

# Your **Tenants' Handbook**

Incorporating The Wrekin Housing Group Tenants' Charter

## **This handbook sets out:**

- The main responsibilities of the Group.
- Your responsibilities as a tenant and what we expect of you
- Important safety information.
- A summary of the standards of service you can expect.
- Ways that you can get more involved with the Group.
- The Wrekin Tenants' Charter.

**The Wrekin  
Tenants' Charter  
is on page 22**

**Houses and bungalows**

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Version 1

# Welcome to your new home

## Thank you for choosing The Wrekin Housing Group as your landlord

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This handbook gives you important information you will need to make a success of your tenancy with us. It sets out what we will do as your landlord and what we expect from you as our tenant. It also contains our Wrekin Tenants' Charter, our commitments to you, along with our Service Standards and advice on keeping you and your home safe while you are with us.

Further information can be found in our online tenants' handbook at [wrekin.com](http://wrekin.com). A copy of this agreement will also be placed in your Customer Portal on our website.

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# Accepting your new home

## What we do

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### **We will provide you with:**

- An offer letter detailing your rent and service charges, and any additional charges.
- An appointment to view the property with you, and all occupants that will live at the property, at a convenient time.
- A copy of your tenancy agreement.
- Registration to our online Customer Portal.
- The property's Energy Performance and Gas Safety Certificate.
- Details of your utility suppliers (if applicable).
- Information about health and safety repairs.
- Details of services provided to you (such as cleaning, grounds maintenance and landscaping).

### **We will also let you know about:**

- Our moving in services.
- Home contents insurance.
- Ways to become an involved resident.
- Care and support, as well as community alarms and assistive technology.

### **If you are moving into a new development, we will provide you with:**

- Instructions and manuals to help you maintain your new home.
- In some cases a supplemental tenancy agreement which may have specific terms relating to your property.

## What we expect from you

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- Attend all pre-arranged appointments.
- Read your offer letter, draft tenancy agreement and information about moving into your new home.
- Make sure all occupants are able to be alerted by the smoke/fire alarm.
- Make sure the property you accept is suitable for you and your family's needs and you are able to leave unattended in the event of a fire.
- Maintain any gardens, hedges and trees that are your responsibility. Because of this, please ensure you don't take on more that you can handle.
- Meet with us to collect the keys and sign your tenancy agreement when we let you know the property is ready.
- Update Housing Benefit, Universal Credit and Council Tax agencies with your new tenancy details.
- Register with your new utility suppliers and provide meter readings where required to do so.
- Pay your rent and additional charges in advance by Direct Debit.
- If you have gas central heating, you will need to arrange an appointment so we can test the system and show you how to use it as soon as you move in.

## The Customer Portal

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The Customer Portal is your personal area of our website wrekin.com. The log in and password you used to register for a home will become your log in and password for the Customer Portal.

If you do not have a log in call us on **01952 217100**.

# Your tenancy agreement

## What we do

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- The Group now offers a 12 month starter introductory tenancy, followed by either a two or five year fixed term tenancy as standard. We also have tenants with previous tenancy types.
- We will comply with all requirements and responsibilities within the tenancy agreement.
- We will offer advice and support throughout your tenancy to help you sustain it.
- We will tell you if you are in breach of your tenancy agreement and will give you the chance to put it right.
- If you breach the conditions of your tenancy and don't put it right when we ask you to, we may take you to court to ask a judge to make you comply with your tenancy conditions. You will be charged the cost of this.
- If you do not resolve the breach of your tenancy, you may lose your home.
- We will allow you to transfer your tenancy through mutual exchange or direct transfer to another Group property, as long as you meet our transfer criteria.

## What we expect from you

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- Keep your tenancy agreement in a safe place. It is an important document.
- Read your tenancy agreement and make sure you understand what you have agreed to.
- Comply with all the conditions contained in it.
- Let us know if there is anything you don't understand, so that we can explain it to you.
- Notify us if there is a change to your circumstances that may affect your ability to be alerted by the smoke/fire alarm and vacate the building safely in the event of a fire.
- Keep us informed of anything that might affect your tenancy agreement, for example if someone moves in with you.
- Be a good neighbour.
- Live in the property as your main home.
- Not to totally sub-let the property.
- Give us four weeks' notice if you intend to end the tenancy.
- Remove all your belongings from the property, clear any rent balances and return all keys to us before you leave.

