

Our Annual Review 2023/24

Welcome to our Annual Review* for 2023/24 where we will be looking back and highlighting some of the key work we did to help you, our customers, and to improve our properties.



As Chief Executive of St Leger Homes I'm extremely proud of the work we do. Just as last year, this year has been a positive one, but there's also been challenges for tenants and for us.

The cost of living and inflation challenges continued. However, that didn't stop us doing all we could to offer the best value for money services possible. Once again, we kept our rent as the lowest in South Yorkshire whilst still providing a high-quality service.

We had challenges around our repairs service, and we put things in place to improve this. We created one team responsible for delivering all your day-to-day repairs and improved how we communicated about the progress of your repair. We still have a small backlog of repairs, which has been reducing over recent months.

In 2023/24 we also saw the introduction of 22 Tenant Satisfaction Measures by the Regulator of Social Housing. We compared our performance against other organisations and I am pleased to say that overall we are doing really well. Our performance was published in July edition of HouseProud and is on our website.

We really do value your feedback on the services we provide and in 2023/24 it helped us to pull together a new Corporate Plan. This sets out our commitment over the next five years.

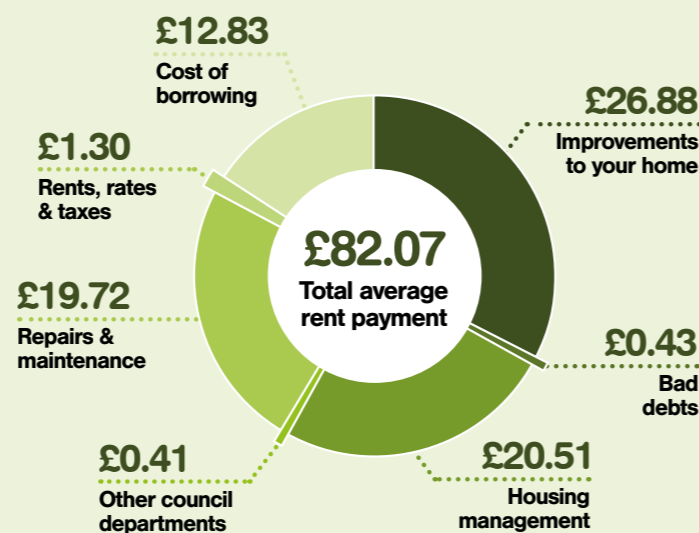
Whilst we are proud of the work our teams do to involve and engage as many of you as possible in our services, we are working towards improving engagement with tenants from under-represented groups. We have a range of ways for you to have your say on how we deliver our services, so we'd love for you to be involved.

It's really important to us that tenants are happy and healthy in their homes and we are aware that we don't hear from some of our tenants very often. To make sure all tenants are fully supported we are carrying out keep in touch (KIT) visits. So please let your housing officer or our customer access team know if your contact details have changed, or we need to be aware of any vulnerabilities.

During 2023/24 we continued to focus on the issues that mean a lot to you including damp, mould and condensation and antisocial behaviour. We put in place new teams and processes to deal with these issues – something that we had in our plan to deliver.

We do hope that this Annual Review gives you a feel for our achievements and challenges in 2023/24 and the impact this had. You can see some of our tenants talking about their experience of our services in the past year in our Annual Review Video on our YouTube channel and our website at www.stlegerhomes.co.uk.

How your rent was spent



The housing and repairs teams have been fantastic with me. Thanks to their help I'm 1000 times better than I was. If you work with them, they work with you and things get sorted.

Terry, St Leger Tenant

Looking after your home

Once again, our Repairs and Maintenance teams provided an absolutely essential service for you. This service saw the highest demand from our customers throughout 2023/24.

Despite financial challenges around inflation and costs of materials, we continued to make improvements in this area.

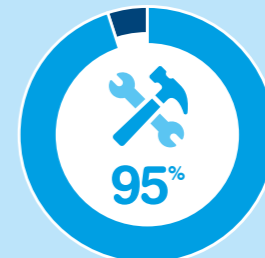
Our dedicated Damp, Mould and Condensation team was fully embedded in 2023/24. This means we now have **eight members of staff dedicated to resolving damp and mould** related issues and ensuring remedial work is actioned.

Our repairs service continued to show a positive increase in completing repairs at the first visit. This meant we were able to carry out our repairs on the day we arrived, rather than having to return later. 79.6% of tenants told us they are satisfied with our repairs service.

