



# Customer Newsletter



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**Shropshire Towns and Rural Housing**

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## Scrutiny Spotlight

# How customers are helping us make improvements

**Our Customer Scrutiny Panel is a group of customers who take an independent look at how STAR Housing services are working.**

They spend time speaking to other customers, reviewing information, checking processes and visiting our homes. After completing their investigations, they create an action plan with clear recommendations for STAR to work on.

Over the last 18 months, the Panel has carried out three major reviews: Repairs, Kitchens & Bathrooms, and Communal Areas. Their work is already helping improve services for all customers, **find out more on page 10.**

## Our New Website

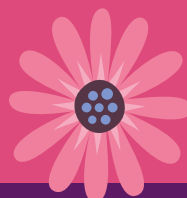
Designed and Tested with you in mind

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## The Garden Competition is back!

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## Improving our services with your feedback

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☎ 0333 32 12 200

✉ [enquiries@starhousing.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@starhousing.org.uk)

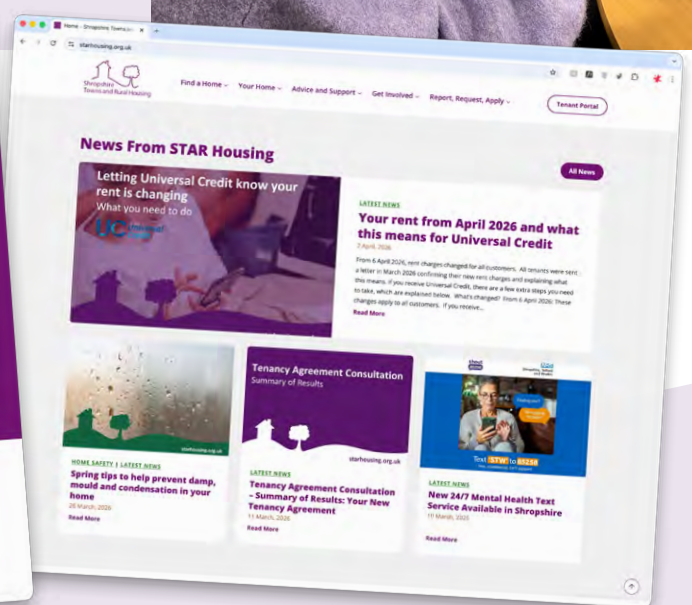
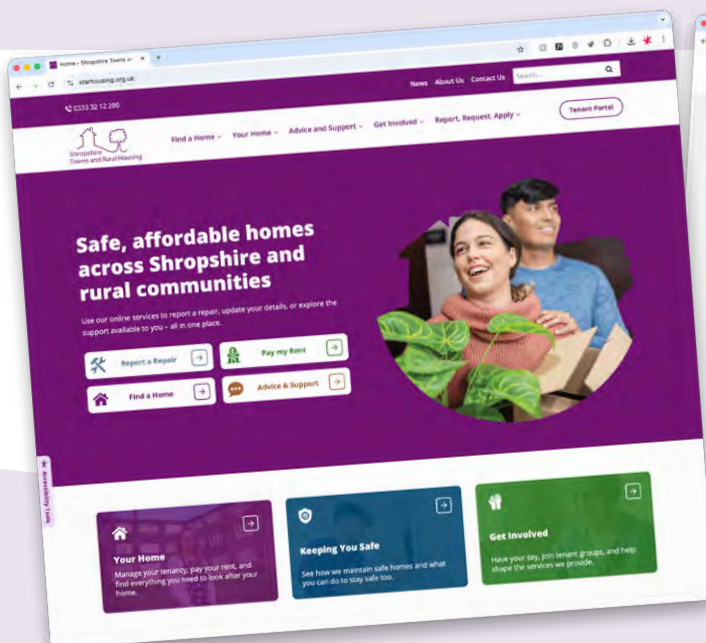
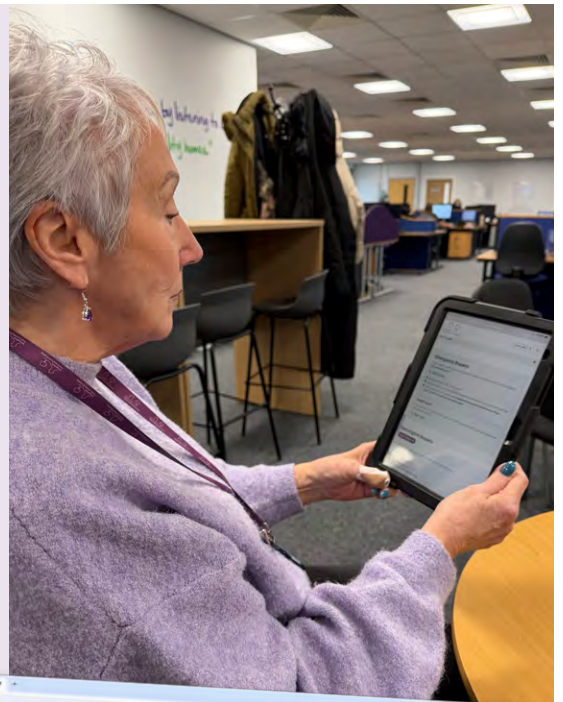
## Our New Website

