

Your Newsletter

The tenants' newsletter for Denbighshire Housing



Issue ten – Autumn 2022

Announcing this year's Denbighshire Housing Tenant Award Winners!



Our second, Denbighshire Housing Tenant awards celebrated the achievements and participation of you, our tenants, the work within your communities and showcasing projects that are happening across Denbighshire.

Over 95 guests attended this event at the 1891 Restaurant, Rhyl, including tenants, local business sponsors and key housing and council professionals. We'd like to thank our main sponsor, Brenig Construction and TPAS Cymru for compering the awards, making everyone feel at ease and enjoy the evening.



For more pictures from the night and to see who won, go to page 4!

Cost-of-Living advice

We are all experiencing the effects of the cost-of-living crisis right now. To support our tenants, we are here to help, offering guidance, advice and referrals to partners about:

- Living on a squeezed income
- Help if you're struggling with bills, rent payments
- Budget and debt advice
- Benefits and entitlement
- Everyday money

Council schemes and support, including help with free school meals, school uniform and equipment grants, council tax reduction scheme etc.

For more information and useful links, see page 17.

Heating your homes this winter advice, page 20 The Renting Homes (Wales) act – latest news, page 7

Damp and condensation advice, page 18



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Inside this issue

Denbighshire Housing:

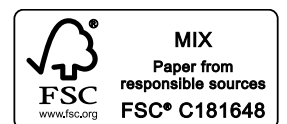
Message from Geoff	Page 3
Message from DTARF	Page 3
Renting Homes (Wales) Act	Page 7
Getting to know us	Page 10
Help the Council improve their services	Page 16
County Voice	Page 16

Investment & Improvements:

Planned works and energy improvements	Page 8
Fire safety update	Page 9
Electrical, smoke, heat and carbon alarm testing	Page 11
New homes update	Page 12
Housing disrepair claims	Page 13
Damp and condensation advice	Page 18-19

Community & People:

Tenant Awards	Page 4-5
Getting to know our tenants	Page 6
Working Denbighshire profile	Page 13
Community Resilience update	Page 14-15
Cost of living advice	Page 17
Keeping warm this winter	Page 20



Bulletin Board

To report any maintenance issues, contact Customer Services:
Mon-Fri 9:00am – 5:00pm 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 080031 63 105

NHS Direct Wales
111
Floodline
0345 988 1188
Type talk
0345 602 6340



Message from Geoff Davies, Lead Officer, Community Housing

Welcome to the latest edition of your newsletter.

We hope that you find the information in this edition useful and interesting. As ever, if there is anything you would like to see in future issues, please let us know.

Firstly, we were delighted that we were able to hold our second Tenants Awards night recently. This was a celebration of the people that live in our communities and the incredible time and commitment that people give to help their neighbours and others in their communities. More information is included on page 4. We received well over 50 nominations and whilst only a few can win, we would like to have given all nominees an award to recognise the amazing things they do for others.

Another topic on our minds is the cost-of-living crisis and the difficulty we all face with the costs of running a home during this autumn/winter.

Please, if at any time you need any advice, support or just need some basic information on using your heating system, finances etc, please let us know. We will do what we can to help and also have access to information and support.

If you have any money worries, then please let us know and we can refer you to the Citizens Advice Denbighshire (08082 787 933) or, if you'd prefer, you can contact them directly for free and impartial advice if you prefer.



Denbighshire Tenant and Residents Federation (DTARF) Update:

Hello everyone. At DTARF we continue to meet managers from the Denbighshire Housing Team every month to discuss issues. Since the last newsletter, we have raised issues we have had about heating repairs, the plan for fitting solar panels on homes, and training for tenant's groups among many other things

We have received updates on the forthcoming Renting Home Wales Act, which will mean a new tenancy contract for all households in Denbighshire. We met the grounds maintenance contractors, were given information on the new housing standards proposed for Wales, and we had an update on enquiries, complaints and compliments that the team have dealt with.

In the new year we are meeting with Rhys Thomas, the new Lead Member for housing at the council and also, we want to plan what we need to be doing in 2023, so please let us know if you have any issues, concerns or compliments as well!

Finally, big congratulations to everyone who was nominated, shortlisted or was a winner at the recent tenant's awards. We are so proud to be able to celebrate the great things that people do within Denbighshire communities.