Throughout 2023/24 we invested **£7.89m** in bringing **48 homes** back into our stock that are of an affordable rent. The properties are in locations across the City and include different property types, such as bungalows, flats and houses. All have between 2-4 bedrooms, ensuring they are suitable for a range of people with different needs.



We completed 95% of repairs without having to return to carry out the same repair within 12 months.



We made and kept 95% of repairs appointments.



2,473 Inspections to support tenants with damp & mould



£39.9M Investments and improvements in homes



1,536 Properties where planned improvements took place

Supporting our customers and communities

We set out to support our tenants to sustain their tenancies and we achieved that in 2023/24 – as well as prioritising the wellbeing of our tenants.

Our specialised Mental Health Navigators were fully embedded during 2023/24, and they continued to play a key role in supporting tenants in sustaining their tenancies and making improvements in their lives. You can see a glimpse of the great work they've done in one of our videos on our YouTube channel by scanning the QR code below.



Scan the code to visit our YouTube channel.

The work we are doing involving tenants, helping us to shape how we deliver our services really started to make difference in 2023/24.

The One Voice Forum and Tenant Scrutiny Panel worked hard to give us first hand tenant input into our work and to hold us to account, including influencing the implementation of our new website, reviewing the service we received from the contractors who clean our communal areas, reviewing our Allocations Policy and reviewing our Repairs and Maintenance Policy and our Customer Charter.

In a time where the cost of living is affecting everyone, our Financial Inclusion team played a huge role in helping tenants. They supported tenants in making sure they had access to almost **£900,000** worth of additional money they were entitled to through benefits and grants.

From the **1,083 referrals** into our Tenancy Sustainability team, **99.2% of tenants** were still in their tenancies six months after our support had ended – a fantastic achievement for both our team but also the tenants involved who engaged and helped themselves by being open to the support.



The amazing winners of our 2023 Tenant Celebration Awards



£900,000

worth of additional money entitled to tenants through benefits and grants.



99.2%

of tenants were still in their tenancies six months after our support had ended. (1,083 referrals)

Achievements and accreditations

We are so proud of our teams who, worked hard to achieve the many awards and accreditations we received. We are delighted that we continue to achieve many long-standing accreditations and gained new ones as part of our commitment to developing our staff. These recognise the high quality services we provide.

Here's a sample of some of the great things the independent assessor said about our customer service when she visited in July 2023:

“St Leger Homes has an in-depth understanding of its customers that has enabled it to design and provide services that meet the needs of the full range of customer groups. Satisfaction levels are high, demonstrating strong customer loyalty.

There is strong corporate commitment to putting the customer at the heart of service delivery, with a clear emphasis on team working and the use of customer insight to improve service delivery.”



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer, Dan Debenham receiving our HDN accreditation

These awards and accreditations are important to us, as they are an opportunity for independent assessors to review how we are delivering services. They ensure we are constantly looking at how we can improve our services, learning from external and independent feedback. Here are some of our biggest and proudest achievements over the past year.

Customer Service Excellence

We achieved accreditation from the Government's Customer Service Excellence scheme for the 13th year following an independent assessment in July 2023. The Customer Service Excellence scheme assesses organisations to make sure that they provide a fair, efficient and effective service for customers

Health and Safety accreditations

We also achieved a **five-star rating** from the British Safety Council for the twelfth straight year – and kept the international ISO 45001 accreditation for health and safety. This means tenants can feel confident that their

safety and well-being are prioritised, reducing the risk of accidents and ensuring a safer living environment.

Investors in People (IIP)

In May 2023 we completed our first Investors in People assessment as part of our ambitions to become an employer of choice. Investors in People is a global award that sets the standards for what a good employer should look like. Getting this award helps us to attract the best people to come to work for us. Employing the best people helps us to deliver the best services to our tenants.

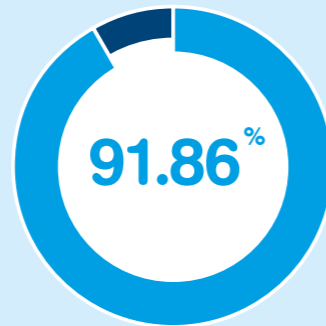
Housing Diversity Network (HDN)

In October 2023, we were delighted to receive our HDN accreditation. This accreditation shows that we have all the right things in place when it comes to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. The award is underpinned by the policies, strategies and procedures that are in place for both tenants and staff to ensure everyone has the same opportunity to be able to have their say, share their views on services and to feel part of all the work we do.

