

Your Newsletter

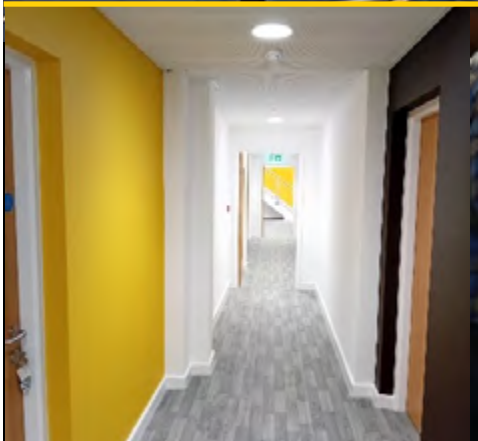


The tenants' newsletter for Denbighshire Housing

ISSUE 14

Autumn/Winter 2024

**Excited to welcome
new tenants to
Llys Elizabeth,
Rhyl**



**Welsh Housing Quality
Standards 2023** Page 4



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Update** Page 8



Getting ready for winter
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Denbighshire Housing**
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Cyngor
**sir ddinbych
denbighshire**
County Council



Welcome

Geoff Davies, Lead Officer, Community Housing

*Welcome to the latest edition of your newsletter.
As ever we hope you find it interesting and useful.*



There are articles about the work we have been doing on your homes and what we have been doing out and about in our communities

We want to do more to support communities. We know winter can be a difficult time for some people with cold weather and less hours of daylight. Having great neighbours or living in a close community can make a big difference to well-being and a sense of belonging which we all need.

We have support available to help with household finances and bills during the autumn / winter months so please check out the information in this newsletter or get in touch for more information.

We are proud that we have been able to build new homes which are of the highest quality for modern day living. We welcome our new communities in Rhyl and Prestatyn. We are also working on a long-

term programme to make sure that all our properties continue to provide safe and secure homes well into the future.

We do receive comments about how this newsletter is sent to all homes, but we feel it is important to get information to you and keep in touch with our communities. We know some people would prefer a digital copy but we also understand that many still welcome this format so we use recyclable materials and keep the costs as low as we can. We hope to be able to offer choice on preferred version in the near future.

If you have comments or questions, please get in touch.

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When you have finished reading this, please put it in the **TOP BOX** of your **Trolibocs** with the **BLUE** lid.



Denbighshire Tenant and Residents Federation (DTARF) Update

Hello everyone. At DTARF we continue to meet as a group and invite managers from the Denbighshire Housing Team every month to discuss issues, concerns, and any changes in the service we get from them.

We have met about the repairs service, gas safety, fire safety and heard about the community development work of the team.

We continue to work together but also make sure we raise your concerns and challenge the Housing Team about their service.

These are tough times for households and communities, so we are always here to help if you need anything. Please get in touch.

DTARF has represented all council tenants in Denbighshire since 1996 and it is important that we continue to do this, so feel free to join us or get in touch at any time.

John, Chair DTARF
dtarf1@outlook.com



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Denbighshire Tenants and Residents Federation



Bulletin Board

To report any maintenance issues contact customer services:

Mon-Thu 9:00am-5:00pm,
Fri 9:00am-4:30pm
01824 706000

Out of hours emergency
0300 123 3068

Galw Gofal (Careline)
0300 123 6688

Single point of access (SPOA) for support referrals **0300 456 1000**

Gas emergency **0800 111 999**

Electricity emergency
0800 3163 105

NHS Direct Wales **111**

Floodline **0345 988 1188**

Type Talk **0345 602 6340**

Introducing the new Welsh Housing Quality Standards (WHQS 2023)

– What it means for you!

In our last newsletter we introduced the new WHQS 2023, explaining what this means to you and how are we going to deliver it. In this edition, we wanted to share with you a little more information about what the standards include, and how we're approaching this for you.

1. What is WHQS 2023?

In October 2023, the WG introduced a new set of standards for social housing in Wales. It focusses on providing tenants with affordable housing of good quality, suitable for the needs of existing and future residents.

2. What are the main things included in the new standards?

For us to meet the WG standards, your homes must:

• Be in good condition

- Walls must be in a good condition, and not be weak or falling.
- There should not be damp in your home.
- Staircases should be safe.

• Be safe and secure

- **Doors and windows** should be safe and secure. We will follow the Secured By Design guide from the Police about how we can do this.
- **Fire safety:** homes must have heat and smoke detectors.
- You must have a safe and easy way to **escape if there is a fire.**
- **Gas and heating safety:** homes must have a carbon monoxide detector.

- **Home safety checks:** if homes have gas, oil or solid fuel, we must do a safety check once a year. We must give you a copy of the safety checks.

- **Electrical safety:** your home should have an electrical safety check every 5 years, and we will give you a copy.

• Not cost too much to heat. And not be bad for the environment.

