



TENANT NEWSLETTER

# SHINES

## YOUR HOUSING NEWSLETTER

December 2025

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### Why SHINES?

**SHINES** sets out the 6 key principles of our service: **S**afe **H**omes, **I**nclusive **N**eighbourhoods, **ES**ustainable.

It's all about ensuring your homes meet our high standard - we want to ensure your homes are safe, that you enjoy where you live, and that we're helping you save money through ongoing improvements to your homes. SHINES is our promise to you to make sure your homes, and our services are the best they can be.

### Since last time...

Since our last newsletter, we've been continuing to work with the Regulator for Social Housing to help improve our services - and we're receiving some

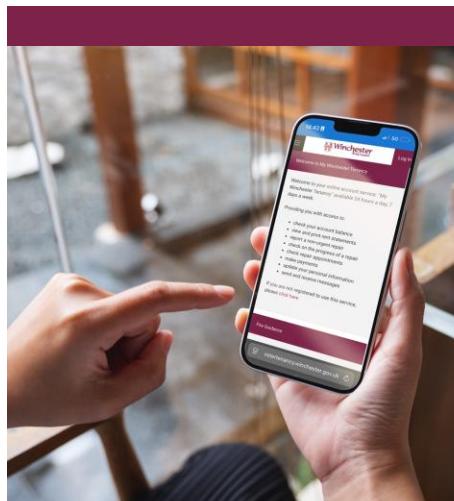
really positive feedback from the regulator about the work we've done to date to make sure our services are meeting expectation.

We also recently completed our recent Tenant Satisfaction Measures survey - thank you to everyone who took the time give us your feedback about the service you receive. We're now collating the results and will update you on the outcomes in the next newsletter.

We've now also launched our consultation on our Housing Budget for 2026/27 and **we would welcome your feedback** on how we invest money in services – some more info on this below.

In other news, we've restructured the Landlord Service and as part of this, our new Housing Services Team is now in place. We're also recruiting for more Housing Officers so they have smaller patches to manage – which will help improve the service you receive!

And finally, we'd like to take this opportunity to send all best wishes to you and your families for the holiday season and for 2026!



## Sign up now for My Winchester Tenancy

With **My Winchester Tenancy**, you can easily make payments, check your balance, report non-urgent repairs and more online!

**Sign up today**

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## Helping you save money

## Upgrading our tenants' homes

We're making great progress to upgrade windows for tenants across five streets, with 13 houses having so far received improvements. The new windows will help make tenants' homes warmer and more comfortable, helping them to cut down on heating bills too!

**Speaking about their new windows, one tenant said:**

"I'm absolutely delighted with the window upgrades. The installation was completed in just three days, covering the basement, front room, kitchen, bedrooms, and my son's room. These areas were previously very cold and draughty due to the old single-glazed windows. Since having the new double-glazed sash windows fitted, the difference is remarkable — it's already so much warmer and more comfortable throughout the house. I'm especially pleased with the operatives selected by the council; they were professional, respectful, and always cleaned up after themselves. A fantastic job all round!"



Since the last newsletter we've also seen a further 9 projects to improve and upgrade our tenants' homes – with a total of £760k being spent to upgrade roofs and window renewals, helping to keep homes warm, comfortable and cheaper to run, as well as replacing asbestos soffits and facias and cleaning gutters cleaning to help ensure safe, well-presented homes for our families.

**Another happy customer, from Old Alresford, said:**

"I have had two guys, Toby and Allan, finish installing our new windows. Firstly, we are very impressed with the quality of the windows but what impressed us more was the two lads that fit them. They worked efficiently, professionally and did a magnificent job. They were polite and chatty whilst still getting on with the job in hand. Nothing was too much trouble, and they did all the cleaning up afterwards."



## Keeping your home safe

### Repairs & Maintenance Policy

We're proud to announce the launch of our new Housing Repairs and Maintenance Policy — a major step in ensuring every home is safe, well maintained, and compliant with national standards.