# Designed and tested with you in mind

Our new STAR Housing website is now live and ready for you to explore. It has been created to make it easier for you to manage your home online, find information quickly and use our services at a time that suits you. The layout is clearer, the wording is simpler, and every page works smoothly on a phone, tablet or computer. Whether you want to report a repair, check information about your tenancy or find safety advice, everything is now easier to access.

### What you can do on the new website

- ✔ Read information about your tenancy
- ✔ Find safety advice for your home
- ✔ Send a request or enquiry online
- ✔ Get help through our advice pages
- ✔ Check opening times and how to contact us
- ✔ See community news and neighbourhood updates
- ✔ Learn more about STAR Housing and our services
- ✔ Use our improved accessibility tool called **Recite Me** to translate pages, adjust colours and change text size to suit your needs
- ✔ Find important information faster



Our New Website

# How your feedback shaped the new website

A group of customers known as our customer website champions tested early versions of the site. They tried out important tasks and shared honest feedback about what felt easy and what needed improving. Their comments helped us shape the final design and make the website clearer and more user-friendly. See what they had to say below.

You can explore the new website at [www.starhousing.org.uk](http://www.starhousing.org.uk)



"I love the new website. It is informative and user friendly. It is fresh, accessible to everyone and very functional. I have really enjoyed testing the site and being involved in building such a great site. I hope it is well received and well used."  
**Nicky**

"There has been a lot of research undertaken to improve the website and the results are phenomenal. The feedback offered has been taken on board and the new website is undoubtedly a major improvement on the previous model. It is informative and easy to use."  
**Anthony**



"Pleased to note all recommendations made previously have now been included. The website is very user-friendly. As a customer I am confident I will be able to use the system to report repairs, give feedback and more."  
**Ellen**

# *Manage Your Home Online* with the **STAR** **Tenant Portal**



Our Tenant Portal is an easy way to manage your home at a time that suits you. It works on your phone, tablet or computer and brings everything together in one secure place.

Once you're logged in, you can:

- ★ Check your rent balance and see recent payments
- ★ Make a rent payment
- ★ Report a repair and track progress
- ★ View your tenancy details
- ★ Update your contact information
- ★ See your upcoming repair appointments
- ★ Read important letters and documents
- ★ Get in touch with us about your home



## **Need Help Accessing the Portal?**

If you're unsure about signing up or run into any issues, our team is here to support you. Just give us a call and we'll guide you through it.

**Call us on** 0333 32 12 200

**Email** [enquiries@starhousing.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@starhousing.org.uk)

# It's designed to save you time. There's no waiting on the phone - you can look things up, make changes and send requests whenever you need to.