- We must make sure that heating your home does not cost too much money. And that it isn't bad for the environment.
- Your home must let air flow through it, especially in kitchens and bathrooms.
- Homes should have fittings and appliances that stop water being wasted. This can help you keep your water bills down and is good for the environment.

• Have an up-to-date kitchen and utility area

- Kitchens should be less than 16 years old, unless they are in good condition.
- New kitchens should have space for a cooker, fridge and washing machine, and other appliances if needed.
- Kitchen floors must be non-slip.

- If there is nowhere to wash, dry and air clothes, we should provide a tumble dryer.

• Have an up-to-date bathroom

- Bathroom and toilets should be less than 26 years old, unless they are in good condition.
- Bathrooms must have a non-slip floor.
- They should have a shower, and a bath is possible. A shower can be over the bath.

• Comfortable and suit the person living there

- Your home should have enough space to live in comfortably.
- **Flooring:** When new tenants move in, all rooms must have the right type of flooring and be in good condition.
- **Noise:** Walls and windows should be good quality, so normal noise doesn't bother you.
- We need to make sure a home suits your needs, including disabled and older tenants.

• Have a garden if possible.

- It isn't always possible to have a garden, as it depends where you live.
- You should be able to get to your garden safely and easily.
- There should be a path for you to walk around.
- If possible, we should put up a clothes drying line, and there should be a path to it for you.
- You should have a lockable storage space outside. E.g. to store a bike or garden equipment.

• Have a nice outside space if possible

- We need to try and create a nice outside space, that is easy to look after.
- Spaces should be wildlife friendly.
- There should be plenty of plants and trees that also let sunlight through.
- If you don't have your own garden, we should provide enough storage outside space for bikes, pushchairs or mobility scooters for you.

3. What are the timescales?

These are the main deadlines that we will be working towards:

31 March 2025:

- Assess the condition of your homes so we know what we need to do. To do this we will look at the information we have about your homes. We may need to visit some of your homes but will let you know if we do.
- Create a plan and work out how much it will cost to get homes up to the standards. We must give this to WG.

- Engage with you and show what we're going to be doing so you can have your say. We will be working closely on this with our Denbighshire Tenant and Residents Federation (DTARF).
- Update our business plan to include any improvements and works we need to do to comply with the WHQS 2023 standards.

31 March 2027:

- Produce our Target Energy Pathways (TEP) using the information we have got from you home assessments. A TEP shows us what we need to do to make sure your home has a heating system that you can afford to turn on.

31 March 2034:

- We must meet these standards.

4. What have you done so far?

So far, we have been working through the WHQS 2023 standards and putting together a plan of action that we can share with you by March 2025. In July, we updated Denbighshire Tenant and Residents Federation (DTARF) on our progress and what we planned next.

To help inform this, we have also listened to your responses in the recent STAR 2023 survey and are using this information to understand how you'd like the WHQS 2023 shaped so far. Over the next few months, and throughout the whole WHQS 2023 programme, we will have opportunities for you to engage with us and let us know what's important to you, your priorities on how we deliver this programme for you.

5. How will this be paid for?

The improvements we need to achieve the new standards will be funded by a percentage of the WG Major Repairs Allowance, other grant funding and tenants' rents.

6. How can I get involved?

An important part of these new standards is your involvement and engagement in the process. We will be working closely on this with DTARF and hope to set up a task and finish group with tenants in the future.

If you'd like be part of DTARF, or part of a task and finish group of tenants, and support us implementing the WHQS, then please get in touch on 01824 706000 or email housing@denbighshire.gov.uk.

7. Where can I find out more information?

For more information about what these include, please visit <https://www.gov.wales/welsh-housing-quality-standard-2023-0>



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Mould and condensation advice

Here are our top tips for reducing mould and condensation in your homes this winter!

What is mould and condensation?

Mould and condensation appear in your home when the air is too wet.

Condensation often occurs on windows when they steam up. This is when warm, moist air comes into contact with a cooler surface.

Black spot mould can start to grow in your home when there is too much condensation. It can grow on walls, ceilings and furniture.

Black spot mould is prejudicial to health.

Where does condensation come from?

Moisture in your home can come from cooking, drying your clothes, showering or having a



bath. This moisture can create condensation in your home.

Important things to know:

By working together we can all reduce mould and condensation in our homes. To help with this, please remember:

Our responsibilities are to:

- Respond promptly to reports of mould and condensation.
- Provide you with information and advice to reduce condensation in your home.

You can help by:

- Following our advice to minimise mould and condensation in your home.
- Promptly reporting any issues with mould and condensation in your home.
- To report a problem, you can:
 - Call us on **01824 706000**
 - Email us at **housing@denbighshire.gov.uk**
 - Visit us online at **www.denbighshirehousing.co.uk**

The good news is you can reduce the moisture in your home by following these top tips!

Tip 1: Try to keep your home warm and at a constant temperature. Leave internal doors open so air can flow around your home.

Tip 2: Put a lid on your pans when cooking, and only use as much water as you need.

