

What we've been up to !

Currently made up of just 10 staff members, we are a small team , however that doesn't stop us aiming to do our very best to keep our properties safe and decent and to regularly check in on our tenants. Here's a snippet of what

In 2023/24 we:

- Completed 300 annual and new tenancy visits, checking on the safety and welfare of tenants
- Renewed 57 kitchens
- Re-let 75 empty properties
- Provided 6 new build houses in the Burslem area
- Inspected over 1,700 Fire doors
- Introduced a process for supporting tenants with damp and mould, visiting 58 tenants.
- Completed the installation of a new heating system at Dickson and Hammond House
- Introduced a new cleaning service for our schemes.

During 2024/25 we are busy:

- Providing 17 new homes in the Burslem and Shelton areas.
- Reviewing our Allocation policy alongside the way we re-let our homes.
- Demolishing the top layer of our multi story car park at Dickson and Hammond House.
- Replacing the windows at the Bottlekiln, Hanley, an apartment scheme that is a listed building.
- Consulting with residents of Marchwood Court over external improvements.
- Renewing 75 kitchens
- Reviewing our services against the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards
- Compiling our building safety case reports for our high rise schemes ready for the Building Safety Regulator.
- Reviewing our staffing structure and introducing some new positions to help deliver and improve services.

53 weeks – paying your rent in 2024-25

We charge our rent based on the "financial year", which runs from the first Monday in April every year. There are 52 weeks in a normal year, which means we issue 52 weekly charges for rent. Every five to six years, because of how the calendar falls, there are 53 Mondays in a year instead of 52.

2024-2025 is one of these years, which means 53 weeks rent are charged rather than the usual 52.

Here's how the extra week impacts you:

If you pay weekly there will be no change, you will pay your new weekly rent from 1 April in advance every Monday.

If you pay monthly you will need to multiply your weekly rent by 53 and then divide by 12. If you pay by Direct Debit we have automatically done this adjustment for you.

If you receive Universal Credit the Department for Work and Pensions will only pay for 52 weeks. , so you'll need to budget for that extra 53rd week yourself.

If you receive Housing Benefit your local authority will recalculate your Housing Benefit and pay the additional week

If you think you are going to be affected by this please contact the Housing Team



-----TEAR HERE-----

Complete the missing words in the sentences below:

1. The _____ is a tool you can download to your smart device
2. _____ of our customers are satisfied with the overall service that we provide.
3. Don't _____batteries or charge them unattended or while asleep
4. The _____, manufacture and supply of cannabis is a crime under Section 8 of the misuse of drugs act 1971.
5. Stoke on Trent Housing Society meets all requirements of the _____ Handling Code 2024
6. Inspected over _____ fire doors.

**WIN VOUCHERS
WORTH
£50**

Now complete your name and contact details below and send us an image of your entry slip via **WhatsApp** to **07876897172** or email **info@stokeontrenthousingsociety.org.uk** with your answers. Alternatively, send your completed entry slip to The Trevor Jones Office, Hammond House, Ridgway Road, Hanley, ST1 3AX. The 3 lucky winners will be drawn on **20th September 2024** and must be a tenant or leaseholder of the Society .

Name:..... Address:

Email: Mobile:

Resident Newsletter

Summer 2024



Hello and welcome to your Summer 2024 Newsletter

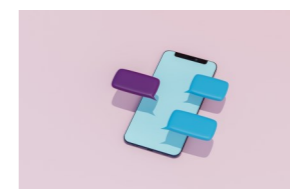
INSIDE THIS ISSUE

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We're also giving away £50 worth of VOUCHERS to 3 x lucky winners — be sure to read this newsletter and fill in the gaps on the competition on the back page.

Noise App

We have recently launched a Noise App to help tenants who may be experiencing problems with noise from neighbours.



When you report that you are experiencing problems with noise and you have access to a smart device, we'll ask you to gather evidence using the **Noise App**.

