NEWS

Solihull Community Housing
Shaping our neighbourhoods

For tenants and leaseholders of Solihull Community Housing

Autumn 2025

The SCH Big Conversation returns!

...read more on page 4



Read up on Gas Safety Week... see page 2

Message from Fiona



Fiona Hughes
Chief Executive

Hi everyone,

Welcome to the Autumn newsletter. This is a busy time as we're currently out and about talking with hundreds of our customers as part of the SCH Big Conversation. Some of you may have already stopped to chat with our teams in recent weeks.

If we've not seen you yet, please keep a lookout as we're working our way across the borough. The Big Conversation gives us the opportunity to listen to our customers, hear what's important to them and any concerns they may have.

All of this feedback is invaluable. We learn a great deal from these visits and it helps improve the quality and efficiency of the services we deliver. All our visits are promoted via our social media platforms so keep an eye out to see when we're visiting your area.

Please come and say hello if you see the teams out and about. We'll have staff on hand from different parts of SCH to help answer any questions you may have.

This Autumn edition of the newsletter features our Annual Report. It carries a lot of information which is why it needs four pages. I make no apologies for that. It is important that customers know what we do every year and how we invest your rent. If you have any comments on the Annual Report, please let me know.

The publication of this newsletter coincides with the introduction of Awaab's Law. This law highlights the issue of damp and mould that still causes a problem in many homes.

As many of you will know, the new law is named after Awaab Ishak, a two-year-old boy whose death in the north west of England was attributed to damp and mould in his family home.

You can read more about Awaab's Law, and damp and mould, on page 11.

As always, I hope you find this newsletter informative and interesting.

Fiona

Shaping services to meet your needs

We are always working to shape our services to better support the needs of all tenants. This is why understanding who lives in the homes we manage, and the needs they might have is fundamental to what we do. To help us do this, we launched our 'Everyone Matters' initiative.

We are committed to providing you and those you live with a more accessible, personalised and inclusive service that is tailored specifically to you.

A big thank you to everyone who has already taken the time to fill out our online form. You are at the heart of everything we do, and none of this would be possible without you.

Some of the information we are collecting is new, especially for those who live with you. So, even if you think nothing has changed, please complete the form to ensure we have your most up to date details.

Every resident who provides these details will be entered into a prize draw with a chance of winning up to **£200** in High Street vouchers.

All you need to do is visit our website and update your details to be entered into the draw.

Your data will be kept safe, confidential and will be handled in line with strict government guidelines.

If you would like a paper copy or require support to complete the form, please call us on 0121 717 1515.

Everyone Matters

Gas Safety Week

We are pleased to be supporting Gas Safety Week which runs from 8-14 September.

Gas Safety Week encourages everyone to get gas appliances checked annually by a qualified Gas Safe registered engineer.

Unsafe gas appliances, whether badly fitted or poorly serviced, can cause gas leaks, fires, explosions, and carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. CO is a highly poisonous gas that can kill quickly and without warning, as you cannot smell it, see it, or taste it.

The theme of Gas Safety Week this year is 'Looking after your home, friends, and family'. Whilst we as your landlord are legally responsible for the gas safety of your home, as a tenant you can make a difference too by ensuring you're aware of our responsibilities, and taking positive action to keep your household safe and sharing gas safety advice with others.

Gas Safety Week .co.uk
Keeping our nation safe

A great way to do that is by co-operating with us for your annual gas service. It's a free service and we will contact you when your service is due.

You must give us access to carry out the service as it's part of your tenancy agreement.

Our engineers also offer annual gas services to leaseholders at a reasonable cost, if you're interested please call us on **0121 717 1515.**

You can find out more about gas safety by scanning this QR code:

Housing Allocation Scheme changes

Changes to Solihull Council's Housing Allocation Scheme (previously referred to as the Allocation Policy) come into effect on **24 September 2025.**

If you have an existing application with our Housing Allocation Scheme (Solihull Home Options), you will need to resubmit your application to determine if you can remain on the Housing Register. **You can do this from 27 August 2025.**

You will have four weeks from this date to resubmit your application, otherwise your application will be closed.

As part of this process, you will also be asked to provide supporting documents, including details of your household's income.

If you have a **medical banding**, you will need to resubmit your application, but you will not need to resubmit medical evidence/information.

