

# Your Newsletter

The tenants' newsletter for Denbighshire Housing



Issue nine – Summer 2022

## Renting Homes Act Update

The Welsh Government has recently announced that it is implementing The Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016. This affects our tenancy agreements from the 1 Dec 2022. We have included some information to help explain what these changes mean to our tenants, you!

We will give you a written contract, setting out all your rights and responsibilities.

### What is changing?

You will hear and see new terminology being used, e.g.

- A tenancy agreement will be called an Occupation Contract.
- You will be called Contract Holders and not tenants.

Tenancy agreements will be replaced with Occupation Contracts over the next 6 months.

**THE WAY  
YOU RENT  
IS CHANGING**  
**for tenants & landlords**

For more information about this and what it means for our tenants, please go to page 6–7

### Tenant Awards

It's time to make your nominations! See page 8.

### New Homes Update

New builds, conversions and Passivhaus progress. See page 11.

### Service Charges

Your questions answered. See page 14.

# Inside this issue

## Denbighshire Housing:

Message from Geoff	Page 3
Message from Denbighshire Tenant and Resident Federation (DTARF)	Page 4
STAR Survey 2021 results and what next	Page 4–5
Renting Homes (Wales) Act	Page 6–7

## Community & People:

Getting to know us	Page 7, 15
Tenant Awards	Page 8
Working Denbighshire profile	Page 12
Community Development update	Page 13
Cost of living	Page 16

## Investment & Improvements:

Planned works and energy improvements	Page 9
Fire Safety Update	Page 10
Grounds Maintenance Update	Page 10
Housing Development Programme	Page 11
Service Charge–FAQs	Page 14

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## 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 for Denbighshire Housing

**Welcome to the latest edition of your newsletter. As ever, I hope you find it interesting and please let us know if there is anything you want us to include in future newsletters.**

There is lots to read about in this edition. We have included information on our partnership with Citizens Advice Denbighshire as we are aware of the cost of living issues affecting everyone's household finances. Citizens Advice have experienced advisors who can support anyone regardless of your income or household circumstances.

We have also included feedback from you following our most recent survey (STAR) of our tenants. We had our largest ever response so thanks to everyone for taking the time to respond and we assure you that we use this information to develop and improve what we do.

Now the Covid lockdown days are over we want to work closer with our communities. We are committed to supporting our existing tenants' groups and the representative group, DTARF, but we also want to find new ways to involve tenants. We will shortly be looking for tenants to get involved in an on-line session looking at how we can develop our repairs service.

## New Tenancy

In this newsletter you will see information on the new Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016. This is a major change to legislation in Wales on how homes are rented and managed. We have included some information on how this will affect you. We are expecting to be able to convert the existing tenancy agreement we use into the new "Secure Occupation Contract" as part of the change of legislation, so there will be no additional terms in your tenancy other than what is in the legislation.

You don't need to do anything and we will send you the new contract (tenancy) with further information later in 2022. I can assure you it will not remove any rights or security you currently have.

## New Quality Standards

We are also expecting new quality standards from Welsh Government. This is how we ensure our homes are quality homes for people to live in and informs how we deliver programmes for roofs, kitchens and bathrooms for example. This is called the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) and we are expecting some additional standards for us to include in future. Information on our current programmes is included in the newsletter.

## New Grounds Maintenance Contractors

We have recently re-tendered our contract for ground maintenance. This is the service which ensures we can keep communal open spaces and shared gardens clean, green and tidy.

As a result, we now have a new contractor and we delighted to have appointed Greenfingers. They are experienced grounds maintenance contractors with a great track record throughout the North West / UK. Starting a new contract is always a challenge due to the need to recruit new staff, get to know the area and manage the early growing season challenges of very changeable weather.

Once we get fully up and running we know that Greenfingers will be a great partner and work closely with us and our communities to keep our open spaces looking great.

As ever, if you have any enquiries or need any support please let us know. Whilst we hope we can provide great services we know things can go wrong so please use our complaints procedure. We use information from all our complaints to make sure we can improve.



## Message from Denbighshire Tenant and Resident Federation (DTARF)

DTARF has been representing Denbighshire tenants for over twenty years.

We are always looking for new volunteers and new tenants associations to join us. We hold monthly meetings in various community venues around Denbighshire. If you or your association was to join us we would hold at least one meeting a year within your community. We also pay travel expenses to and from meetings, so if anyone would like to get in touch you can email on [dtarf1@outlook.com](mailto:dtarf1@outlook.com) we always welcome new faces.

