Solihull Community Housing

Shaping our neighbourhoods

Tenant Handbook

2025

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Welcome

Welcome to your new home. This booklet provides information about the key services we provide and the things we expect from you as a tenant.

Please keep this quick reference guide in a handy place where you can find it at any time. If you have any questions, or need extra information about our services, please visit our website at www.solihullcommunityhousing.org.uk or contact us using the details on the back page.

1. Paying Your Rent

We collect rent from you to help provide services, so we need all our customers to pay their rent on time.

If we don't collect enough rent money, it will be harder for us to deliver the services that we have promised to you and provide the kind of service you expect.

We offer convenient ways to pay your rent and service charges on your housing account. The easiest way to pay your rent is to set up a Direct Debit so your rent payments come out of your bank account automatically.

Direct Debits are convenient, and you can choose to pay with an any day monthly Direct Debit or choose to pay weekly or fortnightly on a Friday.

They are safe and secure because you are protected by a comprehensive guarantee, which means you get a full and immediate refund from your bank if an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit.

To set up a Direct Debit please call on 0121 717 1515 or scan the QR code and complete our online request form.

SCAN ME

Managing your money

We are committed to helping you stay in your home and deal with your arrears or debts.

Our Money Advice Team can help stop customers from becoming homeless due to money managing problems or debt.

If you are having difficulty paying your rent or your circumstances change, please phone us immediately on 0121 717 1515.

2. Repairs

Solihull Community Housing is committed to improving the quality of existing housing, meeting regulatory standards and ensuring our customers can live in comfortable homes.

We recognise that the key to this is providing a good repairs service. Repairs are important and we aim to provide a service that achieves high standards of quality, safety, and satisfaction.

Solihull Community Housing is responsible for carrying out most of the repairs in your home and the communal areas of our low rise and high-rise buildings.

These are defined as 'responsive repairs' and fall under the following categories:

Emergency repairs	We will respond within 24 hours
Urgent, such as leaking pipes or roofs	We will respond within 5 working days
Routine repairs	We will respond within 28 days

Residents can report a repair by completing our online form by scanning the QR code or calling us on 0121 717 1515.

SCAN ME

We will offer you a choice of a morning or afternoon appointment and send a text message reminder the night before we are due to visit.

Our operatives will always wear a uniform and appropriate PPE and show you their SCH identification badge before entering your home.

Our responsibilities

- Baths, hand basins and toilets (if we have fit these previously)
- Bath seals and two rows of splashback tiles
- Concrete floors (not including floor tiles)
- Cupboard drawers – unless damaged by the tenant
- Cupboard door catches, handles, hinges and drawer handles
- Door-entry systems for shared areas
- Internal doors –fire doors unless damaged by the tenant (if unrepairable there will be a recharge to the tenant)
- External doors (unless damage was caused by the tenant)
- Electrical consumer unit (fuse box)
- Extractor fans (if Solihull Council own them)
- Electric shower units (if we have fit them previously)
- Electric storage heaters (if Solihull Council own them)
- Electrics – standard electrical wiring, sockets and light fittings
- Fences – repairing boundary fencing owned by Solihull Council
- Foundations

- Garages and outbuildings owned by Solihull Council
- Gas fires (but only if we fit them previously)
- Gas pipework inside your home
- Gas – servicing appliances every year (if Solihull Council own them)
- Gates, including catches and hinges
- Immersion heaters (if Solihull Council own them)
- Kitchen cupboards (we will replace cupboards that are beyond repair, but new cupboards may not match your existing cupboards)
- Letterbox – replacing front external door letterbox plates
- Locks and hinges on outside doors where you still have the keys
- Locks – repairing faulty locks where you still have the keys
- Paths, steps and other access to the property that Solihull Council own which has been fitted by us
- Radiators, valves, timers and thermostats
- Shared areas such as lifts and stairs, rubbish chutes and shared TV aerials
- Shared gardens
- Shower trays (if we fit them previously)
- Sink seal and one row of splashback tiles
- Smoke alarm (mains operated)
- Soil and vent pipes (if the main pipe is blocked). If you are a Leaseholder then we are responsible for the main soil stack but if the damage is in a main drain outside the property, then Severn Trent are responsible for this repair.
- Staircase, banisters and handrails fitted by us
- Structural walls inside your home
- Structure and covering of the roof, the chimney, gutters, drainpipes and their clips, and wood or plastic boards on the outside of the building
- Toilet-flushing systems if fit by us previously
- Taps, tap washers, dripping taps and stopcocks
- Vinyl floor tiles – replacing floor tiles in our bathroom and kitchen (we will match your existing tiles, if possible)
- Walls – outside walls and rendering
- Washing lines and posts in shared areas
- Water pipes, overflow pipes and water tanks
- Window vents, catches and handles
- Window frames and outside windowsills
- Worktops (we will replace worktops that are beyond repair, but the new worktops may not match your existing unit)