If you are homeless and have a **homeless banding**, your application will be updated automatically by our homelessness team.

Please be aware that the advert bidding cycle will also be closed from **20 August to 23 September 2025**. Keep an eye on our social media and the customer portal for updates.

You can find much more information on the Housing Allocation Scheme changes by visiting our website or scanning the QR code.



Police act on ASB

SCH worked in partnership with Solihull Council and West Midlands Police to support the successful application of the Chelmsley Wood Public Space Protection Order (PSPO).

This has been introduced to tackle anti-social behaviour around the shopping centre and bus interchange. The PSPO bans riding bikes, e-scooters, and similar vehicles in the area and gives police the right to break up groups of three or more between **6pm and 6am**.

Officers can also request the removal of face coverings used to hide identity during suspected anti-social behaviour.

With both fixed penalty notices and escalation for repeat offences, the PSPO aims to create a safer environment for residents, businesses and communities.

Learning from complaints

Our Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report for the performance year 2024/2025 has been published on our website.

This report is designed to give awareness around the type and volume of complaints we receive and respond to, and what we have learned from them. It considers the decisions we've had from the Housing Ombudsman Service and shares the results of our Self-Assessment against the Complaint Handling Code. The report includes our Service Improvement Plan which is where we have committed to improving our service.

The report considers customer satisfaction with complaint handling, which is the opportunity to tell us if you were satisfied with the complaint handling process. This is really helpful and always something we reflect on when we consider ways to improve.

Customer feedback matters to SCH. If you are dissatisfied with the service you have received, you have the right to complain and share your concerns. SCH strive to listen, investigate and respond in line with the Code and our policy, and always with consideration of our customers.

ENGAGEMENT ROUND-UP

Have your say with **The Big Conversation**

The SCH Big Conversation has returned! We want to speak to as many of you as possible to find out your views and priorities. This will help inform our next five-year vision and longer-term Delivery Plan. Listening to our customers is fundamental to everything that we do.

We have been out on the road, walking the streets and popping up at high rises throughout the borough, asking the same questions to everyone we meet. This is a great opportunity to share your thoughts and opinions with SCH. Keep a look out on the website and social media for dates we'll be in your area and make sure you say hello!



Repairs review

The SCHape Panel have just concluded their review of repairs and have produced a number of actions for SCH to put in place.

This September, they will begin the process of completing a 'sense check' of our self-assessment against the new consumer standards which are set by the Government's Regulator of Social Housing. These standards help to make sure customers are provided with safe, well-maintained homes and receive high-quality services.

Become a Mystery Shopper

Mystery Shoppers have attended a short briefing session on the role of a Mystery Shopper, including what we expect from them and how their feedback will be used to improve our services. Their first area of focus will be looking at the website. This is to ensure that the key information required as part of the consumer standards is accessible and easy to find.

Anyone who has expressed an interest in becoming a Mystery Shopper has now been contacted, but we are always on the lookout for more volunteers. If you're interested, please email engagement@solihull.gov.uk

Want to join our VIP?

Our VIP (Virtual Improvement Panel) are a group of residents that work with us on a regular basis. They are involved in various things including helping name and design the logo for our new online hub, reviewing documents and policies, and helping make positive changes for residents.

We are always looking for new members of VIP. If you have any suggestions or comments around what you'd like to see, or if you would like to get involved, please contact the Engagement Team by emailing **engagement@solihull.gov.uk** or calling **0121 717 1515.**

Join our Building and Residents Safety Group

We work hard to keep all our customers safe and we recognise that talking to you is an important part of that. Our Building and Residents Safety Group is a great way to have your say on the safety of your building. It will provide an opportunity to raise any concerns you have directly with us.

We are also looking for residents to work with us as Building Safety Advocates. This is another great way to get involved with your high rise and help us tackle small health and safety issues before they become bigger.

If you would like to join our Building and Residents Safety Group or become a Building Safety Advocate, please email engagement@solihull.gov.uk to register your interest.

Ombudsman in place to support tenants

Do you know how to raise a complaint to the Housing Ombudsman?

The Housing Ombudsman Service is set up by law to look at complaints about the housing organisations that are registered with the Housing Ombudsman. The service is free, independent and impartial.

The Housing Ombudsman resolves disputes involving the tenants and leaseholders of social landlords (housing associations and local authorities). Residents and landlords can contact the Ombudsman at any time for support in helping to resolve a dispute.

