

YOUR HOME MATTERS

News for Stroud District Council Tenants and Leaseholders **Spring 2026**

WIN!

Win a pool party & shopping voucher!

GETTING INVOLVED

Tenants help improve repair service

MONEY MATTERS

Where to find help

SPOTLIGHT ON...

Community hubs

Follow us:



**STROUD
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**
www.stroud.gov.uk

WELCOME

from Andy Kefford,
Strategic Head
of Housing



LOVE WHERE
YOU LIVE.

Welcome to the Spring 2026 edition of *Your Home Matters*, your tenants' newsletter

Thank you to everyone who took part in our recent survey. We really appreciate you sharing your thoughts on the Winter edition and your ideas for what you'd like to see next.

In this edition, we're beginning to introduce key members of the housing team, share details of local services to help tenants, and more fun and prizes. We've also included a summary from our Tenant Oversight Panel, who recently reviewed our repairs process to help make it work better for everyone.

You'll find advice on saving money, plus two chances to win – a fantastic pool party at either Active Lifestyles Stroud or Dursley, and a £50 Love to Shop voucher, for signing up to pay your rent by Direct Debit. We'd love you to enter both!

We hope you enjoy reading and feel even more connected to your community this Spring. Let us know what you think - your voice helps shape every edition."

Andy

Andy Kefford, Strategic Head
of Housing



Welcome to Your Home Matters which gives an insight into the work we're doing together to support safe, secure homes across our communities."

Cllr Gary Luff, Chair
of Housing Committee

COMPETITIONS



You'll notice little bees buzzing around the pages of this Spring edition - a cheerful sign that the season's underway. Count how many bees you can find throughout the magazine and you could **WIN a children's pool party at Active Lifestyles Stroud or Dursley.**



Once you're confident you've spotted them all, **pop your answer into this form** or scan this QR code with your smartphone and you'll be entered into the draw. Closing date 1 May.

We also have a **second competition** where you can win a **£50 shopping voucher** by signing up to pay your rent by Direct Debit. **That's it!** Everyone who signs up to pay with a new Direct Debit by **30 April** will be automatically entered. There's more information about rents on page 9.

Damp and mould – what you need to know to prevent it

YOUR HOME SAFETY

MATTERS

Damp and mould are usually caused by moisture from everyday activities like cooking, washing and drying clothes. When warm air hits a cold surface, it turns into condensation. If this builds up, mould can start to grow.

How to help prevent it:

- ✓ Leave a small gap behind furniture so air can move around.
- ✓ Use extractor fans when cooking or showering, and keep kitchen and bathroom doors closed.
- ✓ Open trickle vents or windows for short periods each day.
- ✓ Avoid drying clothes on radiators. If you need to dry indoors, open a window in that room.

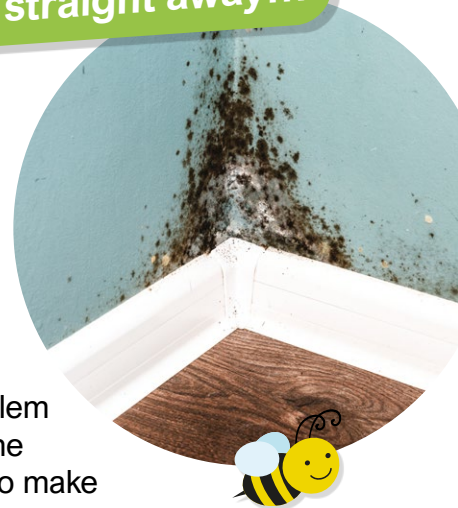
Report problems straight away...

If you have an issue with your home, particularly if you think it may pose a risk to your health and safety, report it to us immediately.

We'll assess the problem and respond within the required timescales to make any hazards safe.

Your safety and wellbeing are our priority. If you're unsure whether something is a problem, just get in touch – we're here to help. Call **01453 766321** or email:

DmEnquiries@stroud.gov.uk



Meet Chris



Chris is our Stock Condition Surveyor and along with his colleagues, helps make sure your home is safe, comfortable and well maintained.

He visits properties to check things like roofs, windows, heating, kitchens and bathrooms. The information he collects helps us plan repairs, keep homes up to standard and budget for future work.

His role means we can look after our homes more effectively and keep investing in the things that matter to you.

Chris's tip: "If you need to dry clothes indoors, do it in the bathroom with the door closed, and the fan on or window slightly open. That way you'll avoid too much moisture in your home which can cause condensation and lead to damp and mould!"

Fire safety advice

If you live in a block of flats or an Independent Living property, you'll have a fire door that's designed to keep you safe if a fire breaks out.

Jonathan is our Safety, Health and Compliance Manager and part of the team making sure your home meets all legal safety standards.