**Yours
John, Chair DTARF**

Denbighshire Housing Tenant Awards 2022 – Introducing our winners



We are so proud to announce our second Denbighshire Housing Tenant Award winners!! Huge congratulations to:

Tenant of the Year
Gwenda Williams

Young Tenant of the Year (under 25)
Makayla Flynn

Good Neighbour of the Year
Gwyndaf 'Jock' Davies

Housing Resident / Community Group of the Year
Trem y Foel Community Centre, Ruthin

Customer Services Award for Denbighshire Housing
Owen Evans

Community Project of the Year
Community Hwb Cymunedol Pengwern, Llangollen

Community Hero
Jonathan Lawton

Garden of the Year – Community area
Gellifor and Llangynhafal

Garden of the Year – Tenant/individual
Carolyn Philips and Alun Scourfield

Garden of the Year – Communal area
Llys Offa

Lockdown Hero
Debbie Holmes

Denbighshire Housing Award
Adam Garvey and Richard Jones from GCS Heating Services





Councillor Rhys Thomas, Cabinet Lead Member for Housing and Communities, said: "The Denbighshire Housing Awards continue to go from strength to strength. It's great to bring communities and individuals together to celebrate what they have all achieved through hard work, determination and simply being great tenants."

"Day in day out we see a huge amount of positive work going on throughout our communities led by our tenants to help support and improve the quality of life for all."

"Being shortlisted for an award is an honour for those groups and individuals and our thanks go to them for their efforts in their local communities".

We had some great feedback on the night from tenants and other guests, here are just a few comments that we wanted to share:

Thank you so much for a lovely evening last night, the food was lovely, the atmosphere was lovely, and I thoroughly enjoyed the whole event. There were some inspiring people collecting awards.

I really enjoyed hearing the stories of tenants. Great welcome, great atmosphere and great food. Thank you!

Thank you for a lovely evening, well done all winners, sponsors and staff putting up with us.

Great evening. Well planned & executed! Lovely food, nice welcome drink. Wouldn't change anything. Thank you!

A fantastic evening, recognising residents of Denbighshire. Thank you so much.

It was a real delight to attend the awards and to see all the good work DCC Housing does, and to see the strong community spirit of our tenants. It was a real honour to be able to present an award.

Oh wow! What a lovely night, so well organised and lovely food. Thank you for the invite.

Fantastic place, fantastic evening, thank you to all that made this evening amazing

Many thanks for a great, well organised evening. Didn't realise you covered such a large area. Thank you again.

It was a lovely evening, thank you to everyone who arranged it!

Wonderful evening, very good examples of kindness, respect and heartfelt. The warmth and caring nature of people is extraordinary. Well done Denbighshire Housing.



Getting to know us – spotlight on one of our tenants and member of Denbighshire Tenant and Residents federation (DTARF).

Gina Jones, Rhyl

Gina runs the Phoenix Centre, her local community centre in Rhyl. In recent years the centre has been transformed and is a vibrant welcoming place for the whole community.

Gina put Rhyl on the map when she won the Housing Champion Award at the Chartered Institute of Housing Cymru Awards in 2019.

Please tell us about your role?

I make sure the centre is open and available for people on the estate just to pop in or attend an organised event. We try to put things on for all ages in the community.

We have run events such as movie nights, knitting clubs, IT sessions, homework clubs, CV writing, Arts / crafts, Youth club, gardening, parties and day trips. Some of these I arrange myself and some others we have partner organisation that come and help like Rhyl College.



What do you enjoy about working for your communities?

I just enjoy being able to help people on the estate, either for them to pop in and not be on their own, or to join in an activity that will help them in some way.

We want the centre to be warm and welcoming this winter.

Describe a typical day?

We have had a lot of work carried out on the estate with new roofs, and solar panels so it has been busy arranging all this and dealing with some of the issues.





The Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 update

Changes to The Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016

The Welsh Government has recently announced that it is implementing changes to The Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016. This affects our tenancy agreements from the 1 December 2022. We have put together this helpful guide to help explain what these changes mean to our tenants.

The Renting Homes (Wales) Act (RHA) 2016 – what is it & what does it mean?

- From the 1 December 2022, the Welsh Government plans to implement the RHA. This will change the way we rent our homes, improving the rental experience for you.
- The new act will improve the way we rent, manage, and how you live in rented homes in Wales.

What do these changes mean to you?