Your Responsibilities

- Bath panels
- Bathroom – repairing cracks or chips in sinks, baths and so on (If we repair this there will be a recharge to the tenant)
- Blocked sinks and basins (if we repair this there will be a recharge to the tenant)
- Deliberate damage that you, or people living with you, have caused
- Disconnecting and reconnecting cookers (unless Solihull Council own them). When we turn on your gas supply after you move in, we will reconnect your cooker if it is safe
- Doors – door handles, door frames and carpet strips
- Doors – internal doors
- Dustbins and removing household rubbish
- Electricity meter and the electricity supply
- Fences – repairing or adding new fencing that divides gardens
- Garden – your own garden
- Gas meter and the gas supply
- Keys – replacing (or getting extra) keys to your home
- Keys – replacing (or getting extra) keys or fobs for shared doors in low-rise blocks (there is a £10.00 recharge per key or fob)
- Lightbulbs and fluorescent lighting
- Locks – extra locks for doors or windows
- Locks and keys – the cost of replacing locks or keys for homes, garages or alley gates
- Pest control (other than communal areas)
- Plasterwork for patches and cracks, plaster air vents
- Plumbing in washing machines
- Security chains for front doors
- Shower curtain and rails, shower hose and shower head (we are responsible if these have been fitted with disabled home adaption work)
- Sink plugs and chains
- Spyholes for doors, if fitted by you
- Toilet seats
- Washing lines and posts – your own

Always report any faults or repairs as soon as they emerge so that we can respond quickly to reduce the risk of any accidents.

3. Damp and Mould

Solihull Community Housing are responsible for dealing with reports of damp, mould and condensation within a Solihull Council owned property. We will ensure a customer centred approach to damp and mould by:

- keeping residents safe and well, and in doing so, providing assurance that the Council is compliant with legal and regulatory requirements.
- responding swiftly and effectively to incidents of damp and mould to safeguard the health and wellbeing of tenants and their families.
- identifying homes liable to damp, mould and condensation, and in proactively preventing their occurrence in the first place, using good practices and design and where possible, smart technology.

Our performance on Damp, Mould and Condensation will be monitored in line with the statutory timeframes as follows:

- **With 24 hours** we will investigate any potential emergency hazards and, if the investigation confirms emergency hazards, undertake relevant safety work as soon as reasonably practicable, both within 24 hours of becoming aware of them
- **Within 10 working days** we will investigate any potential significant hazards becoming aware of them
- **Within 3 working days** we will produce a written summary of investigation findings and provide this to the named tenant within 3 working days of the investigation concluding
- **Within 5 working days** of the investigation concluding, we will undertake relevant safety work if the investigation identifies a significant hazard
- **Within 5 working days** of the investigation concluding we will take steps to begin any further required works where the investigation identifies a significant or emergency hazard. If steps cannot be taken to begin work in 5 working days this must be done as soon as possible, and work must be physically started **within 12 weeks**.

4. Making changes to your home

You have the right to make improvements and alterations to your home, but you must get written permission from us before you make any changes.

If the changes you want to make seem reasonable to us, we will give permission. But we will ask you to make sure the improvements meet certain standards.

You can request permission by contacting us. We will respond in writing to you within 10 days. Do not start making the alterations or improvements until you have received our permission in writing.

Carrying out works without notifying us and being granted permission could have safety implications for your home and your neighbours.

5. Compliance and Building Safety

SCH believe that everyone has a right to a safe home, and we are committed to meeting our safety responsibilities as your landlord.

We carry out safety checks and inspections on your home to keep you and your neighbours safe. We also expect you to report any issues you may find to us.

Some of the key safety checks we carry out are:

- Gas Safety checks
- Electrical Inspections
- Fire Risk Assessments in our high-rise and low-rise buildings
- Fire Door Inspections in our high-rise and low-rise buildings
- Fire Safety checks in our high-rise and low-rise buildings
- Water Risk Assessments
- Asbestos Inspections
- Structural Surveys

We work in partnership with West Midlands Fire Service and other partners to make sure we are delivering to the highest standards in safety.

Maintaining evacuation routes in our flatted buildings

If you live in a high-rise or low-rise, you must follow our Clear Spaces Policy. Please make sure that landings, stairwells, and communal areas are always clear. This is so people can safely evacuate in the event of an emergency.

We carry out regular inspections in the communal areas to ensure that they are always kept clear.

If you have any concerns about safety in your home, or in a communal area, please complete our online Building Safety reporting form or call us on 0121 717 1515.

We welcome tenants who want to work with us, and we have a team of volunteer Building Safety Advocates (BSAs) who support us in our work.

