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SHAC Annual Report 2025

Our Purpose and Structure

SHAC is a national grassroots campaign group dedicated to building tenant and resident power across the UK. We actively campaign against core issues including high rents, service charge abuse, pervasive disrepairs, poor handling of antisocial behaviour, and disability discrimination. SHAC is run democratically, ensuring that every decision is grounded in the interests and direct involvement of our members.

With Thanks

The SHAC Committee have been more active than ever, acting as ambassadors for the organisation and promoting the campaigns we run. Their time is given on an entirely voluntary basis, and we place on record our thanks for their tireless commitment and dedication. The Committee's work is backed by a community of SHAC activists who have been vital in delivering all our successes in 2025. We look forward to working with you all again in the coming year.





Protests

In April, we organised a protest outside the **London Home Show**, led by Alison from the SHAC Committee. The protest successfully highlighted to visitors the con that shared ownership represents.

In June, SHAC and the Unite Housing Workers Branch jointly organised the **Homes Fit for Life** protest outside Notting Hill Genesis's head office in London.

Also in June, SHAC members (and our banner) joined the **Anti-Austerity** bloc of the Peoples Assembly.

Later the same month, we headed to Manchester with a number of other Homes for Us Alliance groups to protest outside the **'Housing 2025'** event which helps various sectors identify new ways to exploit tenants and residents.

End Service Charge Abuse (ESCA)

Publicity ESCA remains one of the most high profile campaign themes for SHAC. We have continued to expose the abuse with articles on Plus Dane, Hackney Council, Anchor and others. The media outlets have included Private Eye, BBC Radio and The Telegraph. We will continue highlighting abuses to keep the issue in the public eye.

Withholding Payment Over the next quarter, many tenants and residents will once again receive their annual demands, sparking a fresh flurry of enquiries. Where members are willing to withhold payment, SHAC will support them with advice and guidance on doing it as safely as possible, and offering peer support through our dedicated WhatsApp group.

The most high profile payment strike support by SHAC was that undertaken by members living in Hackney council flats at Pitcairn house.

Legal project We worked with the Public Interest Law Centre (PILC) to prepare a bundle of evidence which was submitted to the National Audit Office (NAO) asking them to investigate the level of overcharging.



To aid our project, a group of 26 MPs led by Mohammad Yasin MP wrote to government highlighting this form of financial abuse.

The bundle was submitted to the NAO in March, but despite meeting with them in April to discuss our findings, the NAO nonetheless refused to investigate, sending a detailed letter suggesting others were better placed to take it on.

PILC took further legal advice from a barrister on options for strategic action. The barrister's view was that there were grounds for a legal challenge against government, and we are now working with him to gather relevant evidence. In the new year, this will involve a fresh survey of members.

Political lobbying Our current [Parliamentary Petition](#) raises the call for a fast-track service charge dispute scheme, allowing disputed charges to be paid to a court and only released to the landlord if they can prove the legitimacy of the charges. Although the petition expires in the next month, we will reissue a slightly amended version to keep the pressure on government.

An open letter appealing to government to initiate the scheme was signed by Rachael Maskell MP and 14 other MPs as co-signatories. It was sent to Keir Starmer as Prime Minister, and Angela Rayner, who held office as Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government. We received no response.

www.shaction.org/service-charges

Antisocial Behaviour and Disability Visibility

Our action on Disability Visibility included inviting Adam Gabsi to address a special meeting. Adam is a long-standing SHAC member, and high-profile disability activist. He led an interesting and lively discussion at our online meeting on fighting discrimination in the housing sector.

We added our name to an open letter from Disabled People Against Cuts (Cymru) to the Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, and UK Governments demanding an independent review of welfare benefits for disabled people (specifically PIP). We were happy to co-sign the letter.



SHAC Committee member Jacqueline Parkes attended the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government's (MHCLG) panel to discuss remediation to building safety works, specifically on fire and cladding risks for disabled people, speaking on behalf of SHAC.

As a result of two reports written by Jacqueline Parkes on antisocial behaviour (ASB), we had a meeting with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for the Victims' Commissioner's Office. Russell A'Court. Our aim was to improve the handling of ASB complaints, and to encourage further support for the victims of ASB crimes. We also highlighted the disproportionate impact on disabled people.

