

Housing Service Standards

**What tenants and leaseholders
can expect from us**

St Albans City & District Council
Housing Services | 2026



St Albans
City & District Council

Introduction

St Albans City & District Council is committed to delivering safe, well-maintained homes and providing high-quality housing services that meet the needs of our tenants and leaseholders.

Our Housing Service Standards

Our Housing Service Standards set out the level of service tenants and leaseholders can expect from St Albans City & District Council's Housing Service.

The standards cover:

- Anti-social behaviour
- Tenancy management
- Repairs and maintenance
- Income and rent
- Resident engagement and tenant voice
- Complaints handling
- Communication

Each section explains our commitment, what we will do and what this means for residents. The standards provide clear and consistent expectations and help residents understand the service they should receive.

The standards have been informed by feedback from residents, including the Tenant and Leaseholder Forum, alongside relevant legal and regulatory requirements.

The full standards are set out in this booklet, followed by a quick reference guide summarising the main commitments.

These standards have been developed to fulfil our obligations under the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and are aligned with the Decent Homes Standard. They also reflect requirements from the Regulator of Social Housing, the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code, and the national Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs).

We are committed to co-designing these standards with residents through the Tenant and Leaseholder Forum, ensuring resident feedback directly shapes the services you receive. Our approach also reflects our duty to ensure services are accessible and inclusive to all.



Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Service

Our Commitment

We will respond quickly and effectively to reports of anti-social behaviour (ASB), ensuring residents feel safe in their homes and communities.

What We Will Do

Provide clear information on what ASB is and how to report it (e.g. noise nuisance, harassment, vandalism, hate incidents, drug-related activity, domestic abuse).

Offer multiple reporting channels: online, by phone, in writing, or in person.

Respond to routine ASB reports within **3 working days**.

Respond to high-risk cases within **24 hours**, including:

- Violence and threats of violence
- Drug dealing
- Cases involving high-risk or vulnerable witnesses and victims

Agree an action plan with you where appropriate, including timescales for updates.

Keep victims and witnesses informed at least every **10 working days** during active cases.

Work with the Police, Community Protection, and support agencies to resolve issues.

Take proportionate and timely enforcement action where required.

Publish annual performance data (number of cases, outcomes, and tenant satisfaction).

For Residents, This Means

You will always be taken seriously if you report ASB.

We will respond quickly and keep you updated.

We will work with you and other agencies to resolve the problem.

You will be treated fairly and with respect.





Tenancy Management Service Standard

Our Commitment

We will manage your tenancy fairly, transparently, and in line with the law, supporting you throughout your tenancy journey.

What We Will Do

When You Move In

Provide a home that meets our Lettable Standards, including:

- Safe, secure front and back doors with working locks
- A clean and well-maintained kitchen and bathroom
- Gas and electrical safety checks completed before you move in
- Working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms.

Provide a welcome pack with useful information.

During Your Tenancy

Provide clear information about your tenancy rights and responsibilities.

Acknowledge receipt of enquiries within **3 working days**.

Provide you with updates on an open case every **10 working days** until resolution, or less frequently if agreed.

Offer advice and support if you are experiencing financial difficulties, domestic abuse, or other issues.

Treat you fairly and with respect, with no discrimination.

Carry out tenancy visits as required to ensure your home is safe and well maintained.

When Your Tenancy Ends

Provide clear guidance on how to end your tenancy.

Manage bereavement cases with sensitivity and provide additional support where needed.

Prepare homes for re-letting promptly while ensuring they meet safety and lettable standards.

For Residents, This Means

Your home will be safe, secure, and ready when you move in

You will receive clear and timely responses to your questions

We will provide support if your circumstances change

We will handle tenancy endings and bereavements respectfully



Repairs and Maintenance Service Standard

Our Commitment

We will keep your home safe, secure, and in good condition through a responsive and reliable repairs and maintenance service.

What We Will Do

Provide clear information on how to report a repair, including online, by phone, and in person.