Tip 3: Use your extractor fan if you have one. If not, open a window to let steam out.

Tip 4: Open your windows when cooking, showering, or having a bath. When running a bath, put cold water in first, then add the hot. This reduces steam by up to 90%.

Tip 5: If you have window vents, make sure they are open to help the airflow in your home.

Tip 6: If you can, hang washing outside to dry.

Tip 7: If you're drying your clothes inside, please:

- Do not put wet clothes on your radiators.
- Put them in the bathroom with the heating on.
- Use a clothes drier.
- Close the bathroom door and keep a window slightly open or put the extractor fan on.

Tip 8: If you use a tumble dryer, make sure you have a vent to outside, unless you have a condenser dryer.

Tip 9: Wipe away any water that is lying around on:

- Your windows, and windowsills, especially in the morning, after a shower or bath, while cooking etc.
- Grout or tiles in bathrooms and kitchens.
- Tiles after a shower.
- Corners of the bath.

Tip 10: Don't put furniture or beds directly against a wall to allow air to circulate.

Getting your home ready for winter

It's that time of year again, the weather is getting colder, so we start putting the heating on! Here are some hints and tips to get your home winter ready!

Adjusting the temperature

During winter, the Energy Saving Trust recommends that your heating should be set to between 18 degrees and 21 degrees centigrade. Try seeing what temperature is comfortable for you and increase it if needed.

Check your radiators

Once the heating is on, give it a few minutes to start working. Then check each radiator to see if it is getting warm. If not, then your heating may need attention, below are some common problems and possible quick fixes that you can do.

Common problems

- Radiator cold spots – If you notice cold spots at the top of your radiator, it might need bleeding. We advise that you get in touch with us if you notice these.

• Pressure loss

Gas combi boilers are pressurised, so your boiler needs to be around 1 to 1.5 bar. Check the pressure gauge, if the pressure is lower than this, it may need re-pressuring.

If you notice low pressure, get in touch with our contractors, Liberty on **0330 333 8384**.

• Time settings

Your thermostat & timer might be set to come on at a specific time.

On warmer days you can turn the thermostat down. This stops your heating from coming back on during a cooler spell.

If your boiler does not automatically come back on when you'd expect it to, check the thermostat has been turned back up.

Tips for winter

- Boilers can sometimes stop working if they are not used regularly. We recommended that you turn your central heating on for at least one hour, every day throughout winter to make sure it continues to run smoothly.

- The water in your outside pipes can freeze in very cold weather. This can stop the boiler working and even causes pipes to burst. If this happens, you can try to gently thaw the pipe with warm water.

When to ask for help

If you have followed the above advice and you are still unable to get your central heating working, then please call Liberty on **0330 333 8384**.

Also remember, each year, Liberty will do a check to make sure your boiler is safe and working efficiently. It's important that you answer their calls and let them into your home to do this.





Cymuned
Community

Community resilience team update

The Community Resilience team have been busy over the summer, supporting communities, holding events and organising digital training for our tenants. Here is just a snapshot of what's been going on!

Joining up with Prestatyn Youth Centre

Throughout the summer holidays, Denbighshire Housing, Leisure and Youth Service's have joined up to deliver various activities for young people. They organised multi-sport sessions where young people had an opportunity to try archery, boccia and get involved in a football tournament. They also had a chance to try out cooking over a fire and foraging.

The community were able to access the first family fun session held at Prestatyn Youth Club, where the tots could get involved in messy play, while the older children enjoyed sport games, healthy snacks, arts and crafts as well as giant Lego!

Clawdd Poncen Summer Event

The community of Clawdd Poncen thoroughly enjoyed their afternoon at our summer event on the playing field. There was plenty for the families to take part in from arts & crafts, sports activities to enjoying the pop-up pump track, as well as checking out the plans for the new pump track to be built later this year.



Cwmpas E-Sessions

Cwmpas have been busy providing digital support to our tenants in Cysgodfa, Denbigh and The Phoenix Centre in Rhyl.

Tenants and residents have been learning how keep their information safe online, learning new tips and tricks with their smart phones and tablets. For more information about Cwmpas, visit <https://cwmpas.coop/digital-confidence-denbighshire/> If you'd like any help or support with your digital skills, please get in touch on 01824 706000 and ask for the Community Resilience team, or email us at community.resilience@denbighshire.gov.uk

Pengwern Hwb Harvest Event

Friends of Pengwern and South Denbighshire Community Partnership held a summer event in the Pengwern Hwb celebrating all things harvest. Families were able to try their hands at pressing apples, natural arts and craft and take their chances with the groups brick-a-brac and raffle. The food prepared by South Denbighshire Community Partnership also went down a treat, the smiles of enjoyment throughout the day said it all!



Introducing our community centres

As the winter nights draw in, we wanted to let you know that we have several community centres that you can pop along to meet new people, explore a new hobby, get advice and support, or just have a good chin wag! Here are a list of our centres, some examples of what might be on offer and where to find out more information.