To make sure you are safe, we will:

- Notify you that a safety inspection will be carried out and keep our appointment
- Make it easy for you to report a safety defect
- Provide a gas safety certificate at the start of your tenancy, and within 28 days of your annual safety check, if there is a gas installation
- Carry out an electrical inspection every five years
- Carry out annual fire risk assessments to our high rise and every 3 years to low rises

How you can help us

- Become a Building Safety Advocate (BSA) and work with us to challenge current practice and promote safety.
- Keep your appointment or tell us in advance if you need to re-arrange.
- Allow us access to your home so we can complete safety checks and works.
- Report safety concerns by contacting us via telephone.
- Informing us of any specific access or personal requirements that we may need to be aware of when completing our inspections and checks.
- Do not clutter or hoard items in your home in a way that creates a fire risk.
- Being respectful and polite to our staff, we will always do our best to help.

How we will update you on how we are doing

We will provide information about our services through our newsletters, on our website at www.solihullcommunityhousing.org.uk and on social media channels.

6. Estates

Estate Assistants

Our team of Estate Assistants help to maintain our estates. They carry out a variety of important roles, including:

- making sure our cleaning contractor maintains high standards
- carrying out fire safety checks in our high-rise buildings
- removing rubbish from communal areas
- reporting repairs
- assisting with the clearance of overgrown or neglected areas on the estates

Looking after your estates

If you notice something making your estate untidy, please report it to us. Some examples of things you might want to report are:

- Dumped rubbish
- Dog fouling
- Tripping hazards
- Fire risks
- Neglected areas
- Fly posters
- Graffiti

Reporting an issue

You can report problems either by calling our Contact Centre on 0121 717 1515 or, you can scan the QR code and fill out our online contact us form.

SCAN ME

CCTV

We have CCTV in all our high-rise buildings to try and ensure the area is always as safe and secure as possible.

Please help us keep our buildings safe by being alert. If you have any concerns, please call us on 0121 717 1515.

Graffiti

We have a specialist team who remove graffiti from homes and buildings that we manage on behalf of Solihull Council. If you see any graffiti, please report it to SCH Better Places by calling 0121 779 8900.

If the graffiti is racist or offensive, we will aim to remove this **within two hours** of it being reported. We will remove other graffiti **within 20 days** of reporting. If you know who is responsible for the graffiti, you should report them to the police.

Dogs

If you own a dog, you must always take responsibility for it. This includes:

- Cleaning up after your dog immediately when they make a mess
- Not leaving your dog alone for long periods of time
- Don't allow your dog to bark continuously
- Please ensure your dog is on a lead when in a communal area (inside and outside)

We expect all tenants who own an XL Bully to follow the law. Please scan the QR code to read more information on this.

SCAN ME

Keep your garden tidy

If you have a garden, then you are responsible for keeping it tidy as explained in your Tenancy Agreement. If you have your own individual garden(s) then you will need to pay Solihull Council to collect your green waste. The current charge is £49 a year. Please log on to the Council's website for payment details.

If you live in a high-rise or low-rise you must keep communal gardens clear of rubbish, litter, dog fouling, play equipment and ornamental furniture.

Communal gardens are maintained by the Council's Grounds Maintenance contractor. They may refuse to cut the grass if toys, play equipment, garden furniture, garden ornaments are in the way or if the grass is covered in dog fouling.

Trees

The Council's contractor maintains trees across the borough. Please see our website page which explains what works the council will and will not carry out.

If you are concerned about a tree, please call us on 0121 717 1515 or Solihull Council on 0121 704 6000.

SCAN ME

Cleaning

We are responsible for keeping the communal areas of our high-rise and low-rise buildings clean and tidy. We employ contractors to do this work for us.

You must also take responsibility for maintaining your communal areas. This is a condition of your Tenancy Agreement.

Domestic household waste and recycling

Solihull Council collect your household rubbish every week from outside your home.

If you would like to find out more about the Household Waste Collection service, please contact Solihull Council on 0121 704 8000.

If you live in a high-rise building, you will find a bin chute hopper on each floor:

- only put small bags of rubbish down the chutes. Large bags, or other large items can block the chutes
- Do not leave rubbish bags outside your flat, in corridors or on the landings by the bin chute or in any communal area

Bulky Waste Collection

We offer a Bulky Waste Collection service where you can arrange for us to collect several items from your home for a small charge. To find out what items we will remove, scan the QR code.

SCAN ME

If you are concerned about anything outside your block, please call us on 0121 717 1515.

Fly-tipping

If you know who is responsible for dumping rubbish, please let us know as it is a criminal offence. You can scan the QR code to report fly-tipping anonymously.

SCAN ME

If you live in a high-rise or low-rise you must never throw anything out of your window.

Cars

Please always park your vehicle considerately. You must not park vehicles on grass verges or gardens. Do not park where there are hash / keep clear markings or in a disabled space unless you are a registered blue badge holder.

