



Customer Newsletter



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Shropshire Towns and Rural Housing



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Making Flavourful Food go further



Are you ready to give your cooking skills a refresh and learn how to stretch flavourful meals further?

We've partnered with OsNosh, Oswestry Community Kitchen, to deliver a series of free cooking workshops. With all ingredients and equipment provided, you can look forward to learning amazing tips and tricks from professional chef, Ben. Each course consists of three sessions (usually taking place over three weeks) and every household that completes the workshops will also receive a free slow cooker to take home.

Our taster sessions have been an enormous success and we look forward to helping more residents unlock their inner chef!

To sign up visit our website, speak to your Housing Officer, or email us at involvement@starhousing.org.uk, or to go straight to the form, use the QR code below.

The workshops are running for the whole year so there is plenty of time to get cooking!



Calling all green-fingered wannabes ... Our 2023 Gardening Competition is back this summer!

Categories

**Best
Garden**

**Best
Container**

**Best
Communal
Garden**

**Best
Wildlife
Friendly**

If you want to take part, get in touch by emailing involvement@starhousing.org.uk or speak to your Housing Officer.

Further details about the categories and closing date will be announced soon!



Springing into Action

As you have seen, our Grounds Maintenance Teams have been working hard over the winter – even when the weather was really bad!

One very rainy day, our Oswestry Team decided to reuse some scrap wood and create some new planters. These have now been filled with flowers and placed at Monkmoor Court, Yorkfields and Ifton View. We think they look fabulous!

The Team have also removed weeds, and created some beautiful shrub beds. Good job Team, these look lovely!

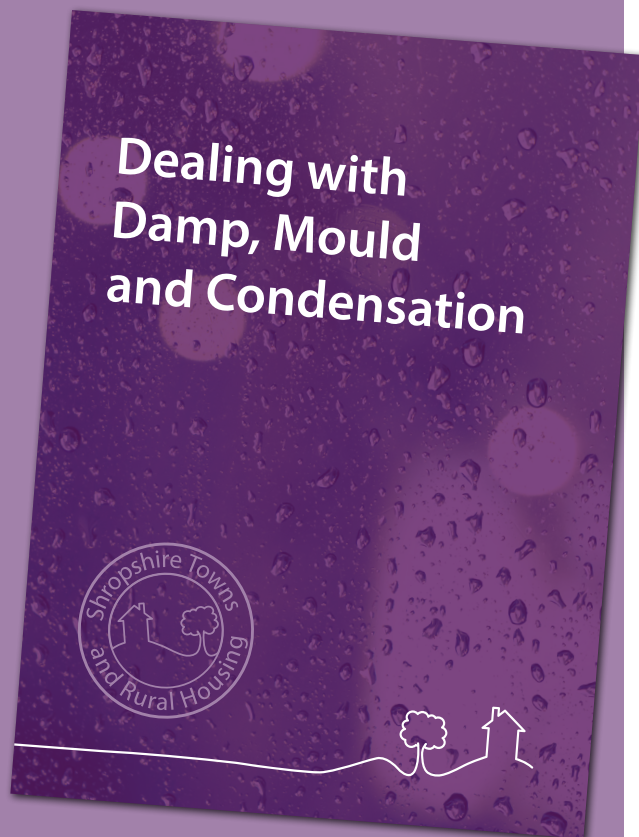


Have you seen our Damp and Mould Advice Guide?

It's chock full of handy hints to help you keep up with your responsibilities as a tenant and helps to show when it is an issue you need to deal with and when you need to call in the experts (that's us!)

Don't forget to tell us when something needs repairing or if other work needs doing in your home.

You can get in touch by calling **0333 32 12 200**, finding us on Facebook or Twitter, emailing us through the website, or using the Tenant Portal



Free home safety advice

Did you know... Shropshire Fire & Rescue Service offers a free Fire Prevention Service? The Team will visit you in your home and offer you personalised fire safety advice, to help you live well and keep you and your family safe.

You can get in touch with the Fire Prevention Team by calling **01743 260 200** or you can email **safeandwell@shropshirefire.gov.uk**



This could be 'alarming'

Do you test your smoke alarms? Did you know that testing your smoke alarm regularly is part of your tenancy agreement?

As a result, we expect you to test your smoke alarms once a week and let us know if they are not working properly. Don't forget to clean the dust off them once a year! (And then test it again to make sure it is still working!)

If you are deaf or hard of hearing, get in touch with our Repairs Team so we can make sure that you have the right smoke alarm for you.



Tell us if you spot something

Do you live in a block of flats or Independent Living Community with shared areas?

If so, it is important you tell us straight away if you see any faults or damage, or if your fire doors do not self-close.

Fire doors are an important fire safety feature. They only protect you and your family if they work properly, as they help stop the spread of fire when they are closed.

We are currently carrying out the Annual Fire Door Survey to make sure that all the doors meet safety standards. Please do get in touch with our Repairs Team if you have any questions.



Don't forget!

Please do not keep or store anything in your communal areas, corridors or front doors! Our Housing Officers take a zero-tolerance approach to this as it is a health and safety requirement.

One of the biggest fire risks is rubbish or junk stored in the wrong place – it can stop you from escaping your home in an emergency or cause you to fall.

If our Housing Officers spot items where they shouldn't be, you could:

- ▶ be charged for rubbish removal
- ▶ be in breach of your tenancy or lease and risk facing enforcement action.



