



Tenant Housing Roadshow
25th March, 10am-2pm,
Swadlincote Town Hall

Welcome to South Derbyshire Housing News

Introduction from our Executive Director for Place and Prosperity

Alison Bennett

I joined South Derbyshire District Council as the Executive Director for Place & Prosperity in October last year. Previously I had worked for Melton Borough Council, and had recently completed their review by the Regulator for Social Housing achieving a C2 rating. I have been made to feel very welcome, and have enjoyed going out and about around the borough, visiting Hilton, Church Gresley and Rosliston, to name a few.

The housing department is on a journey, as the council is committed to delivering excellent landlord services and developing and supporting our communities.

The Council recently approved a draft housing staffing structure, which will increase our capacity and ability to be more responsive to tenants, and to spend more time with our local communities.

I hope you will be able to join us at our open day at the Town Hall on March the 25th



Come and meet us!

Tenant Housing Roadshow
Tuesday 25th March
10am-2pm

Our teams will be available for you to meet at Swadlincote Town Hall for our first Housing Roadshow of the year. We will have a range of service areas there to offer support and guidance.

Please do come along and find out more about the services we provide and how they might help you!

Please pop along to meet the teams supporting you, they include:

- Community Engagement Officers
- Housing Officers
- Repairs Team
- Tenancy Sustainment Officer
- Careline
- Leisure Services
- Housing Solutions
- Community Services
- South Derbyshire Safer Homes fund
- Free Raffle – with Easter Eggs
- Scavenger hunt with Easter chocolate for the kids!

Need more info?:

Tenant.Participation@southderbyshire.gov.uk
Customer Services: 01283 221 000

A message from our Head of Housing

Jason Dhesi



As Head of Housing, it is my aim to ensure we are customer focussed and offer a cost-effective service that delivers what we have promised to residents in our Council Plan.

Social landlords across the country face significant challenges in aligning their operations with modern consumer standards. This is clear, when you look at how many are receiving C3 and C4 grades (which means there are serious failings to meet consumer standards) from the Regulator of Social Housing.

We self-referred ourselves to the regulator, and received a C3. We were disappointed, but not surprised as consumer standards have risen so considerably.

We are not resting though, we have used this as an opportunity to propel us on to making important improvements to our service. I'm pleased by the progress we have made since our self-referral in April 2024. This is a testament to the dedicated and hard-working staff we have within the Housing Service, so a huge thank you to them.

We have more work to do as part of our Housing Transformation Plan as we aim to improve on our C3 grading. We won't always get things right, but we will be open and transparent as we look to share more information with you. I welcome you to join our Tenants Voice Group where you can help shape the future of the Housing Service.



Did you know about the HomeSwapper Service?

How can HomeSwapper help?

HomeSwapper can help you to swap your council or housing association home with other social tenants, also known as a Mutual Exchange. This Service is completely free of charge.

HomeSwapper is the UK's biggest and best mutual exchange service for social housing tenants. And we're here to support all the way! We help you search for possible swaps, get in touch with other tenants and arrange viewings until you find the home that works for you. It's an easy-to-use service, with a free app to download and lots of help and support. Click [HomeSwapper](#) to find out more.

What is Mutual Exchange?

A mutual exchange is a home swap between two social housing tenants. It can happen for many reasons, such as needing more (or less) space, moving for work or to be closer to family. It's a great option for social housing tenants who can't access or don't want to wait for the normal allocation process. It means you're able to choose a home that suits your needs, in a place you want to live.

Can I swap my home?

If you are a social housing tenant with a secure or assured tenancy, you have the right to a mutual exchange. If you have a starter tenancy or a demotion order, you probably won't be allowed to swap. If you're not sure, it's always a good idea to get in touch with our Housing Team to find out what type of tenancy you have and if you're allowed to swap, before you start looking. It's important to remember that you won't be able to swap with a private housing tenant – both homes need to be social housing properties.

Do I have to swap with a property in South Derbyshire?

