

April 2025

house proud

The magazine for St Leger Homes' tenants



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A message from our Chief Exec

Hi everyone,

In this issue of HouseProud we have a special feature about repairs, which we know is one of the most valued services we provide for our customers.

From speaking to housing organisations all over the UK, we know that everyone has had big challenges to face in the last few years when it comes to handling customer's repairs. We have seen big increases in the number of repairs requests we receive, as well as difficulties getting the materials we need to carry out repairs, and more.

There is positive news though as we are delighted to tell you we have now completely cleared the backlog of repair jobs which had built up following the Covid pandemic. You can read more about all of this in our Repairs special feature.

Also in this issue we announce the opening of nominations for our Tenants' Choice Awards 2025. Every year it is a joy to hear

about all the ways our tenants go the extra mile to support their friends and neighbours in the community, and we love celebrating the work you do.

If you know someone who deserves an award for things they do then have a look at the article and send your nominations in now!



Tenants' Takeover

Hi everyone, it's been a chilly winter, but the Tenants Scrutiny Panel (TSP) have an exciting year ahead of us.

As a group, we have been made aware of your concerns around condensation damp and mould and its recent high profile in the media. So, since early January this year, we are assessing the way St Leger Homes tackle this issue by reviewing their policy, interviewing the managers, staff and a cross section of tenants to ensure you are front and centre in all the actions taken.

Both St Leger and the tenants have a responsibility to ensure that your home remains healthy and safe.

For St Leger, that firstly means a timely response when you call the 01302 862862 number.

The operator should then ensure your concerns are answered, take the appropriate steps to help you and inform the Damp and Mould Team.

For the tenants, it means ensuring that in their daily household chores they follow the available guidelines (where possible) to reduce the circulating moisture in the home – such as opening some windows during the day.

We will be looking at all the ways the company keep you informed about the issue of condensation, damp and mould (as a concerned landlord should).

The TSP meet once a month for regular meetings, but due to the work, we often have extra meetings to meet with staff that participate in the current review. Our remit is to challenge St Leger on its policies and procedures, as well as to recommend changes that are informative and can make a tenant's environment better and healthier.

Scan the QR code for more on the TSP or email tenantscrutiny4slhd@gmail.com



Meet our My Access prize winners!

We recently gave you the chance to win £100 worth of vouchers and two gift boxes in our My Access prize draw – and the results are now in!

This was our way of saying ‘thank you’ to the 6,000+ customers who have registered on our My Access web portal and checked that their personal information is up to date. This is important as it allows us to tailor our services to make sure we are meeting your needs. My Access also gives you a quick and easy way to pay your rent, report repairs and much more.

Our first prize voucher winner was Sevtap Ozmen. She said: **“I’ve never won anything before, I’m so happy!”**

“I use My Access to check my rent account, I’ve reported repairs on there as well and I use it to make rent payments. It’s very convenient indeed. People should definitely sign up for it – it makes life easier!”

Our two runners-up were John Atkinson and Lee Wade, who each picked up a Tea and Treats gift box.

John Atkinson said: **“When we were told we had won the prize we thought it was a scam – we’re not usually that lucky!”**

“It was easy to sign up to the My Access portal. I’ve been using it since the start, I check my rent on my phone. My Access is easier than calling up, you’re not in a queue and you can take your time with it.

“I’d encourage other people to use it, it’s easy and if you still need help you can phone up and they will help you anyway.”

It’s easy to sign up to My Access, just visit our website www.stlegerhomes.co.uk and click the link on the top corner of the page. To register you only need your Tenancy Reference number which you can find on your rent statement or by ringing our Customer Access Team on **01302 862862**.



Our repairs service is here for you

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We understand how important it is for everyone to have a home that is safe, secure and comfortable. At St Leger Homes we have our own Repairs service who are dedicated to making sure all our homes are well maintained and in good condition. If you have a problem in your home and something needs fixing then it will be our Repairs teams who come to sort it out for you and your family.

Our Repairs service is available at all times – 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year – for you to report a repair.

We just ask that you only contact the team outside of office hours (that is between 5pm at night and 8am in the morning; on weekends and Bank Holidays; and during our Christmas closedown period) **if your repair is a real emergency that can't wait until the next working day.**

The reason for this is at these times we only have a limited number of people taking calls and carrying out repairs, so it's really important we use these resources where they are needed most – which is helping customers who are facing genuine emergencies in their home.