## Service standards

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- We will provide you with a copy of your tenancy agreement when you start your tenancy and, should you lose it, provide you with a copy on request.
- We will not change your tenancy agreement without your written consent.
- We will keep our tenants' handbook up to date and regularly inform you of how you can get involved.

# Rent setting and payment

## What we do

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- We will set rent and any service charges once a year, complying with government guidelines, usually in April. We will write to tell you at least one calendar month before your rent changes.
- We will make it as easy as possible for you to pay your rent.
- If you are on a low income, or are struggling with your finances, we can refer you to our free advice service to help access benefits and manage household bills or debts.
- If you miss any payments we will let you know quickly, to prevent you from getting into more debt.
- If you get into debt we will work with you to make an affordable payment plan. If you do not keep to the payment plan, we will apply to the courts for the repossession of your home. This may result in you losing your home.
- We will provide rent statements on request and make them available in the Customer Portal on our website at wrekin.com.

## What we expect from you

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- Pay your rent and service charge and any debts when they are due (in advance) as per your tenancy agreement.
- Agree a payment frequency for your Direct Debit with your Housing Executive and maintain it.
- Let us know straight away if you are having difficulties paying your rent and charges.
- Let your Local Authority Housing Benefit team, or the Department of Work and Pensions know if your circumstances change as well as telling us.
- Be responsible for your own Housing Benefit or Universal Credit claim.

## You can pay your rent by the following methods

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- Direct Debit on any day, weekly or monthly. Direct Debit is our customers' preferred method of payment.
- Bank Standing Orders.
- Online via our website using our Customer Portal, or through the Allpay mobile app.
- Over the phone by calling our payment line on 01952 217111.
- With an Easy Pay rent card.
- With a direct payment of your Housing Benefit or Universal Credit to us.
- Using your debit card in our local access points or in your home via our website or payments line.

## Service standards

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- If you miss any payments we will let you know quickly, to prevent you from getting into more debt. We will then work with you to make an affordable payment plan.
- We offer a free Money Matters advice service to help you manage household bills or debts and access benefits.
- We will repay any agreed credit within 20 working days of agreeing the credit.
- We will identify those who are vulnerable and offer them on-going support either through our Tenancy Support team or other agencies.

# Money advice

## What we offer

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- **Welfare benefits advice**  
We can offer expert advice on the whole range of welfare benefits and help to claim all that you are entitled to.
- **Budget and bill payment advice**  
Our specialist teams can help you deal with money worries, by offering advice on managing your budget.
- **Advice on affordable utilities**  
We offer advice and guidance to help you manage your gas, electric and other utility payments.
- **Access to low cost loans and saving schemes**  
We can guide you on ethical, affordable credit and secure saving options, in partnership with local Credit Unions.
- **Home Contents Insurance**  
We offer an affordable and comprehensive Home Contents Insurance scheme, exclusively for Wrekin Housing Group tenants.
- **Benefit notifications**  
We will contact tenants quickly regarding any problems or changes to Housing Benefit or direct payments of Universal Credit that we have been informed of.
- **Debt advice**  
We can provide free, regulated, impartial and confidential debt advice, helping you to gain control of your finances and manage your debt problems.

## What we expect from you

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- Pay your rent in advance and on time.
- If you are struggling to pay your rent, tell us as soon as you can. The sooner we know, the quicker we can help.
- Let your Local Authority Housing Benefit team, or the Department of Work and Pensions know if your circumstances change as well as telling us.
- Be responsible for your own Housing Benefit or Universal Credit claim.
- Supply all supporting paperwork that is asked for as quickly as you can.

## Service standards

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- We offer a free Money Matters advice service to help you manage household bills or debts, and access benefits.
- We will identify those who are vulnerable and offer them on-going support either through our Tenancy Support team or other agencies.
- If you miss any payments we will let you know quickly, to prevent you from getting into more debt. We will then work with you to make an affordable payment plan.

For more information about benefits, please call our general enquiries number on **01952 217100**.

# Responsive repairs to report a repair call 01952 217217

## What we do

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- We will keep the exterior and interior structure of the property in good condition.
- We will also repair the interior fixtures and fittings and communal areas around your home that we are responsible for.
- We will keep any gas and electrical systems safe.
- We will make sure you have heating and hot water, even if your system breaks down.
- We will abide by our code of conduct for employees working in your home.