The **Noise App** is a tool you can download to your smart device that enables you to collect and submit noise recordings for us to review. This could be prior to us opening a case or during a live case.

How it Works

You'll need to contact us first to tell us about the type of noise you are experiencing, and we'll send you an invitation to **The Noise App**. You can then register your account and start to use it to record any incidents of noise nuisance.

If we've asked you to submit recordings within an agreed timeframe and do not receive any evidence from you, we may be unable to investigate further. If this happens, we'll let you know and deactivate your access. You'll then need to restart the process with us to reinstate your access should the nuisance progress.

Email info@stokeontrenthousingsociety.org.uk or call us on 01782 968566 for access to **The Noise App**.

Worried About Paying Your Rent?

It is important that all tenants pay their rent on time. We use the rent money we collect to deliver the services we provide – like keeping your home safe, our repairs service and making planned improvements to your home.

If you cannot pay your rent but don't talk to us we may not be able to help, and your tenancy could be at risk in the future. Email us info@stokeontrenthousingsociety.org.uk or call **01782 968566**.



You can now pay less with **up to 18% discount** for what you already buy online and in store with your Housing Perks. The free app will help you to save money on the essentials:

**UP TO
18%
DISCOUNT**

- ✓ GROCERIES ✓ CAR ✓ FUEL ✓ CLOTHING
- ✓ SCHOOL UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT
- ✓ HOME FURNISHINGS & DIY ✓ FAMILY DAYS OUT

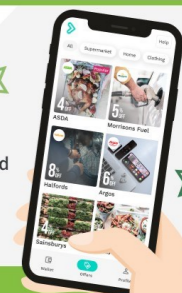
HOW IT WORKS

- 1 Download the app for free to your device available from
- 2 Buy a voucher with up to 18% discount
- 3 Voucher appears in app within seconds ready for you to use



HOW TO SIGN UP

- ➔ When you download the app, enter organisation ID: **SOTHS**
- ➔ Your account will need to be registered to your SOTHS address, so keep your tenancy reference handy.



For more information visit www.stokeontrenthousingsociety.org.uk

Farewell to Helen

Helen Cartlidge has recently bid farewell to colleagues and Stoke on Trent Housing Society . Helen joined the Society in 2004



and is a well known face to tenants as she has dedicated her time here looking after our homes and residents via our repairs and estate services.

We thank Helen for all that she has done for the Society and residents over the years and wish her all the very best for the future.

There will be some new staff joining the Society over the coming months and we will introduce you to them in our next newsletter.

Tenant Satisfaction

In April 2023, the Regulator of Social Housing introduced a new set of Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's), to assess how well social housing landlords are doing at providing good quality homes and services. There are 22 tenant satisfactions measures, covering five themes, 10 of the TSM's are measured by monitoring performance against a set of key standards, and 12 are measured by carrying out tenant satisfaction surveys to understand what our customers think about the services we offer.

In December 2023 and January 2024 we surveyed all tenants living in our 588 homes and received 230 completed surveys, that's a 39% response rate! Here are our TSM results:

Overall satisfaction with the service provided by Stoke on Trent Housing Society = 89%

Keeping Properties in Good Repair

Emergency repairs completed in target time frame in 23/24 92%	Non-emergency repairs completed in target time in 23/24 79.4%	Homes that do not meet the decent homes standard in 23/24 0
Satisfied with the overall repairs service 84%	Satisfied with the time taken to complete your repair 83%	Satisfied the home we provide is well maintained 88%

Maintaining Building Safety

Gas Safety Checks in date 100%	Fire Safety Checks in date 100%	Asbestos Safety Checks in date 100%
Water Safety Checks in date 100%	Lift Safety Checks in date 100%	Satisfied that home is safe 85%

Respectful and Helpful Engagement

Satisfied we listen to your views and act on them 77%	Satisfied we keep you informed about things that matter to you 75%	Agree that we treat customers fairly & with respect 89%
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Responsible neighbourhood management