The meetings coincided with Parliamentary discussions on the Crime and Policing and the Public Protection bills. They created an expanded role for the Victims' Commissioner and this offers further opportunities to work with Victims Support.

www.shaction.org/asb - www.shaction.org/disability-visibility

Disrepairs

Although we are unable to resource casework or advocacy, we were able to work with Imran Khan and Partners (IKP) on a project representing groups of tenants living with disrepair problems. The team at IKP have taken group disrepair claims on behalf of tenants and residents of Clarion Housing and Richmond Housing Trust, and we are monitoring outcomes.

www.shaction.org/dampmould

A National Housing Union

The progression of a national housing union has been a key for SHAC over the last year. If such a union was in existence, we would have been able to make more progress on all the other campaign points. We began with a combined in-person and online conference and a vision paper in October, and established a steering group to provide strategic direction which held its first



meeting in November. A taskforce will undertake most of the work, and is due to meet for the first time in January.

www.shaction.org/a-national-housing-union

Other Key Alliances

SHAC was invited to partner with **Free Leaseholders** over a legal challenge. This was to oppose a group of freeholders who sought to end government reform of leasehold. The request by Free Leaseholders and others to make representations on behalf of affected residents was unsuccessful, but the judge nonetheless rejected the freeholders' claim that new government legislation was a human rights abuse.

Earlier in the year, we partnered with **Greater Manchester Tenants Union** who contacted us over pressure they were bringing on Riverside Housing Group to carry out repairs and remedy service overcharging. We submitted evidence on behalf of a number of members with outstanding issues, with mixed success

Press Coverage

Our press coverage across the year has been excellent, although it seems to ebb and flow depending on world developments which can crowd out domestic reporting.

We have been referenced in almost 50 articles, radio and television broadcasts on a very wide range of issues. These include various aspects of government housing policy such as home building targets, and specific cases that we have sought to highlight such as 60% service charge increases at Plus Dane.

We will continue engaging with the press to present an alternative housing narrative, and to do so from the tenant and resident perspective. It is also important for us to combat the dominant voice of landlords and other vested interests.



It is also important that we recognise the very effective work being done by Ben Jenkins and Housing Sector to highlight many issues that landlords – and often government – would rather not expose.

www.shaction.org/press-articles/ - www.housingsector.co.uk/

Articles and Newsletters

We published 27 articles on our website over the last year. Significantly, many of the contributions were submitted by members. This is a crucial development, with the website providing a hub through which local campaigns and issues can be amplified.

Topics have been extremely varied. For example, Francesco Guerrieri wrote about exercising the Right to Manage, Arti Dillon highlighted the surplus of empty homes in the midst of a housing crisis, Carl Davis continued making disability issues visible, and Michael Savell lobbied for better tenant representation in media reporting on service charges.

Our newsletter is issued at least once per fortnight, sometimes weekly depending on the volume of issues we need to report on. It is a key shop window through which SHAC and our members can report on developments, draw attention to campaigns, issue calls to action, and highlight our own articles and press mentions. Once cascaded through our mailing list, it is also published on the website.

We will continue supporting members to report on the issues affecting them.

www.shaction.org/news-blog - www.shaction.org/newsletters

Social Media

Our social media profile has increased, and the numbers of followers have increased on each platform except our website, which had a boost in 2024 through BBC press coverage. The Twitter following has also dropped very slightly in line with declining users on this platform overall.

- YouTube subscribers: **383** (2024: 282)



- Website subscribers: **308** (2024: 247)
- Website visitors: **30,902** (2024: 42,104)
- Website views: **57,500** (2024: 80,559)
- Facebook followers: **3,192** (2024: 2,751)
- Twitter followers: **4,635** (2024: 4,780)
- Bluesky: **408** (new in 2025)
- Instagram followers: **817** (2024: 616)

Help SHAC Fight

SHAC is kept afloat through donations primarily from members and trade unions. All funds are used for campaigning and some for basic admin costs. We have no office base and do not employ staff, and our costs are therefore minimal. If you are able to help, please go to <https://shaction.org/donations/>

The Year Ahead

The project to develop a national housing union will remain one of the important tasks we need to deliver in the year ahead. An unprecedented number of members have stepped up to the plate to support its growth. Alongside this, we will continue highlighting key issues relating to disrepairs, service charges, rents, antisocial behaviour, and disability discrimination.

It is clear that our members have the energy and commitment needed to sustain SHAC's successes in the coming year and we are grateful to every single one for their support.