If you are dissatisfied with the way in which you feel your complaint is being handled by us, you have the right to seek advice from the Housing Ombudsman:

PO Box 1484
Unit D
Preston
PR2 0ET



www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/contact-us/

info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

0300 111 3000

Phonelines are open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

The Voice of the Customer Framework

We are fully committed to putting the customer at the heart of everything we do and our ambition is to deliver an excellent customer experience.

The Customer Experience Strategy sets out our vision for ensuring that we place you, as customers, your views, and your experiences, front and centre. **To take a look, scan this QR code:**

The Voice of the Customer Framework is a strand of work emerging from the Strategy and provides the structure to ensure we use the insight gathered via the Voice of the Customer in an effective and systematic way. **To take a look, scan this QR code:**

Super teds support for cystic fibrosis

The Kingshurst Needlecrafters were asked to make and donate some teddy bears to the Warwickshire Hospital Cystic Fibrosis Children's team.

The team handed out the teddy bears to lots of different children who are undergoing treatment for various conditions. The children ended up loving the woolly toys, and felt a strong sense of companionship and support through their tough time.





Phone system gets new look

In the first few weeks of September, our contact centre will be installing a new phone system. This upgrade is the first step to improve how we work and how we support you.

The new system will bring in improved capabilities that will improve your experience when you reach out to us. As we put this new technology in place, we promise to keep you informed about all the changes and what they mean for you.

Do you have the Right to Buy?

Did you know that as a secure tenant you may have the Right to Buy your home?

You must meet the eligibility criteria and ensure that your property is not excluded from this option to do so.

Details of the scheme including how to apply for Right to Buy, discounts and required proof can all be found on our website.

You can also find further additional information about the Right to Buy via the Gov.uk website by visiting **Right to Buy: buying your council home: Overview - GOV.UK**

Annual Report 2024/25

This report looks at our performance from April 2024 to March 2025. It highlights the services we provide to our tenants and leaseholders on behalf of Solihull Council.

Getting the basics right

9,763
Properties

19,998
Tenants

4,627
Garages

3,416
Households on the Housing Register

1,305
Number of leaseholders

292
Employees

485
Homes re-let

60.03
days average re-let time

42.75
Number of stage 1 complaints received per 1000 homes*

5.39
Number of stage 2 complaints received per 1000 homes*

73.57%
Stage 1 complaints resolved within Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales*

83%
Stage 2 complaints resolved within Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code timescales*

111,689
Number of calls received at Contact Centre

90,062
Number of calls answered at Contact Centre

85.69%
Overall satisfaction with services provided by SCH (transactional)

92%
Satisfaction from new tenants

78%
Satisfaction with Contact Centre service

35%
Satisfaction with complaints handling

77%
Overall satisfaction with services provided by SCH*

67%
Satisfaction that SCH listens to you and acts upon your views*

77%
Satisfaction that SCH keeps you informed about things that matter to you*

84%
Satisfaction that SCH treats you fairly and with respect*

38%
Satisfaction with SCH's approach to handling complaints*

81%
Satisfaction that SCH is easy to deal with

Our Annual Report shows how we are meeting our Delivery Plan objectives. It also includes the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (indicated by *). These are set out by the Regulator of Social Housing to assess how well landlords are doing in providing good quality homes and services.

We report on our performance against these on a monthly basis, and also return to the Regulator annually. This data is used to identify areas of service improvement, particularly considering customer feedback.

Providing safe homes

Number of electric checks:
1,274

Proportion of homes for which all required gas safety checks have been carried out:
99.9%*

Proportion of homes for which all required fire risk assessments have been carried out:
100%*

Number of Wellbeing Service users:
1,786

Proportion of homes for which all required communal passenger lift safety checks have been carried out:
100%*

Proportion of homes for which all required asbestos management surveys have been carried out:
100%*

Satisfaction that SCH provides information on Building Safety and tenant responsibilities:
84.53%

Satisfaction that SCH provides a home that is safe:
80.07%*

Proportion of homes for which all required legionella risk assessments have been carried out:
100%*