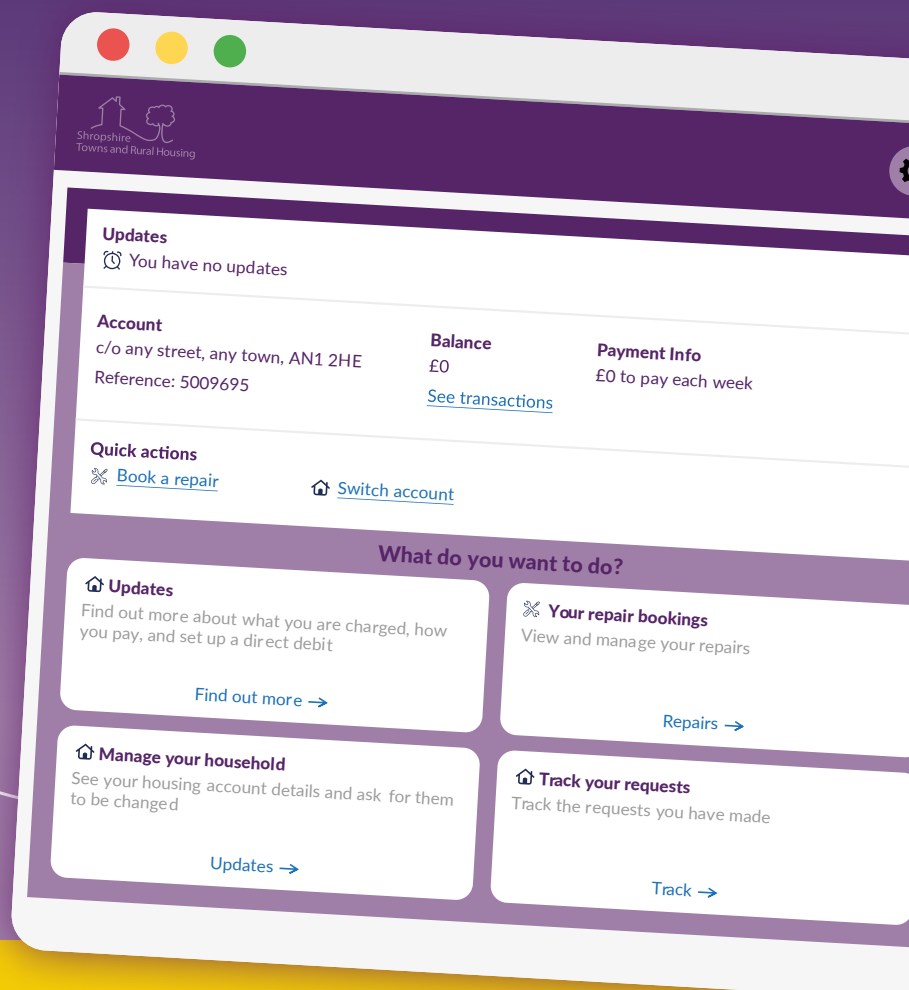
## Getting started

If you haven't used the portal before, it only takes a few minutes to set up an account. You'll need your email address, your tenancy number and a few basic details so we can link everything correctly. If you need any help getting started, we can offer one-to-one support.



### Your information is safe

The portal uses secure technology to protect your details. Your information is encrypted and handled in line with strict data protection standards, so you can use it with confidence.



You can find the portal on our website:

[www.starhousing.org.uk/tenant-portal](http://www.starhousing.org.uk/tenant-portal)

## What you need to know to prevent damp, mould and condensation in your home

No one wants damp or mould in their home. Understanding the difference between condensation, which can lead to mould, and damp coming from outside your home can help you spot issues early and prevent problems from building up.

A warm and well-ventilated home is the best defence, but we know heating costs can be a worry for many households. If you are struggling with energy bills or rent, please contact us. Support is available.

Condensation happens when warm air meets a cold surface, such as a window or wall. This can create moisture droplets that may lead to mould if they are not wiped away. Everyday activities such as cooking, showering and drying clothes can all increase moisture in your home. Damp caused by leaks or water coming through walls needs repairing quickly, so please report this to us straight away.

### Simple ways to reduce condensation and mould

- ✓ Wipe moisture from windows and walls
- ✓ Open windows slightly when cooking or showering
- ✓ Make sure extractor fans are switched on when cooking or showering
- ✓ Keep rooms warm where possible
- ✓ Move furniture away from cold walls
- ✓ Keep vents clear so air can circulate
- ✓ Try to avoid drying clothes on radiators. If you can, dry washing outside or use a tumble dryer. When drying laundry indoors, place it on an airer in a well-ventilated room and open a window slightly so the moisture can escape.
- ✓ Open your windows for five minutes each morning. This quick burst of fresh air helps clear overnight moisture and keeps your home drier.



## Did you know?



### **Dry air is easier to heat**

Continuous running ventilation fans are designed to remove excess moisture from the air. When the air in your home is drier, it becomes easier and cheaper to heat. Keeping these fans switched on helps prevent damp and mould and keeps your home healthier.



### **Awaab's Law**

Awaab's Law has been introduced nationally to make sure serious issues such as damp and mould are inspected and repaired quickly. It sets clear time limits for social landlords to act. At STAR Housing, we already treat damp and mould as urgent issues and will continue to respond as quickly as possible to keep your home safe. You can find further information on Awaab's law on our website.



