



Summer Newsletter

Some of the items further on in the Newsletter include

Tenant Involvement

Safety checks and what to do if you smell gas

New properties

Cybercrime & Cyber security

New Policies

Money Matters

Shawbury in bloom

We're Open

Following the easing of restrictions after the Covid-19 pandemic, our offices are now fully re-opened if you need to visit us. Please do not come into the office if you have any symptoms or have had a positive test, or are self-isolating. Our office hours are Monday—Thursday 9.00 am to 5.00 pm and Friday 9.00 am to 4.30 pm. Alternatively, you can give us a call on **01743 874848** to chat to us or make an appointment. We're always here to help.



Thank you to all of our tenants who participated in our recent Tenant Satisfaction Survey, and congratulations to our three winners of the £50 prize:

Mrs Davies from Weston Rhyn

Ms Griffiths from Oswestry

Miss Haycocks and Mr Dessaur from Tern Hill

**Thank
YOU!**

We are pleased to say the survey results show that the majority of our tenants are happy with the service we are providing; however, we have reflected on all the comments made and are aware that there is room for improvement. We are now contacting tenants who highlighted a concern to learn a bit more about the problems.

Hearing your voice

Listening to our tenants' views, opinions and concerns and having clear and direct lines of communication between the Association and our tenants is one of our main priorities. In simple terms, because that's the best way to ensure you get the best possible housing service.

We are now working with the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) to help us make sure your voice is heard through the Association and you are able to influence what we do and how we operate as your landlord.

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



We have already been speaking to those tenants who expressed interest in some form of tenant involvement in our recent satisfaction survey, but if you are interested in knowing more or getting involved, please ring on **01743 874848** or drop us an email at **enquiries@shropshirerural.co.uk**

Shropshire Tenants Conference

We are working with Shropshire Council and other housing associations to organise a conference for all tenants in the County to be held in early November.



Alongside the opportunity for tenants of different landlords getting together to discuss common issues, the event themes also include:

- Developing awareness of climate change and how retrofit can work
- Employment and training
- Design and well-managed neighbourhoods
- Maintenance and property standards
- Downsizing and other people's housing options
- Affordability and benefits
- Investing in your community—linking to all volunteering opportunities.

Please see our back page for details on completing a short survey to become involved in the conference. We do hope some of you will be able to attend.

Some of our tenants asked for more information regarding benefits that they may be entitled to. Please see below for details on benefits and energy prices with website addresses and telephone numbers.

Universal Credit

<https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit>

Housing Benefit

<https://www.gov.uk/housing-benefit>

Council Tax

<https://www.gov.uk/council-tax>

Discretionary Housing Payment

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/claiming-discretionary-housing-payments/claiming-discretionary-housing-payments>

Child Tax Credit

<https://www.gov.uk/child-tax-credit>

[0300 200 3100](tel:03002003100)

Pension

<https://www.gov.uk/browse/working/state-pension>

[0800 731 7898](tel:08007317898)

Citizens Advice

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

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/>

[0800 144 8848](tel:08001448848)

Rising Energy Prices

<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/news/2021/02/energy-bills-to-rise-for-11-million---act-now-to-beat-the-hikes/>

<https://www.which.co.uk/news/2021/03/energy-price-rise-seven-million-energy-customers-due-to-pay-more-from-1st-april/>

Housing Systems

Housingsystems.co.uk



Safety Checks



Shropshire Rural Housing has a duty to ensure your gas appliances, gas pipework, flues and boilers are in a safe condition to use. We also have a duty to check other forms of heating, all your electrics and for our older properties, Asbestos. When our contractors contact you to make these appointments, please ensure you allow access for these works to be carried out. It is a legal requirement by the Regulator of Social Housing to carry out these checks. If you need to re-arrange an appointment please either contact the contractor or ourselves.

As things get older in the coming months and you begin putting your heating back on, after it being off for several months throughout the summer, here is what to do if you smell gas.

DO

Open doors & windows to allow fresh air in.

Turn off the gas at the mains tap, which is usually near the meter. Move the handle a quarter turn until it's at 90 degrees from the pipe to shut off the gas supply.

Leave the property

Phone the National Gas Emergencies number on **0800 111 999**. Only use a mobile phone from outside the property. The number is free and available 24 hours a day.

Follow the advice given by the emergency adviser.

Wait outside for a gas engineer to arrive.

If you feel unwell, visit your GP or hospital immediately. Tell them you may have been exposed to a gas leak or carbon monoxide poisoning.

DON'T

Smoke, light a match or use any other naked flame.

Turn any electrical switches on or off.

Use doorbells, mobile phones or any other electrical switches that could cause a spark.

Need a repair doing?



Do you need a repair doing? Don't forget to report any issues **direct** to us, so we can ensure your home is of a good standard and safe for you and your family to live in. Please **do not** ring the contractors direct as they do not have the authorisation to carry out the repair. You can ring us on **01743 874848**, or email us at **enquiries@shropshirerural.co.uk** or report through the website at **www.shropshirerural.co.uk**.