Domestic Abuse Support

Are you worried that someone you know may be being abused? Or, are you worried for yourself?

It doesn't have to be an emergency before you can find help. It's important you tell someone, you are not alone.

We are not a domestic abuse service but we can support you to get the help you need, you can also call the Shropshire Domestic Abuse Service on **0300 303 1191** or visit their website at **shropsdas.org.uk**



Worried about debt?

Did you know that nearly one in ten people turned to loan sharks to help cover the costs of Christmas 2021 and there are fears that this number was even higher over Christmas 2022.

We have a dedicated Money Advice Team who can help and advise with money worries – which we know is more important than ever at the moment. You can call us **0333 3212 200** for more information and support.

If you are worried about debt or need cash fast, Loan Sharks can look tempting, but these are not your friends and the debt can often spiral out of control. If you have borrowed money from an illegal money lender, you can get help and support via **www.stoploansharks.co.uk** or call **0300 555 2222**.

If you are looking for a loan at the moment, before you borrow any money, make sure your lender is genuine by visiting the Financial Services website which can be found at **www.register.fca.org.uk** and you could also consider the local, ethical, not for profit alternative lenders you can use. You can find a local community lender or Credit Union here **www.findingfinance.org.uk**



Food Banks

Food banks are lifelines for millions of people who may be affected by the cost-of-living crisis and struggling to afford basic needs like food, rent, and utilities.

Below is a list of food banks in our areas.

Albrighton Food Bank

St Mary's Parish Centre, Vicarage Fields, off High Street, Albrighton, WV7 3EQ
Monday to Friday 9.30 am - 4pm delivery only
07767 390860
www.albrightonparishchurch.org.uk/albrightonfoodbank.htm

Bridgnorth Food Bank

Number Seven, West Castle Street, Bridgnorth, Shropshire, WV16 4AB
Monday 10.30-12.30
07960 285520
www.bridgnorthfoodbank.co.uk
contactus@bridgnorthfoodbank.co.uk

Broseley Foodbank

Community Centre, Wilkinson Avenue, Broseley, TF12 5DY
www.facebook.com/Broseley-Residents-Committee-and-Food-Bank
01952 360013

Gobowen Food Bank

Preeshenlle United Reformed Church Schoolroom, St Martins Road
Wednesday Mornings 10.00-12.00
Delivery so contact them first, no referral needed
07907 972 657

Oswestry & Borders Food Bank

56 Beatrice Street, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY11 1QW
Monday & Thursday 11am-2pm
01691 671 940
www.oswestryandborders.foodbank.org.uk
info@oswestryandborders.foodbank.org.uk
Facebook: Oswestry and Borders Foodbank

Shifnal Food Bank

St Andrews Church, Church St, Shifnal TF11 9AB
07562 384 965
shifnalhelpfoodbank@shifnalbenefice.org.uk

The Highley Community Project

Severn Centre, Bridgnorth Road, Highley, WV16 6JG
hcprojectshrops@gmail.com
Facebook: The Highley Community Project



For more information about food banks and emergency food, please visit:

www.shropshirelarder.org.uk/emergencyfood

Cost of Living Payments 2023

Millions will receive new Cost of Living support from Spring 2023. Exact payment windows will be announced closer to the time but are spread across a longer period to ensure that consistent support is offered throughout the year. The first payment expected is £301, and will be received by those eligible in the Spring of 2023 and second payment of £300 is expected during the Autumn. Some households will be entitled to a £150 disability payment in the Summer.



Good to meet you **Yordan**

What made you want to be a Tenant Board Member?

I have been living in a STAR Housing property for over six years and I decided that it was worth me investing some of my time to make sure that the Tenant's experience is heard. STAR makes people's lives easier and I wanted to make sure that keeps happening.

Do you enjoy it?

Being a Board Member is a great opportunity! It really helps with my personal and professional development and is something I have been able to put on my CV. I would really love to see more people get involved .

Is it a lot of work for you?

It is about four meetings a year which works for me because I also work full time. There are emails that you have to read. I have also volunteered for a sub committee because it interests me, so these are about four more meetings a year .



Tell us something we don't know!

I ended up in Oswestry completely by accident! I came here on a Sunday afternoon and Monday morning I started working! I really like it here and love the quiet.

Team update

Welcome Zoe!

Our Financial Inclusion Team has grown from the start of 2023. We now have 3 Financial Inclusion support staff operating between Oswestry and Bridgnorth. We are delighted to introduce Zoe Flynn, who will be working alongside Sara Shelston & Traci Ewen. Traci is our Financial Inclusion support for Bridgnorth tenants, and Sara operates within Oswestry. Zoe will provide support between both areas. You can get support by e-mail moneyadvice@starhousing.org.uk or contacting STAR Housing on **0333 32 12 200**.



Our Board are waiting for you!

Are you passionate about where you live? Do you want a bigger say in what happens? We are looking a new Tenant Board Member to join our Board of Directors. **You could even earn up to £1,500 per year as a thank you for your hard work!**

Our Board provides an important way of making sure that we uphold our values and keeps an eye on our decision-making, ensuring that we behave fairly and responsibly.

This a brilliant opportunity for someone who is looking to get involved or even to add some skills to their CV!

Get in touch at involvement@stahousing.org.uk to find out more!



This year it's our 10 year anniversary!

Keep a look out for
our celebration events
coming soon!