### **Find advice and report a concern on our website**

Our website has clear advice to help you spot problems early, understand the causes and prevent damp and mould from building up. You can also use our online form to report damp, mould or condensation in your home so our team can support you quickly.



Shropshire  
Towns and Rural Housing

[www.starhousing.org.uk/damp-mould-condensation](http://www.starhousing.org.uk/damp-mould-condensation)

## Allowing access to your home

Sometimes we need to visit your home to carry out repairs, safety checks or inspections. Allowing access helps us keep your home safe, well-maintained and in good condition. It also means we can deal with issues early before they become bigger problems. We will always let you know when we are visiting and will give you as much notice as possible.

Allowing access is an important part of your tenancy agreement. It helps us make sure your home meets safety standards and that any checks or repairs are completed on time. Missed appointments can lead to extra costs for STAR Housing. Over 2025/2026, missed appointments and “no access” visits cost STAR Housing around £60,000, money that could have been used to improve homes and services for customers.

When someone visits, they will always carry official STAR Housing photo ID and will show this to you before entering. If one of our approved contractors is visiting your property, we will let you know who is coming and they will also be wearing clear identification. If you are ever unsure, please contact us.

In an emergency, such as a serious leak or anything that puts people or your home at risk, we may need to enter straight away to make the area safe and prevent further damage.

**If you cannot keep an appointment, please let us know as soon as you can so we can rearrange it at a time that works for you.**



Over 2025/2026, missed appointments and “no access” visits cost STAR Housing around **£60,000**

# Have Your Say on Our Customer Service

We're taking a fresh look at our customer service to make sure we're delivering the best possible experience for you. To do that, we want to understand what's working well and where things could be better.

Your feedback will play a key role in shaping real improvements. We're committed to listening openly and being transparent about what we learn and the changes we make as a result. It's all part of our long-term commitment to providing better services for every customer.



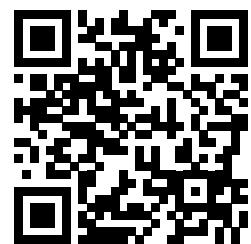
**Keep an eye on the STAR website for upcoming ways to get involved and share your views.**

## Summer Skip Events

Our summer skip events are back and are a great way to clear out bulky household items you no longer need. These events give you an easy and convenient way to tidy your home and outdoor spaces.

Dates for upcoming skip events can be found on our website. You can also ask your Housing Officer or look out for posters in your neighbourhood.

We try our best to offer skip events in as many locations as we can. However, we are not able to provide a skip in every community. **If you think your estate would benefit from a skip event, please contact your Housing Officer and they will be happy to discuss this with you.**



# Scrutiny Spotlight

## How customers are helping us make improvements



Our Customer Scrutiny Panel is made up of STAR customers who take an independent look at how our services are working. They speak to other customers, review information, check processes and visit our homes. After each review, they produce clear recommendations to help us make improvements.

Over the last 18 months, the Panel has completed three major reviews – **Repairs, Kitchens & Bathrooms**, and **Communal Areas** – and their work is already making a real difference.

### Repairs

The Panel reviewed the full repairs journey, from reporting a repair through to follow-up checks. They told us customers wanted clearer communication, more regular updates and stronger quality checks.

Most of their recommendations have already been put in place, with a small number of longer-term actions still underway. Since the review, satisfaction with repairs has increased, particularly around how quickly repairs are completed, showing that customer feedback is improving day-to-day services.



### Kitchens & Bathrooms

This review focused on the design of new kitchens and bathrooms, customer choice, contractor performance and the information provided before work starts. Customers were generally happy with the finished work, but felt letters and guidance could be clearer and inspections more thorough.

We've since improved our written information, strengthened inspections and updated the guidance customers receive before work begins. The Panel was pleased with the progress at their follow-up review.



### Communal Areas

Panel members visited a range of communal areas and found standards varied across different locations. They highlighted the need for more consistent upkeep and more regular, detailed inspections.

STAR managers have now met with the Panel and agreed an action plan to improve the look, feel and safety of shared spaces. **Watch this space as we put these recommendations into action.**

## What's changed so far

Thanks to customers involved in Scrutiny, improvements have been made across STAR Housing, including:

### Better diagnosis of repairs

Getting it right first time means quicker repairs and fewer repeat visits for you.