Pengwern, Llangollen

Activities: Wellbeing Wednesdays, including various arts & crafts.

More information: <https://www.facebook.com/Communityhwbpengwern>
Email office@sdcp.org



Phoenix Centre, Rhyl

Activities: • Wellbeing Wednesdays; • Craft Thursdays; • Coffee mornings; • Drop-in sessions

More information: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61561397661711>
Email marshcom@gmail.com



Llys Y Felin, St Asaph

Activities: • Bingo; • Coffee morning; • Social evenings

More information: Denbighshire Tenant And Resident Federation (DTARF), see page 2.



Cysgodfa, Denbigh

Activities: • Coffee mornings; • Parent & Toddler Sessions; • Nature for Health activities

More information: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100083630371186>
Denbighshire Tenant And Resident Federation (DTARF), see page 2.



Trem Y Foel, Ruthin

Activities: • Monday: armchair bowls / Tea & chat [depending on number of people attending] at 2.00 pm.

• Tuesday: carpet bowls / Tea & chat [depending on number of people attending] at 2.00 pm.

• Wednesday: Chocolate bar bingo at 2.00 pm.

• Thursday: Pool table, Dart board at 6 pm – 8.30 pm.

• Friday: bingo night at 7.00 pm Every Friday throughout the year.

More information: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61556892953543>



Llygadog, Corwen

Activities: • Parent and toddler sessions; • Coffee mornings; • Nature for Health activities; • Yoga; • Indoor bowls; • Age Connect Forums

More information: Denbighshire Tenant And Resident Federation (DTARF), see page 2



You can also find out more on our website at <https://www.denbighshirehousing.co.uk/community-hubs/>

Another great place to look for information about what is on in your community, groups and services, visit www.dewis.wales. They have loads of information that can help you think about what matters to you, along with information about local organisations and activities.

Getting to know us better

Mark Cassidy and his role in delivering the new Welsh Housing Quality Standards 2023 (WHQS)

What is your role?

I am the Lead Officer for Housing Property, and I have overall responsibility for the teams that carry out repairs and maintenance to our houses. This includes:

- Major works like roofs, wall insulation, kitchen and bathrooms,
- Void works, this is when we renovate any of our empty properties to bring them up to housing standards,
- Safety compliance for making sure all the gas, electrical, fire etc is safe.
- Managing other support teams within those areas such as the contact centre and various administrative support roles.

Best thing about your job?

It has to be the people I get to work with on a daily basis! I have a great team around me, with lots of character, all who are extremely professional and committed to help us deliver WHQS 2023 for you.

I enjoy meeting our tenants and regularly attend the DTARF sessions along with my colleagues. To find out more about DTARF, please see their article on page 2

Describe a typical day.

As it happens, there isn't a typical day in maintenance. I guess the only constant, like many people in the world, is that I receive lots of emails! (The modern-day phenomenon). There's a lot of parts to the role, it could be dealing with the legal team, finance team, HR team and offering support to team members if they need it.

What would you like tenants to know about your team?

The new standard puts tenants firmly at the heart of what we do. Our aim is primarily to ensure that our tenants live in safe and comfortable homes.

In the recent STAR Survey, our team came 10th in Wales for overall satisfaction with Repairs and Maintenance, which is good, and fared really well in comparison to other landlords in North Wales.

Our team goal is, initially to become the best repairs provider in Wales and with the team we have in place, listening to our tenants, and utilising the professional skills from all parts of the team, we will hopefully achieve that.

What is your role with the WHQS?

Put simply, it's to ensure that all our homes comply with the standard. There are some tough



measures to achieve, which will impact our budgets, but we must strive to meet these requirements. As a landlord, these challenges are not unique to us.

One important area that I'm involved with is ensuring that as a housing team, we develop our plans to meet all aspects of WHQS. We will use these to inform Welsh Government (WG) of how we aim to achieve full compliance. Our first submission to WG is March 2025.

For more information about the WHQS and what it means for you, please see the article on page 4.



Getting to know us better

Fran Williams Customer Resilience Team Leader

What is your role?

Community Resilience Team Leader

Best thing about your job?

I love the variety my role brings and that I am able to play a part in helping individuals across Denbighshire take positive action in their communities.

Describe a typical day...

There is no such thing as a typical day for a member of the Community Resilience Team! This is partially because our work is led by the communities we support and partially because the breadth of the team's work is so varied.

We cover everything from supporting the development of community projects, to tenant involvement and even looking after the street naming and addressing function for the council – I told you it was varied!

My time is typically split between supporting the team with their endeavours, providing 'hands on' community development support to projects around the county, and working with colleagues identify ways in which we can help more communities to have greater control over the things they care about.

What would you like tenants to know about your team?

The Community Resilience Team is here to help you take positive action in your community; this could include anything from organising neighbourly social activities to establishing a resident's association. If you have an idea about how you could work with your neighbours to improve your community – we would like you help you bring the idea to life. Please get in touch!