Satisfaction with Safer Homes service:
95.54%



Supporting people to live well



Number of households approaching as homeless:
2,981

Satisfaction with Housing Options service:
61.48%

Satisfaction with Money Advice service:
100%

Number of households placed in Temporary Accommodation:
566

Percentage of homeless approaches where prevention or relief achieved:
49.06%

Satisfaction with Aids and Adaptations service:
95.28%

Satisfaction with Wellbeing service:
93.55%

Money Advice Team referrals:
785

Number of minor adaptations:
1,681

Number of major adaptations:
434

Investing in new and existing homes

31
Properties lost to Right to Buy

43
Number of property acquisitions

1.86%
Percentage of homes which do not meet decent homes standard*

81.61%
Percentage of non-emergency repairs completed within target timescales*

91.83%
Percentage of emergency repairs completed within target timescales*

35,807
Number of repairs completed

44,350
Number of appointments made

32,886
Number of appointments kept

3,028
Stock condition surveys completed

C
Average EPC of properties

474
Number of properties receiving energy efficiency improvements

93.58%
Satisfaction with repairs

74.1%
Satisfaction that the home is well maintained*

77.9%
Satisfaction with repairs completed in the last 12 months*

80.17%
Time taken to complete the last repair*

76.92%
Satisfaction with quality of home

75.27%
Satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance overall service

Scan the QR code to view our video Annual Report

Delivering our neighbourhoods



Number of new ASB cases reported (public and private):
223

Number of ASB cases which involve hate incidents opened per 1000 homes:
0.41*

Satisfaction that SCH keeps communal areas clean and well maintained:
66.67%*

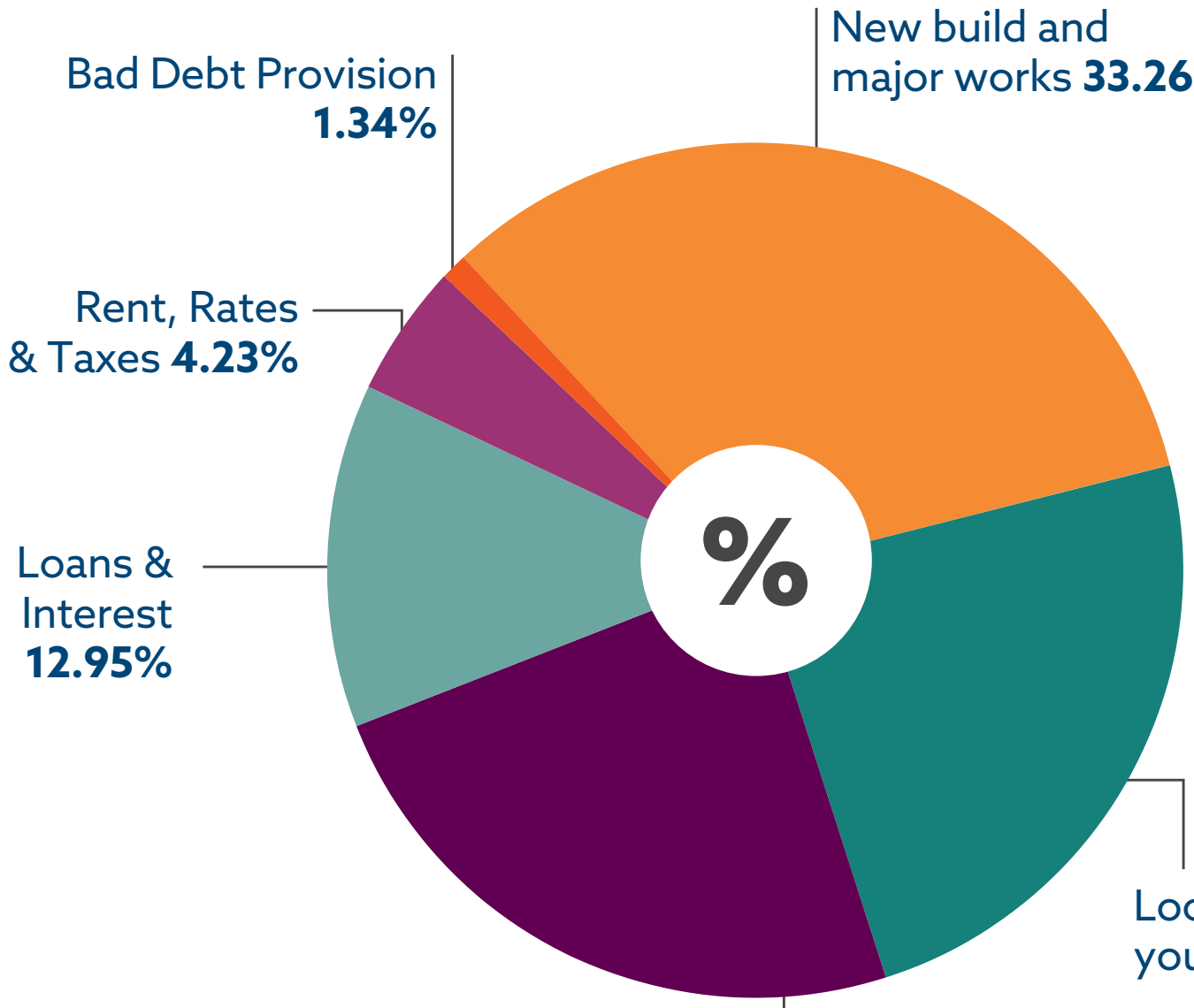
Satisfaction that SCH makes a positive contribution to neighbourhood:
74.74%*