How soon will my repair be done?

Lots of things can happen in the home that may need to be repaired, and of course some repairs are far more urgent than others – a broken boiler is a bigger problem than a damaged drawer, for example.

We prioritise which repair jobs we do first based on how urgently it's needed. We work flexibly, so if someone is vulnerable or has serious health issues and the repair impacts on this, we will try to take this into account to get out to you as soon as we can.

Please remember...

Because emergencies can happen at any time there is always the chance your repair appointment could be delayed. We would only do this if it's absolutely necessary and will always contact you to explain why, and what the next steps are.

Remember, if you were suddenly in an emergency at home you would expect us to prioritise your needs and help you first.

Help us to help you!
Is your repair a genuine emergency?



Help us to help you!
Is your repair a genuine emergency?

Hard of hearing customers can text 07799 477252 between 8am-5pm, Mon-Fri or 07929 080056 at any other time.

Here are our timescales for completing your repair:

1

Emergency repairs – Priority one

These are the only repairs which we will attend on call out. These are repairs which if not dealt with quickly could pose to a real risk of injury or death, or could lead to major damage to your home. We will attend these emergency repairs within two hours of being reported to us so we can make the issue safe, or if possible complete the repair.

2

Emergency repairs – Priority two

We will complete priority two emergency repairs within 24 hours of being reported to us. This does not mean we will attend the same day. Priority two emergency repairs include, but are not limited to:

- Total loss of electric power (not related to utility provider issues)
- Total loss of gas supply
- Unsafe power, light socket or electric fitting
- Partial loss of gas supply (with no other form of heating)
- Total loss of water supply
- Insecure external window, door or lock



3

Routine repairs – Priority three

A routine repair is something that doesn't immediately affect your safety or security but may do if not dealt with soon. We aim to complete these within five working days, not including the day it is reported, weekends and Bank Holidays.

Routine repairs include, but are not limited to:

- Partial loss of water supply or electric power
- Rotten timber flooring or stair tread
- Blocked sink, bath, waste pipe, drain or toilet (with no other working toilet)
- Leaking roof
- Leak from water or heating system
- Door entry phone not working
- Tap cannot be turned
- Extractor fan not working
- Loose banister or handrail
- Restore heating or hot water

4/5

Non-urgent repairs – Priority four and five

Non-urgent repairs don't cause immediate issues for you or lasting damage to your home. We aim to complete priority four repairs within 20 working days and priority five repairs within 60 working days, not including the day it's reported, weekends and Bank Holidays.

Non-urgent repairs include, but are not limited to:

- Wall tiles
- Internal doors
- Cleaning gutters
- Paving
- Plastering repairs
- Repairs to kitchen units and worktops
- Renewal of wash hand basins



Help us help you!

Our Repairs Teams want to help everyone as soon as they possibly can, but to do this we have to overcome some challenges.

Contacting you about your repair

We always give you a courtesy call before coming out to do your repair to make sure you will be in. We will try to call you twice, but if we don't get an answer we will send a text message asking you to get in touch to re-arrange the appointment. If we don't hear back from you within 48 hours then the repair will be cancelled.

Is your repair a genuine emergency?

We have seen a big increase in the number of urgent repair jobs we receive. As these emergency jobs must be responded to the same day this has an impact on the service we provide. This means we have to complete some jobs in the evening on call out which costs us more.

We get around 25,000 emergency repairs each year – that's more than double the amount in previous years. It costs more than £1 million a year to provide this emergency response service

and the number of emergencies we have to deal with affects our ability to attend routine repairs as quickly as we would like. It also costs money that could be spent on employing more Repairs operatives to provide a better service.

We monitor the 'same day' repair jobs we get to check they genuinely are urgent – so if we ask some questions when reporting your repair, please understand this is only to make sure we deal with the most serious cases first.

We do ask you to be mindful of what you are reporting as a repair – is it a real emergency? If you report something as an emergency and it turns out it's not, this has a real impact and takes away our resources from genuine emergencies.

We may also consider recharging if we attend and find the repair could have waited.