GOT AN EMERGENCY OUT OF HOURS –then just ring our number detailed above and you will be put through direct to our Out Of Hours service.

Pastures new for Shropshire Rural

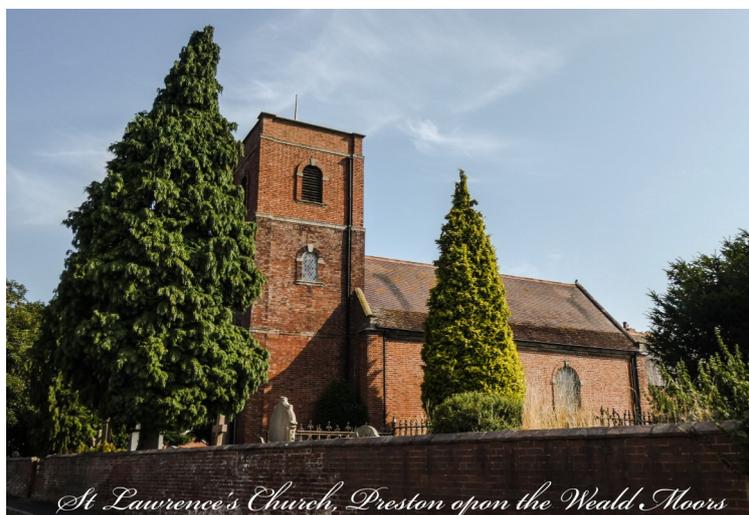


We are really pleased to have bought 4 houses in the village of Preston upon the Weald Moors. The houses are let at social rents to families with a local connection to the village.

These are our first homes in Telford and Wrekin, and we are looking forward to helping the new tenants settle in.

Interesting Fact:

Preston upon the Weald Moors - is the longest village name in England.





Cybercrime & Cybersecurity

Cybercrime is, unfortunately, becoming more common all the time especially as we have been locked down and discouraged from going out except for essential items, and with more of us working from home, due to the pandemic.

Online is the new frontline. We shop online. We play online. We live online. More and more of our lives depend on online digital services. Almost everything can be done online—from shopping and banking to socialising and card-making. All of this makes the internet an attractive target for criminals. Things like theft, fraud, bullying, victimising and other activities extend into the online world. It is important to protect ourselves from threats—our identity being used by someone else, our information being seen by those you didn't intend to share it with.

SO WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PROTECT YOURSELF?

Passwords and passcodes are the most common way of authenticating the user. Examples of this are your PIN with your bank card and passwords when logging into computer based services.

GOOD PASSWORD CHECKLIST

- **DON'T** use simple short, easy to guess passwords such as names of friends, family and pets. **DON'T** use words from the dictionary or commonly used passwords such as 12345 or QWERTY.
- **DON'T** substitute characters such as pa22w0rd
- **DON'T** use the same password on more than one website
- **DO** use long passwords that are a random mix of upper case, lower case, numbers and other characters.
- **DON'T** share passwords with other people or leave lying around in notebooks or on sticky notes close to your computer.
- **BEFORE** you enter a password into a website make sure it is a secure connection beginning with **https://** (it might also have an image of a small padlock close to the address). This means that the site is using a secure link that cannot be intercepted by hackers.
- **IF** you have trouble remembering passwords, try a password manager program that not only stores passwords but can generate new highly complex passwords for you.
- **TWO** factor authentication gives you an additional protection as it requires two pieces of information (such as a password and a random number sent by SMS) to provide access to your data. If a company offers two-factor authentication, you should use it.



Recently there have been a lot of scams by text and email. If you're unsure where this has come from, you don't recognise the phone number or email address or don't have an account with the company that the message is reportedly from, then ignore and delete and do not click on any links or attachments within the text or email, as it is likely that this is a scam and possibly how the criminals will get to your personal information.

If you need further information why not visit one of the following websites:

www.ncsc.gov.uk

www.getsafeonline.org—there is lots of information on this site about protecting your computer, yourself, smartphones and tablets, shopping, banking and payments, safeguarding children, communication and social networking.

Why not think about protecting your home?



