bags  
when all you ever put in them  
are other bags

# TIPS & TRICKS

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## CELEBRATE THE SMALL WINS

Track your progress, take photos or write down what you have been doing.

If you achieve a win, such as, being able to open your curtains or that you can see a section of your floor or having a clear worktop.

Remember to celebrate this, reward yourself with a special meal or having a sweet treat or simply being proud of yourself.

Decluttering is a marathon, not a sprint.

Create a playlist of music that helps you to feel uplifted and motivated.

Play this when you are having a sorting session.

Alternatively, set your Alexa or device to play 5 songs and during that time, sort through your items, then take a break.

Reset when you are ready.

## DECLUTTER PLAYLIST



# POEM

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## POEM BY A FELLOW HOARDER

There is never a date,  
where we can pinpoint  
when our hoarding began  
we can never know one specific  
reason  
our 'things' began to get out of  
hand.

We may never understand  
how 'disposable' items became  
treasures we hold onto...  
just in case...

but one thing we do know  
it's difficult to change,  
its hard to let go,  
its emotionally draining,  
it pushes anxiety to new heights.  
It can be overwhelming  
to the point of exhaustion  
these are some of the realities,  
the list is endless.

They are not explanations  
they are not the answers  
BUT and this is the HOPE....  
with the right support,  
with the right help,  
with the right understanding,  
with the right empathy,  
with the implementation of plans,  
using baby steps,  
the mountains holding us in  
can begin to be taken down.

Bit by bit  
piece by piece  
item by item  
until you begin to see the light  
before you rediscover  
inch by inch, piece by piece  
the long gone space that was  
your home.

We have all had our wings  
clipped by the hoarding that's  
taken us down  
but with the right support  
we can begin to grow our  
wings again  
free ourselves from the things  
that have held us back  
forge new friendships and alliances  
with people who share  
our experiences  
with their own stories

# MORE TIPS

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## GET ORGANISED

Set out three bags, boxes or piles. Each one will represent something.

1. Keep – things that you use or truly value
2. Donate – things in good condition that you no longer need
3. Not sure – can't quite decide whether to keep or not (come back to these later and reassess)

Try to organise some of your items using this method, just a few items at a time to help you differentiate between them.

Take photos!

Before you start a task and at the end of a task. These can really help you to see how much progress you have made.

## NOTICE YOUR PROGRESS

## PAY IT FORWARD

Donate your items, look for local charity shops to donate to.

Let them be loved by someone else.



# SUPPORT SERVICES



## Befriend



Befriend are a service who connect people that feel lonely and isolated. Their goal is to provide regular social contact and encouragement.

What they do:

- Visit or call regularly
- Provide a friendly listening ear
- Offer friendly conversation
- Help people feel less alone
- Listen without judgement

Is a charity that supports people to live safely, independently and with dignity.

- Practical support at home
- Handyperson services
- Help with light cleaning
- Decluttering assistance
- Home safety checks
- Signpost to other services
- Emotional and social support
- Help with benefits and money worries

Age UK



# SUPPORT SERVICES

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## Clutterers Anonymous

This is an online 12 step programme where you can join support peer groups and be guided by a mentor. You can join via Zoom meetings, it is free to join. They can provide a safe place to talk, with closed and open meetings.

Similar to our group but a lot more frequent, with professionals who specialise in hoarding.

Clutterers Anonymous\*

Run by St Leger Homes, they are able to support with mental health conditions, emotional support, strive for better engagement, practical support and provide plans.

Mental Health Navigators

## Bereavement Support

Life after loss can look uncertain, confusing, distressing and helpless. There are several services within Doncaster that can help.

- Doncaster Mind
- St Johns Counselling/RDASH
- Bereavement Buddies
- Life After Loss Cafes
- Forward after Bereavement

# MEET THE TEAM

THE OFFICERS IN YOUR AREA WHO CAN HELP

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# A FEW WORDS FROM OUR MEMBERS

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**"THE FRIENDSHIP AND SUPPORT FROM THE  
GROUP HAS BEEN THE HIGHLIGHT"**

**"ITS A SAFE PLACE TO TALK ABOUT OUR SHARED  
PROBLEMS. I LOVE THE GROUP"**

**"I CAME TO GROUP TO TRY AND RE-ORGANISE  
MY LIFE AND TO LIVE IN A BETTER HOME"**

**"I AM NOT ALONE IN MY TASK OF TRYING LIVE A  
BETTER LIFE"**

**"I FEEL I'M LESS ATTACHED TO SOME ITEMS  
AND WANT MY HOME TO BE PRESENTABLE"**

**"NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE"**

# WE ARE HERE TO SUPPORT YOU

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**OUR GROUPS RUN ON A WEDNESDAY 1-3PM,  
EVERY 3 WEEKS AT DONCASTER LIBRARY**

Next groups:

11.02.2026

15.04.2026

04.03.2026

06.05.2026

25.03.2026

27.05.2026

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## CONTACT US

Call 01302 736532

or email [safeguardingandasbteam@stlegerhomes.co.uk](mailto:safeguardingandasbteam@stlegerhomes.co.uk)

or get in contact with your officer

We hope to see you soon!