Our Recharge Policy

We have worked in partnership with tenant groups the One Voice Forum and the Get Involved Group to develop our policy on if/when we should recharge people for repairs. We agreed that if we find damage has been caused intentionally by the tenant and isn't due to normal wear and tear, the cost of the repair may be charged to the tenant.

Help us to help you!
Is your repair a genuine emergency?





What are my responsibilities?

There are some things we ask customers to take responsibility for themselves. These include replacing light bulbs, resetting fuse board trip switches, toilet seats, shower curtains, paying the cost of new locks if keys are lost, and more.

Doncaster Repair and Support Service carries out minor repairs and small maintenance jobs for elderly or disabled people who can't do the job themselves and don't have anyone to help them. This service is offered by the council and there is no charge for the work, but you must provide the materials.

For more information call 01302 736574 or visit www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/adult-social-care/doncaster-repair-and-support-service

Gas and electrical testing

Our annual gas and five year electrical safety testing programme continues to keep customers safe in their homes. These checks make sure the gas appliances and electrical wiring in your home are in good working order. If appliances aren't properly maintained it could lead to fires or even carbon monoxide poisoning, so it's essential you let us in to carry out these safety checks.



Improving your home

This year we did a lot to improve the condition of your home. This includes delivering upgrades to kitchens and bathrooms, fitting more than 320 new extractor fans, upgrading the smoke and heat detectors in over 1,200 homes, installing over 220 new roofs including replacing guttering and fascias, and upgrading the flat roofs on more than 370 homes.

Over the next year we plan to continue this improvement programme and bring upgrades to even more homes. This is why it's so important we work efficiently in the way we provide repairs, and why we ask you to be mindful when reporting a repair as an emergency – because the more efficient we are, the more money we have to put into upgrading your homes.

Moving forward

We've been working hard in recent years to clear a backlog of over 7,000 repair jobs and are proud to say this has now been cleared, which is great news.

You will see an improvement in timeframes for most repairs, but like housing organisations across the country, demand is still higher than in previous years – however we do recognise there are some repair jobs we want to get out to sooner and we're constantly working to keep improving.

As our 2023/24 Annual Review showed, out of over 78,500 repair jobs carried out in that time we kept 95% of our appointments; completed 95% of repairs without having to return to carry out the same repair within 12 months; and almost 80% of customers told us they were satisfied with our repairs service.

This year we are also updating and enhancing our IT system that schedules your repairs which will help us become even more efficient and effective in completing repairs to your home.

You can find more information about our Repairs service on our website at www.stlegerhomes.co.uk/repairs

Damp, mould and condensation myth buster



What is damp?

Damp is a build-up of moisture in the structure of your home. There are two types of damp – penetrating damp and rising damp.

Myth:
‘Condensation and damp are the same thing’

This is incorrect. Penetrating damp is caused by water coming through external walls or the roof. Damp on internal walls can also happen when there is an internal leak or plumbing problem.

Rising damp is caused by water rising from the ground into your home. It normally rises around 1m above ground level only affecting basements and ground floor rooms. Rising damp brings up salts from the ground which make it difficult for black mould to grow. If you have black mould in the area, you most likely do not have rising damp.

If you notice damp in your home you don't need to worry which type it is, you just need to contact us so that our dedicated Damp and Mould Team can help you.

What is mould?

Mould is a fungus that grows in damp, humid conditions. It can appear to be cloudy or have black patches, and has a musty smell. In the home it can grow in areas such as on walls, furniture and even on clothes.

It is fairly common for mould to grow in the home, **but it is very important to tackle it because it can cause harm to your health.**

Myth:
‘Mould can be left and it won't cause problems for me or my home’

This is incorrect. Mould can cause serious health issues for everyone and this can be worse for people with respiratory conditions, so it is important to deal with it.

If mould does start to appear you can use a fungicidal wash to clean the affected area, but be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions on the bottle. If you still have issues you should contact our Damp and Mould Team.

What is condensation?

Condensation happens when moisture in the air hits a cold surface like a window or wall, where it turns into water droplets.

Myth:
‘I don't need to do anything about condensation in my home’

This is incorrect. As moisture builds-up in the air it leads to more water droplets on windows and walls, which can cause wet areas where mould could develop. Warm air releases less moisture so it's important to keep your home well heated to reduce condensation. You should also let moisture escape by leaving window vents open at all times and opening a window for a short time each day.