### Clearer updates

We'll text you when your repair is booked, remind you the day before, and call when we're on the way, keeping you fully updated.

### More quality checks

We now inspect at least 75% of contractor repairs to make sure the work meets the standards you should receive.

### Recognising great customer service

Following the Panel's recommendation, we've brought in a new way to recognise staff who go above and beyond for customers.

### Better use of the contractor portal

We now share key support information with contractors so your repair is safe, tailored and consistent.

### Clearer letters and guides

Information for repairs and planned works has been rewritten in plain English so you know exactly what will happen and when.

### Better follow-up calls and quality checks

We've strengthened our follow-up process after repairs so we can make sure the work has been completed properly and you're happy with the result.

### Stronger inspection processes

Inspections are now more consistent and detailed, helping us keep homes in good condition and pick up issues earlier.

### Clearer contractor standards

We've updated what we expect from contractors so everyone working in your home understands the standard we require.

### Action plans for communal areas

Action plans have been agreed to improve the look, feel and safety of communal areas, based on what customers told us in the Scrutiny review.

**These changes are already making a difference, and the Panel will continue to monitor progress.**

You can read all Scrutiny Panel reports on our website:

[www.starhousing.org.uk/scrutiny-panel](http://www.starhousing.org.uk/scrutiny-panel)

Get involved to help shape future services, from sharing feedback on specific topics to joining one of our customer panels. To find out more about the different ways to get involved, visit: [www.starhousing.org.uk/get-involved](http://www.starhousing.org.uk/get-involved)

If you'd like to take part or have a question about getting involved, you can email our Engagement Team at [involvement@starhousing.org.uk](mailto:involvement@starhousing.org.uk) or speak to your Housing Officer, who will be happy to help.





# Gardening Competition

# Summer in bloom

**Our Garden Competition is back!**

Our annual Garden Competition opens on 1 June, and we cannot wait to see your beautiful outdoor spaces. Whether you have a small balcony, a colourful planter or a full garden, we would love you to take part.

Once entries open, you'll be able to apply online, or you can request an entry form from your Housing Officer if you prefer.

## Categories are

Best Garden

Best Container Display

Best Communal Garden

Best Wildlife Garden

Entries close on **1<sup>st</sup> July**.  
Judging will take place  
on **15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> July**



# Understanding your new tenancy agreement

The updated tenancy agreement is now in place following the recent consultation. Thank you to everyone who shared their views and helped shape the final version.

You should have received a consultation pack in the post during the autumn, along with details on how to share your feedback. A formal Notice of Variation has also been sent to every household to explain the confirmed changes and what they mean for you.

The updated agreement includes clearer information on how rent is charged and brings all service charge details together in one place so they are easier to understand. The wording throughout the agreement has also been simplified to make it clearer and easier to read.

There is nothing you need to sign. The updated agreement has now replaced your previous one. If you receive Universal Credit, you may need to let the Department for Work and Pensions know about the change to how rent is charged, moving from a 48-week charge period to 52 weeks.

**More information, including details about service charges and the full consultation results, is available on our website.**

## THE BIG Check in



The Big Check In is back this summer and it is bigger than ever. Throughout the week of Monday 6 July to Friday 10 July, our teams will be out across all our communities visiting every STAR Housing home.

As well as saying hello on the doorstep, we will be running customer engagement activities throughout the week. This is a great chance to speak to us, share your views and find out more about the support available to you. Our aim is to make it easy for every customer to have a voice and to help us keep your information up to date so we can provide the best possible service.

**To find out more about what the Big Check In involves and why we do it, visit our website [www.starhousing.org.uk](http://www.starhousing.org.uk)**



# Your Complaint Matters

If something has not gone right, we want to hear from you. A complaint is simply letting us know that you are unhappy with something we did or did not do in the last twelve months. Your feedback helps us understand what happened and improve our services.

## How to make a complaint

Fill in our **online complaint form**

Call **0333 32 12 200**

Email **complaints@starhousing.org.uk**

Speak to a member of **staff directly**

Send us a **private Facebook message**

We will acknowledge your complaint within five working days and aim to resolve it within ten working days. If needed, you can ask for it to be reviewed at Stage Two. You can also contact the Housing Ombudsman at any time for independent advice.