Offer convenient appointment slots and keep you updated if these change.

Complete repairs within agreed timescales, according to contractor arrangements:



Emergency repairs within 24-hours;
routine repairs within 28 working days



Emergency repairs within 24-hours;
urgent repairs within 7 calendar days;
routine repairs within 28 calendar days



Emergency repairs within 24-hours;
urgent repairs within 7 calendar days;
routine repairs within 28 calendar days.
(Targets currently under review and will be formalised and published following contract agreement.)

Carry out annual gas safety checks in compliance with the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, to protect tenants from the risks of fire, explosion, and carbon monoxide poisoning, and ensure your home meets the Decent Homes Standard.

Ensure that any staff or contractors working in your home are polite, respectful, and carry identification.

Carry out inspections of major works to check quality and safety.

Publish annual performance information on repair timescales, satisfaction, and investment in homes.

For Residents, This Means

You can easily report repairs in a way that suits you.

Emergency repairs will be dealt with quickly and safely.

Routine repairs will be completed within agreed timescales.

You can expect courteous, professional service from staff and contractors.

Your home will be well-maintained and meet required safety standards.

Repairs Service Hours

Normal Working Hours

Monday to Friday: 8:00am–5:00pm

Emergency Repairs

Emergency repairs are covered 24-hours a day, 365 days a year. Outside normal working hours, our emergency call-out service applies.

Out-of-Hours Call-Out

Monday to Friday: 5:00pm–8:00am

Weekends: 5:00pm Friday–8:00am Monday

The Contractor Must

Be contactable 24-hours/day, 365 days/year

Provide an escalation process up to Director level in emergencies

Have adequate staff, including a staffed call centre and robust fail-safe communication system

Attend heating system faults with the following minimum response times:

Emergency	4-hours
Urgent	3 days
Routine	7 days



Income and Rent Service Standard



Our Commitment

We will provide clear, fair, and supportive income and rent services to help you sustain your tenancy.

What We Will Do

Provide clear information about rent charges and how they are calculated.

Offer a range of payment methods, including online, direct debit, phone, and in person.

Issue rent statements on request, or with each arrears letter.

Contact you promptly if your account falls into arrears.

Offer support and advice if you are struggling to pay, including referrals to welfare advice, benefits, and financial support services.

Agree repayment arrangements that are affordable and sustainable.

Take enforcement action only as a last resort, in line with policy and with sensitivity to individual circumstances.

Work with external agencies to support households at risk of financial exclusion.

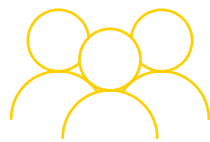
For Residents, This Means

You will always know what your rent is and how to pay it.

You will receive support if you are at risk of arrears.

We will treat you fairly and only take enforcement action if all other options have been explored.

Resident Engagement and Tenant Voice Standard



Our Commitment

We will actively involve tenants and leaseholders in shaping our services, policies, and decisions.

What We Will Do

Provide multiple opportunities to get involved: forums, surveys, focus groups, digital platforms, and community events.

Involve residents early in shaping policies and services, not just at the end.

Use plain language and make engagement opportunities accessible to all.

Provide feedback on the outcomes of consultations through “You Said, We Did” reports.

Publish information in our Housing Annual Report to show what has changed as a result of your input.

Ensure our leadership team champions resident voice and accountability.

Monitor engagement using real-time tenant feedback tools as well as forums and surveys.

For Residents, This Means

You will always have a say in how we deliver our services.

You can get involved in a way that works for you.

You will see how your feedback makes a difference.





Complaints Handling Standard

Our Commitment

We will handle complaints fairly, transparently, and in line with the Council's Complaints Policy and the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.