- You won't need to do anything. We will provide you with new contracts/agreements in the next 6 months.
- Under the new law, you will be known as 'contract-holders'. We will replace tenancy agreements with 'occupation contracts'.
- For 'contract-holders' (you) this will mean.
 - Receiving a written contract setting out your rights and responsibilities.
 - Improved succession rights, these set out who has a right to continue to live in a dwelling, for example, after the current tenant dies.
 - More flexible arrangements for joint contract-holders, making it easier to add or remove others to an occupation contract.

How will it affect you?

- You will receive a replacement occupation contract within 6 months of the 1 December.
- New tenants after the 1 December will sign the new occupational contract in the usual way and will receive a copy within 14 days.
- The occupational contract will be set out in a 'written statement'. This statement will confirm the terms of the contract and contain all the required contractual terms as provided by the Welsh Government. These are:
 - **Key matters:** For example, the names of the landlord and contract-holder and address of the property. These must be inserted in every contract.
 - **Fundamental Terms:** Covers the most

important aspects of the contract, including how we get possession and our obligations regarding repairs.

- **Supplementary Terms:** Talks about the more practical, day to day matters applying to the occupation contract. For example, the requirement to notify us if the property is going to be left unoccupied for four weeks or more.
- **Additional Terms:** Addresses any other specifically agreed matters, for example a term, which relates to the keeping of pets.

Will I still be a tenant under the RHA?

Yes, you will still be a tenant. Your tenancy agreement will be known as an occupation contract.

What happens to my existing tenancy agreement after 1 December?

Our current tenancy agreements will convert into an 'occupation contract', which will replace the tenancy agreement. Many of our existing terms will stay the same but some things will change e.g. we need to give you more notice of a rent increase.

Will these changes affect my rent?

No, this has no effect on your rent or cost you any money.

What do you need to do?

When you get your new Occupation Contract, you will need to read it, and make sure you understand your rights and responsibilities.

These changes are supported by tenant organisations such as TPAS Cymru and in partnership Shelter Cymru.

For more information and some frequently asked questions created by the Welsh Government, visit <https://gov.wales/renting-homes-frequently-asked-questions-tenants>



Whether you're a landlord or a tenant it is important you know what the changes mean for you.



Optimised Retrofit Programme (ORP) update

Phase 2 - Rhydwen Drive, Rhyl

Work has started on the Welsh Government-funded energy improvements programme to the rest of our properties on Rhydwen Drive, Rhyl.

Improvements include:

Fitting solar panels – these will generate electricity and store it in connected batteries to allow tenants to use energy in the evenings. Better external wall insulation – this will help reduce drafts and the energy needed to heat each home, especially during winter time.

Councillor Rhys Thomas, Lead Member for Housing and Communities said: "It is great to see the start of the second phase of energy improvement work at Rhydwen Drive. Following completion these homes will have improved energy efficiency in times of rising fuel costs and will also better support the council's work to reduce our carbon footprint across the county."



Canol y Dre, Ruthin

Our second programme, that will be starting this autumn, is on 17 properties in Canol y Dre, Ruthin.

This project will improve:

The appearance, roofs and rendering. These improvements will help reduce drafts and the energy needed to heat homes, especially during the winter.

Improve energy measures, including solar panels, batteries and external wall insulation on four tenant's homes. The solar panels will generate electricity, that will be stored in the batteries, to allow tenants to use energy in the evenings.

Cllr Rhys Thomas, Lead Member for Housing and Communities at Denbighshire County Council said: "We are really pleased to introduce our energy improvement works to our council homes on Canol-Y-Dre.

"Following completion, these homes will have improved energy efficiency in times of rising fuel costs and will also better support the Council's continuing work to reduce our carbon footprint across the county."

Aberadda, Llangollen – Flat Roof Replacement Scheme

Denbighshire Housing has started working on replacing the flat roof at our Aberadda flats in Llangollen. The flats were originally built in the 1960's, when flat roofs were popular. We have repaired the roof in the past, but there are flaws in the general design of the flats. We are now working to improve the roof and overall appearance of the flats.

We are building over the existing roof, with a steel frame pitched roof. This type of roof will get rid of all the problems the old roof had, as well as improving the thermal efficiency of the flats because we can insulate it better. The new slate like roof will also blend in better with the surrounding properties.