Meet Jonathan

Jonathan's tip: If you spot any of the following issues with your fire door, please let us know so we can arrange a repair:

1. The gap between the door and the frame is bigger than 4mm - roughly the width of a £1 coin.
2. There's any damage to the door or frame, or screws are missing.
3. The door itself is missing, or any glass in the door is broken.



4. The furry seals around the edge are missing or damaged.
5. The door doesn't close by itself within 30 seconds, or it doesn't fit properly.

If anything doesn't look right – or you're just not sure – get in touch. We're always happy to send someone out to check it for you.

Call: **01453 766321**

Email: property.care@stroud.gov.uk

Text: **07984 442968**

(start your message with the word **REPAIRS**)

Investing in our homes: Nouncells Cross update

Nouncells Cross in Stroud is getting a major upgrade. Following consultation with local residents, we're investing £1.8m to make homes and the surrounding area safer, smarter and more welcoming.

Improvements include new roofing, windows, door entry systems, CCTV, fencing, insulation, better footpaths, updated bin stores and other essential works to improve day to day living.





We are a group of tenants who work independently with SDC to help improve housing services.

We look at real experiences, highlight what's working well, and suggest changes that make a difference for all tenants.

Our first project focused on how the council communicates during the repairs process.

What we found:

- Tenants have mixed experiences of being kept updated
- Most people felt communication was clear and respectful
- Repairs were usually acknowledged quickly

Our top recommendations:

- ✓ Provide more information when a repair is first reported
- ✓ Repair appointments need to better suit tenants who work
- ✓ Give clearer, more regular updates – especially about delays
- ✓ Improve how email and text queries are handled
- ✓ Spot dissatisfaction early so problems can be resolved sooner
- ✓ Our recommendations are being put into action by the Property Care team.

You can read our full report at:
[Tenant Oversight Panel \(TOP\)](#)



What's next for TOP?

Our next project will focus on **damp and mould**.

If you're a tenant or leaseholder and would like to join us please email resident.involvement@stroud.gov.uk for more information.



New strategy, new opportunities for tenants

Back in December 2025, the Housing Committee approved our new Resident Engagement & Communication Strategy. The aim is simple: to build trust, be more transparent, and make sure every resident has the chance to influence decisions about their home and community.

We want your voice to be at the heart of what we do, and the new strategy opens up even more ways for you to get involved. Your ideas and experiences really matter - they help shape our services and guide future decisions.

That's why we'd love to see you at our upcoming Have Your Say, Your Way event.



It's a relaxed chance to chat with other involved tenants and Stroud District Council officers, share what's important to you, and find out how you can help make positive changes.

To register for the 'Have Your Say, Your Way' event - either [click on this link](#) or scan the QR code below.



CELEBRATING
MICHELLE'S
ACHIEVEMENTS

We're proud to share that **Michelle Elliott**, our Tenant Relationship Manager, was invited to a Royal reception at St James's Palace in recognition of her work supporting some of the district's most vulnerable residents.

Michelle has helped many people during her 25 years in housing, from arranging **emergency accommodation** during the pandemic, creating a **Tenant Support Fund** and championing **survivors of domestic abuse** and **anti social behaviour**. She also helped shape our award winning **pet-friendly policies**, which many tenants now enjoy.

Michelle said the event was an incredible honour and a moment that reflected the hard work of all our housing teams.

A key aim of our housing service is to make sure tenants are at the heart of everything we do.

Last year we invited all tenants to take part in our tenant census so we could gather up to date information about who lives in our homes. More than 2,500 tenants completed the survey and we want to say a huge thank you to everyone who took the time to respond.

YOU SAID



WE DID ✓

Here is a quick snapshot...



The average age of a tenant is 59



65% of households have at least one member with a disability or long-term illness



Around 1/5 of our residents are children



34% of tenants are retired



6% of households are overcrowded (compared to 11% nationally)



28% of tenants are working age but not employed

As a result, we've now introduced new policies that support:

- Tenants who would like to move to a smaller home
- Tenants who want to swap homes with someone else, either within the district or further away.



YOUR VOICE

MATTERS

Housing Online - coming soon



We're developing a new self service platform for tenants and leaseholders that will make it easier to manage your home online. You'll be able to use it any time, on any device, to view your rent account, make payments, report issues, upload documents, update your details and send general service requests.

The platform is currently being tested and is expected to launch in the next few weeks. Once it's ready, we'll share all the details with you. We will keep improving the system over time so it stays easy to use and meets your needs.



Worried about rent or household bills?
Talk to us early - we're here to help.

Many tenants need support at some point.
Our team can help you find practical solutions.

