

Empower's Tenant Newsletter

Welcome to the Summer 2026 edition of your Newsletter from Empower.

This information can be made available to you in alternative formats (such as easy read or large print). If you would like a copy in an alternative language, just let us know by contacting 01257 260712 (Opt.3) or email HM@empowerhousing.org.uk

A word from our CEO

As we welcome the Summer 2026 edition of our newsletter, I want to take a moment to reflect on the past year and share some of the progress we have made together at Empower.

Over the last year, we have continued to focus on what matters most – providing safe, supportive and high- quality homes where people can live independently with dignity and thrive. I am proud of the commitment shown by our colleagues, partners and tenants in helping us build strong communities and improve the services we provide.

We have seen some positive developments across the organisation, including continued investment in our homes, improvements to services, and a strong focus on listening to tenant feedback. Your views help shape the way we work, and we remain committed to being open, responsive and always looking for ways to do better.

This newsletter highlights just some of the great things happening across Empower – from tenant stories and community achievements to helpful seasonal advice and important service updates. I hope you enjoy reading it and feel proud to be part of the Empower community.

Thank you for your continued support, honesty and involvement. Together, we will keep working to make Empower a place where people feel safe, valued and able to thrive.

With best wishes,

Sara
Chief Executive Officer



Staff Spotlight

Jennie Mulvaney

We are pleased to introduce Jennie Mulvaney as our new Executive Assistant & Governance Support. Jennie joined Empower in December 2025 and brings a wealth of experience from previous Personal Assistant and business support roles. Jennie has undertaken numerous courses such as Advanced Microsoft, managing challenge and a raft of office-based skills. Jennie is experienced in policy review, reporting and system improvements - taking pride in helping organisations run smoothly.

In her role, Jennie provides direct support to the Senior Management Team and helps coordinate key governance activities, including meetings, documentation and organisational administration. Her work plays an important part in keeping things running smoothly behind the scenes and supporting strong communication and decision making across the organisation.



Gardeners Spotlight

Carl's 5 top tips for summer gardening

- Ensure Garden Waste bins are kept free from general waste so that you won't miss a collection and end up with too much rubbish around your garden as this can attract vermin such as rats.
- If you have a free standing mini "greenhouse" or growhouse, ensure they are placed in the best area of your garden for maximum sunlight but also where they are fully accessible and safe for you to get the best out of it.
- "Deadhead" flowering plants to encourage more flowers to grow. This means removing flowers when they start to die so that more new ones can take their place.
- Avoid peak sunshine times and do not water plants/flowers when in full sun. It's best to water in the morning or late afternoon.
- Always remember, it's not just your plants that need water... You do too! Make sure you keep yourself hydrated when busy in your gardens.



Tenant's stories

We have carried out two engagement sessions with tenants this year and here is what they told us!

What Empower and Independence means to them - "Our homes, our voices"

At Empower, we believe a good home is the foundation for a good life. Recent conversations with tenants highlighted the positive difference their homes and our support make to their independence and wellbeing.

Tenants told us they feel safe, comfortable and settled. Their homes provide security, stability and a sense of belonging, while living alongside people they trust helps them feel happy and confident.

Several tenants spoke positively about home improvements, with one saying they felt "really happy and proud" of the changes. Having their own bedroom, personalising their space and keeping pets were also important in supporting their wellbeing and independence.



Tenants said that having a safe, well-maintained home helps them maintain routines, build confidence and live more independently. Many also take part in volunteering, learning and community activities, supported by the stability of their home environment.

Empower was described as:

- "A great landlord, quick with repairs"
- "Supportive people who keep us safe"

Tenants told us they feel listened to, respected and supported by both Empower colleagues and their Support Teams. One tenant summed this up by saying:

"We're glad Empower is our landlord – all the time."

Their feedback shows that tenants value homes that provide safety, stability, independence and a sense of pride. We thank everyone who shared their experiences and remain committed to providing supportive, inclusive homes where people can live independently and thrive.

What Our Tenants Value in a Good Repair Service

Feedback from tenants and support staff highlights the key qualities that make a good repair service. While experiences vary, there is clear agreement that repairs should be completed promptly, communicated clearly, carried out respectfully, and resolved effectively the first time.

Timely repairs are especially important. Tenants value quick responses and minimal delays, and when repairs take longer than expected, this is often their biggest concern. Keeping Tenants informed throughout the process is equally important, helping them feel reassured and involved.

Communication emerged as a consistent priority. Tenants and support staff appreciated receiving updates on appointments, delays and completed works, and valued opportunities to share their views about repairs and future improvements.

Professionalism and respect also play a significant role in delivering a positive experience. Operatives were frequently described as friendly, approachable and considerate, particularly when supporting tenants with mobility, behavioural or anxiety-related needs.