How we dealt with complaints



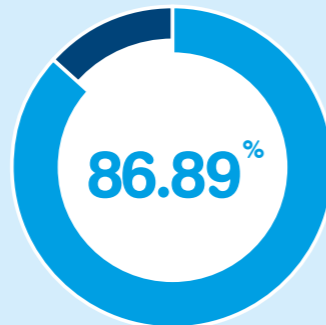
We received
1,007
Stage 1 complaints
50.7 complaints per
1000 properties.



We responded to
91.86% of Stage 1
complaints within
target timescales.



We received
98
Stage 2 complaints
3.1 complaints per
1000 properties.



We responded to
86.89% of Stage 2
complaints within
target timescales.

Although we strive to deliver great services at all times, there will be occasions where we fall short of the standards expected, resulting in a complaint. We got better at dealing with complaints in 2023/24.

We welcome complaints as we see them as an opportunity to learn. We did receive more complaints in 2023/24 when compared to some other housing organisations, but we don't see this as a negative and neither do the Housing Ombudsman's Office, who feel organisations should make it as easy as possible to complain.

Our performance on how quickly we respond to complaints is above the median for both Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints when compared to other housing organisations and we have continued to make further improvements.

We also received the outcome from four investigations undertaken by the Housing Ombudsman's Office during 2023/24. These were about how we handled a repair, how we handled a report of anti-social behaviour, how we

handled a complaint and communication about the allocation of a property. We have learnt from all of these complaints and taken on board the Housing Ombudsman's recommendations.

The main reasons for complaints in 2023/24 were about time taken to deal with things, the policies we have which determine what we deliver and how we deliver them, and staffing issues. **19.16%** of complaints we received were upheld. Some of the things we have done in response to the complaints we have received are included in the You Said, We Did section on the next page.

You can find more about how we performed in 2023/24 and how we deal with complaints in our Annual Complaint and Service Improvement Report – 2023/24, which can be found on our website www.stlegerhomes.co.uk. If you don't have access to the website, please contact our Customer Access Team on 01302 862862, for a copy.

You Said, We Did

One of our most important commitments to you is to listen, and not only listen, but to act on things you tell us could be better. That's why we publish information on what we have changes following your feedback. You can see more information on the how we responded to your feedback this year on page 13.

Here's just a few examples of some of the changes we have made following your feedback.

Our Tenant Scrutiny Panel said – That a better, more efficient approach to tenancy management, which included how we deal with anti-social behaviour, was needed.

We did – We changed our Housing Service to create a dedicated team of officers to deal with reports of high-level antisocial behaviour and restructured our housing officer services to increase support in your local areas. This has resulted in improved response times and customer satisfaction when dealing with high and medium risk reports of antisocial behaviour.

Your complaints and feedback told us – You wanted us to be more responsive when you reported Damp, Mould and Condensation concerns.

We did – We set up a new team to specifically deal with all requests related to damp and mould. This is a dedicated team carrying out damp and mould inspections and ensuring the reporting of follow on work.

You said – You wanted us to improve communications with you when dealing with enquiries and complaints.

We did – During 2023/24 we changed our complaints processes and trained staff on investigating complaints to improve the time taken and the quality of the response.

Our One Voice Forum members said – They wanted to be involved in the review of Customer Charter and Service Standards.

We did – As a result of this feedback a new Customer Charter was put in place. This charter sets out our customer service promises and standards that tenants told us were important to them.



Head to www.stlegerhomes.co.uk/getinvolved to find out more



Tenants' Takeover

Our tenants are involved in helping us to improve and make decisions at all levels. Everything from learning from complaints and feedback, all the way up to our Board, tenants help shape the services we offer. So, let's hear from three of the many tenants who work tirelessly to represent you throughout 2023/24.

Hi, I'm Sharon

and I've been involved in the One Voice Forum since it started around 18 months ago and I'm the current Chair of the group.

Our group provides a way for tenants to help shape the policies and services St Leger Homes provide to make sure they are meeting the needs of customers.

Becoming Chair has been a proud moment for me as I started getting involved in the same way most others become involved – by wanting to know more about what goes off in St Leger Homes, how it's run and how important things like policies are developed.

Tenants can have an input into what St Leger does and as a service user it's great to know we can make a difference. We had an input into nearly 30

consultations in the last year to help shape new policies and services!

During 2023/2024 we've worked hard to make sure any documents that come to the meetings were completely understandable for tenants, as initially some were a bit too formal and included jargon. Now they are easier to read and follow.

I am proud of the work the One Voice Forum does, getting involved in the services St Leger Homes provide and making it easier for tenants to be involved – which is fantastic!



Hi, I'm Maureen

and I've been involved in the Tenant Scrutiny Panel since 2010 and I'm the current Chair of the group.

