

# Empower's Tenant Newsletter

SUMMER EDITION | AUGUST 2025

## Bungalows in Brierfield Helping People Live Independently

**In July 2025 14 tenants moved into 7 new bungalows in Brierfield, a fantastic step in helping them to live more independently.**

These homes are designed to meet tenant's needs, with spacious rooms, easy access and modern technology supporting tenants to live safely and comfortably.

This exciting project was made possible thanks to a fantastic partnership between Empower, FiveThirds Living, Alternative Futures Group and Lancashire County Council.

**Read Raymond and James's story on their move into their new bungalow...**



**Raymond and James**

## A New Start for Raymond and James

**Moving into a new home can be a big change and for Raymond and James, it's the start of an exciting new chapter!**

They didn't know each other before the move and at first, they were a bit unsure about living together but with help from their support teams, they got to know each other slowly through visits and chats including cups of tea and trips to cafes before they actually moved in together.

They've even got mobile phones now, so they can text each other and stay in touch.

### **James said:**

"I like it. It's very nice and smells fresh and new. I know Raymond now, I've got used to him. I'm very excited."

### **Raymond said:**

"I'm quite happy. I'm going to make cheese and onion pie in the kitchen. I've bought dining chairs for the garden. I'm going to bring my plants and strawberries."

### **Kaley Kenyon, Head of Operations at Alternative Futures Group, said:**

"It's been great to see Raymond and James become friends before moving in. It's all about helping people feel confident and part of a community."

# Welcome to your Summer edition of our Newsletter from Empower

This information can be made available in alternative formats, such as easy read or large print and may be available in alternative languages upon request. **Please contact 01257 260712 or email [HM@empowerhousing.org.uk](mailto:HM@empowerhousing.org.uk)**



## Community Housing Partnership Tenants Conference, Warrington – 2nd July 2025

The Partnership is a group of community housing associations in the North of England. Every year they run a Tenants Conference, giving tenants of a number of small housing associations, like Empower, the opportunity to meet other tenants, hear their stories, learn and contribute to improving the services they receive from their landlords.

Empower tenant, Susan from West Lancs, attended with Officers from Empower and heard all about:

- Health and Safety for tenants
- Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) and how and what tenants are feeding back
- Awaab's Law and changes to regulation due in October 2025

Susan felt attending the conference had given her more confidence and she enjoyed hearing other tenants' stories.

Would you be interested in getting involved? Please email the Housing Management Team at [HM@empowerhousing.org.uk](mailto:HM@empowerhousing.org.uk) alternatively you can contact the team on 01257 260712 option 3.



**Mark & Richard (Empower), Susan, and Dave from the Partnership**



**Sam Formby**

## A Week in Sam Formby's Life

**At just 16, Sam, an Empower tenant, had a serious brain bleed that left him unable to move or speak. Things looked very tough—but thanks to his determination, Sam has made an amazing recovery.**

Now, Sam is getting back his independence and inspiring others. He's a big believer in how exercise helps mental health, and his weekly workouts are impressive!

Sam trains at local gyms and does things like standing for 10 minutes, 60 squats, planks, hand cycling for an hour, walking 100 steps, boxing, crunches, and strength exercises like pushdowns, leg curls, and rows.

His story shows how staying active can help both body and mind—and how strong the human spirit can be.

**Do you have a story that could inspire others? We'd love to hear it—get in touch and share it with us! [HM@empowerhousing.org.uk](mailto:HM@empowerhousing.org.uk)**

# New members to the Empower team

We would like to introduce and welcome four new colleagues to the Empower team:



## Meet Steve Our Property & Compliance Manager

Hello! I'm the new Property & Compliance Manager at Empower. I joined in March 2025 and bring 20 years of experience in looking after buildings, homes, managing projects, and making sure everything runs smoothly.



## Meet Mark Our Housing Manager

I'm excited to have joined the Empower Team as Housing Manager, having come on board in May 2025. With over 20 years of experience in the housing sector across the North of England, I'm looking forward to bringing my knowledge and insight to support our work here at Empower.



## Meet Arwel Our Maintenance Team Supervisor

Hello! My name is Arwel and I joined Empower in April 2025. I work as the Maintenance Team Supervisor. My goal is to make sure your home is safe, comfortable, and well maintained. I'm here to help improve the service we provide to you.



## Meet Adam Our Assistant Management Accountant

I started working with Empower in April 2025 and successfully became the Assistant Management Accountant in June 2025. My work focuses on rents, service charges and management accounts.

If you want to know more about our new colleagues visit our website [www.empowerhousing.org.uk](http://www.empowerhousing.org.uk)

## What you said about us

Thank you for taking the time to tell us when we get things right! Here are just a few of the compliments you have shared with us over the last 12 months!



“

We wanted to say a big thank you for the very swift visit that very evening. It was amazing.