Tenants were most satisfied when repairs were completed to a high standard without the need for repeat visits. Where issues reoccurred, they emphasised the importance of lasting solutions rather than temporary fixes. Overall, the feedback reflects a repair service that is well regarded and tenant focused.

Tenants told us that what matters most is a service that delivers:

- Prompt responses
- Clear communication
- Respectful and professional service
- Repairs completed right the first time

These priorities will continue to guide improvements, helping us provide a responsive, high- quality repair service that meets Empower Tenants' needs.

Tenant's Charity Event

On 2 May 2026, Zack, an Empower tenant, hosted a charity football fundraiser in Accrington to support the North-West Ambulance Service (NWAS). The fundraiser was a huge success, raising over £17,000 in recognition of the vital and amazing work that NWAS do every day.

The event featured two football matches involving local celebrities, community figures, former professional footballers and also NWAS. Alongside these matches, people attending the event enjoyed a range of activities including a mascot race, community market stalls, raffles, and visits from emergency services and even some Star Wars characters!

Zack said the day was his way of “giving back and saying thank you to the emergency services who support local communities every day”.

Everyone at Empower would like to say a HUGE well done to Zack for organising such an amazing event. We can't wait to see what you get up to next!



Simpler Recycling – A Reminder

In our Winter 2025 newsletter, we shared information about the Government's new Simpler Recycling initiative, which will make recycling collections more consistent across England by introducing a standard set of recyclable materials and separate waste collections. The changes are being introduced in stages, with all councils now required to collect the same core recyclable materials from 31 March 2026.

For more information on what these changes mean for you, visit:

www.gov.uk/guidance/simpler-recycling-household-recycling-in-england

Staying Safe, Cool, and Comfortable at Home This Summer

Summer is a great time to enjoy warmer weather, but it can also bring challenges around keeping cool, staying safe, and looking after your home. A few simple steps can make a big difference.

Keeping Cool and Saving Energy

Keeping your home cool doesn't have to mean higher energy bills. During the hottest parts of the day, close curtains or blinds to stop heat building up indoors.

Open windows early in the morning or in the evening to create natural airflow and cool your home without using extra energy.

You can also save energy by switching off appliances you're not using, including chargers, lights, and TVs left on standby.

On very hot days, try to avoid using the oven, as it can quickly heat up your home. Microwaves, slow cookers, or outdoor BBQs are better options and can help keep indoor temperatures down.



Staying Safe in Hot Weather

Hot weather can increase safety risks, so it's important to take extra care. If you use a BBQ, always keep it well away from buildings and fences, and never leave it unattended while lit.

Open windows and fans can help keep your home cool, but make sure trailing cables don't cause trip hazards and that open windows are safe for you. If you're going away, remember to lock all doors and windows and avoid leaving valuables on display.

Fire risks can also rise in summer. Keep items such as aerosols, tea lights, and lighters out of direct sunlight and store them in cool places. Rechargeable devices should be unplugged once fully charged and should never be charged on soft furnishings like sofas or beds.



Repairs and Summer Maintenance

Summer is a good time to spot small issues before they become bigger problems. Check your home for signs of damp or mould, especially in rooms that get warm or humid, and report anything as soon as possible so it can be dealt with early.

Keeping outdoor areas, gutters, and pathways clear of leaves, weeds and rubbish helps prevent problems, especially in shared spaces. Warmer weather can also bring pests such as ants or wasps. Keeping food sealed and emptying bins regularly can help reduce this. If you notice a wasp nest or similar, please report it to a local pest control company rather than trying to handle it yourself.

Looking after your home is a shared responsibility. Reporting issues early and carrying out basic checks helps keep everyone safe, comfortable, and compliant with health and safety requirements throughout the summer.

You can report any repairs to our maintenance team by calling **01257 260 712** (option 1) or by email at **maintenance@empowerhousing.org.uk**





Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

How to report concerns – and what happens next?

At Empower, we want everyone living in our supported homes to feel safe, respected and supported.

We understand that many of our tenants live with mental health needs, learning disabilities, or higher support requirements. Sometimes behaviour can be linked to health, stress, or unmet support needs. That's why we always take a support-first and tenant-centred approach when dealing with ASB.

What is ASB?

Anti-social behaviour is any behaviour that causes distress, fear, nuisance or harm to others in or around the home.

This may include:

- Repeated loud noise
- Verbal abuse, threats, or intimidation
- Damage to rooms or shared areas
- Visitors behaving in a way that affects others
- Behaviour that impacts neighbours

Not all behaviour is intentional, and support needs are always considered before action is taken.



How do I report ASB at Empower?