Find out more on our website: [www.starhousing.org.uk/complaints](http://www.starhousing.org.uk/complaints)

**Complaints  
Summary**  
April 2025 – March 2026

**100%**  
of Stage 1  
complaints were  
responded to  
within the target

**97%**  
of Stage 2  
complaints were  
responded to  
within the target

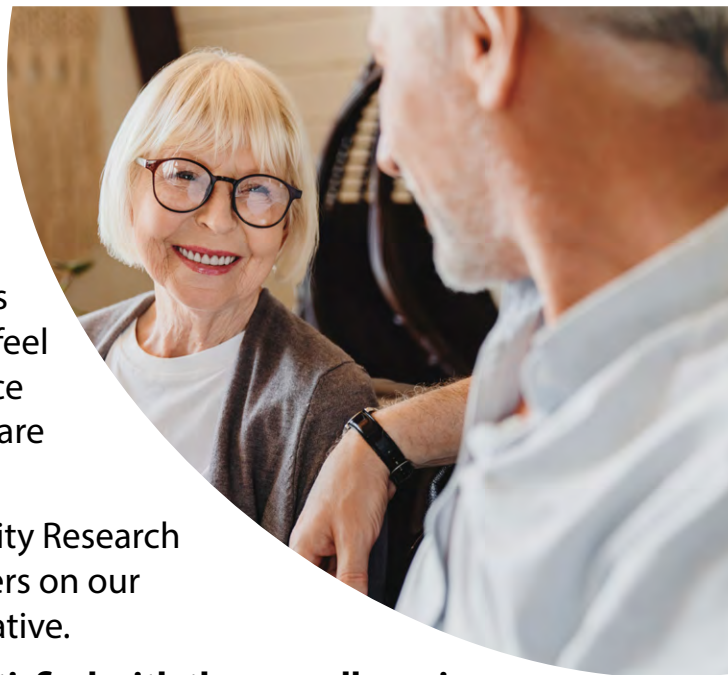
**52%**  
of complainants who answered  
our complaints feedback survey  
were satisfied with how their  
complaint was handled

# Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) results

Every year we ask customers to share their views through the national Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) survey. This helps us understand how you feel about your home, our services and your experience with STAR Housing. It also shows us where things are working well and where we need to improve.

The surveys are carried out independently by Acuity Research & Practice, who contact a sample of STAR customers on our behalf to ensure the results are fair and representative.

**This year, 84% of customers told us they are satisfied with the overall service they receive from STAR Housing.** Many of you also said your home feels safe, well-maintained, and that satisfaction with repairs has improved again this year.



You can see a snapshot of this year's results in the grid below, and the full results are available on our website: [www.starhousing.org.uk/tsms](http://www.starhousing.org.uk/tsms)

## Your Neighbourhood Team

Your Neighbourhood Housing Officers are here to support you with all aspects of your tenancy. You will often see them out and about in your community, carrying out tenancy visits, responding to neighbourhood issues, tackling anti-social behaviour and taking part in estate walkabouts. They are also on hand if you need advice, have a concern about your home, or want to speak to someone face to face.

Each community has a dedicated team of officers who look after different areas. To find out who your Housing Officer is, simply visit our website and select your area on the Neighbourhood Housing Team page.



Find your Housing Officer here  
[www.starhousing.org.uk/your-neighbourhood-housing-team](http://www.starhousing.org.uk/your-neighbourhood-housing-team)

# How Your Feedback Has Helped Us Improve Our Services

Thank you to everyone who took part in last year's Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs). Your feedback guided our work throughout the year, and the improvements you'll see in this year's results reflect the changes we've made together.

Here's a summary of what you told us - and what we've done in response.

## Listening and Acting on Your Feedback

Many customers said they wanted to feel listened to, kept updated and confident that their concerns were taken seriously. In response, we have:

### Strengthened how repairs and complaints are handled

- ✓ Introduced a new Complaints Improvement Plan so complaints are acknowledged more quickly and handled consistently and with empathy.
- ✓ Set clearer expectations across STAR to make sure updates are more regular, transparent and easier to understand.
- ✓ Continued reviewing repair quality and invested in staff training so repairs are completed to a higher and more consistent standard.

### Created more ways for you to get involved

- ✓ Launched our new Customer Engagement Offer, including a Customer Scrutiny Panel, giving customers a stronger voice in shaping services.
- ✓ Contacted customers who said they wanted to be more involved and offered opportunities to take part.
- ✓ Introduced a structured follow-up process for customers who responded to the TSM survey to make sure concerns are addressed and trust is rebuilt.