”

(tenant) is very happy with his new shower tray & cubicle, he says it is like walking into Buckingham Palace.

“

Just wanted to say a huge thanks to Andy who came over to our home today. He was great with the persons supported. Went the extra mile to fix a few additional items that weren't on his list and his workmanship is great.

”

Services all good. Very responsive in terms of maintenance and repairs. Recent leak (for example) was dealt with very quickly. Always good experience with EHA.



# What We've Learned & How We're Improving

We welcome feedback from tenants in various ways including complaints which help us understand what's gone wrong and how we can put things right, learn and improve.

Between April 2024 and March 2025, we received 8 complaints. All were responded to on time and no complaints were referred to the Housing Ombudsman.

## What were the complaints about?

- **Repairs** – delays, poor communication, and contractor behaviour
- **Maintenance** – untidy work and lack of notice before visits
- **Adaptations** – poor quality work and delays
- **Compliance** – missing information and poor planning

## What have we done to improve?

- **Improved** how we track and follow up on repairs
- **Better communication** with tenants and care providers
- **More inspections** before and after work is done
- **Stopped using contractors** who didn't meet our standards
- **More training** for colleagues on handling complaints and customer care

## Last year we reported the key themes of complaints being:

- Poor communication
- Issues with standards of work
- Processes not being followed

Some of these themes have continued over the last year, therefore these will be a key focus for improvement during this year.

We're using tenant feedback to shape future services and will continue to share what we've learned in regular updates. The full report will be published by 30 September 2025 on our website. Your feedback helps us make real changes!



**WE WANT  
YOUR  
FEEDBACK**

## Your Feedback

Every day we are delivering services to you in a number of ways including:

- When we first let a home to a new tenant
- When you report a repair
- When you make a complaint
- When you report a case of anti-social behaviour
- When we visit you in your home

It is important that we understand if we are getting things right, how we might improve and make sure we are not complacent. To do this we undertake telephone surveys with a number of tenants to obtain feedback about the contact we have had with them .....these are just some of the results over the last 12 months:

Day to day repairs and property health and safety (compliance) visits

**95%**

reported being very satisfied with the repairs service

Appointment scheduling & punctuality

**98%**

reported being very satisfied

Ease in applying for their home

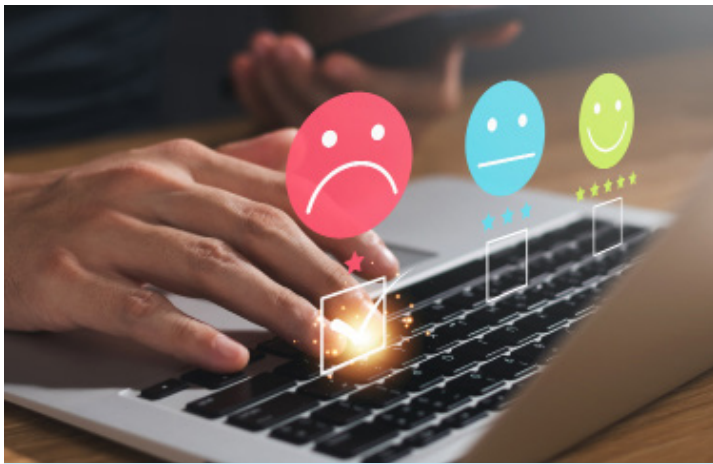
**80%**

of tenants said they found the process easy

Arrangements for and info provided on property visits

**100%**

of tenants asked were very satisfied



## Tell Us What You Think Tenant Satisfaction Measures

**Between September and December 2025, we'll be asking you to take part in a short survey. This is part of something called Tenant Satisfaction Measures – or TSMs**

### What are TSMs?

TSMs are a way for us to check how well we're doing as your landlord. They help us understand what's working and what needs to improve.

### Why are they important?

We are required by the Regulator of Social Housing to undertake these surveys every two years and report our results. They enable us to demonstrate if, how and where we are improving.

### What will we ask you?

**We'll ask about things like:**

- How happy you are with repairs?
- If you feel safe in your home?
- If we listen to you and keep you informed?

### How will we contact you?

We'll be in touch by phone, email, or face-to-face between September and December 2025, as many of you have told us previously how you like to be contacted.

**Your voice matters. By taking part, you can help us improve our services for everyone. (You can see our 23-24 TSM results on our website)**

## What is Awaab's Law and What Does It Mean for You?

Awaab's Law comes into force on 27 October 2025 and is named after Awaab Ishak, a little boy who sadly died because of his prolonged exposure to damp and mould in his home. Awaab's Law is here to make sure that no one else has to live in unsafe housing.

From October, we must fix serious damp, mould, and other health hazards in your home within a set time. If there's a risk to your health, we must act quickly.