## What we expect from you

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- Look after your home.
- Tell us if something needs repairing.
- Tell us when something needs repairing on the day you will be at home.
- Be home when you've arranged for us to attend.
- Allow us access to carry out work.
- Make sure the area is clean and safe to work in.
- Keep children away from the work area.
- Be respectful and polite to our staff.
- Repair the things that are your responsibility. This is outlined further in your tenancy agreement.
- Pay for any work we have to carry out through damage you caused, whether by accident, neglect or deliberate acts.
- Pay your rent in line with your payment plan. Failure to do so could impact on this service.
- Maintain fencing. Fencing is the responsibility of the tenant unless it borders on to a public right of way or is part of a communal area.

## Service standards

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- We will aim to complete responsive repairs on the same day they are reported or by any other appointment or timescale that has been agreed with you.
- We aim to get repairs right first time and use your views on whether we achieve this to measure and report on our performance.
- We provide an out of hours emergency service for any housing related emergency, in addition to our emergency repairs service.
- If heating and hot water systems fail and we can't repair them the same day, we will offer you temporary heating and hot water appliances.
- We will use enforcement action to gain access to carry out safety work if you do not give us timely access.
- We will attend a gas call out within two hours and aim to fix the problem on the first call.

## Additional ways you can get involved

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- Become a member of the Tenant Repair Group.

# Major works and other repairs

## What we do

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- If the major components of your property (such as kitchens, bathrooms, central heating, windows, doors, roofs and wiring) are no longer fit for purpose due to their age, or are no longer economical to repair, we will replace them.
- We will offer you some choice in what is replaced, where it is reasonable to do so.
- We will carry out maintenance to the exterior of buildings on a seven year cyclical basis.
- We will carry out major repairs and replacement work by appointment with you.
- We will leave the work area clean and tidy when we have finished the work.
- Our workforce and contractors will respect you and your property when they are working in your home.

## What we expect from you

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- Look after your home.
- Tell us if you think something needs repairing or replacing.
- Agree an appointment for us to visit your home to assess the work we will need to carry out.
- Continue to give us access to carry out the work for as long as it takes to complete.
- Empty cupboards or units ready for us to replace them.
- Make sure the area is clean and safe to work in.
- Keep children away from the work area.
- Be respectful and polite to our staff.
- Keep a clear rent account. Failure to do so will impact on your ability to access these improvements.

## Service standards

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- We will improve homes to a higher level than that set out in the government's Decent Homes Standard or an equivalent standard.
- We will monitor satisfaction standards and involve customers if they fall below a tenant agreed standard.

To report a repair, please call **01952 217217**.

## Adaptations

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If you or your family member are struggling due to physical and / or sensory disabilities we will consider adapting your home to meet your needs.

We may work with a range of agencies to assess your needs for more complex adaptations and some minor adaptations.

We will carry out most agreed minor adaptations quickly, usually through our same day repair service, once agreed. Major repairs are more complex and will take longer.

For more information on our adaptations service visit our website [wrekin.com/Pages/Care/adaptations](http://wrekin.com/Pages/Care/adaptations).

To contact us about adaptations you can call **01952 217128**, email [adaptations@wrekin.com](mailto:adaptations@wrekin.com) or write to: **Adaptations Team, The Wrekin Housing Group, Colliers Way, Old Park, Telford, TF3 4AW.**



# Making your own improvements to your home

## What we do

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- We will let you improve your home if you wish to do so, but you must get our permission first. Some permission will be granted with conditions attached.
- We will provide you with guidance on any conditions attached to making improvements.
- Permission may be asked for in writing or over the phone. In many cases we will give you verbal permission when you call.
- For more complicated work involving gas, electrics or interior/exterior structural alterations we will provide you with application forms and the conditions you must meet. These can be found on our website [wrekin.com](http://wrekin.com), along with more information about improving your home.
- Wherever possible we will leave the improvement in the property for the next tenant.
- We will not unreasonably withhold permission.