As part of the project, we are also upgrading and improving the outside appearance of the flats. This will modernise the look and feel, as well as improve the overall insulation of the building. We are really excited about this project and similar projects that we have planned across Denbighshire to improve the energy efficiency of our tenants' homes.

Proposed South Elevation
Scale 1:100





Fire Safety Update

In our last newsletter, we mentioned that we have a new Fire Safety & Compliance Officer, Andy, who you may have already seen in your area reviewing fire safety risk assessments for all our communal areas. To get to know Andy a bit better, why not read about what his role is, his likes and what he does in his spare time on page 10.

Fire safety is important, and something that we should all be thinking about. Below are some ideas about how you can be safer in your home.

One of the most important things we can all do is have a plan in place for fire, as such the following information is worth noting:

If you discover a fire in your own home:

1. Raise the Alarm:

- Try to stay calm and let everyone in your home know that they need to evacuate to a safe place, well away from the building.
- If you live in a flat be sure to alert your neighbours either side of you as you leave.

2. Call the fire and rescue service on 999 when safe to do so

- Provide as much information as you can to the emergency services. This will include your address and any other useful information you may have, for example:
 - Is everybody out?
 - Are there any persons unaccounted for?
 - Is there any person onsite who may need assistance to evacuate?

Escaping during a fire

• Plan your route

- It's a good idea to plan your escape route in advance.
- if you live with young people make them aware of the plan and consider having a practice evacuation.

If it's not in your home, but the flat or house next door.

If you live in a block of flats or in a terraced or semi-detached home and a fire starts in the house or flat next door **evacuate immediately.**

if you live in a block of flats, and the fire is on a different floor or at the other end of the building (in larger blocks), it may be safe to stay in the building and await further instruction from North Wales Fire & Rescue upon their arrival. However, if you do not feel safe evacuate immediately.

Reporting fire safety defects

If you see any fire safety defects, please let your housing officer know, or call our contact centre on 01824 706000.



Getting to know us! Introducing **Andy Thomas,** Fire Safety & Compliance Officer



What is your role?

As the Fire Safety & Compliance officer it's my job to review our communal areas, to make sure they comply with all current fire safety requirements and the Fire Safety Act (insert date).

That's a very formal answer, so in simple terms I will visit our sites annually to identify areas that need improvement and areas of good practice.

One of the other things I'm currently working on, is putting together an information pack to provide advice and guidance on fire safety for all tenants.

The best thing about your job?

There are lots of things I love about this job but here are a few of the best things:

Meeting new people! I love a good chat, so if you see me wandering around your site, please say "Hello", and if you have any queries, I'll do my best to help.

Helping to keep the people of Denbighshire safe. I'm keen to help people learn about fire safety, how easy it is to have a positive impact on your home and your community.

The travel. As a newbie in post, I had never really appreciated it before. Denbighshire is a beautiful place to visit, and I consider myself very lucky that I get to see so much of it on my travels.

Describe a typical day

The first thing I do, every morning, is log on and check if any urgent issues have come in that need immediate attention.

After that, I normally have a planned programme of inspections for the week, which gets me out and about visiting sites.

Typically, a site visit involves an inspection of all the communal areas, so that's the entrance, the hall, stairs, landing and doors, plus any store and service cupboards. The most common issue I see is that people use their escape routes for storage. It's always worth asking yourself the question "If the items stored on the escape route were ignited could I still escape past them?"

What is your favourite film?

Not Backdraft or The Towering Inferno you may be pleased to know. I'm a fan of classic Sci-fi movies, particularly the late 70's and 80's so Ghostbusters, Back to the Future, Star Wars, Alien, Gremlins. Alternatively, anything I can sing along too, very badly I should add.

What is your favourite music?

Anything rocky, so Queen, Led Zeppelin, The Who, Pink Floyd, all the way through to more modern bands like Guns & Roses, Metallica and Nirvana. Yes, I know that's not very modern but, in my defence, I was part of that generation that wore torn jeans and sleeveless lumberjack shirts before it was retro!!



Electrical, smoke, heat and carbon alarm testing

Why do we have to do electrical and alarm testing?

As part of the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 implementation, from the 1 December 2022, we need to do an electrical safety check on all our properties. This test is sometimes called an electrical installation condition report (EICR) test.

What is an EICR test?

This test will check the electrical installation (electrics) in a property. This include light fittings, sockets, wiring and fuse boxes are all safe and are not fire hazards and of the highest standard.