What is your role in welcoming new tenants?

We really enjoy welcoming new tenants into our new build homes, and recently put on a welcome event for the new tenants that moved in Llys Elizabeth, Rhyl. As part of the welcome, we provided each new tenant with a welcome pack, sharing lots of useful information about things they can do in their local community, where to find social groups etc. Tenants also took part in willow weaving, boccia games and talked with the Community Navigators. For more information, take a look at pages 12 and 13.





Excited to welcome new tenants to Llys Elizabeth, Rhyl

'Beautiful' Rhyl Council homes build foundations for strong community

Council tenants are building a strong community at a newly finished Rhyl housing development.

Denbighshire Housing recently held an event for Llys Elizabeth tenants to help them meet their new neighbours and also chat to staff about their new homes at the former tax office.

Tenants got together in the grounds of their new homes to have a go at willow weaving, take part in bocchia games against each other and also talk to a Community Navigator to learn about suitable community support if needed.

Llys Elizabeth is designed for people aged 55 and over. The development at the site has seen the creation of a total of 12 new homes comprising eight two-bedroom apartments and 4 one-bedroom apartments which are situated in the building.

Each home is designed to offer high levels of energy efficiency to support the new tenants with the cost of living and help Denbighshire County Council and Wales achieve its targets of lowering carbon emissions.

The new Rhyl homes are part of Denbighshire County Council's continuing commitment to tackling accommodation waiting times by addressing the need for more social housing provision in the county.

'Absolutely beautiful' was how Sandra Williams described her and her husband Alan's new apartment home at Llys Elizabeth while enjoying meeting her new neighbours at the Denbighshire Housing event.

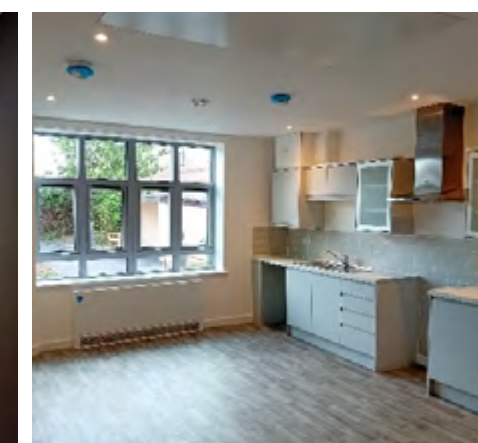
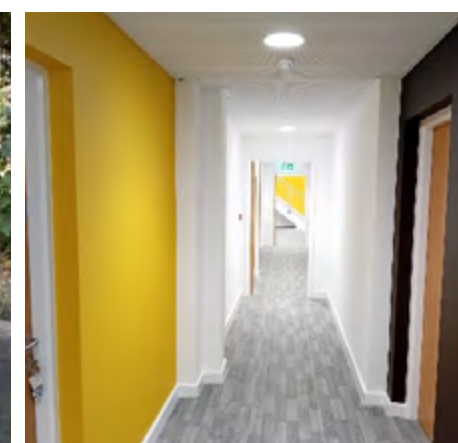
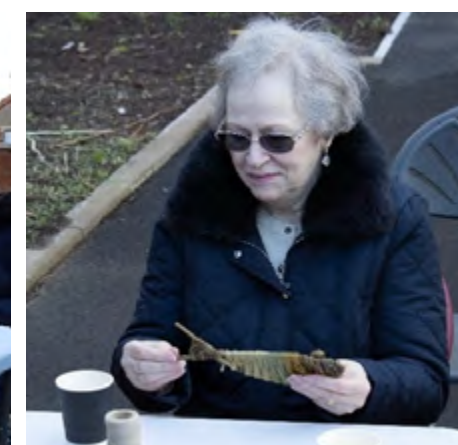
She said: "It's really lovely, I can't fault it at all. It's been like winning the lottery really, we have got such a beautiful place. It's really beautiful, they (Denbighshire Housing) have all been very attentive and I can't say anything bad."

Cllr Rhys Thomas, Lead Member for Housing and Communities at Denbighshire County Council, attended the event to meet the new tenants and also took a tour around one of the apartments.

He said: "I'm very impressed with those buildings, I'm impressed as to how spacious the one we saw there was, the two bedroom one and the large kitchen and dining area combined, so very, very nice."

"I've also talked to some of the residents here as well. They've been in here for about three weeks and they are very, very happy. One said at the moment they saw it, they wanted to move in straight away."

"There are some nice open areas depending on people's interests. Although they are in apartments, if they want to do some gardening and other things they obviously can. It's all on flat ground, people can walk from here to the promenade, they can walk into town and it's on a bus route, so it's a win-win."



Denbighshire residents benefitted from £215,000 in Pension Credit Campaign

Denbighshire County Council has been running a campaign over the last few months to encourage pensioners to find out about the Pension Credit they may be missing out on.