Our job is to investigate and scrutinise the company's services and policies.

We have had another very busy year. We had an input into the new website, which we hope is much easier to use and to find information you need. The ASB Scrutiny Review helped inform a re-alignment of our Housing Services, resulting in a dedicated Safeguarding and Antisocial Behaviour team.

We recently reviewed how cleaning was undertaken in low-rise flats and gave some great feedback to improve the service delivered, including ensuring regular inspections take place. We are involved in reviewing how the company comply with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Code and we also scrutinise a sample number of complaints – this support helps ensure the company is compliant and supports their learning.



Hi, I'm Milcah

and I'm the tenant representative on the Board at St Leger Homes.

As a St Leger Homes tenant, I am proud to represent you, at Board level to bring our lived experiences to the table when decisions are being made.

Sharing experiences from both sides of the table is important when discussing topics at a strategic level. Landlords who share decision making with their tenants and encourage us to speak up and be heard deliver the best service possible.

During 2023/2024, I was involved in the recruitment of the new Chief Executive of St Leger Homes, Chris Margrave and the appointment of Lee Winterbottom as the Director of Property

Services. I'm excited to work closely with Chris to make sure tenants' voices are heard every step of the way.

I want to take this opportunity to encourage all tenants to get involved as much as you can. Getting involved is the best thing I've ever done. I understand more about how services are delivered to tenants and more importantly can influence those decisions.

I also wanted to see what challenges St Leger Homes faced and how they worked to overcome them. I am proud to say being on the Board has helped me achieve that.



For more information about all of our involvement groups and opportunities, please visit our website www.stlegerhomes.co.uk/getinvolved, email us at customer.involvement@stlegerhomes.co.uk or call us on 01302 862743

Supporting our tenants in 2023/24



There must be loads of other people out there in similar circumstances, we can't be the only ones. It's not easy asking for help, but I wish I had done it ten years ago!

Quote from St Leger Homes' Tenant

At St Leger Homes we really do care about our tenants. We offer a wide range of support as we know that sometimes when people come to us with one problem, it may be a sign that there are even more issues going on under the surface we can help them with.

That was the case for one couple who reported a problem with damp and mould in their home. When our surveyor went out to examine it she was shocked at how cold their home was and was concerned. The tenants, who wish to remain anonymous said: **"She told us 'we will get this sorted for you', and I didn't think much would happen – but it did!"**

The surveyor referred the couple to our Tenancy Support Team. It was then we found out that they weren't receiving any benefits, despite both being of pension age and having health conditions.

"We didn't have a lot of money coming in and we were paying all of the bills ourselves", said the tenant. **"We couldn't afford the heating so this house had been like a fridge, even in summer."**

"I was just convinced we weren't entitled to any benefits, but then Elishia came out to see us. I think St Leger Homes needs ten more people like Elishia to be honest with you!"

Elishia, one of our Tenancy Support Officers, did an assessment and helped the couple apply for several benefits they were eligible for including Housing

Benefit, Council Tax Support, Attendance Allowance for their health conditions and Pension Credit.

In total this has given the couple over **£12,000** extra income for the year, their Council Tax arrears were cleared and in future their rent and Council tax bills will be paid by benefits. They are also now getting the correct disability benefits and their quality of life has improved greatly because they can now afford to heat their home in the winter.

"We feel much better now, life is really good. Elishia really knows her stuff, she even comes out to us now for follow-up visits to check things are still going well", the tenant told us. **"She has made a huge difference for us, I can't believe it."**

"People should ring you up and ask, just ask, it's worth it. If you have a problem, give St Leger Homes a call and just see if they can help. You've nothing whatsoever to lose and a lot to gain."

If you are dealing with similar issues, give us a call on 01302 862050, or fill out our online referral form at stlegerhomes.co.uk/tenancysupport or speak to your housing officer.

2023/24 in numbers

People

508

people supported to access benefits and grants they didn't know they were eligible for



147 compliments received

193 people supported by our Mental Health Navigators

Partnerships

42 Apprentices recruited

94 People joined our World of Work Scheme

Homes

100% of properties requiring a gas service completed.

100% safety checks carried out to communal lifts

Communities

77 Supported 77 tenant groups across Doncaster (14 TARAs and 63 tenant clubs)

£4,604 given to tenant groups to fund positive community activities

136 Tenants on our Get Involved Group

We hope that you have enjoyed reading our Annual Review 2023/24. We will also be publishing our short videos to complement this Annual Review very soon, so please look out for these which can be found on www.stlegerhomes.co.uk or on our YouTube channel