No. You're not restricted by an area. You can swap homes with any other council or housing association tenant that lives anywhere in the UK, so your swap doesn't have to be in South Derbyshire. All social housing landlords have to allow mutual exchanges. To speak to the Housing Team about this, call: 01283 221 000, or email: housing.services@southderbyshire.gov.uk



Bringing us up to date - improvements in our technology



We are developing the mobile working solutions for our repairs operatives so we have a more responsive stock replenishment system - so when we need a part to fix your home, it's more readily available. Later in the year we will also be implementing a tracker system, so you can see the location of your repairs operative and check when they are due.

Improvements are coming soon for our online Customer Portal. You will soon be able to raise a repair online.



Work is underway to develop a new system for asset management and compliance. This project will meet latest Housing regulatory changes and provide a system that reduces manual, outdated processes in favour of a streamlined planned maintenance service.



We're working on improvements to our voids (empty properties) processes to enhance this service and get properties ready to let quicker.



Improving the work we do in repairs and maintenance

Over the past three months our maintenance teams have been working hard to reduce the amount of empty properties we have in South Derbyshire, so there are more homes available to let.

This hard work has paid off, as the number of empty homes had reduced from 61 to 30 by the end of February 2025 - and the hard work continues!

This means our lettings team are now working with potential customers to provide new homes.

You Said, We Did!

In recent customer feedback, you told us that you would like us to reduce delays in carrying out repairs. Since the start of January 2025, we've reduced our 'work in progress' by 17% and our 'works outstanding' by 18% with the average number of days to complete a responsive repair sitting at 12.

We're working with our Tenant Voice Group to share this information with you, we know it's important our customers are involved in shaping our improvements and priorities.



Household Support Fund

Our Housing Officers have been assisting tenants using Household Support Funding, this is Government funding to assist residents who require some financial assistance.

To date Tenancy Services have assisted approximately 250 tenants requiring support.

For further details please contact the Tenancy Sustainment Officer by email Tenancy.sustainment@southderbyshire.gov.uk.



Rent increase 2025

Council housing rents have gone up 2.7% (which is an average of £2.53 per week increase) in line with the Government's social rent policy.

You will soon be notified of your new weekly rent amounts, payable from 07 April 2025. If you receive Universal Credit, you will need to log on to your Universal Credit account and advise them of your new housing costs on/or after 07 April 2025, to ensure your Housing Element is updated.

South Derbyshire District Council's Careline and Independent Living Service

Over 900 South Derbyshire residents already use the Careline and Independent Living Falls Recovery Service.

What does the service involve?

We install an alarm unit, with an emergency pendant and additional sensors in your home. Customers can call the 24/7 Careline emergency line when they need us. We have skilled operators on the end of the line, who respond to calls, provide guidance, contact emergency services, or dispatch fall recovery responders.

Call 01283 225 810 for more information or to register for this service.



"I am wholeheartedly grateful to the responder. She was absolutely wonderful and made an uncomfortable situation light-hearted. The responder was an absolute joy. A fantastic service, and I am so happy to have it."

*Careline & Independent Living Service
Customer.*



According to the NHS, around 1 in 3 adults over 65 and half of people over 80 will have at least one fall a year.

In a time where the East Midlands Ambulance Service recently declared a Critical Incident due to high demand, our 'Falls Recovery' responders aim to reach fallers within 45 minutes, achieving this in 93% of cases.

In January 2025, we attended 56 fallers, a combination of tenants and residents of South Derbyshire. The Falls Recovery service is immensely useful for those in South Derbyshire that need that extra bit of reassurance and support.



We aim to support our customers to continue to live independently in their own homes for as long as possible. We know that staying at home is almost always preferable to entering residential care, and our service is just one of the ways we're helping to make that desire a reality.

For more information call 01283 225810 or email careline@southderbyshire.gov.uk



Tenant satisfaction - what you tell us about your Housing services

Overall satisfaction rises to 69.8%

We're now into our second year of carrying out tenant satisfaction surveys, and we are delighted to see that our scores have increased in all areas, compared to the previous year.