A total of £215,000 has been identified so far, with residents being supported by Citizens Advice Denbighshire to claim the benefits they are entitled to.

Over £58,000 has been Pension Credit claims however, other benefits including Attendance Allowance, Council Tax Reduction and Housing Benefit have also been identified as a result of full benefits checks.

On 29 July 2024, new changes were announced regarding eligibility for Winter Fuel Payments. They will now only be provided to individuals receiving State Pension Credit.

More people are being urged to check whether they qualify for the benefit worth, on average, £3,900 a year and unlocks additional support including Winter Fuel Payments, Council Tax, healthcare and if you're aged 75 or over, a free TV licence.

It's estimated that around 80,000 pensioners across Wales are entitled to Pension Credit but are not claiming it. Two letters have already been sent to eligible pensioners in Denbighshire to highlight the support available and encourage applications as well as follow-up telephone calls and partnership engagement.

Pension Credit provides crucial support to older people on low incomes, topping up their income to a minimum of £218.15 a week for single people or £332.95 for couples. For people who have reached State Pension age before 6 April 2016, they may be entitled to extra money if

they have made some provision towards their retirement such as savings or a private pension. This is called the Savings Credit and could be up to £17.01 for a single person or £19.04 for a couple.

Liz Thomas, Head of Finance & Audit, Denbighshire County Council said:

"I'm delighted the campaign has already resulted in thousands of pounds of unclaimed benefits being identified to help pensioners in Denbighshire. This is welcome news, and I would urge friends and relatives to start a conversation with an older person to find out what financial help may be available.

Claiming Pension Credit is important because it can provide access to a range of other entitlements. Some people may only be eligible to claim a few pounds in Pension Credit so feel it's not worth claiming, but they should consider the bigger picture as it opens the door to a lot of further support including the Winter Fuel Payment. Ensuring residents are maximising their household incomes can make a real difference to people's lives."

You can initiate your application up to four months prior to reaching State Pension age. You're allowed to claim any time after you reach State Pension age, but your claim can only be backdated for three months, as long as there is entitlement during that time. This means that the latest date to apply and still qualify for a Winter Fuel Payment is 21 December 2024.

You can find out if you're eligible for Pension Credit and how much you could get by using the pension calculator - www.gov.uk/pension-credit-calculator.

Graham Kendall, Chief Officer at Citizens Advice Denbighshire commented:

"The campaign has been really successful as we've been able to directly target those pensioners that may be eligible for Pension Credit by working in partnership with Denbighshire County Council.

"We deal with a lot of residents who are struggling to balance the books due to the cost of living but can be too proud to consider looking into what financial support they may be entitled to. We aim to break down barriers and encourage residents to open up and discuss their personal circumstances.

"We provide free, confidential advice and support including full benefits checks, complete forms, support customers to manage fuel poverty and provide housing advice."

If you're unsure if you are eligible, or would like help and support with your application, please contact Citizens Advice Denbighshire on 01745 346 775 or via their online form - www.cadenbighshire.co.uk/get-in-touch. Alternatively, claims can be made online at www.gov.uk/pension-credit or by calling the Freephone Pension Credit claim line on 0800 99 1234.

Residents urged to check if they can save on their water bills

Denbighshire County Council is working in partnership with Welsh Water to highlight schemes that may be able to help you and make your water bills more affordable.

Welsh Water's HelpU tariff helps households by putting a cap on the amount you have to pay for your water to reduce future payments. According to the analytics company, Policy in Practice, nearly 6 million UK households are eligible for, but not claiming £900 million of water social tariffs each year.

People are being urged to check whether they qualify for the HelpU tariff which could save customers up to £200 per household per year. Emails and letters are being sent to residents in Denbighshire to highlight the support available and encourage applications.

Currently, only 2253 Denbighshire households are benefiting from this tariff as many people are simply unaware.

If you qualify for the HelpU tariff, Welsh Water will cap your water bill, so you won't pay over a certain amount for the year. The annual HelpU charge for this financial year is £290.03 (£116.52 for water, £173.51 for sewerage).

To qualify for the tariff, someone in the household must receive at least one means-tested benefit such as Universal Credit or Pension Credit and the combined annual household income must be on

or under the threshold for the household size, for example, £11,600 for 1 occupant, £17,400 for 2 occupants and £18,800 for 3 or more people in the household.

In its 2023 Cost of Living research, water services regulator Ofwat found nearly one in four households were struggling with water bills yet only 7% of households surveyed reported receiving any financial support from their water company. Meanwhile, the Consumer Council for Water reported only 16% of households consider their water bills to be affordable.

Rebecca Price, Customer Services Director, Welsh Water said:

"We are committed to putting the needs of our customers first to support the most vulnerable in society. Working together helps us ensure we continue to help those who need it most.

"We offer a range of schemes which might be able to help if you are in receipt of benefits or have a low income. If you use more water due to a higher household size or medical condition, the Bill Cap-WaterSure Wales tariff puts a cap on the amount you have to pay for your water. Alternatively, our Cymuned Support Fund is a scheme offering short term support to working households who are struggling to afford the essentials.