Best wishes, John, chairman of DTARF

## Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR)



Firstly, we'd like to take this opportunity in thanking everyone who took part in our recent survey. We had 755 responses (23%), of which 709 (94%) were online, which is fantastic news!

### Your top priorities include:

- Having a good quality home.
- Timely and good quality repairs service.
- Good communication between Denbighshire Housing and tenants.

We'd like to thank everyone who took part, as your views and opinions really matter.

### What next?

From the STAR Survey results, we will be focussing on:

- Setting up a repairs forum with tenants to look at ways we can develop our repairs and maintenance services.
- Getting out and about in our communities more and hold events and roadshows in our communities.
- Re-establish our "Green Rangers" champions to help monitor the grounds maintenance service and ensure value for money for service charges.





### Overall service

**87%**

of tenants said they were satisfied with the overall service we provide.



### Quality of Home

**84%**

of tenants said they were satisfied with the overall quality of their home.



### Neighbourhood

**85%**

of tenants said they were satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live.



### Repairs

**77%**

of tenants said they were satisfied with the overall repair service.



### Rent

**85%**

of tenants said they were satisfied that their rent provides value for money.



### Service Charges

**29%**

of tenants said they were satisfied that their service charge provides value for money.



### Listen and Act

**64%**

of tenants said they were satisfied that we listen to their views and act upon them.



### Safe and Secure

**87%**

of tenants said they were satisfied that we provide a home, that is safe and secure.



### Easy To Deal With

**82%**

of tenants said they were satisfied that we are easy to deal with.



### Anti Social Behaviour

**62%**

of tenants said they were satisfied with the way we deal with anti social behaviour.



### Your Say

**66%**

of tenants said they were satisfied that they have a say in how services are managed.



### Decision Making

**59%**

of tenants said they were satisfied with opportunities to participate in decision making.



### Trust

**79%**

of tenants said that they trust Denbighshire Housing.

## Changes to The Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016

The Welsh Government has recently announced that it is implementing The Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016. This affects our tenancy agreements from the 1 Dec 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 Dec 2022, the Welsh Government plans to implement the RHA. This will change the way we rent our homes, improving the rental experience for for all tenants whoever their landlord is.
- 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 wont need to do anything. We will provide you with new contracts/agreements.
- Under the new law, you will be known as 'contract-holders'. We will replace tenancy agreements with 'occupation contracts'.
- Overall the new legislation will supersede conditions in current legislation with some additional rights for tenants.
- 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 Dec 2022.
- New tenants after the 1

Dec 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 gets 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 you 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 Dec?

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 your rent?

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





## What are the Fitness for Human Habitation (FFHH) requirements?

This change in the law helps ensure we maintain our homes to prevent them from becoming unfit for you to live in. Highlights include:

- Reducing damp and condensation.
- Making sure that there is a:
  - Hard wired smoke alarm on each floor of a home.
  - Carbon monoxide alarm in proper working order in each room, where there is a gas, oil fire or solid fuel appliance.
- Ensuring that we do an electrical safety inspection at leave once every five years and there is a valid electrical condition report in place.



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

## 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

[gov.wales/renting-homes-frequently-asked-questions-tenants](http://gov.wales/renting-homes-frequently-asked-questions-tenants)

**Working together**

**for a safe home for all**

## Getting to know us – spotlight on one of our residents

### Gwyndaf “Jock” Davies – Ruthin

#### Please tell us about your role in your community?

I have worked for the community I have lived in since moving here. I am chair of the Residents Group.

#### What do you enjoy about working for your community?

I enjoy helping all the residents whether when just moving in or on a daily basis with shopping, getting to appointments and also with their gardens. I enjoy helping them to have their own quality of life.

I want people to enjoy the company of others at our activities so help people as



much as I can and organise lots of different events and activities.

#### Describe a typical day?

I arrange activities in our centre such as the weekly fish and chip supper night and also a monthly Sunday lunch. This not just for neighbours but also other residents from the Ruthin community. We also

occasionally involve children from the nearby school in some activities.

I generally try to help with anything anyone needs help with and if I can't help I get in touch with the council on their behalf if they wish.

I enjoy working on the gardens here and it's good to keep the gardens area looking good.

#### What is your favourite film?

Jesus of Nazareth.

#### What is your favourite music?

60's, 70's 80's but my favourite song is “My Heart Will Go On” from the Titanic film by Celine Dion.



