



Customer Newsletter



Like us on Facebook for regular updates and advice
Shropshire Towns and Rural Housing



Follow us on twitter @star_housing

Visit us online at www.starhousing.org.uk



*Congratulations
— Ernest*

We are delighted to announce that one of our residents, Ernest, was a finalist for Tenant of the Year at the Housing Heroes Awards!



**The
Cherry
Blossom
is in full
bloom**

P2



**We want
your
opinion!**

P9



Congratulations Ernest

We are delighted to announce that one of our residents, Ernest, was a finalist for Tenant of the Year at the Housing Heroes Awards!

Ernest is a brilliant neighbour who often goes out of his way to help out and support his neighbours. He does the gardening, fixes minor repairs, offers lifts to appointments and has even cleaned other people's homes when needed. Ernest's friend, Nigel, said "He never says anything, but he just helps. He even picked me up from the hospital – never said a word about it".

Ernest also started a local walking group to get people out and about and has inspired others to become better connected with their neighbours. When asked about his dedication to helping others Ernest simply said "We are a community – if you can you do and sometimes you get it back. We're neighbours"

Though the winner will have already been announced by the time this newsletter is published, we can say that Ernest is a true winner in our eyes and we are so glad to have him as part of our community.

Thank you, Ernest, for being such a good friend and neighbour.



From STAR to SaTH!

The residents of Wilkinson Avenue, Broseley have raised an incredible £870 to support the Haematology Unit at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital.

Ernest, who lives at Wilkinson Avenue, had been so impressed by the support provided by the hospital during his treatment for leukaemia he wanted to do something that would give back to them.

With an initial target of £50, Ernest started organising and the rest of the community quickly got involved. They reached the original goal so speedily that they decided to just keep going!

Staff from the Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital Charity visited on a sunny day in May, along with the Deputy Mayor, to receive the cheque from the residents.

We are certain that the incredible efforts of Wilkinson Avenue will make a big difference to the patients and families who use the unit.



Blowing our own trumpet ...

We were thrilled to learn that we were finalists for three separate national awards this year!

The Housing Support Team were shortlisted for the Best Housing Team award at the Housing with Care Awards, which took place in London on 9 June. This award recognises how the team made an outstanding contribution by working together and developing existing services. Although we were runners up on the night, we are very happy that the team was recognised for the very hard work that they do and they are all winners to us.



We have also been nominated twice as part of the Housing Heroes Awards. Ernest Wilkie of Broseley was shortlisted as Tenant of the Year and our work with OsNosh in Oswestry was shortlisted in the Best Company Health and Wellbeing Initiative. The Awards ceremony is on 26 June, so look out for an update on our social media and the next newsletter!

Are you making the most of your money?

If you are over State Pension age, you are being urged to check that you are getting all the money you are entitled to. You can get a benefit known as "Pension Credit". You don't need to collect a state pension to access this money and it can increase your weekly money by a significant amount!

More importantly, a Pension Credit award – even a small one – can help you get other help and benefits.

Our Money Advice Team can help you with any questions you might have so get in touch or you can find out more here www.gov.uk/pension-credit



HAFing trouble with holiday cover?



Do you know about the HAF (Holidays Activities and Food) Programme? It is run by Shropshire Council and provides an exciting programme of activities over the Summer Holidays. In the past children have learnt how to play cricket or have had dance lessons.

Funded by the Department of Education, Shropshire Council work with local organisations to give children and young people (reception to 16) FREE, fun things to do over the summer.

If your children receive benefits related free school meals, have been referred to HAF by a professional you are working with or you are a Ukrainian guest staying in Shropshire, your children can take part in all the fun!

Find out more here www.shropshire.gov.uk/schools-and-education/holiday-activities-and-food-programme-haf/

Money Advice are here to help!

Our Money Advice Team offer a free, confidential support service and can help you with all sorts of issues around finance, debt and benefits to make sure you are getting the money you are entitled to.

The Team are based between Oswestry and Bridgnorth and can meet you privately for a face to face chat.

If you are struggling, you are not alone – the team have helped lots of people so they might be able to help you too.

Get in touch by
e-mail moneyadvice@starhousing.org.uk
or by calling 0333 32 12 200.



The Cherry Blossom is in full bloom

We were thrilled to open another development in Shrewsbury on a beautifully sunny day. Working closely with our building partner, Harpers, we have built four Shared Ownership homes and eight affordable rent homes for families.

Our Chair, Tony Deakin, was there for the opening with the big scissors so he could cut the ribbon. He said "The new development will help provide housing solutions for the local community".

We managed to catch up with Vanessa who was moving in that day. Despite the stress of moving day, she said "I can't believe how nice the houses are, it's lovely and I didn't expect it to be so beautiful!"

Good luck to all of our new residents and welcome to the STAR family.