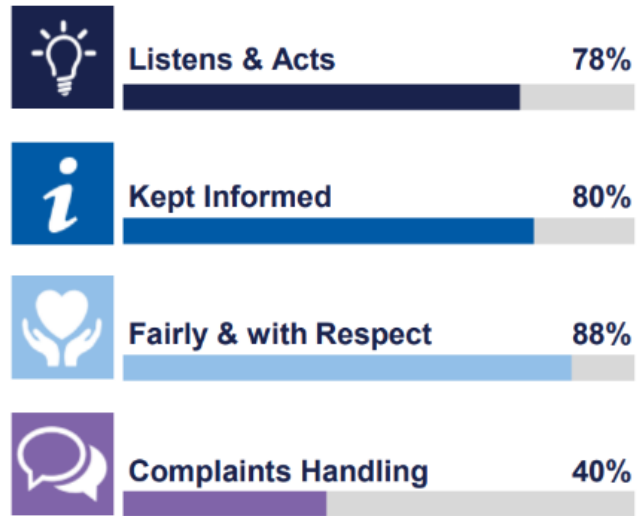
### Made it easier to reach us and stay updated

- ✓ Launched the new Tenant Portal, so you can report repairs, track progress and manage your tenancy at a time that suits you.
- ✓ Improved our internal systems so updates on repairs and appointments are more accurate and timely.
- ✓ Developed a clearer communications plan to show how "You Said, We Did" feedback leads to real change.

### Keeping Properties in Good Repair



### Respectful & Helpful Engagement



### Responsible Neighbourhood Management



## What's Changed This Year?

Because of your feedback - and the improvements made since last year - we've seen:

**Higher satisfaction with repairs**

**More customers feeling listened to**

**Improved ratings around fairness and respect**

**Better satisfaction with how complaints are handled**

We're pleased to see progress, and we know there is still more to do. Your feedback will continue to shape our priorities over the coming year.

## Thank You

Your voice really does make a difference. Thank you for taking the time to share your views and helping us improve the services we provide.



## Investing in warmer, more energy-efficient homes

We are continuing to improve the thermal performance of our homes so they are warmer, more comfortable and cheaper to heat. By making homes more energy efficient, we can help reduce problems such as damp, mould, excess cold and excess heat. These improvements also support a healthier living environment for customers.

The Government has set a target for all social homes to reach an EPC rating of C or above by 2030. During 2025 and 2026, we increased the number of STAR homes at EPC C from 54% to 70%.

### How we are doing this

We are investing in homes through a range of measures that support our retrofit strategy, including:

- ✔ Installing insulation to keep warmth in
- ✔ Adding triple glazing
- ✔ Carrying out regular inspections and keeping accurate information about the condition of our homes
- ✔ Tackling the root causes of damp, mould, and temperature issues
- ✔ Using government grants to support and extend our investment programme



During 2025 and 2026, we secured £1.9 million of ECO4 funding. This helped us install 191 solar panels across 92 bungalows, 39 flats and 60 houses, helping customers reduce their energy costs and improve comfort throughout the year.

We will continue investing in our homes so customers can enjoy warmer, healthier and more energy-efficient living spaces.

**To find out more about our work to improve energy efficiency, please visit [our website](#).**

## Our Charity of the Year

# Welsh Coast Mountain Bike Challenge

STAR Housing's Charity of the Year is the Welsh Coast Mountain Bike Challenge, and we're proud to be supporting Martyn Thomas, a Young Person Support Worker at STAR Housing, as he takes it on.

Martyn is raising money for Young Lives vs Cancer and the Wrexham Maelor Oncology Unit. His challenge will see him cycle around 870 miles, travelling from Chepstow to Chester FC along the Welsh coast on tough mountain bike routes. These charities mean a great deal to Martyn and his family, and his challenge is helping to raise awareness and bring in vital support for these charities.

**If you'd like to learn more about Martyn's story or support his fundraising, you can find more information on our website.**



## Your feedback matters

We'd love to hear what you think about this newsletter and what you'd like to see in the next edition. You can get in touch by calling our contact centre, emailing [involvement@starhousing.org.uk](mailto:involvement@starhousing.org.uk) or scanning the QR code.





**0333 32 12 200**

**[enquiries@starhousing.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@starhousing.org.uk)**

**[www.starhousing.org.uk](http://www.starhousing.org.uk)**

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Information correct at time of print