What is Periodic Inspection and testing (PIT)?

This is just another name for an EICR that the Welsh Government mention on their website.

What do you need to do?

We will need to visit each home and have access to every room to check the electrics.

What happens during a test in our tenants' homes?

1. Our housing maintenance team will arrange for either one of our qualified engineers, or a suitable contractor to come and look at the overall quality, performance and safety of the electrics in your home.
2. When we arrive, we will take a look around and check to see if anything needs replacing or repairing. For example, some of our older properties may need a new fuse box, also known as a consumer unit.
3. We will then need to turn off your main power supply for a bit to check the circuits for faults.
4. When we turn your electric back on, we will do a 'live' electrical test. Also testing the quality of the earthing in the house.
5. Lastly, we will check switches, sockets, power outlets, light fittings etc.

6. Any dangerous faults found will be fixed at the time. Any minor faults will be scheduled for repair at a later date.
7. As part of the test, we will also replace your smoke, heat and carbon monoxide alarms, where you have them, if they need upgrading.

How long will the testing take?

A typical test will take around 3-4 hours, depending on the size of the home.

What will happen after we have done the testing?

Within 7 days, we will provide a tenant with a report of the test, including any issues that need to be fixed.

How often do we have to do an EICR check?

Every 5 years, or when we have a change in tenancy.

Some of our properties have already had an EICR test recently. If you have had one of these tests, we will get in touch when it is due to be retested in 5 years.



New homes update

Prestatyn

In our last newsletter, we shared some pictures of our new apartment development on the old library site on Nant Hall Road in Prestatyn. Since then, our contractor has been making good progress with the construction works, and the steel frame is now in place. This gives a good impression of how big the development will be once it's finished. Construction of the fourteen apartments will be complete next spring.



Rhyl

Last year we told you that we'd bought the old tax office in Churton Road, Rhyl to convert it into apartments. Work has now started on site and the twelve apartments will be ready for tenants next summer.



Dyserth

Last year we bought some new affordable homes on the Cysgod y Graig development in Dyserth, listed on Tai Teg. We have been given the opportunity to buy some more this year, and these include three semi-detached houses and four bed apartments. We hope to be able to tell you more in our spring edition and will be available on Tai Teg soon.



Passive Homes

In the next newsletter, we'll be able to share with you our finished energy efficient Passivhaus houses and apartments we've been building in Denbigh and Prestatyn. With energy prices rising, the benefits of building this type of housing will be even more important in the future. Keep an eye out on our social media channels for up-to-date news.





Working Denbighshire - How can they support you?

In addition to how we can help you, Working Denbighshire is an employability service, which aims at supporting Denbighshire residents, aged 16 and above, who are at risk of poverty.

We offer support with a range of different barriers you may face, like,

- Help with finding a job
- Finding a work or volunteering placement
- Training and further qualifications
- Confidence building and motivational support
- Creating or improving a CV
- Interview skills and techniques
- Filling in application forms
- Developing basic IT skills
- Help to understand your benefit entitlements
- Help with funding for equipment, interview clothes and certificates
- Funding of travel costs to interviews, work placements and training (at the discretion of your mentor)

If you sign up, you will be assigned a mentor, who will support you with reaching your desired goals. You can discuss any kind of barriers that you are facing in improving your personal situation.

Within Working Denbighshire, they have Employment Coordinators. They engage with various employers across Denbighshire and beyond, providing you with a list of job opportunities available to our participants that are offered exclusively to our team.

Working Denbighshire work closely with many different organisations, including Job Centre Plus, Careers Wales, North Wales Training, Youth Services, us, Supporting People and many more.

If you feel that Working Denbighshire can offer the support that you need, please contact them on: Tel: 01745 331438 / 07342 070635 or Email: workingdenbighshire@denbighshire.gov.uk



Housing Disrepair Claims – Beware of scammers

We know solicitors are knocking on doors offering to help tenants on a “no win no fee basis” who have outstanding repairs and suggesting compensation may be due. We don't want to frighten people and certainly do not want to stop tenants from challenging us, but please be cautious. You may be liable for costs if you change your mind and if you are unsuccessful in court.



If you do have an outstanding repair, please:

1. Let us know by calling us on 01824 706000 or email housing@denbighshire.gov.uk
2. If you are unhappy with how we are dealing with it, please use our complaints procedure and we will look into it.
3. If you are still not happy, please contact the Ombudsman for Wales, who can award compensation and there will be no cost for any of this.