If something is worrying you, please let us know as soon as you can. You can report ASB in a way that feels comfortable for you:

- Speak to your support team in your home
- Contact your Housing Officer
- Ask for help to report, if you find forms or phone calls difficult

If you feel in danger:

- Call 999 in an emergency
- Call 101 for non-emergency police support

You can also report concerns if you are worried about another tenant's wellbeing.

What information helps us?

You don't need to remember everything, but it helps if you can tell us:

- What happened
- When and where it happened
- How it affected you

Your support team can help you explain things to us if you find this difficult.

What happens after I report it?

Under our ASB Policy, we will:

1. Listen carefully and take your concerns seriously
2. Assess risk and support needs, including mental health, learning or disability needs
3. Work with you to agree next steps, which may include:
 - Talking things through informally
 - Adjusting support or care input
 - Working with your care providers, health services, and other agencies
4. Keep you informed, where possible, about what is happening

Our aim is always to reduce harm, prevent repeat issues, and keep everyone safe, while offering the right support to those who need it.

Will my report be kept confidential?

Yes. We treat all ASB reports sensitively and confidentially. Information will only be shared, if needed, to:

- Keep you and people safe
- Provide the right support
- Deal properly with the issue

It is important to remember that:

- Reporting ASB is not getting someone into trouble. It helps us to put the right support in place
- Everyone deserves to feel safe and settled in their home

If you're unsure whether something is ASB, it's always okay to ask.

Empower ASB Update 2025/26

We take anti-social behaviour (ASB) seriously and work to respond quickly, support tenants and help maintain safe, respectful communities.

During 2025/26, ASB levels remained low. We received a small number of reports across the year (7 per 1000 homes), and there were no reports involving hate incidents. The number of ongoing ASB cases also stayed low, usually between one and two cases at any time.

Throughout the year, we continued to focus on:

- Responding promptly to reports of ASB
- Keeping tenants informed
- Working with tenants and our partners where needed
- Monitoring ongoing cases closely to prevent escalation

We will continue to prioritise early intervention, clear communication and support for tenants affected by ASB.

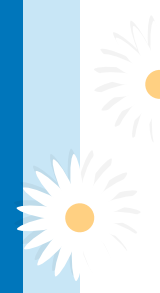
Need more information?

You can read our Anti-Social Behaviour and Hate Crime Policy on our website, or ask your Housing Officer for a copy in an easy-read or alternative format: www.empowerhousing.org.uk - Policies

To report concerns or ask for support:

- Speak to your Housing Officer or Support Team
- Contact the Empower Housing Team via:

Phone on 01257 260712 (Option 3)
Email on HM@empowerhousing.org.uk
Empower website www.empowerhousing.org.uk
By Post 33-35 Hollinshead St, Chorley, Lancashire PR7 1EP



Complaints/Feedback

Learning from Your Feedback – Complaints Performance 2025/26

At Empower, we value tenant feedback and use complaints as an opportunity to learn, improve our services, and ensure we continue to deliver the best possible experience for our tenants.

During 2025/26, we received 3 Stage 1 complaints and 1 Stage 2 complaint. This equates to:

10 Stage 1 complaints per 1,000 homes – in line with EHA's target for 2025/26

3 Stage 2 complaints per 1,000 homes – above our target of 0.



The main themes raised were:

Contractor performance – including delays, communication, quality of workmanship.

Service processes – ensuring responsibilities are clear and improving coordination between Empower, contractors and partners.

Behaviour concerns – making sure our colleagues and the care teams that we work with are supported when managing challenging situations.

Adaptation works – improving communication and oversight to ensure works meet tenants' needs.



As a result of tenant feedback, we have introduced improvements including:

- Increased monitoring of contractor performance and completion timescales.
- Additional quality checks during and after works.
- Improved communication between tenants, contractors, and Empower teams.
- Better tracking of actions identified through complaints.
- Strengthened processes for managing adaptation works and specialist services.
- We also continue to learn from guidance and good practice shared by the Housing Ombudsman Service.

During 2025/26, there were no Housing Ombudsman interventions relating to Empower's complaint handling.

All colleagues completed refresher complaints training during the year to support a consistent approach to handling feedback, acknowledging when things have gone wrong and ensuring we put things right.

Looking ahead

We remain committed to listening to tenants and using feedback to improve our services. Our focus for 2026/27 will continue to be on communication, service quality, contractor management, record keeping and ensuring services reflect the individual needs of our tenants.

Thank you to everyone who shares feedback with us — your views help us continue to improve.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures 2025/26

Your Feedback Matters

Thank you to everyone who completed our recent Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) survey. Your feedback helps us understand what we are doing well and where we can improve. We were pleased to see improvements in many areas compared to our previous survey, showing that the actions we have taken are making a positive difference.