Overall satisfaction has risen to 69.8%, with the number of respondents scoring 'very' and 'fairly' satisfied showing a 4.6% improvement from the 2023/24 Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) scores.

Thank you to everyone that responded, as this is a great way for us to understand how you, our customers, feel about the services we provide.

You told us that you were most satisfied with being treated fairly and with respect. A high proportion of you also told us that you were feeling safe in your homes. Our approach to handling anti-social behaviour (ASB) has seen the largest increase in satisfaction, up by 9.3% from last year's survey.

How do we compare with others?

We are pleased to see that when benchmarked against other landlords, our scores are broadly comparable with national and peer group scores.

How will we use your feedback?

We are constantly looking at ways to further improve satisfaction. We will focus on enhancing complaint handling, the repairs experience, and tenant engagement, including listening to views and keeping you informed.

While ASB handling has improved, it still requires monitoring. We will be partnering with our colleagues across the Council over the coming weeks and months to help develop action plans for these key areas, ensuring that we excel in what matters most to you.



Meet three members of our Tenant Voices Group - speaking on behalf of South Derbyshire's Council Tenants and Leaseholders

David Bark

"I have recently moved into a council property in South Derbyshire and have found myself at a loose end sometimes, following recent retirement. I have a passion for crafting and have lots of arts and crafts resources I have built up following years of teaching. I also enjoy photography too and wanted to work with people of a similar age to me, so that I can keep my brain going. This enables me to share my joys of crafting and photography. Denise has introduced me to her group, and I have a regular spot most weeks bringing different arts and crafts to the table. This has recently led me into joining the TVG and in February I attended my first meeting, which I really enjoyed being part of. At this month's meeting the repairs team had a spotlight, I found out how they work and was able to ask questions too".

Wendy Bruce

"After getting my council property nearly 15 years ago I decided I would like to pay back into the system that had helped me so much and I wanted to work with the Council and tenants to shape our future."

Denise Venning

Denise joined the TVG in October 2024 after setting up a social group at Newlands Community Room where she hosts a crafting and knitting group every Tuesday afternoon. The group has been a huge success in such a short space of time attracting over 16 tenants and residents most weeks.

"I wanted to join the TVG because tenants need a voice and someone to speak on their behalf. The TVG helps to bridge the gap between tenants and the Council. Since being part of the TVG I have met contractors and different teams within the Council, which has given me an insight into how they operate. I feel that I am a good representative of my area and being part of the TVG builds trust. By being a member of the TVG, I can help the Council to understand what tenants would like and I feel we help in future decisions".

Contacting our Housing Team

Who do you need to speak to?



If you need to call us, speak to our Customer Services team on 01283 221 000, or email us - details below.

Finding the right team for your query - the below suggestions may help.

Income related matters

- All rent account queries.
- Make repayment arrangements
- Request refunds

Please contact on
Housing.income@southderbyshire.gov.uk

Estate management queries

- Tenancy Changes
- Estate management
- Report anti-social behaviour / neighbour disputes/ nuisance behaviour
- Struggling with maintaining tenancy agreement.

Please contact on
Housing.estatemanagement@southderbyshire.gov.uk

Tenancy Sustainment Support

- Managing money and budgeting to ensure rent and other essential bills are paid.
- Maximise income and ensuring you in receipt of all benefits you are entitled to.
- Digital inclusion.
- Setting up utility (gas, water, electric) services
- Understanding your tenancy agreement
- Accessing affordable loads
- Accessing trust funds and grants
- Making referrals to specialist services, such as Adult Services/P3 mental health support
- Help getting low costs furniture
- Advising on how to look after your property
- Support in applying for Derbyshire Discretionary funds and Discretionary payments.
- Referrals to external support networks for debt counselling
- Support in setting up a bank account and accessing credit unions

Please contact on Tenancy.sustainment@southderbyshire.gov.uk

Report a repair!

Did you know you can report a repair to us via email?

Send us a quick message and we'll come back to you, as soon as we can.

Housing.Repairs@southderbyshire.gov.uk