## What we expect from you

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- Ask us for permission before you make any improvements to your home. You should do this when you are ready to make the improvement.
- Carry improvements out at your own cost.
- Be responsible for all future repairs and maintenance to any improvements you make to your home.
- Make sure the improvements are carried out by a competent person.
- If you are making gas or electrical improvements you must provide us with safety certificates from your contractors, when the works have been completed. If you do not, we will carry out the safety check and recharge you for doing so.
- Make sure improvements comply with any building or planning regulations.
- If you cause damage to the property, to put it right at your own cost.
- If you leave, and we ask you to, remove the improvement and return the property to its original condition.

## Improvements we will not give permission for

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**There are certain things that, for health and safety or other reasons, we will not give permission for:**

- Installation of wood burning stoves.
- Caravan storage.
- Laminate flooring of any type in flats above ground level or glued laminate flooring in any property.
- Garden ponds.
- Any other improvement prohibited by planning or building regulations or the terms of your tenancy agreement.

## Service standards

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- We will respond to your application for permission to carry out improvements within 10 working days of receiving it.

For more information about applying to make your own improvements to your home visit our website: [wrekin.com/Pages/Handbook-Home-Improvements/improvements-to-your-home](http://wrekin.com/Pages/Handbook-Home-Improvements/improvements-to-your-home).

# Safety in your home

## Fire safety

Every year people lose their lives from a fire in their homes. We want you to be safe and know what you should do to prevent fires from starting and what to do if a fire starts in your home.

If you follow the advice in this booklet a fire is less likely to start and you will be far safer in your home.

There may be more information about building safety in your account on the Customer Portal which is accessible through our website wrekin.com or through the Wrekin app.

Alternatively if you have any concerns about fire safety please call 01952 217100.

## What to do if you discover a fire in your home



### Leave the room where the fire is and close the door.

- Do not stay behind to put the fire out.
- Tell everyone in your home to leave and close the door behind you when everyone has left the premises.



### Leave the building and go to a safe place away from the building



### Once you are safe – call the fire and rescue service

# Safety in your home

## Fire safety

Small fires are common, causing serious injuries and extensive damage to property and possessions. By following a few simple steps and maintaining a basic level of awareness you can considerably reduce the chances of fire in your home.

The easiest and most effective way of protecting your home is by having a working smoke alarm and regularly making sure it works.

### What you can do to keep your home safe

- You should have smoke alarms on each floor of your home. If you do not or yours aren't working properly, call us immediately to have them installed or replaced. Keep them free from dust and test them once a week.
- Make a fire action plan so that everyone in your home knows how to escape if there is a fire.
- Keep the exits and routes in your home clear so that people can escape if there is a fire.
- Make sure that everyone in your home can easily find the keys for doors and windows.
- Never leave cooking unattended and never leave children alone in the kitchen.
- Take extra care when cooking with oil. Consider buying a fryer which is controlled by a thermostat.
- Never leave lit candles in rooms that nobody is in or in rooms where children are on their own.
- Keep candles in secure holders on a surface that doesn't burn and away from materials that could burn.
- Make sure cigarettes are stubbed out properly and disposed of carefully, and never smoke in bed.
- Close doors at night. If you want to keep a child's bedroom door open, make sure you close the doors to the lounge and kitchen; it might help to save their life if there is a fire.
- Don't overload electrical sockets, remember, one plug for one socket.
- Keep matches and lighters away from children.
- Take care when you are tired or when you have been drinking.
- Don't leave electrical appliances on standby. Always switch them off and unplug them when not in use.
- Do not use heaters with a flame (gas/paraffin) or element (electric bar fire). If portable heaters are used, oil filled radiators are considered the safest alternative.
- Do not store things in the gas and electricity meter cupboards.
- Make sure that your furniture is fire resistant with a fire resistant label.
- If you or a member of your household has any difficulty seeing, hearing or moving about the home, you will need to take extra care to deal with the risk of a fire. If you are unable to escape for any reason, find a room where you can wait for assistance. This is particularly important if you have difficulty moving around or using stairs. It is advisable for your safe room to have a window that opens, and a phone.



If you have any concerns about fire safety, or need to report any problems with smoke alarms or fire doors call **01952 217100**.

# Safety in your home

## Gas and carbon monoxide safety

Carbon monoxide is produced when gas doesn't burn properly. Known as the silent killer as it has no colour, smell or taste. It kills at least 30 people in the UK each year.