Number of ASB cases opened per 1000 homes:
22.7*

Satisfaction with SCH's approach to handling ASB:
61.32%*

Evictions:
22

Where your money goes



New build and Major works:	£18,957,000
Looking after your home:	£13,617,000
Managing your home:	£13,869,000
Rent, Rates & Taxes:	£2,413,000
Bad Debt Provision:	£762,000
Loans & Interest:	£7,380,000
Total spend:	**£56,998,000**



Keep all communal areas clear

Outdoor play equipment such as swimming pools and trampolines are not allowed in communal areas.

If we identify play equipment in communal areas, we will give notice for them to be removed. Failure to remove items by the deadline will result in them being removed and stored for two weeks before being disposed of. Should you want to claim your items you will be charged £112 + VAT and will have to pay the charge before your items are returned.

Picking up after your dog

If you're a dog owner, it's your responsibility to clean up after your dogs. Leaving dog mess in communal areas is unpleasant and can prevent grass cutting from taking place. We may take action against tenants who persistently fail to clean up after their dogs. Leaving dog mess is an environmental offence.

Disposing of your rubbish responsibly

We have a problem in some areas of aerial fly-tipping where items are thrown out of high-rise windows.

We will take action if we find those responsible, such behaviour is irresponsible as rubbish outside a block presents a public health and safety issue.

Bin chute blockages

A number of our high rise buildings have experienced problems with blocked bin chutes in recent months.

This happens when things are dropped down the chute that are simply too big to go down and so end up blocking the chute.

This means rubbish backs up and presents a fire hazard.

To force large objects into the chute is highly irresponsible and potentially puts all residents at risk.

Please do not do this and never drop cigarette ends down the chute.

Such actions are against the terms of your Tenancy Agreement and we will take serious action if forced to do so.

Remember, we operate a Clear Spaces Policy in all communal areas of both our low rise and his rise buildings.



Garden waste charges



Can we please remind all residents who have a garden there is now a charge for using Solihull Council's garden waste collection service.

This is in line with most other councils in the West Midlands and the majority of councils in the country. The cost of the service is £49 for the year. Scan this QR code to find out more:

Home contents insurance

All customers should take this out to protect their belongings. **Scan the QR code to find out more.**

Explore opportunities at Solihull Apprenticeship and Pathways show

Apprenticeships are alternatives to university or further education, and you can obtain a qualification ranging from Level 2 to 7. You can earn an income while learning new skills on the job. Post-16 pathways such as BTEC and T-Levels will also be on display.

Sign up to the next Solihull Apprenticeship and Pathways Show in October and speak to employers and training providers who will share apprenticeship pathways and work opportunities, as well as answering any questions you may have.

Exhibitors will be from a range of sectors including construction,manufacturing, hospitality, creative and engineering. Current apprentices will be on hand to share their first-hand experience.

Date: Wednesday 22 October 2025

Time: 2:30pm-7:00pm*

Venue: Cranmore Park, Cranmore Avenue, Shirley B90 4LF

*2:30pm-3:30pm will be a quieter hour for individuals with additional needs.



Visitors talking to exhibitors at the show last year

Scan the QR code to sign up here

BUILDING SAFETY NEWS

Kingshurst House bridge

We are delighted the work to repair the small bridge used by Kingshurst House residents is now complete.