# Denbighshire Housing Tenant Awards

29 Sep 2022 at 1891, Rhyl

We are proud to present our annual tenant and community awards after being cancelled because of the recent pandemic.

This is a prestigious evening, sponsored by Brenig Construction, celebrating the achievements and participation of our tenants, the work within their communities in which they live, and projects across Denbighshire.

## Award categories

- **Tenant of the Year**
- **Young Tenant of the Year**
- **Good Neighbour of the Year**
- **Housing Resident / Community Group of the Year**
- **Denbighshire Housing Customer Service of the Year**
- **Community Project of the Year**
- **Community Hero of the Year**
- **Garden of the Year - Tenant**
- **Garden of the Year - Communal Area**
- **Garden of the Year - Community**
- **Lockdown Hero**

## Nominate now!

Online:

[www.denbighshirehousing.co.uk/awards](http://www.denbighshirehousing.co.uk/awards)

Email:

[housing@denbighshire.gov.uk](mailto:housing@denbighshire.gov.uk)

Phone:

01824 706000



**Closing date: 29 July 2022**







# Housing Improvement Programme Update



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

## Energy Improvement Programme – Optimised Retrofit

Great news! We have been successful, again, in being awarded an energy grant called the Optimised Retrofit Programme from the Welsh Government. Last year, we made improvements to 50 homes in Meliden.

This year's grant will improve 50 homes in Rhydwen Drive and Rhydwen Close, Rhyl. The improvements include:

- Fitting solar panels (PV) to generate electricity from the sun. We connect these panels to a battery, which stores the electricity to be used in the evening.
- External wall insulation to the outside of the homes using rockwool, a natural, low carbon, fireproof material. This helps reduce drafts and the need to have the heating on as much in the winter.

At the moment, we are looking to see if these improvements can help tenants reduce their energy usage in the future, and how we can work with tenants to understand their needs better. Sadly, not every house is suitable for solar panels because of the direction the house faces the sun. In this case, we will survey your home to see what other energy measures might help.

As well as tenants seeing an improvement in the energy efficiency of their homes, this grant, in conjunction with Working Denbighshire, is helping us get local people into construction work. Our 'Construction Academy' has helped 10 people, in the local area, get experience on the project site. Of these, 6 people have secured employment with our subcontractors.

We will keep you updated on our progress in the next newsletter and share with you our plans for other areas in Denbighshire.

## Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) Internal Improvement Programme

Due to the Covid-19 restrictions over the last 2 years, we are, understandably, behind on our planned kitchen and bathroom improvement programmes. We are pleased to say that, later this year; we will be restarting this project, and will be in touch to let you know more

details of when your home will be upgraded, in date order of when your property was last improved.

As part of this project, we will also be doing electrical installation upgrade work if necessary.

These improvements will ensure that your homes remain compliant with the WHQS, which is the Welsh Government's standard to which our homes must meet. Homes selected for the first round of works will receive letters later in the summer to arrange a survey prior to the improvement work starting.



## Electrical Testing Programme

We have restarted our electrical test programme of our homes. This is a 5-year, periodic check of the fixed wiring in your home. We complete this to ensure that the wiring is safe, and to advise us of any upgrade work that might be required. The inspection takes approximately 2-3 hours to complete, depending on the size of the property, and done by our approved electrical subcontractors.

We try to inspect our homes in date order of when they were last rewired. As part of the inspection, we will replace all smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, to ensure these remain in good order. We will write to you when it's time for your home to be inspected, to provide with more information about the check. These inspections are mandatory, and must be completed, similar to your annual gas service. Please help us by making sure you're available for these inspections to take place.

## Fire safety update

In the last newsletter, we updated you on the new Fire Safety Act. With the help of a new Fire Safety & Compliance Officer, we will better understand what this means to everyone. The new officer will help us understand this new legislation, what relevant measures we need to put in place, ensuring all communal areas are clear of items and belongings, etc. Over the next few months, the officer will start visiting your homes to see what we need to put in place.

The new act also mentions a few things that you will need to do to help keep you and others safe. For example, if you live in a building, which the Fire Safety order refers to, a block of flats, or a house occupied by more than one household, you will need to:

- Comply with any fire safety measures that have been put in place and not interfere with these. For instance:
  - You should not tamper with or remove the self-closing device from the fire door at the entrance to your flat, or
  - Replace a fire door with one that does not offer proper fire protection.
- Report any fire safety defects to your housing officer or call our maintenance line on 01824 706000.