Talk to your
Housing Officer –
they are here to help with:

- Payment plans
- Support funds
- Friendly advice

The two-child benefit limit has ended – make sure you're not missing out

If you have more than two children and get Universal Credit, you'll be able to claim an extra amount for your third – or subsequent children – from April 2026.

Use a free benefits calculator to quickly find out what you could be entitled to:
www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators

A warm welcome and a LOT, LOT more

Did you know Stroud district has a long history of locally run community hubs?

This year, GL11 Community Hub in Cam is celebrating its 25th anniversary. It began as a small toddler group run by local mums and has grown into a busy hub with thousands of visitors each year and hundreds of volunteers.

There are now 15 hubs across the district, all run by local people. Most offer a friendly place to drop in, a warm welcome, an affordable cuppa and a chat. You'll also find social groups, activities and plenty of chances to get involved.

Take a look at the map here:

www.stroud.gov.uk/community-and-living/community-hubs/
or type in "community hubs" on our website.

SPOTLIGHT ON COMMUNITY HUBS



Since the cost of living crisis started, many residents now see their local hub as the first place to go for support.

Hubs bring help closer to home, with weekly Stroud District Foodbank sessions running in many, along with face-to-face support from specialist money advisers, and drop-ins with Housing Officers.

Support if you're struggling with rent



We know that changes to your household, income or employment can sometimes make it hard to keep up with rent. If you're worried about arrears, please remember that support is available and you don't have to face them alone.

Our Tenant Support Fund may be able to offer short term financial help to eligible households who are struggling. It's there to assist tenants experiencing hardship, reduce housing related debt and improve access to employment, education and financial stability.

If you'd like confidential advice or want to know if the fund could help you, contact your Housing Officer on 01453 766321.

Becky is the Housing Officer for Berkeley, Wotton-under-Edge, Sharpness, and surrounding villages. She supports council tenants with tenancy and rent enquiries and works hard to help keep our estates safe, welcoming and community focused.

You can meet Becky at:
The Keepers Community Hub
on the last Wednesday
of every month,
10.30am - 11.30am.

Meet
Becky

Becky's tip:

"Please reach out as early as possible if you're struggling to pay your rent."

We're here to help, and the sooner we know what's going on for you, the sooner we can look at the options and support available."



Make rent payments easier with Direct Debit



Win a £50 shopping voucher!



Paying your rent by Direct Debit is one of the easiest ways to stay on top of your account. Once it's set up, your rent is paid automatically on the date you choose, so you never have to worry about missing a payment.

Why it helps

- Your payment is made on time every month
- You save time because you don't need to pay manually
- It's safe and protected by the Direct Debit guarantee
- It helps prevent arrears and gives you peace of mind

Direct Debit - Win a £50 shopping voucher

If you set up a new Direct Debit during April, we'll enter you into our free prize draw to win a £50 shopping voucher. Your first payment can start later, for example in May. As long as you set it up between 1 and 30 April, you'll be included.

How to set one up

- **Online:** visit our Pay housing rent page on our website www.stroud.gov.uk/pay-for-it/pay-housing-rent/
- **Phone:** call 01453 766321 (option 3, then 3)
- **Post:** we can send you a Direct Debit form to fill in and return for free

If you need any help, call 01453 766321 and ask for your Housing Officer, or email housing.management@stroud.gov.uk

Setting it up only takes a few minutes and could save you a lot of time. Plus, you might win that £50 voucher.

Please note: it takes around five working days to set up a Direct Debit. We'll send you a confirmation letter once it's active.

Anti-social behaviour

What to do if you're experiencing ASB

If something is impacting your home or neighbourhood, please report it.

Your Housing Officer will work with you and may involve partners such as Community Officers or the police to investigate the issue.

Your tenancy agreement explains how we all agree to treat our neighbours. Behaving in a way that causes distress or disruption can put your tenancy at risk, so please let us know early if you need support to prevent things from escalating.

We want everyone to feel safe and confident that their concerns will be taken seriously. If you're in immediate danger, call the police on 999.



What is anti-social behaviour?

Anti-social behaviour (or ASB) means anything that causes nuisance, upset or distress where you live. We are committed to stopping problems early, supporting anyone affected and taking action when needed.

Report anti-social behaviour at: www.stroud.gov.uk/report-it/
Phone **01453 766321** or email customer.services@stroud.gov.uk

Be aware of Direct Debit indemnity fraud

We want to warn you about a type of scam that has recently affected one of our tenants. Sadly, they lost more than £3,000 after scammers accessed their bank account, reversed their rent payments and then convinced them to pay the money to them instead. Direct Debit indemnity fraud is becoming more common, and it can be hard to spot. Please take a moment to read the advice below and protect yourself.