Unfortunately, tests had shown that wear and tear had taken its toll on the bridge so the repairs were essential works.

Thank you to all the residents for their patience and understanding while this work took place.

Any customer with any building safety concerns about their home should always call us immediately on 0121 717 1515.





How Awaab's Law will affect social landlords

The first phase of Awaab's Law will come into effect on 27 October. Many readers will recall that Awaab Ishak's tragic death was attributed to the damp and mould in the family home.

Awaab's Law will cover damp and mould and all types of emergency hazards. Social housing landlords, such as SCH, will have to respond to emergency hazards within 24 hours.

Awaab's Law means:

- If a social landlord becomes aware of a matter or circumstance in a social home that may be a hazard within scope, they must investigate within 10 working days
- The landlord must produce a written summary of the findings of the investigation (in most cases) and provide this to residents within 3 working days of the investigation concluding
- If the investigation finds that a hazard presents a significant risk of harm to the health or safety of a resident, the landlord must, in most circumstances, within 5 working days of the investigation concluding, make the property safe and begin any further required works. The social landlord must complete repair works within a reasonable time
- In an emergency, the landlord must investigate and action any repairs as soon as reasonably practicable and, in any event, within 24 hours
- If the property cannot be made safe within the specified timescales for Awaab's Law, then the landlord must offer to arrange suitable alternative accommodation

Damp and mould occur when you have a lot of moisture in your home. To reduce this, always:

- Open a window when cooking
- Open a window when having a bath/shower
- Avoid drying clothes on radiators
- Leave small windows open for 30 minutes a day
- Dry damp windows or sills with a cloth

If you are concerned about damp and mould in your home, call us on 0121 717 1515.

Biomass video

If you're a biomass user please take a look at our new instructional video. The more people who use the biomass in each block the lower the costs will be. Try to build up your credit over the warmer months to help you pay your bills when you use the biomass more in the winter. Just scan this QR code to view the video:

Safety checks

There are a number of important safety checks we need to carry out in customers' homes. These include checks on gas, electric and fire doors.

If we write to you to arrange a visit please respond quickly to allow us to do this. The visits will help keep you and your neighbours safe.

Your Tenancy Agreement says that you must allow us access to your home to carry out these important checks.

If access is not given, we can go to court to gain authority to enter your home. If this action was taken, our court costs would be passed on to the tenant.

Competition time!

Thank you to everyone who entered our wordsearch competition. Congratulations to our previous wordsearch winner, Warren.

For a chance to win a £25 voucher you can complete our Autumn themed wordsearch. Only one entry per person is allowed. You must be an SCH tenant or leaseholder to enter.

Cut out and send your entry, with your name and address to: Freepost RLSS-UEBA-RTUZ, Solihull Community Housing, Endeavour House, Meriden Drive, Solihull B37 6BX or take a picture of your entry and email it to **newsandviews@solihullcommunityhousing.org.uk**

Closing date: **Friday 10 October 2025**



Enjoy the puzzle!

H	A	R	V	E	S	T	E	I	S	E	T
R	S	L	O	E	C	D	D	E	C	H	A
A	E	U	O	L	I	A	V	A	A	S	S
E	A	U	N	R	L	A	A	N	R	C	N
E	E	P	Y	F	E	A	K	R	E	O	R
O	L	A	P	L	L	S	B	A	C	R	O
R	H	M	E	L	G	O	U	T	R	N	C
A	E	E	D	I	E	T	W	L	O	A	A
N	R	E	V	E	U	S	O	E	W	O	R
G	L	I	E	M	R	M	A	A	R	R	F
E	N	E	N	P	U	M	P	K	I	N	R
G	Y	E	L	L	O	W	I	D	S	A	R

WIN A £25 VOUCHER

Words to find:

PUMPKIN
YELLOW
SCARECROW
AUTUMN
LEAVES
SUNFLOWER
ACORNS
CORN
HARVEST
APPLES
HAYRIDE
RED

Your name and address:

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

Phone number: .....

Email address: .....

To get in touch

Freepost RLSS-UEBA-RTUZ
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Endeavour House, Meriden Drive
Solihull B37 6BX

Phone: 0121 717 1515

Typetalk: 18001 0121 717 1515

Website: www.solihullcommunityhousing.org.uk
Visit the contact us page on our website to complete an online form with details of your enquiry



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