We will keep you updated on what else the new act means and how we are making changes to the way we improve fire safety.

## Grounds maintenance update



We are really pleased to announce that Greenfingers Landscape Ltd have won our grounds maintenance contract earlier this year. This contract is for 3 years, with an option to extend for up to two more years.

We were really impressed with the company's willingness to engage with you and residents, as well as their priority to support biodiversity, and plans to reduce their carbon footprint. They are hoping to recruit local residents to help deliver our maintenance programme to their highest standard.

Our Greenspace team will be working closely with Greenfingers, making sure that our estates, complexes, open spaces and play areas are all well maintained.

Some of the maintenance will include:

- 18 grass cuts per year, which means a cut nearly every 2 weeks throughout the season.
- Shrubs and borders to be:
  - Maintained throughout the year to ensure they are not growing over windows or doors and pathways are kept clear.
  - Dug over during the winter months at the same time we collect leaves.
- Hedges will be cut at the end of the summer, when the bird-nesting season is over. Some pruning work will need to take place during the year, as long as there is no risk to nesting birds.
- Regular litter picking and the emptying of the bins at our 28 play areas.

We are also hoping to expand our wildflower areas reducing the need for grass cutting, encouraging a better habitat for bees and other pollinators as well as other species of wildlife.

More information on what Denbighshire Council are doing as part of their action plan on Climate and Ecological change can be found at [www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/environmental-health/climate-and-ecological-change/wildflower-meadow-project.aspx](http://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/environmental-health/climate-and-ecological-change/wildflower-meadow-project.aspx)



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

## New homes update

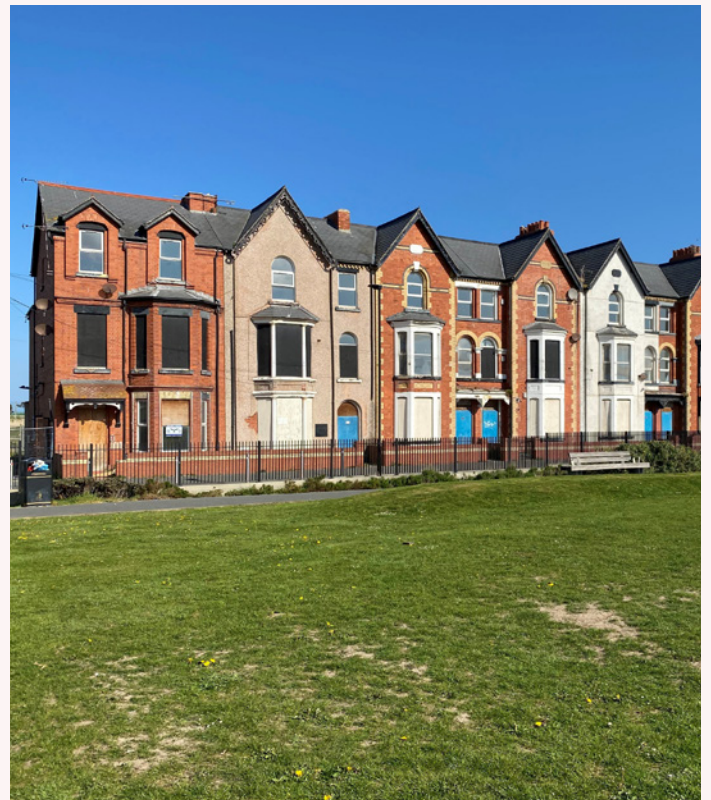


### Llys Llên, Prestatyn (Old Library)

Last year we shared an update with you about our plans for the old library, Prestatyn. We've appointed local builders Wynne Construction from Bodelwyddan to do the work. They have demolished the building in preparation to build a development of 14 new Council apartments in its place. They are making good progress putting up the new apartments and we will keep you updated on how things come along.

### Aquarium Street, Rhyl

Another great project which is about to start is the renovation of eight terraced houses overlooking the park in Aquarium Street in Rhyl. We've bought these properties from the Welsh Government and just appointed Denbigh-based company, Adever Construction to convert them into four bedroom family homes.



### Passivehaus Developments

Our contractors are making great progress with the energy efficient, Passivhaus developments in Caradoc Road, Prestatyn and Llwyn Eirin, Denbigh. Both of these developments will be completed this summer and we're looking forward to being able to show you pictures and films of the new homes once they're finished.