What We Will Do

Provide clear information about the difference between a service request and a complaint

Make it easy to log a complaint via **MyStAlbans**, by phone, in writing, or in person

Acknowledge all complaints within **5 working days** of receipt

Stage 1

A service manager will review your complaint and respond within **10 working days** wherever possible. If an extension is required, we will inform you and agree a new timescale (*up to a further 10 working days*)

Stage 2

A senior manager will review your complaint and respond within **20 working days** wherever possible. If an extension is required, we will inform you and agree a new timescale (*up to a further 20 working days*)

Provide updates through your **MyStAlbans** account, where used

Signpost you to the Housing Ombudsman or Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman if you remain dissatisfied after **Stage 2**

Use complaint feedback to improve services and publish an annual complaints and compliments report

For Residents, This Means



You can raise a complaint easily in a way that suits you



You will always get an acknowledgement and clear timescales



Your complaint will be handled in line with national standards



You will see improvements from the lessons we learn





Communication Standard

Our Commitment

We will communicate clearly, openly, and in a timely manner to ensure you are always informed and listened to.

What We Will Do

-  Use plain and accessible language in all our communications
- Provide clear contact routes

 Online

 Phone

 Writing

 In Person
-  Acknowledge enquiries and correspondence promptly
-  Keep you informed about the progress of any issues you raise
-  Ensure our staff are approachable, respectful, and professional
-  Support tenants to combat digital exclusion

For Residents, This Means

- You will always know how to contact us and when to expect a response.
- Your concerns will be listened to and addressed promptly.
- You will receive clear information that is easy to understand.
- Open and timely communication will help prevent issues from escalating and support a safe, well-managed, and stable living environment.

Monitoring and Review



What We Will Do

We will monitor our performance using:

- 

1. Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)
- 

2. Complaints and compliments
- 

3. Feedback from the 'Tenant & Leaseholder Forum'
- 

4. Surveys and focus groups to understand residents' lived experiences

We will review these standards annually with residents and publish results with actions taken to improve services.



Quick Reference – What You Can Expect from Us

Anti-Social Behaviour

- Easy reporting (online, phone, in person)
- High-risk cases responded to within **24 hours**
- Routine cases responded to within **3 working days**
- Action plan within **10 working days**
- Regular updates during active cases
- Partnership working with Police and support agencies
- Proportionate and timely enforcement

Tenancy Management

- Homes safe, secure, and clean at start of tenancy
- Gas, electric and fire checks before move-in
- Acknowledge enquiries within **3 working days**
- Update you on your case every **10 working days** unless agreed otherwise
- Support for vulnerable tenants and those experiencing changes
- Sensitive handling of bereavements and tenancy endings

Income and Rent

- Clear information about rent and charges
- Range of payment options
- Rent statements on request or with each arrears letter
- Prompt contact if arrears arise
- Affordable repayment plans
- Enforcement action only as a last resort

Resident Engagement

- Multiple opportunities to get involved
- Early involvement in shaping services
- Clear “You Said, We Did” updates
- Annual reporting of Resident Engagement impact
- Tenant feedback tools used

Repairs and Maintenance

- Easy reporting (online, phone, in person)
- Emergency repairs attended within **24 hours**
- Routine repairs completed within **28 days**
 - Morgan Sindall Property Services: **28 working days**
 - Watret: **28 calendar days**
 - MASCO: Targets under review
- Urgent repairs completed within **7 days** (Watret; Masco targets under review)
- Annual gas safety check for every home
- Staff and contractors polite, respectful, and carrying ID
- Inspection of major works for quality and safety

Out of Hours Repairs

- The service operates **365 days per year**
- Emergency call-out arrangements apply outside normal working hours
- Escalation process up to Director level in emergencies
- Minimum response times:

Emergency	4 hours
Urgent	3 days
Routine	7 days

Complaints Handling

- Clear distinction between service requests and complaints
- Acknowledgement within **5 working days**
- Stage 1 response within **10 working days** (or extended by 10)
- Stage 2 response within **20 working days** (or extended by 20)
- Signposting to Ombudsman if unresolved
- Annual reporting on complaints and lessons learned

Communication

- Clear, timely, and accessible information
- Multiple ways to contact us
- Prompt acknowledgements and updates
- Open, respectful, and professional communication



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