The policy reflects our ongoing commitment to the Decent Homes Standard, Awaab's Law, and guidance from the Regulator of Social Housing, putting quality, communication, and resident experience at the heart of our repairs service.

It introduces:

- Clearer response standards and timescales
- A stronger focus on getting repairs right first time
- Better coordination between planned and reactive works
- Consistent communication and resident support

This is a proud achievement for the service and a shared step forward in maintaining homes that residents can feel safe and proud to live in.

**Visit our repairs page to read the new policy**

## Our Updated Compliance Policies

We've updated six important Building Safety policies to help make sure your home remains safe, well-maintained, and compliant with national standards.

The policies cover gas, fire and electrical Safety, lifting equipment, asbestos and water hygiene, and they explain how we inspect and maintain your home, how we manage safety risks, and what you can expect from us.

Across all six policies, we are committed to:

- Regular safety checks and inspections
- Using fully trained, qualified contractors
- Fixing urgent safety issues quickly
- Keeping accurate safety records
- Supporting vulnerable residents
- Communicating clearly before, during and after safety checks

Our new **Fire and Building Safety webpages** are also now live, with easy-read information and links to our fire safety policies.

Remember, if you have any concerns about safety in your home, please contact us on **01962 848 400** or email **HHub@winchester.gov.uk**

**Visit the fire and building safety webpages**

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# Delivering the best services we can

## Have your say on the housing budget

We're asking our tenants, leaseholders and shared owners to share their views on our Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget for 2026/27.

Our HRA is our housing budget, which is made up of rent from our 5,000 council homes. The budget can only be used to pay for housing services - and every penny is reinvested in housing. With rising costs, we currently spend more on housing services than we receive in rent, so we need your views on where savings or extra income should come from.

You can fill out the survey online or contact our Tenant Partnership team on **0800 716 987** for help completing it over the phone.

As a thank you for taking part, you can choose to be entered into a prize draw to win one of three Love2Shop vouchers or an iPad!

**Have your say on our Housing Budget**

## See How We're Performing

We're committed to being open and transparent about the services we provide. Want to know how we're doing?

**Visit our website** to see the latest performance updates, including how we're meeting our targets and improving services for you.

**Performance Web page**

## TACT Board Stock Tour

Following feedback, we recently arranged for members of our TACT Board to tour some of our homes and housing schemes in the district's southern parishes, as well as Chesil Lodge, to help them better understand our housing stock.

The whole day was really helpful and informative as the Board were able to understand the wide area that Winchester district covers and also saw the diverse range homes and schemes that we manage. Another stock tour for the north of the district is planned in 2026!

## Community spirit shines in Stanmore festive celebrations



Stanmore residents came together recently for a festive lunch that welcomed 65 local residents aged over 65 to the Sportsman's Club for food, entertainment and companionship. Organised by our Tenant Partnership Team as part of the Love Stanmore initiative, the event was delivered in partnership with CARDO, A2Dominion and the Sportsman's Club, which kindly provided the venue free of charge. Fourteen volunteers supported the day, creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere for all.

Local tenants played a key role in shaping the event – and one resident shared their experience by saying: “I didn’t expect to have Christmas this year, but you brought it to me.”

Find out more about the event [over on our website](#).

The Love Stanmore resident group is now planning further activities, including exploring a Memory Café for older residents.

## **Love Stanmore Action Day makes a visible difference**

In other news from our Love Stanmore initiative, we're pleased to have hosted our first Stanmore Action Day, bringing residents, council staff and partners together for a successful litter-picking event, organised in collaboration with CARDO. Volunteers of all ages took part, collecting a significant amount of litter and helping to improve the local environment. As well as making Stanmore cleaner and more welcoming, the day strengthened community connections and showed the positive impact of working together.

## **Community and digital support in your community**



We're continuing to run our Community Hubs and Digital Drop-In sessions across the district, bringing accessible face-to-face support from our friendly officers out into your local community.