## Working Denbighshire @ Llwyn Eirin

An unemployed young man from the Vale of Clwyd has been given the chance to build a career in the world of construction thanks to a partnership between a leading developer, Brenig Construction, Denbighshire Housing & Denbighshire County Council.

Kieran Rowlands, 23, has spent three months working on the ground-breaking new environmentally friendly development Llwyn Eirin on Henllan Street, in Denbigh.

The local firm is building 22 sophisticated new Passivhaus homes, the first council house project in the county for over 30 years.



Kieran, from nearby Accar y Forwyn, was taken on by Brenig as part of the Council's Working Denbighshire-Work Start scheme to provide work experience for long-term unemployed, and he is impressing the construction team on site.

Site Manager John Breslin, said: "He has passed every test with flying colours and has earned his Construction Site Certificate which will allow him to work on any site in the country.

"He's really come out of his shell and has proved himself to be a very good and valuable member of the team. He is very willing and eager to learn, is such a nice lad. He's local and it's great to help someone like him learn the skills which can provide him with a job for life."

Kieran said: "I was unemployed and was recommended to the Council and came here for a week at first and then earned a three-month contract.

"I've passed my CSCS certificate and my other tests first time and I'm hoping to get some training on the digger and to perhaps get my contract extended here.

"I've really enjoyed it and I've learned a lot, met a lot of good people and everyone has been really kind and helpful and just so focused on doing the job well.

"It's really helped me with my confidence and when I told my family that I'd passed the tests, they were so happy I had to tell them to calm down."

This paid placement at Brenig Construction was supported by Denbighshire Housing, Denbighshire County Council and funded by its Working Denbighshire Work Start project.

Brenig Construction Joint Managing Director Howard Vaughan said: "We're very

committed to training because people like Kieran and many others with us are the lifeblood of the industry and will be so important as we seek to grow as a company and provide more employment in the future.

"It is also vital that we as a company are involved at the cutting edge of new developments in construction because schemes like this are definitely the housing of the future.

"They use sophisticated insulation and advanced building techniques and materials to cut carbon use and can reduce energy bills to a third or less in homes that are modern, comfortable and pleasant to live in."



# Community Development Update



## Community Arts

We have relaunched our community art sessions in partnership with Denbighshire Leisure this year. Trem Y Foel Community Centre is the first community to benefit from the sessions. Tenants have made some beautiful decorative pieces made from weaved willow, as well as creating spectacular glass art. Some of these sessions have also involved local primary schools as part of an intergenerational project. It is so nice to see everyone back out in the community in face-to-face settings.



## Community Centres

The Phoenix Centre, Rhyl, is getting back on its feet after Covid-19, thanks to Gina Jones and the volunteers at the centre. They have held sessions as part of the Nature for Health project, which has included art and craft making, walking groups and trips to Chirk Castle and Ty Mawr Country Park. The volunteers at the centre are very much excited about their plans in the summer. (See photo 3)



## Community Clean Up Day

In March, we worked together with the Council's waste team and local residents to help clear out any cluttered gardens in Bruton Park, Rhyl. It started as a very windy day, thanks to the storm, but the day ended on a high with around 10 tonnes of waste being collected and removed. A huge thank you to all the residents that helped clean up that day and make Bruton Park a place to be proud of.

## Keep Active

This is another partnership project with Denbighshire Leisure that has started this year, encouraging the community to keep active. These sessions are all tailored around the group and vary from armchair exercises, Boccia to gentle community walks.

## Get involved!

If you have any ideas about how we can make improvements in your community, please get in touch with us.

We are looking for people who would like to become involved in community projects, and with our support, make positive changes in their local area.

Do you have a hidden talent you can share with your community or would you like to have your say on some of the decisions made by the Council?

If this is something you are interested in, please contact Sarah Jones on **01824 706873** or email: **Sarah.Elizabeth.Jones@denbighshire.gov.uk**

## Service Charge – Frequently Asked Questions



We have recently been getting some questions about service charges, and what does it mean. We thought this useful guide would help answer some of your questions.

### What is Service charge?

Every household pays rent for services that all tenants can receive such as repairs and housing management.

You normally have to pay an additional service charge for the extra services that we provide you specifically, if you use shared, communal facilities or outside areas in addition to your rent.

These are costs that were previously included in the weekly rent but we are now required to charge those households that receive these specific services the actual costs for providing these services.