"We urge Denbighshire residents to get in touch to find out how we can help you with your payments and discuss the best options moving forward."

Gwyneth Ellis, Lead Member for Finance, Performance and Strategic Assets said:

"Everyone should have access to affordable water. I would encourage all residents in Denbighshire to check if they are eligible for cheaper water bills.

"Many people are not aware they are entitled to these schemes so it's important we highlight them to ensure residents are maximising their household incomes.

"We're keen to offer ongoing help and support together with our partners especially to those struggling with day-to-day costs to support economic growth and help communities to thrive.

"If you're struggling to pay or are worried about any of your bills, please contact Citizens Advice Denbighshire for free, confidential advice."

For more information on all the schemes and to apply online please visit www.dwrcymru.com/costoflivingdenbighshire. If you're unsure if you are eligible, or would like help with your application, please contact **Welsh Water on 0800 052 0145** or **Citizens Advice Denbighshire on 0808 278 7933** / www.cadenbighshire.co.uk. Alternatively, check what you could be entitled to with the benefit calculators – www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators.



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denbighshire
County Council



WORKING DENBIGHSHIRE

FREE support service for anyone living
in Denbighshire!



IAN, WORKING DENBIGHSHIRE'S COMMUNITY HOUSING & EMPLOYMENT MENTOR SAYS:

"Hey, I'm Ian, the Community Housing Employability Mentor at Working Denbighshire. I'm here to help you find work and overcome any barriers in the way.

Whether you need help with a CV, job application, or interview practice, I've got you covered.

I can also find training courses for you and sort funding for them too.

If you're feeling unsure or need extra support, our wellbeing team is here to boost your confidence and get you ready for the next step.

We even offer paid 3-month work placements where you can gain experience, work part-time, and get comfortable in a new role.

Let's work together to get you where you want to be!"

SIGN UP TODAY:

working.denbighshire.gov.uk



COST OF LIVING Citizen's Advice Denbighshire

The cost-of-living crisis has an impact on all of us. The price of food and goods is higher, the amount it costs to heat our homes has increased, fuel is more expensive, and people's income just isn't stretching as far as it used to.

If you're finding it hard to keep on top of your bills, struggling with debt management, aren't sure whether your home is as energy efficient as possible, or would just like peace of mind knowing you're claiming everything you're entitled to, Citizens Advice Denbighshire is here to help.

We are able to offer free, confidential, impartial advice and support.

With an income maximisation session, we'll help make sure you're claiming what is yours and that you're receiving the correct amount of benefit. We'll help identify and manage any debts and arrears you might have.

We can refer you on to larger schemes and projects (whether that's for new boilers or insulation through Nest, or helping with whatever grants are available), and we'll help you with practical energy efficiency advice and small measures you can take.

With the cost of living continuing to increase, it's important that you have access to all the support you need before crisis, so get in touch today for free, independent, impartial, and confidential advice.

Call us on **08082 787 933**
or email **advice@dcab.co.uk**

Here are some helpful websites for more advice and support:

Denbighshire County Council

www.denbighshire.gov.uk/cost-of-living

Money Helper UK

<https://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en>

MoneyHelper joins up money and pensions guidance to make it quicker and easier to find the right help. MoneyHelper brings together the support and services of three government-backed financial guidance providers: the Money Advice Service, the Pensions Advisory Service and Pension Wise.

Turn2us

<https://www.turn2us.org.uk/>

Turn2us is a national charity, which tackles financial insecurity. It offers services to calculate what benefits you may be entitled to and runs a helpline to give support and information to people who don't have access to the internet or find it hard to get online. Their helpline is 0808 802 2000.

StepChange

<https://www.stepchange.org/>

StepChange provides free, expert debt advice either online or via the phone. You can speak to them about your debts, and they will look at your financial situation and advise you on what you can do next. Their debt advice helpline is 0800 138 111.

Mental Health – Samaritans

<https://www.samaritans.org/?nation=wales>

If you think it's an emergency or you would like to speak to someone on the phone, call the Samaritans. You can call the Samaritans helpline on 116 123 Monday to Sunday at any time, calls are free from mobiles and landlines.



Who is my Housing Officer?

Eryrys, Llanarmon Yn Ial, Llanbedr D C, Llanferres, Llanrhaeadr, Ruthin

Sian Frost

Bontuchel, Betws G G, Clawddnewydd, Clocaenog, Corwen, Cyffylliog, Cynwyd, Gwyddelwern, Llandrillo, Llanellidan, Llanfair D C, Melin Y Wig, Pwllglas

Dawn Barraclough

St Asaph, Trefnant

Louise Ellams

Prestatyn

Banastre Avenue, Caradoc Road, Ceg Y Ffordd, Central Avenue, Conwy Grove, Dawson Close, Dawson Court, Dawson Crescent, Dawson Drive, Ffordd Isa, North Avenue, South Avenue, St Andrews Drive.