Community Resilience Update

Our community resilience team have been busy over the summer, delivering support, advice and fun activity programmes within our communities. These include:

Let's Play Out

During the summer holidays, we worked in partnership with South Denbighshire Community Partnership (SCDP), Denbighshire Leisure Ltd, and Denbighshire Play. Together we delivered Let's Play Outside sessions in Corwen (Wednesdays 10:30am-12:30pm) and Llangollen (Wednesdays 2:00-3:00pm) for over 100 people! Activities included sports, messy play and art crafts. Families said that they really enjoyed the weekly sessions and can't wait for them to be on every school holidays. Please keep an eye on SCDP's Facebook page for more information <https://www.facebook.com/SouthDenbighshireCommunityPartnership>



Cost of Living Roadshows

Working in partnership with Welsh Water, Nest, Warm Wales, Cambrian Credit Union, Citizen's Advice Denbighshire, Wales Illegal Money Lending Unit, and Working Denbighshire, our team have been on tour across the county, advising people about the cost-of-living crisis.

We wanted to visit our communities, listen to people about their worries, offer advice and support about rising costs of energy, fuel and food. Partners were able to share ideas, hints and tips to help over the coming months.

Over 450 residents came along to our roadshows, with 26 being referred for more support. Feedback from the events showed that this is something that communities want, and we hope to be out and about again soon. Please keep an eye on our social media accounts for up-to-date information.



Croeso Cynnes / Warm Welcome

This winter, we are supporting the Croeso Cynnes/Warm Welcome project, where a safe, warm place is available to anyone. Denbighshire County Council are putting together a timetable of venues that will be hosting Warm Welcomes across the County. People can pop along to a local hub, where they will find a warm welcome, fun activities and a hot cuppa! Once this timetable has been confirmed, it will be announced on the Council's website, so keep an eye out. Everyone is welcome!





Eat Well, Cook Slow Project:

After a successful pilot in 2020/21, Denbighshire Housing and Citizens Advice Denbighshire came together again to deliver slow cookers to our tenants.

The idea of the project was to connect with tenants who were at risk of falling into food and fuel poverty this winter. 66 tenants were given a slow cooker, fresh ingredients, a recipe book, and a link to online demonstrations on how to prepare meals, along with energy saving measures.

We checked in with tenants to see how they were getting on, as well as having a chat about maximising household income, reducing expenses where they could, resolve debt issues, energy and utility advice, and how to apply for grants and entitlements.

As this was such a successful project, we will continue to work with Citizen's Advice Denbighshire in the future, to help our tenants.



Pengwern Community Hub Official Opening:

This August, the Chairman of Denbighshire County Council officially opened the new Pengwern Community Hub. Families from the local community came along to enjoy activities including arts, crafts, nature, hair braiding, bracelets, keyring making to name a few. There was also bike health checks, entertainment and refreshments.

This new hub aims to increase opportunities for people to raise skills and aspirations, as well as resources to deliver activities and services to support people.

Cllr Rhys Thomas, Lead Member for Housing and Communities, said: "We are really proud to continue working with our partner organisations in supporting the hub's continued work to increase the overall wellbeing of the local community."

Margaret Sutherland, Chief Executive Officer of South Denbighshire Community Partnership (SDCP) said: "SDCP are delighted to have worked in partnership with Denbighshire County Council, Denbighshire Housing and Friends of Pengwern on the development of the community hub, which will provide enhanced activities and services for the Llangollen community.

"Extensive consultation in the summer of 2021 identified services and activities that the community felt were needed. All partners have a very clear aspiration for the hub to provide a place that the Llangollen Community will embrace and actively contribute to the management and direction of."

Keep an eye on the Hub's Facebook page for up-to-date activities they have planned.



Do you want to become a digital champion?

We recently surveyed our tenants and asked them about their digital skills, and if they'd like help and support to get online.

Over 400 tenants took part, and 134 said that they'd like to become a digital champion, helping others get online. This is an amazing response and has helped us, in partnership with Digital Communities Wales, put together a course to support this. We are contacting everyone who said they'd like to become a champion, and once we have enough numbers, we will run this in the New Year either face to face or online.

If you'd like to know more about this, or want to become a digital champion, please contact our Community Resilience team on community.resilience@denbighshire.gov.uk



Help the Council improve their services!