Satisfied we keep communal areas clean and well maintained 75%	Satisfied we make positive contributions to neighbourhoods 68%	Satisfied with our handling of anti-social behaviour 54%
ASB cases relative to size of landlord for 23/24 29	ASB cases involving hate crime relative to size of landlord 1	

Effective handling of complaints

Stage 1 complaints relative to the size of landlord for 23/24 8	Stage 2 complaints relative to the size of landlord for 23/24 1	Satisfaction with our approach to handling complaints 62%
Stage 1 complaints responded in target time frame for 23/24 87.5%	Stage 2 complaints responded in target time frame for 23/24 100%	

What the results tell us and what's next

We are pleased that 89% of our customers are satisfied with the overall service that we provide and feel that we treat them fairly and with respect, however the results tell us that we can do better in some areas.

The team are now working hard to:

- Improve communication, particularly regarding repairs and anti-social behaviour
- Provide better information on our services and what you can expect from us
- Keep tenants informed about things that matter to them
- Review how we deliver our repairs service

We'll keep you updated !

Complaints

The Housing Ombudsman has introduced a new statutory Complaint Handling Code which all Housing Associations, must comply with. To make sure that we are complying with the code a self-assessment has been completed by Sue Davies (Housing Director and Complaint Officer) and reviewed by Glyn Morrey (Chair of the Board and Member Responsible for Complaints).

Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report

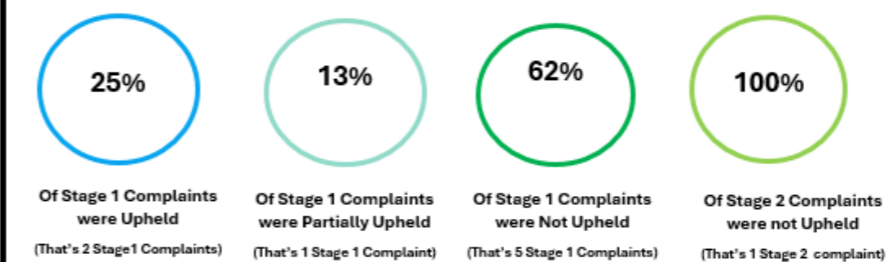
To comply with the Complaint Handling Code, each year we must produce a service improvement report that details the Society's performance in relation to dealing with complaints. A full copy of our report for 23/24 is available on our website, however here are some main highlights:

Number of Complaints and How Long we Took to Handle Them:



All the above were responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales for complaint stages. That's 100% !

Complaint Outcomes:



How to Make a Complaint:

- ✓ Email us
- ✓ Complete a General Contact Form on our website.
- ✓ Telephone us on 01782 968566.
- ✓ Visit us at The Trevor Jones Office
- ✓ Whatsapp us on 07876897172
- ✓ Send us a message via Facebook.
- ✓ Speak to one of our officers as they visit your scheme

Complaint Learning:

YOU SAID

You weren't happy when we repaired an item that was due to be renewed.
You felt that communication was slow when we completed a repair that needed several trade elements.
You were uncertain that our decision to decline a nomination from the City Council was correct.
You weren't happy with the time you had to wait for a replacement front door.
You felt that the lifts in Northwood Court were breaking down too often.
You weren't happy that we didn't consult residents when emergency works were needed within the external area of a scheme.
You told us that you were not happy with your home, however you did not want to meet with us to discuss this further.

WE DID

We now have renewal data in our IT system that reminds staff to check when an item is due for renewal.
We now use one contractor to lead on these types of repairs to help speed up and improve communication.
We spoke to the City Council about the nomination process and discussed how to improve it.
We have spoken to the supplier direct and have agreed that they will keep us updated on orders.
We have commissioned an independent review of all our lifts to establish their condition and to plan for any future works or replacement.
Although we couldn't consult in this instance as the work was an emergency, we have taken on board that consultation is important when we plan to complete any works around our schemes.
We have introduced a no access policy to guide staff on the process that they should follow when liaising with residents to try and arrange access.