Always use your extractor fan when cooking or bathing, and if condensation does form you should wipe it off straight away.

If you need more support, email info@stlegerhomes.co.uk or call our Damp and Mould Team on 01302 862862.

Looking after our local environment



Environmental Pride is a programme led by St Leger Homes and City of Doncaster Council, and assisted by several partnership organisations across the city. The aim is to provide support to help communities deliver environmental improvement projects in their areas.

We've been working closely with groups that lead projects for and with the community. These projects respond to climate change, encourage people to get outside and have a positive lasting impact on the local area.

To date, we have launched five rounds where we have invited groups to submit their project plans – plus one extra round dedicated to developing community orchards.

One of the successful projects we supported was Seed to Feed by one of our local groups, Whinfell Community Group.

Whinfell Community Hall had existing planter beds on site which provided fresh produce for community lunch meals, with any excess produce being delivered to less mobile residents free of charge. However, the area was overgrown and difficult to manage. Using grant funding from Environmental Pride, the group were able to redesign the space and make it accessible for all to get involved.

The Cambeth Community Project, which supports young people and adults with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), also applied for Environmental Pride funding to launch Litter Picking Lunches. The aim of this project was to educate the young people about our planet, encourage community spirit, and create meaningful experiences for the SEND students.

With our support, their project was a success and volunteers learnt about recycling and protecting the local environment whilst being outdoors in the fresh air – which is great for mental health and wellbeing. They have now also created a sensory light garden using their recycled materials to give the students a safe outdoor space that stimulates the senses.

Learn more about Environmental Pride and all the other projects by scanning the QR code or visiting our website at www.stlegerhomes.co.uk/environmentalpride



SEND Students Litter Picking Lunches



Want to carry out home improvement work?

We've updated our Tenants Own Improvement Policy which sets out how you can apply for permission to make improvements to your home. Our aim is to approve requests, not refuse them, whilst also being able to prove that any work is carried out properly and meets safety standards.

The new policy makes it simpler for us to answer enquiries about CCTV and video doorbells; allows people with Introductory Tenancies to install fencing; and creates clear guidelines around

installing Electric Vehicle charging points. We also wanted to create an easier, more user-friendly process for customers to contact us about their home improvement requests.

If you would like more information about making improvements to your home, you can find details on our website at www.stlegerhomes.co.uk/home-improvements





Supporting our local foodbanks

You can find more information about our local foodbanks on the Your Life Doncaster website

Many people in our city were able to enjoy a brighter start to 2025 thanks to a £1,000 donation to local foodbanks from St Leger Homes staff as part of our Foodbank Fundraiser.

Our staff raised the money by taking part in a Christmas raffle, bonus ball draw, tombola and other events. This was presented to the Trussell Trust foodbank and Mexborough Foodbank along with food items donated by St Leger Homes staff which will all be used to provide meals for households who need help.

The fundraiser was organised by our Tenancy Support Team, who help customers that have problems dealing with their finances, paying household bills and managing their tenancy.

Throughout the year the team refer many of our customers to local foodbanks. With this donation we are able to give something back by supporting the foodbanks that serve those in our communities who are struggling to feed themselves and their families. This was the seventh year our Tenancy Support Team have held the Foodbank Fundraiser event.

Anyone who feels they need help with managing their tenancy, or are struggling with their finances, can get support from our Tenancy Support Team by visiting www.stlegerhomes.co.uk/support



You can find more information about our local foodbanks on the Your Life Doncaster website at www.yourlifedoncaster.co.uk/food-bank-information



We are still holding regular Pension Credit and Cost of Living drop-in sessions at the Civic Office

Pension Credit and Cost of Living support

Over the autumn/winter period we have been working to help eligible tenants apply for Pension Credit. Pension Credit can give you extra money to help pay for living costs, as well as unlocking access to other benefits including Winter Fuel Payments.

This made a huge positive difference for tenants and over the last six months those people we have helped to apply have gained just under £650,000 in extra benefits!

We are still holding regular Pension Credit and Cost of Living drop-in sessions at the Civic Office and at other locations all across the borough to provide tenants with information about these benefits, and to help people apply for them.