The Council wants to hear from you about services that they provide, how you feel about Denbighshire, and your local area.

Please complete their stakeholder survey to tell them what you think!

To take part and have your say, please visit <https://countyconversation.denbighshire.gov.uk/project/682> or scan the QR below:



The online survey is running from 7 November 2022 to 27 February 2023.

The results from the survey will be used to help us improve services that are important to you, as well as monitor the progress of our Corporate Plan.

To review our current Corporate Plan, visit www.denbighshire.gov.uk/corporateplan

To keep up to date, visit the county conversation portal at www.countyconversation.denbighshire.gov.uk and sign up for Y Panel!

Paper copies of the survey are also available in Denbighshire Libraries / One Stop Shops.

Finding out more – County Voice

As part of the Council, we wanted to let you know about County Voice, Denbighshire's residents' newsletter. It gives you all the latest news, updates about the Council's services and information about community events, activities and much more.

If you would like to subscribe to ensure you receive your copy via e-mail, sign up at

<https://countyvoice.denbighshire.gov.uk/english/subscribe>.

You can read the latest edition here ...

<https://countyvoice.denbighshire.gov.uk/english>

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www.denbighshire.gov.uk



Cost of living Crisis advice

Citizen's Advice Denbighshire

The cost-of-living crisis has had a detrimental impact on all of us. The price of food and goods is higher, the amount it costs to heat our homes has increased (with the energy price cap set to increase again later this year), 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, and confidential 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.

If you're a member of the Armed Forces community, we have dedicated specialist energy advisers ready to help. Thanks to our partnership with Woody's Lodge, with funding from the Energy Redress Scheme, our Force for Energy Project is able to offer you a home visit - alongside our usual offer of advice, support, and referral - to properly assess whether your home is as energy efficient as possible and give you small measures to help towards that.

With the cost of living set 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 08082 787 933

Email advice@dcab.co.uk

See an adviser in our virtual waiting room (Monday-Friday, 9.30am to 4.30pm)

<https://attenduk.vc/area-1>



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 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 116 123 Monday to Sunday at any time, calls are free from mobiles and landlines.

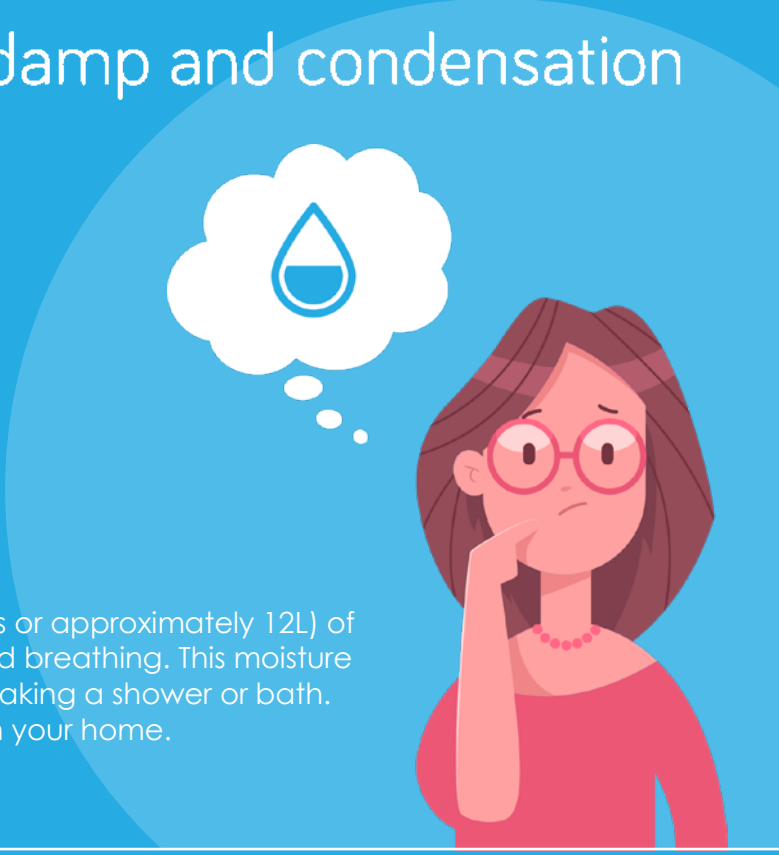
Advice on dealing with damp and condensation

What is damp and condensation?