Carmel Rider

Prestatyn

Brynteg, Cwrt Dowel, Llys Bodnant, Llys Llen, Llys Offa, Llys Owain, Pen Y Cae, Pendyffryn Gardens, Tywyn Ganol, Tywyn Isaf

Jeff Evans

Bryneglwys, Carrog, Gellifor, Glyndyfrdwy, Graigfechan, Llandegla, Llandyrnog, Llangollen, Llantysilio, Llanynys, Rhewl

Linda Mair Jones

Bodfari, Henllan, Nantglyn, Saron

Helen Stanfield

Denbigh

Blaen Y Coed, Bron Y Crest, Bryn Seion, Bryn Siriol, Clwyd Avenue, Cysgodfa, Factory Place, Henllan Street, Llwyn Mair, Maes Yr Eglwys, Pen Y Graig, Post Office Lane.

Helen Stanfield

Denbigh

Bod Nant, Bryn Garth, Bryn Stanley, Lloyd Avenue, Llwyn Eirin, Lon Llewelyn, Maes Hyfryd, Maes Y Dre, Maes Y Goron, Maesglas Avenue, Myddleton Avenue, Smithfield Road

Stephen Tones

Dyserth, Meliden

Louise Jones

Rhyl

Bath Street, Brighton Road, Brynhedydd Close, Eastville Avenue, Edgbaston Road, Elwy Drive, Ffordd Anwyl, Llys Brunswick, Lynwood Drive, Mayfield Grove, Oakville Avenue, Princess Elizabeth Avenue, Rhyl Coast Road, Sholing Drive, Weston Court.

Carmel Rider

Rhyl

Arfon Grove, Council Terrace, Cramer Court, Ellis Avenue, Fforddlas, Frederick Street, Gwalia Avenue, Kingsley Avenue, Marsh Road, Menai Avenue, Rhydwen Close, Rhydwen Drive, St Davids Square, Victoria Road.

Linda Streetly

Rhyl

Cae Thorley, Colin Drive, Foel View Road, Geufron, Glyn Avenue, Hen Afon Road, Holland Park Drive, Howell Drive, Leonard Avenue, Llys Elizabeth, Llys Morgan, Llys Pen Y Cefndy, Llys Y Gerddi, Mona Terrace, Pendre Ave, Penymaes Ave, Prince Edward Ave, The Crescent, Thornley Ave, Trellewelyn Close, Trellewelyn Road, War Memorial Court

Kath Sparrow

Rhyl

Maes Arthur, Maes Bryn Melyd, Maes Famau, Maes Gaer, Maes Isaf, Maes Maenefa, Maes Menlli, Maes Y Cwm, Maes Y Parc.

Jeff Evans

Rhyl

Aled Avenue, Brookes Avenue, Buckley Avenue, Cefndy Road, Ellis Avenue, Gwynfryn Avenue, Llys Glan Aber, Meredith Close, Meredith Crescent, Plas Cyril, Walford Avenue, Warren Road.

Lori Arnold

Rhyl

Vale Road, Victoria Road, William Street.

Paula Stubbs

Bodelwyddan, Cefn Meiriadog, Cwm, Rhualt, Rhuddlan, Waen

Paula Stubbs



Five Festive Friday tips

Not everyone is excited about Christmas this year, worried about money, heating, paying bills etc. But we thought we'd share some top tips that some of our tenants have mentioned to us, that might help you feel a little bit more in the festive season spirit.



Tip 1: Stick to a Christmas budget if you can. It's very easy to get into debt at Christmas, so work out a budget and try to stick to it. For advice on how to save for Christmas, this is a really good money planner from Money Advice Service. <https://www.moneyadvice.org.uk/en/tools/christmas-money-planner>



Tip 2: The festive food shop! Why not add one or two Christmas food items a week to your food shop, rather than buy it all at once, spreading the cost? For more advice visit <https://www.moneyadvice.org.uk/en/articles/saving-money-for-christmas>



Tip 3: Before you buy presents for family and friends, maybe ask them what they need, or suggest what you'd find helpful this year? A gift doesn't have to be material, it can be **a simple act of kindness** that means so much more. For example:

- Maybe offer someone a kid-free night, or could use a free babysitter?
- A night off cooking, or make a homemade meal?
- A night in with friends, giggle and a catch up.
- Maybe someone needs a warm drink, a chat and just someone to listen?
- Helping make the festive season bright by just being there for each other?

Whatever it is, we can all help each other in some way with an act of kindness.



Tip 4: Don't forget you! This time of year can get a little too much and stressful. Take some time and get outdoors, have a winter walk at one of the many beautiful locations in Denbighshire and blow those cobwebs away! For ideas of walks, visit <https://www.denbighshirecountryside.org.uk/walking/>



Tip 5: Spend time with people if you can, smile, laugh and something funny on the telly...but most of all...try and **have a little fun!**