### What we do to keep you safe

- Carry out a gas service and safety check at least once a year and provide you with the safety certificate.
- Maintain all gas systems within your home.
- We will attend a gas call out on the same day we are called and aim to fix the problem at that visit.
- **If you have a gas leak or gas fumes, you need to call the emergency gas provider on 0800 111 999.**

### What you can do to keep your home safe

- Always let us in to service your gas appliances every year. We're happy to arrange your appointment at a convenient time.
- Make sure your flue and any vents are always kept clear.
- Never cover a gas appliance.
- Never use a gas appliance if you think it is not working properly.
- Never block, cover or obstruct any fixed ventilation grills, air bricks or outside flues.
- Do not store items under your gas boiler.
- Always ask our permission before altering any gas fittings in your home.

#### Look out for and let us know if you notice ►

- Yellow or orange flames. Gas flames should always be blue.
- Soot or stains around the appliance.
- Pilot lights that frequently blow out.
- You're feeling tired, drowsy and generally unwell (headaches, chest or stomach pains or flu like symptoms) at home. These are symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning.

### If you can smell gas or suspect carbon monoxide poisoning:

#### Do not ►

- Smoke cigarettes or battery operated vapes.
- Light any flames, such as candles or gas cookers.
- Turn any switches on or off, including light switches, as they produce a spark.
- Use phones inside the house, including mobile phones.

#### Do ►

- Open all windows and doors.
- Put out all sources of ignition and naked flames.
- Shut off the gas supply to your gas meter. If you are unsure how to do this our Gas Safe Engineers can show you next time they visit.
- Leave the building as soon as you can.



**Once you are safely away from the suspected gas leak or carbon monoxide, call:**

**0800 111 999**

**Then contact us on 01952 217217**

To report a gas, electric or other health and safety fault call **01952 217217** 24 hours a day.

# Safety in your home

## Electrical safety

Contact with live electricity can cause shock, burns and even death. There is also risk of fire if electric appliances are faulty.

### What we do to keep you safe

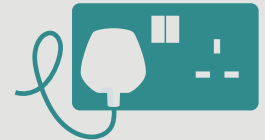
- Install wired-in smoke alarms as part of our rewiring programme.
- Test your fixed electrical installation every five years (and at every change of occupancy).
- Maintain your fixed electrical installation within your property. This does not include your own appliances used on the fixed installation.

### What you can do to keep your home safe

- Allow us access to carry out the electrical safety check.
- Don't overload sockets.
- Don't carry out any electrical work yourself.
- Be aware of cables in walls when carrying out DIY.
- Use an RCD safety device with all outdoor equipment and be aware where the power cable is at all times.
- Always ask our permission before altering any electric fittings in your home.

#### Look out for ►

- Switches or sockets that are loose or cracked.
- Damaged appliances and loose or frayed cables.
- Signs of overheating like dark marks around plugs.



To report a gas, electric or other health and safety fault please call **01952 217217** 24 hours a day.

## Asbestos safety

Widely used in many buildings including houses between 1900 and 1999. Asbestos materials are unlikely to cause any threat to your health, as long as it is undamaged. There is a risk to health if it's disturbed.

### What you can do to keep your home safe

- Unless you're sure the materials you're working on are asbestos free, always check with us.
- Don't work on or disturb any material that you don't know is asbestos free.
- If you have an asbestos survey which has identified materials containing asbestos those materials should not be broken, sanded, cut or drilled.

#### Look out for and let us know if you notice ►

- Any damaged materials that could contain asbestos, like textured coatings on ceilings or walls.

**To report any suspected asbestos please call 01952 217206.**



# Safety in your home

## Water safety

Legionnaires' disease, a severe form of pneumonia, can be caused by inhaling small droplets of water containing the bacteria. Certain conditions can increase the risk.

### What you can do to keep your home safe

- If a tap or shower hasn't been used for a while (after a holiday or over winter if outside) run it for five minutes to clear any built up bacteria.
- Clean scaled taps and shower heads on a regular basis.
- Disconnect hose pipes from external taps when they're not being used.

#### Look out for ►

- Excessive build-up of lime scale on taps and shower heads.
- Water being too hot or too cold.
- Damage to any part of your water system.