10 reasons to choose **My Home** Contents Insurance Scheme



- * Apply over the telephone or complete an application form
- * Covers loss or damage to food in a fridge/freezer (excludes damage caused if the electricity supplier deliberately cuts off the supply to your home).
- * Covers theft, water damage, fire and many more household risks
- * Covers tenants improvements (up to £2000 or 20% of the sum insured whichever ever is the greater)
- * Covers theft or attempted theft to contents of sheds, outbuildings and garages (up to £3000)
- * Covers damage to external glazing for which you are responsible
- * Covers replacement and installation of locks for outside doors or windows and alarms, if keys are lost or stolen
- * You don't need to have special door or window locks (just a lockable front door)
- * Up to 35% of the contents sum insured for damage to your landlord's fixtures & fittings which you are legally liable for as a tenant (excludes loss or damage whilst your home is unoccupied)
- * Flexible regular Pay-As-You-Go payment options (fortnightly and monthly premiums include a transaction charge)

To apply for cover today call

0345 450 7288

Email—myhome@thistleinsurance.co.uk or visit

www.thistlemyhome.co.uk



New Policies



Unhappy with our service? Our complaints policy has been updated to comply with the new rules from the Housing Ombudsman. This now means that you can have assistance from the Housing Ombudsman from an earlier stage, and all complaints have to be included in our Annual Report. Our policy is available on our website, or if you prefer a hard copy please contact us and we will arrange for one to be sent out to you.

Our new Pet Policy advises you on the types of pets you can have, the amount, what we expect from you as a pet owner, and what you can expect from us, as an Association. Again this can be found on our website, or contact us for a hard copy if you prefer.



Coming soon

Later in the year we will be launching our 'My Tenancy' portal, where you will be able to view your current rent account details, view your property repair history, request a rent statement, report repairs and update your contact details. Further information will be available on how to access the portal when this is launched. Keep an eye on our website, social media channels and through the post.

Keep Shropshire Warm

Are you struggling to pay for you gas and electric? Keep Shropshire Warm offer free energy advice and can help you get your payments under control. Keep Shropshire Warm is helping people in need around the county deal with managing debts by providing small grants and talking to suppliers. Their friendly Energy Advisors can be called on **0800 112 3743**, or message them on **Facebook @Keep Shropshire Warm**.





Money Matters

We're here to help

If you're struggling to pay your rent and other bills because of the pandemic, please don't bury your head in the sand—we can help.

We are here to help. The most important thing is to talk to us as soon as you think you may be facing money problems. We can help you understand what you may be entitled to before debts start to mount up.

We're on hand to help answer your questions and provide support. We can help and guide you with :

Managing Budgets

Help with your utility bills

Debt advice

Advice and help with all welfare benefits

Help to move into employment or training

T: 01743 874848

E: enquiries@shropshirerural.co.uk



Could we get in contact with you if we needed to?

Remember



If you change your mobile or landline telephone number or your email address please remember to let us know. In line with Data Protection regulations we can reassure you that your data will be kept, and passed on to contractors in a secure way. **If we cannot contact you, there may be a delay in carrying out your repairs or in contacting you about other urgent matters.**

WAYS TO PAY YOUR RENT



At the **Post Office** or **PayPoint** using your Shropshire Rural Housing Association **Allpay Swipe card**.
If you do not have one, please contact the office.

By sending a **cheque** to the office.

By **Standing order** or **online bank transfer**, using the following details:

Payee: Shropshire Rural Housing Association Ltd.

Sort Code: 55-50-05

Account number: 12574414

Please use your Tenancy Key as the reference.

By **Telephone** using a debit card. Please call **01743 874848** or
via the website, **www.shropshirerural.co.uk**



CONTACTING US ONLINE

You can now contact us and keep up to date via our website at
www.shropshirerural.co.uk or through Facebook, Twitter and Linked In.



@srhassoc



@srhassoc



Shropshire Rural
Housing Association

Amie Pendant Alarms



To our Community Alarm users. Just a quick reminder please to ask that you press your personal Amie pendant alarm on a monthly basis so that Welbeing- our Alarm Service provider can monitor and check all is well with your equipment and you of course!!



Shawbury in bloom

Below are a selection of photos from the raised bed in the communal area of Shawbury to which all residents have contributed towards either with flowers or monetary donations. Many residents have looked after their gardens as well. Why not send us photos of your gardens, tubs, or hanging baskets?

Email us to enquiries@shropshirerural.co.uk



Photographs of our Schemes



A member of our team will be coming out and taking photographs of our schemes and properties, to ensure all our information is up to date and so we can include on our website, so please do not worry if you see someone taking photos, they will be wearing ID.

Want to make your voice heard?

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Tenant Voice 2021

We would like to invite you to a brand-new event for tenants in Shropshire. This is an event for you, for your home and for your community. In November 2021, we will be hosting Tenant Voice 2021, an event created so that tenants across the county can connect, discover and explore more about some of the key opportunities and issues facing them and their communities. Most importantly, this event is about your voice, and about your voice being heard.

As we begin to put the groundwork in place to make Tenant Voice 2021 happen, we would like your help in making sure that this year's event is something that you would like to engage with and to be part of.

The following short survey will take no more than two/three minutes to complete and will help us to make sure that your voice is heard.

Tenant Voice 2021 is brought to you by Shropshire Council, Connexus Group, STAR Housing, Wrekin Housing Group, Bromford Housing and Shropshire Rural Housing Association.

You can access the survey at the following web address or using the QR Code.

<https://forms.office.com/r/39Qb7YKgRw>