Abandoned vehicles

If you see a vehicle that you think may have been abandoned, please report it to Solihull Council by calling 0121 704 8000.

7. Antisocial Behaviour

We would like everyone living in our homes to feel safe and comfortable but sometimes this isn't possible due to actions of neighbours which could be considered Antisocial Behaviour.

ASB is anything that causes nuisance, annoyance or distress to other people. This can range from playing music too loudly, shouting, swearing or arguing that disturbs others, drug or alcohol related disturbances, committing a serious criminal activity such as domestic abuse, threats or actual violence, drug dealing or cultivation and hate crime.

The following is not classed as ASB; everyday living noise, one off parties or celebrations, cooking smells, disagreements between neighbours, parking disputes and children playing.

ASB is a breach of your Tenancy Agreement, which means that in extreme cases we can take court action which could result in us evicting the offender.

In some cases, it might be possible to resolve ASB informally, especially if the behaviour is not severe or dangerous.

If you're experiencing anti-social behaviour, here are steps you can try to take before making a formal report:

- consider whether the behaviour is intentional or might be a result of daily life, cultural differences, or a one-off event
- speak to your neighbour if you feel safe. A polite and calm conversation can sometimes resolve the issue quickly. They might not even be aware their actions are causing a problem
- keep a record and note down dates, times, and descriptions of incidents. If the issue continues, this log will help us investigate more effectively
- if the behaviour continues you can report it to us.

Being a Good Neighbour

As part of your Tenancy Agreement, you are responsible for ensuring that you, anyone living with you, or any visitors to your home do not cause nuisance, annoyance, or anti-social behaviour. This is a serious breach of your tenancy and could result in enforcement action.

What we expect from you

- Show respect and consideration by treating your neighbours how you would like to be treated. Respect their right to peace and quiet, privacy, and safety.
- Manage noise levels by keeping music, TV, and conversations at a reasonable volume, especially late at night or early in the morning.

- Control pets and ensure they do not cause a noise, foul in communal areas, or behave aggressively. Clean up after them in shared spaces.
- Dispose of rubbish properly using the bin provided, avoid fly tipping, and follow local collection schedules.
- Supervise children and be responsible with visitors making sure children play safely and behave appropriately. You are accountable for the actions of your guests.

How to report ASB

You can report Anti-social Behaviour to us through the following methods:

- **By phone:** 0121 717 1500
- **By text:** 07781 474 722
- **Scan the QR code to report ASB online**

SCAN ME

8. Wellbeing Service

Our Wellbeing team offer a range of handy gadgets and services to help you live independently in your own home.

They are designed to keep you safe and give you and your loved ones' peace of mind knowing that in an emergency help can be called at any time.

Some of the services we offer include:

- Home adaptations
- Safe and Sound service, which includes a pendant security alarm
- Home Hazard checks
- Handyperson service

We offer the Handyperson Service to vulnerable residents for small jobs which may be difficult for them to complete.

Call us on 0121 717 1515 for full details or scan the QR code to find out more.

SCAN ME

9. Customer Engagement

Engaging with you, our residents, is at the heart of everything we do. We want to make sure we are providing you with as many opportunities as possible to share your thoughts and make sure your voice is heard.

We are committed to making sure you can get involved and help us make important decisions about the services you receive.

We want to make sure no decision about you, is made without you.

There are lots of ways you can share your feedback, including using digital platforms where you can share your comments from the comfort of your own home!

If there is a particular subject that is of interest to you, let us know and we can tell you how you can get involved.

Please email engagement@solihullcommunityhousing.org.uk to find out more about working with us or visit the Getting Involved page of our website by scanning the QR code.

SCAN ME

10. Home Contents

SCH cover the buildings insurance for your home, but you are responsible for insuring your own personal belongings.

Home Contents Insurance is not compulsory, but it is a good idea to consider what a policy would cover you for. Home Contents Insurance can help protect your personal belongings from incidents such as fire, theft, water damage, and many more household risks, giving you peace of mind.

We have teamed up with Thistle Tenant Risks to offer all customers a Home Contents Insurance Scheme, designed specifically for tenants in social housing.

Please visit our website or scan the QR code to learn more.

SCAN ME

This tenant handbook was produced in October 2025.

Get in touch

Join us on social media:

Solihull Community Housing

solihullcommunityhousing

Solihull Community Housing

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

Phone: 0121 717 1515
Typetalk: 18001 0121 717 1515
Text: 07781 474 722

Website: www.solihullcommunityhousing.org.uk

RESIDENT APPROVED

ACCREDITED 2022 - 2025 tpas LANDLORD

Visit the contact us page on our website to complete an online form with details of your enquiry.

Contact us if you need this document in a large print, different language or alternative format.
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