How the scam works

Scammers may contact you pretending to be from your bank, the council or another trusted organisation. They may say your Direct Debit has been reversed by mistake or that you owe money. They often create a sense of urgency to pressure you into acting quickly.

Simple ways to keep yourself safe

- Never give out your bank details to anyone who contacts you unexpectedly
- Check your bank account regularly for anything unusual
- Remember: if it sounds too good to be true, it is
- There's no such thing as free money
- If you feel unsure or something doesn't seem right, always check with your bank or with us first
- Don't rush or feel pressured to make a payment

If you think you've been targeted or need advice, please contact your bank immediately and let us know on **01453 766321** so we can support you.

Play Rangers

Play Gloucestershire runs free outdoor play sessions all year in local parks, schools and community spaces. They're open access, so you can drop in anytime (just let an adult know where you are). Under 8's need an adult with them.

The sessions are inclusive, and support is available for disabled children.

Find local sessions at: www.playgloucestershire.org.uk/

They also offer volunteering for ages 10 to 17.

The Door

The Door's Youth Clubs offer free, safe spaces for 11 to 17 year olds to hang out, join activities or chat with friendly Youthworkers. Sessions are open access and run in Cam, Dursley, Stonehouse and Stroud.

Check what's on:

www.thedoor.org.uk

Redz Community Youth Hub

Redz is a youth led space in central Stroud for ages 13 to 25. You can help run sessions, start groups and shape the space. Weekly dropins, films, music, a reading group and monthly "dinner and discussions" are all on offer.

Find out more at:

www.stroudcommunityspace.org/redz-youth-hub

Stroud District Youth Council

SDYC and local youth forums give young people the chance to influence decisions, share views and help shape their communities.

Members come from schools, a college and youth groups.

Local Youth Forums are open to 11- to 18-year-olds and work on projects like improving facilities, running events and leading campaigns.

Get involved at
Stroud Youth Council:

www.stroudyouthvoice.co.uk



- 3 bananas
- Chocolate of choice (dark, milk or white)
- Toppings of choice (nuts, sprinkles, sauces)
- Lolly sticks (optional)

* Please be aware of allergens

How to make frozen banana pops

1. **Prep the Bananas:** Cut bananas in half and slick a lolly stick into each piece.
2. **Freeze:** Place on baking paper and freeze for at least 3 hours.
3. **Melt Chocolate:** Just before taking out the bananas, melt chocolate in the microwave in 30-second bursts.
4. **Add Toppings:** Dip bananas in melted chocolate, then add your favorite toppings.
5. **Final Freeze:** Freeze again for 10 minutes. Enjoy!

What you will need... ↗



USEFUL CONTACTS & INFORMATION

EMAIL US...



Repairs: repairs@stroud.gov.uk

Damp and Mould: DmEnquiries@stroud.gov.uk

Customer enquiries: customer.services@stroud.gov.uk

Housing, anti-social behaviour and rent enquiries: housing.management@stroud.gov.uk

Resident involvement: resident.involvement@stroud.gov.uk

SPEAK TO US...

Opening hours

8.45am - 5pm (Monday - Thursday)

8.45am - 4.30pm (Fridays)

Telephone: 01453 766321

Emergencies

If you need to contact the council out of office hours

Telephone: 01453 222104



Stroud District Council
developing affordable,
energy efficient homes

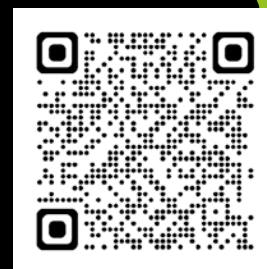
We're working hard to build new
affordable homes in the Stroud District.
We're sorry for any disruption.

newhomes.regen@stroud.gov.uk
01453 766321

Artwork by
Lila Butcher

STROUD SCHOOL OF
ART

REPORT IT
TO
SORT IT



Anti-Social Behaviour



WRITE TO US...

Stroud District Council,
Ebley Mill,
Ebley Wharf,
Stroud
GL5 4UB

COMPLIMENTS, COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK...

Make a compliment, tell us how we're doing or register a complaint by clicking this link on our website:

www.stroud.gov.uk/complaints or phone us on 01453 766321.

FOLLOW US...

Sign up for council email news on the topics that interest you:

[Stroud District Council - Register for email alerts](#)

Follow us on Facebook: [Stroud District Council](#)

www.stroud.gov.uk

Competitions terms and conditions

The competitions are open to Stroud District Council tenants and leaseholders.

The bee competition deadline is 1 May. Prize: a pool party at Active Lifestyles Stroud or Dursley. The Direct Debit competition deadline is 30 April. Prize: a £50 shopping voucher.

Entries after those dates will not be counted.

No alternative prizes will be offered.



STROUD
DISTRICT
COUNCIL
www.stroud.gov.uk