Details about upcoming sessions will be posted on our Facebook page www.facebook.com/stlegerhomes and on our website www.stlegerhomes.co.uk

You can find more information about Pension Credit and how to apply for it by visiting www.stlegerhomes.co.uk/pensioncredit

You Said, We Did

We have lots of ways that you can give us feedback such as by sending a compliment, complaint, or through our wide range of involvement and engagement platforms – and when you give us feedback, we listen!



Take a look below at all the things 'You Said' about our services and how we responded:

Through our One Voice Forum and Get Involved Group:

- **Your feedback helped us develop our Customer Access Strategy**, resulting in a Strategy that gives customers positive benefits for choosing digital services as well as meeting their needs and expectations. The impact of the Strategy will be measured using Tenant Satisfaction Measures and Transactional Surveys.
- **Your feedback helped produce the new Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy** which is now published on our website.
- **Your feedback has informed the new Asset Management Strategy** and our key priorities when it comes to managing assets for the benefit of tenants, residents and the wider Doncaster community.
- **Your feedback helped develop the new Environmental Strategy.** We have listened to this and in 2025/26 we will be undertaking a wider range of energy efficiency works than we have done previously. We will be starting to replace some windows in a small number of properties, as well as installing solar panels.
- **Your feedback helped create the new Customers Own Improvement Policy** which gives customers more control to make their house into their home without undue input from us.
- **Your feedback informed a new Vulnerable Person's Policy** to address the specific needs of vulnerable tenants, supporting an inclusive and transparent service delivery.

- **Your feedback helped develop a new No Access policy.** This ensures a consistent approach when we or our contractors access properties to carry out our safety and compliance responsibilities including gas safety checks, electrical safety inspections, fire safety works, asbestos checks, condition surveys and more.

Through our Tenant Scrutiny Panel:

- The Tenant Scrutiny Panel recently completed their Scrutiny Review of our Rewards and Incentives Scheme, which encourages customers to get involved in helping to further improve our services. St Leger Homes are currently providing a response to the recommendations.

Through an Estate Inspection:

- There were a number of issues identified within the communal gardens and walkways on Maple Road in Mexborough. To tackle this, an action day was arranged where our caretakers worked with City of Doncaster Council's Street Scene team to tidy the area and improve the gardens.

Read more on our website at www.stlegerhomes.co.uk/yswd



Tenants Celebration Awards – nominate now!

It's that time again when we all get together to celebrate you, our amazing tenants, and the work you do to support other residents living in our communities!

We are proud to continue the tradition of our Tenants' Celebration Awards, which will be taking place in November as part of our Tenants' Celebration Event – further details on this will follow soon. You will notice some familiar awards along with a couple of new categories that recognise the contributions people have made to their local community.

You can find this year's categories listed below. To nominate a person or group just go to <https://forms.office.com/e/cBZEAZqXBV> and fill in the simple form, but don't delay – **you have until 31 July 2025** to send your nominations in.



Good Neighbour*

This award is for someone who, with no fuss or expectation of reward, will go out of their way to help a neighbour, giving support – such as helping with shopping, cleaning, gardening or just being a caring person who people can rely on.

It's someone who champions the needs of the people in their community to improve their quality of life.

**Nominees for this award must be St Leger Homes tenants*

Community Group of the Year*

This is awarded to community groups (including Tenants' and Residents' Associations and Tenants' Clubs) that volunteer their time to provide activities and support for local residents.

This could be making estate improvements, helping people to access local services, or running activities for people in communal halls and community houses.

**Nominees for this award must be St Leger Homes tenants*

Cleaner Communities

Celebrating and saying thank you to groups who work to support a cleaner and tidier community, looking after our green spaces and making them something to be proud of.

Community Wellbeing Project

A group that works at a grassroots local level to provide tenants and residents with a space to promote physical, emotional or social wellbeing.

If you would like to nominate someone but are struggling with the form our Customer Involvement Team will be happy to help. Please contact your local Customer Involvement Officer or email customer.involvement@stlegerhomes.co.uk

You can read more on our website at www.stlegerhomes.co.uk/TCAs

**Closing
Date
31 July
2025**



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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