Damp, condensation and mould growth in your home are the visible signs that the air in your home is too wet. When warm, moist air comes into contact with a cooler surface and you see water droplets, this is condensation. For example, when your windows steam up.

Where does it come from?

The average family produces 20 pints (2,5 gallons or approximately 12L) of moisture every day through cooking, bathing and breathing. This moisture is increased when clothing is dried in the home, taking a shower or bath. The good news is you can reduce the moisture in your home.



Whole Home - Keeping your home ventilated and warm is great at reducing condensation. Here are some tips to help:



If your home is warm, condensation is less likely.



Where you have vents in your windows and rooms, make sure they are open to help airflow.



Leave internal doors open so air can flow around your home.



Keep curtains open on sunny days to allow the warm air from the sun to circulate to other rooms. Close your curtains at night to help reduce heat escaping.



Don't use liquid paraffin or bottled gas room heaters.



Try to dry your clothes outside to prevent any excess moisture in your home.



Make sure your heating is the right temperature (**18-21 degrees**) to keep your rooms warm. Keep the heating on a low level for longer periods in cold weather.



Where you don't have vents, keep windows open for a short time each day.



Wipe all cold and moist surfaces with a dry cloth so they are dry.



Where possible, **don't** dry your clothes indoors on airers or on radiators. If you can't, put them in your bathroom with the heating on, the window open or extractor fan on and close the door.



Don't put furniture or beds directly against walls.



Living Room - This room can be where people spend most of their time, so condensation is common. Here are some tips to help:



Open your windows for a few minutes a day to encourage air flow.



Make sure your curtains aren't too close to the window, at least 15cm.



Keep your window and wall vents open.

Bedrooms - All bedrooms get condensation at times, empty rooms where the heating is turned off. Here are some tips to help:



Keep the window vents and windows open for a few minutes a day to encourage air flow.



Make sure your curtains aren't too close to the window, at least 15cm.



Switch on your central heating overnight.



Don't put your mattress directly on the floor.

Bathroom - This room always gets condensation because it is a moist room. Here are some tips to help:



Turn on your central heating so the room is warm.



Keep the bathroom door shut to stop moisture escaping.



Wipe all cold and moist surfaces with a dry cloth so they are dry.



Always use the extractor fan, turn it on when having a shower or bath and let it run until the condensation has cleared.



When running a bath run the cold tap first to reduce steam.

Kitchen & Utility Rooms - When you cook or do washing, it can make your room moist. Here are some tips to help:



Close doors and keep windows open.



Make sure the room is ventilated.



Always use the extractor fan when cooking, turn these on to clear the air, and leave them on when you've finished for about 5 mins.



If using a tumble dryer, make sure the vent goes outside.



Put lids on pans to stop steam escaping.



Keep the kitchen door shut to stop moisture escaping.

Keeping warm this winter – heating benefits

Did you know that there are a number of payments, advice and support available for you over the winter months for heating your home? Here are just a few things to consider:

Winter Fuel Payment

If you were born on or before the 25 September 1956, you could get between £250 - £600 to help you pay your heating bills. You would normally get a Winter Fuel Payment automatically if you are eligible and you get a State Pension or another social security benefit (not Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction, Child Benefit or Universal Credit). For more information call 0800 731 0160 or visit <https://www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment>.

Cold Weather Payment

You could get a payment of £25 for each 7-day period of very cold weather between 1 November and 31 March. The average temperature in your area must be recorded as or forecast to be zero degrees or less for 7 consecutive days. If you're receiving one of the benefits below, then you should be paid this automatically.

- Pension Credit
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Universal Credit
- Support for Mortgage Interest

For more information visit <https://www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment>



National Concessionary Fuel Scheme

You could get free solid fuel or cash allowance for fuel if you're an ex-employee of the National Coal Board (NCB) or British Coal Corporation (BCC). You need to qualify to get the fuel allowance through the National Concessionary Fuel Scheme (NCFS), and you can only get the cash allowance if you're already getting fuel through the scheme. To check if you're eligible contact NCFO on 0345 759 0529.

For more information about any of these heating benefits, please visit <https://www.gov.uk/national-concessionary-fuel-scheme> or speak to your housing officer on 01824 706000

For more information about support schemes available at the moment, please visit <https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/benefits-grants-and-money-advice/benefits-grants-and-money-advice.aspx>