STAR Housing is for everyone



As part of the new development at Cherry Blossom Way in Shrewsbury, we were delighted to meet Rich who was moving in to his new, specialist bungalow – the first of its kind that we have built.

Working closely with the Adult Social Care Team, Shropshire Council Occupational Therapists and our Aids and Adaptations Officer, we built a specially adapted bungalow to entirely suit our tenant's requirements. It is fully wheelchair accessible and also includes a large number of low kitchen

cupboards and an adjustable height cooking hob and sink.

Rich was delighted with his new home, saying it was amazing, and was happy to show off the adjustable height sink for us.

Good luck in your new home Rich!



A (tenant) portal to a new world ...

Our Tenant Portal is your one stop shop for all things tenancy related.

You can use the Tenant Portal to:

- ✓ update or change your personal contact details
- ✓ find out who your Housing Officer is
- ✓ pay your rent or check you rent balances
- ✓ report a repair or check on past jobs that have been done

Scan the QR code below, or alternatively, find it on our website here www.starhousing.org.uk/tenantportal/

Create your account and see how easy it is to use!



Scan the QR code



My Home

We want your opinion!

As you know we are always looking to improve the way we communicate with you, as well as finding the best value for money.

As part of this, we are interested in your views on our IT and digital services. Do you want to access your services electronically? Do you want more services to be run electronically? Or do you think we have the balance about right?

A good example is this newsletter. Would you prefer to get it in your email inbox so you can click straight through on any weblinks? Is there any information that you would like to see added to the newsletter? Or any stories that you think we should be promoting? Let us know!

Give us your ideas and we will see what we can do. You can drop us a line at involvement@starhousing.org.uk or you can give us a call on **01743 210 205**.

Shropshire Council Local to you

Did you know that Shropshire Council offer a mobile service? The van travels all over the county so that you don't have to travel into Shrewsbury or Ludlow to visit a Local hub. The friendly Council staff will help you with whatever



you need and you can have a face to face meeting in a place that is convenient to you. Our Housing Support Teams will also be around at the drop in sessions in Albrighton and Shifnal to chat with you.

Have a look here to find out where they will be www.shropshire.gov.uk/customer-services/shropshire-local-mobile/

Don't forget

You need to tell us if you need something repairing.

You can call us on
0333 32 12 200

You can also report a repair through the Tenant Portal or you can email us
repairs@starhousing.org.uk





Funding for your community

Do you ever look around you and think "I wish I had a bit of money so I could do that in my community ..."?

Well, you can! The STAR Housing Community Chest fund is available for small projects that will improve your local area.

Grants are offered up to a maximum of £750 per application and, as long as the project is in an area where we have homes, we will consider your application but it does have to promote our Vision and our objectives to create a safer, greener, united or connected community.

You can apply here

www.starhousing.org.uk/community-chest-application/



Cooking up some changes



After listening to your feedback, we have changed how we run the OsNosh cooking workshops. We understand that it was hard for you to attend three weeks in a row. So, the workshops are now held every other Wednesday instead. Daytime sessions run from 10am – 1pm and evening sessions run from 5.30 – 8pm. You will still get the high quality recipes from our experienced chef, Ben, with all ingredients provided and you get to take a slow cooker home at the end of the workshop so you can keep on experimenting.

We are holding sessions in Oswestry and the surrounding areas and plan to start workshops in the south of the county later in the year.

Sign up here

www.starhousing.org.uk/star-cooking-workshops/



We need your help!

We know that repairs are one of the most important things we do and we want to make sure we are getting it right.

Starting this summer, we are going to be carrying out a review to see how our repairs work so that we can make sure that we are giving you the best service we can.

We need you to get involved in this review – we want your opinions and your ideas about how we can make things work better for you. You can meet with us in person, take a survey, chat over a coffee – whatever works best for you.

By getting involved you can help us be the best landlord we can be. Email us at involvement@starhousing.org.uk or call us on 01743 210 205

A huge thank you to all that took part

It's so important that you take part in these surveys because we use your feedback to improve our services



81% Satisfied with the overall services provided by Shropshire Towns and Rural Housing



76% Satisfied that their homes are well maintained



80% Satisfied with the repairs service in the last 12 months



68% Satisfied with how their views are listened to and acted upon



80% Satisfied that their homes are safe



77% Satisfied with the time taken to complete their last repair



72% Satisfied with how they are kept informed



76% Satisfied that their communal areas are kept clean and well maintained



75% Satisfied with how repairs and maintenance are dealt with



78% Agree that they are treated fairly and with respect



86% Satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live



70% Satisfied with how anti-social behaviour is handled



51% Satisfied with how complaints are handled



70% Satisfied with the contribution made by STAR Housing to their neighbourhood



79% Satisfied that STAR Housing is easy to deal with

A big thank you to everyone who took part!

417 residents responded to the survey which took place in October and November 2022.