### What does it include?

Some examples of these services are:

- Lighting of communal areas
- Communal laundry facilities
- Communal door entry system repairs
- Grounds maintenance, ranging from grass cutting to inspection and repairs of playgrounds
- Communal area heating
- Fire safety costs
- Communal area cleaning
- General maintenance repairs and improvements

### How do we work service charge out?

Each year we work out the service charge by looking at the actual costs for providing these services in the previous year. We don't make any profit ourselves, and the amount charged is fixed for the year, same as your rent. The total cost of these services are divided between the tenants that use and have access to them.

### Why is my service charge different?

Each communal building has different facilities & outside areas for our tenants to use.

### How do you make sure I am getting value for money?

We regularly look at the costs involved and how we deliver services. This can include grounds maintenance, or our electricity suppliers, to installing energy efficient lighting in communal areas to lower running costs.

Where services are provided by contractors we tender these contracts to ensure we get the value for money and quality for service charge payers.

All these services are eligible for Housing Benefit or Universal Credit for those of our tenants in receipt of those payments.

For more information about our service charges, visit [www.denbighshirehousing.co.uk/service-charge](http://www.denbighshirehousing.co.uk/service-charge)



# Getting to know us – spotlight on one of our housing staff

## Vicki Shenton, Customer Engagement and Marketing Manager

### What is your role?

I work with lots of officers in housing and across the local authority daily. The main part of my job is making sure that we engage, listen and hear what our tenants are saying, as well as managing our brand. I deliver Denbighshire Housing's website and social media accounts, as well as producing all of our marketing materials for a variety of projects & events that we are delivering.

At the moment, the major projects that I am delivering marketing, communications and engagement for are:

- Housing development programmes – building new social housing in Denbighshire
- Our energy improvement programme, i.e. solar panels, air source heat pumps, heating upgrades etc
- Our Tenant Awards in September
- Producing this newsletter
- Improving our website, making sure it's accessibly compliant
- STAR Survey results
- Social media strategy

### The best thing about your job?

The people! Tenants, the people I work with, and the communities they live in are some of the best things about my job. Over the past two years, like most of the teams, I have been working at home, but I have still been able to hear and see what our tenants are up to online. Our social media accounts and website became the first place where we could keep in

touch with our tenants. It was crucial changing the way we listen, engage and communicate.

Supporting the voice of the tenant is really important to me, and in everything that I do. In 2020, I became a member of the Board of Directors for TPAS Cymru. It is important to me I support the shaping of policies and services across Wales that affect tenants, as well as improving tenant participation.

### Describe a typical day

The first thing I do, every morning, is log onto our social media accounts and catch up on anything that is effecting our tenants' lives, check any messages that we might have had overnight & anything that is trending in social housing.

At the moment, I spend most days getting things ready for our tenants, who will move into our new homes in Denbigh later this year. I am planning a few open events for people to come along and look at our new homes, producing user guides and videos, etc. We are also launching our tenant awards for this year, so I am making sure that everything is going to be ready for those.

Every day is different, but at the heart of everything that I do, the decisions I make are for our tenants and their communities.

### What is your favourite film?

I'm a true romantic at heart, so anything that is a romantic period drama or romantic comedy! The list is endless but highlights include *Pride & Prejudice*, *The Proposal*, *Downton Abbey*, etc.

### What is your favourite music?

This is embarrassing, but I like good old-fashioned pop music from the 80's & 90's! Showing my age now!! I've been known to listen to west-end musical music as well, most recently *Six*.



### Cost of Living and what it means for you.



**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 787933**

**Email [advice@dcab.co.uk](mailto:advice@dcab.co.uk)**

**See an adviser in our virtual waiting room (Monday-Friday, 9.30am to 4.30pm)**  
**<https://attenduk.vc/area-1>**

### Introducing our Lead Member for Housing, Homelessness & Community Safety



**My name is Rhys Thomas and I'm pleased to be able to introduce myself to you as Denbighshire County Council's Cabinet Lead Member for Housing, Homelessness and Community Safety.**

I feel very honoured to have been given this responsible post.

I've spent many years working in education. Following that I worked for a range of charities and for the last few years I have been running a local community food bank.

The belief that every individual and every family has the right to live in safe, good quality housing has always been important to me.

As Lead Member I will do all that I can to support all the hard-working and fully committed housing officers who work in this service.

**Rhys Thomas**