### This means:

- You can expect a fast responsive repairs service for damp and mould
- We keep your home safe and healthy to live in
- We must follow clear rules and timeframes

Further regulation will be added in 2026 and 2027 to cover other dangers like excess cold & heat, fire & electrical hazards and falls.

**This law gives tenants more protection and helps make sure your home is safe. If you spot a problem, report it straight away 01257 260712 – option 1 or email us at [Maintenance@empowerhousing.org.uk](mailto:Maintenance@empowerhousing.org.uk)**



# Working Together to Tackle Damp, Mould and Condensation

In July a group of tenants from Burnley helped us review our policy for dealing with damp, mould and condensation. Their feedback has been vital in making sure our new policy is clear, and in line with Awaab's Law, coming into effect in October 2025.

We used pictorial diagrams to explain the causes and effects of damp and mould in a way that was easy to understand and our policy is now more focused on prevention, clearer for tenants to follow, and aligns with upcoming legal standards.

## Remember even in the warmer months:

- Ensure good ventilation
- Open your windows
- Ensure extractor fans are working in your kitchen and bathroom
- Report any repairs quickly
- A minor leak could become a major problem if not dealt with
- Keep bathroom doors closed whilst showering or bathing
- Don't dry wet/damp clothes on radiators



# All About You – Equality Forms

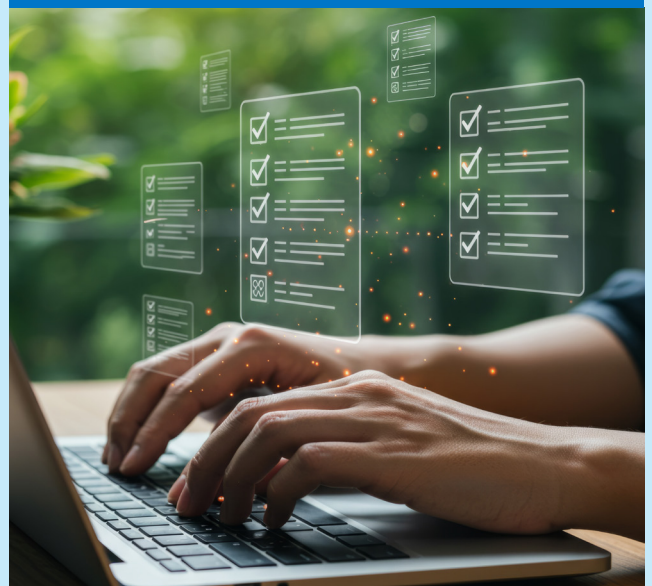
Back in December 2024, we sent out some forms called 'All About You' to collect information about you which may help us to better understand your needs and ensure our properties and services meet those needs.

**So far, we've received 132 forms back – thank you!**

We're now working hard to encourage you to return your form if you haven't done so already. We will be reminding you in a number of ways in the coming weeks by phone, email, or face-to-face.

We will then feedback what you have told us and how we will use that information.

**Remember** – we take your privacy seriously and have strict rules about who can see your information and how it can be used in line with legal requirements.



# Rent Statements

Rent Statements will be sent out in September – so look out for them dropping through your letterbox. Importantly your rent statement will tell you if you are in rent arrears or not and it is important if you do have any arrears on your rent account that you contact us as soon as possible.





## Important Universal Credit reminder for tenant and appointees

Don't forget – your home is **Specialised Supported accommodation**. When completing your universal credit forms, make sure to tick the right accommodation box. This helps to ensure your housing costs are covered correctly.

**Contact us today  
if you need support!**

## How to Make a Complaint

Sometimes we may get it wrong. If something does go wrong or you are dissatisfied with our services, please tell us. You can make a complaint by;

- Contacting the Housing Management Team on 01257 260712 option 3
- Reporting online via the Empower website
- Reporting to a colleague when they visit you
- In person at the Empower office
- Email to [admin@empowerhousing.org.uk](mailto:admin@empowerhousing.org.uk)
- Writing to us at Empower Housing Association, 33-35 Hollinshead Street, Chorley, PR71EP

**Our complaint handling procedure found on our website [www.empowerhousing.org.uk](http://www.empowerhousing.org.uk) explains how you can make a complaint. Empower is a member of the Housing Ombudsman Service. If you are not happy with how we have responded to your complaint you can contact the Housing Ombudsman**

**By phone:** 0300 111 3000

### In writing to:

Housing Ombudsman Service  
PO Box 1484, Unit D, Preston PR2 0ET



## Can you design our 2025 Christmas card? EHA would love your help!

The winning design will be chosen by Empower's Board members and will be sent to all our tenants and stakeholders.

So, grab your pens, paints, or pencils and let your colours flow through... let the festive fun begin! We would love to show off your creative skills!

Make sure **your** pictures get to us before the **31st October 2025**. Entries should be sent, with your name and address, to: Empower Housing Association, 33-35 Hollinshead Street, Chorley PR7 1EP.