If you need to speak to our officer's advice about issues affecting your home or neighbourhoods - anything from repairs and tenancy matters to community safety and local environmental issues, be sure to come along to one of our Community Hubs

Or if you need a little extra help with your tech, whether you're a beginner or simply need a bit of extra confidence, you can bring along your phone, tablet or laptop for some one-to-one support tailored at our Digital Drop-Ins!

We've had great feedback on both sessions already - one Community hub attendee described our team's attentiveness and willingness to escalate concerns, and a Digital Drop-in attendee said they would recommend the sessions to anyone feeling left behind or isolated by modern technology.

**[Find out about upcoming Digital Drop-ins and Community Hubs](#)**

## Shaping our services together

Tenants are playing a growing role in shaping the future of our housing services, from our Policy Co-Creation Group to our Armchair Reviewers, to our Housing Improvement Workshops, there are lots of ways you can share your experiences and help improve how our services work for all our tenants.

Our Policy co-creation group has already helped us to make sure we're reflecting tenants' priorities in three housing policies – and our armchair reviewers have helped review 13 policies so far from the comfort of their own homes.

We also recently held four [\*\*Housing Improvement Workshops\*\*](#) across the district - plus an online session - where tenants shared their lived experiences, explored real-life scenarios, and helped us identify priorities for improving housing services – the feedback that you've given us through these sessions will be a crucial part of the decisions we make about future plans for our housing service.

The impact that our tenants are having on our services is set out in our Tenant Partnership & Influence Report 2024–25, which shares what we did together, who we reached, and the changes made as a result of tenant feedback, as well as how tenants will continue to influence decisions in the year ahead.

**[Find out about your impact on our services](#)**

**Keen to get involved?** Visit our [Tenant Partnership web pages](#) to learn more about upcoming engagement and activities.

## Investigating tenancy fraud: protecting our homes and our community

We're continuing to take a firm stance against anyone committing tenancy fraud – and one area we've been focusing on is fraudulent Right-to-Buy applications.

Over the past year, Government reductions to Right-to-Buy discounts led to a surge in applications - every application is reviewed by our fraud team and, so far, they've stopped **18 fraudulent applications**, saving us **£1,843,200** and ensuring the homes remain available for those that truly need them.

Remember - tenancy fraud can include things like include sub-letting, making false Right-to-Buy claims and providing misleading information on housing applications - your reports make a real difference by helping us return homes to families who genuinely need them.

[Report or find out more about Tenancy Fraud](#)

## In need of support with your tenancy?

If you need support with confidential expert money and debt advice, budgeting, sourcing household items, benefits support, moving home, health and wellbeing support and more, our Tenancy Sustainment Team are here to help.

In a recent case, the team was able to help an elderly tenant to downsize, providing her with specialist support to help her reduce her belongings and enable the move. The team also helped the tenant apply for grants to cover packing and moving costs, and supported her with a housing benefit application too. The tenant is now happily settled and comfortable in her new home.

If you – or someone you know – would benefit from their help and support, please contact our Tenancy Sustainment Team on **01962 848060** or by email to [tenancysustainment@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:tenancysustainment@winchester.gov.uk).

## Update to Direct Debits

If you're a tenant of Winchester City Council and your rent is collected on the 1<sup>st</sup> of every month, we wanted to let you know that, from 1 February, we're moving the Direct Debits over to a new payment services provider, Allpay – but please be assured that **nothing will change regarding your Direct Debit – and you don't need to do anything.**

You may receive a letter from Allpay letting you know about the change, but rest assured that your Direct Debit will be taken for the same amount it has been you do not need to do anything.

## Christmas and New Year opening hours

Please note that the council offices will be closed from 5pm on Wednesday 24 December 2025 until 8.30am on Friday 2 January 2025.

Over this time, in the event of an emergency, you can call 01962 865 407. For housing repair emergencies, call 01962 865 405. You can also continue to [report any issues online](#). All non-urgent enquiries will be dealt with from 2 January 2024.

[View email in browser](#)

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