Some of our strongest results included:

92% Overall Satisfaction.

97% of tenants said they feel their home is safe.

97% agreed they are treated fairly and with respect.

91% were satisfied that their home is well maintained.

87% were satisfied with the time taken to complete their most recent repair.

We also achieved **100% compliance** with all required gas, fire, water, asbestos and lift safety checks, and all Empower homes meet the Decent Homes Standard.

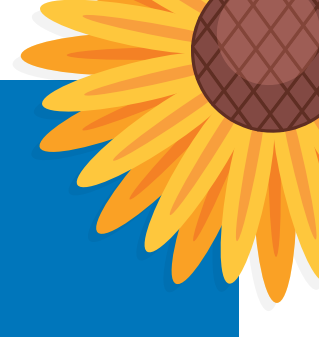
While the results are encouraging, your feedback also highlighted areas where we can do better. Tenants told us that clear communication, timely repairs and keeping tenants informed remain important. We are continuing to focus on providing updates more quickly, improving communication during delays and ensuring repairs are completed as efficiently as possible.

We were also delighted to see very positive feedback from our follow-up repairs surveys, with 99% overall satisfaction and 95% satisfaction with repair completion times.

Thank you for taking the time to share your views. Your feedback helps shape our services and supports our commitment to providing safe, high-quality homes and excellent services for all tenants.

You can find more information and our full survey results on our website www.empowerhousing.org.uk/tenant-satisfaction-measures/





STAIRS

STAIRS: New rules to make housing information clearer

What these changes mean for you

From 01 October 2026, new rules called STAIRS will make it easier for social housing tenants to get clear information about their home and landlord services.

The aim is to make information easier to find, easier to understand and easier to ask for when you need it.

We will share more information with you about these changes over the coming months. In the meantime, if you need any help in understanding information relating to your home or services provided by Empower, then we can support you with this. Just contact your Housing Officer on **01257 260712** (option 3) or by email at **HM@empowerhousing.org.uk**



Lessons Learned from Recent Development Projects

Our recent work across several development schemes has provided valuable learning about how we can help create homes that are practical, safe and better suited to the people who will live in them.

Following completion of the new development at Waterside and the near completion of a 13 apartment refurbishment also in Lancashire, along with a number of other schemes, one lesson stands out above all others: early involvement makes a significant difference.

Why early involvement matters

Being involved at the earliest possible stage enables Empower to bring its experience into the design and planning process, helping to shape layouts, specifications, health and safety considerations, and fire precaution requirements before key decisions are finalised.

This early input can help ensure new homes meet a wider range of tenant needs from the outset. It also supports better planning for people with physical, sensory or other support requirements, reducing the likelihood that costly adaptation works will be needed immediately after completion.

Working together to get the detail right

Early engagement with care providers and commissioning partners is equally important. These partners often understand the referral pathway and the specific needs of future tenants, so their involvement can help identify practical requirements that should be built into the scheme from the start.

By considering these needs early, developments can be more inclusive, more flexible and better prepared for the people they are designed to support. This approach can also help avoid delays, disruption and additional costs later in the process.

Listening to tenants

One of the most important lessons is the value of listening to tenants themselves. Understanding their needs, preferences and expectations can make the transition into a new home much smoother.

Where tenants have the opportunity to contribute to the development process, and where their input is considered and acted upon, the final scheme is more likely to feel like a home from day one. This supports better outcomes for tenants and helps create homes that are both suitable and sustainable.

Looking ahead

The experiences from our recent developments highlight a clear message. The earlier Empower is involved, the more value we can add. Early collaboration helps us design better homes, reduce avoidable costs, support safer environments and meet the needs of a wider range of tenants.





Tenant Consultation

Proposed Partnership between Empower Housing Association and Progress Housing Group

We wrote to you in May 2026 to let you know that Empower is thinking about joining with Progress Housing Group, this means we might work together to make things better for everyone. We asked you to let us know what you thought about the proposed changes and whether you had any concerns. We have now completed our consultation and we are pleased to report that the proposals are ones that our tenants are comfortable with.

Thank you to everyone who contacted us with your feedback, no decisions have been made about the proposals and we will be back in touch later in the year to let you know whether Empower will be joining the Progress Housing Group.

We are always keen to hear your views on how we deliver your services and any other feedback you may have. You can write, email, or call us – see contact details on page 06.



Wordsearch

Because you all loved the wordsearch in our winter 2025 newsletter, we have decided to make it a permanent feature! Find the hidden words - forward, backward, diagonal!

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

SUNSHINE

BBQ

PICNIC

HOLIDAY

BEACH

SUNHAT

ICECREAM

RELAX

BREEZE

SUNSCREEN

SANDALS

TRAVEL