**If you have any concerns get it checked. We do not charge for call outs.  
Call us on 01952 217217.**



## Communal and home lifting equipment safety

It is important to ensure that lifts, home through floor lifts, stair lifts, hoists and other lifting equipment is correctly installed, maintained and operated to remove the risk of injury or death as a result of it being misused or becoming faulty or damaged.

### What we do to keep you safe

- Service, maintain and repair lifts, home through floor lifts, stair lifts, hoists and other lifting equipment.
- Carry out an independent thorough examination every 6 or 12 months to confirm the safety of lifts and other lifting equipment.
- Ensure that contractors carrying out the work are competent to do so.
- Provide a 24 hour emergency call service through our contact centre for communal lifts, in case of entrapment, to get you out as soon as possible.

### What you can do to keep your home safe

- Always let us in to your home to service lifting equipment and carry out an independent thorough examination. We're happy to arrange an appointment at a time that is convenient for you.
- Do not misuse or allow others to misuse lifts, home lifts and other lifting equipment.
- Do not carry out any work to lifting equipment yourself.
- Do not allow children to use lifting equipment.
- Always ask our permission before installing lifts or lifting equipment within your home.

#### Look out for and let us know if you notice ►

- A lift or any other lifting equipment that is not working as expected, including levelling on landings, noises, lighting, voice systems, broken buttons etc.
- If you see any damaged or missing parts (which may be part of safety devices), DO NOT USE the lift and report it as an emergency repair.

**If you have any concerns or questions about lifts or home lifting equipment please call 01952 217217 24 hours a day.**

# Tenancy management

## What we do

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- Investigate any allegations of breaches of tenancy agreement quickly and fairly.
- Work with you to complete tasks agreed to resolve the breaches in tenancy conditions, or refer you to other agencies for extra support.
- Give you advice on how to maintain your tenancy through the tenants' handbook and other sources of information. All of which are on our website or can be requested in other formats.
- Offer a Tenancy Sustainment Service to help you to manage your tenancy.
- If there are serious breaches of your tenancy agreement and you do not co-operate with resolving them, we will take enforcement action in the courts. This may result in you losing your home.
- Take action against tenancy fraud.
- If we have reason to believe that you or the property is at immediate risk, we may gain entry to the property without your permission. This includes instances of flooding, gas leaks or a risk of fire.
- We will make sure that someone from the Group visits your property at least once a year.
- We will make sure that both you and the property are OK when we visit you, known as our Homecheck scheme. If we have any concerns we will arrange a further more detailed visit from your Housing Executive to support you to maintain your tenancy.
- We have signed up to the 'Take a Stand' pledge related to supporting victims of domestic abuse and will signpost tenants and residents to appropriate support and advice.

## What we expect from you

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- Comply with the terms of your tenancy agreement.
- Allow us access to your property with notice.
- Keep your home clean and tidy, and in good decorative order.
- Keep your garden well-maintained.
- Work with us to resolve any breaches of tenancy.
- Keep us informed of any changes in your circumstances.
- Be a good neighbour.
- Dispose of your rubbish and unwanted items appropriately.
- Make sure there are no fire hazards in the home, such as accumulations of items, and have good access and exit routes.
- To remove dogs or other pets, at our request, when visiting or doing any jobs at the property.

## Service standards

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- We will treat you with fairness and respect.
- We will identify those who are vulnerable and offer them on-going support either through Tenancy Support or other agencies.
- We will make it as easy as possible for you to access our services:
  1. In person, through a range of customer access points or personal visits to your home.
  2. By telephone, through our contact centre between 8am and 7pm, 7 days a week or an out of hours emergency call line.
  3. Digitally, through an interactive website and an app you can use on your mobile phone.

# Anti-social behaviour (ASB) and estate management

## What we do

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- Provide a variety of ways to report ASB.
- We will make initial contact with you within one working day of receiving the report.
- We will communicate effectively in all cases.
- We will keep your complaint confidential if you would like it to be, subject to any safeguarding requirements.
- Work with other partners to prevent and resolve ASB in our neighbourhoods.
- Offer a free mediation service to resolve a dispute.
- Use relevant powers to resolve ASB, where appropriate.
- We may have to limit the information we provide to you while managing an ASB case due to third party confidentiality and General Data Protection Rules.

## What we expect from you

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- Not to cause any nuisance or allow visitors to your home to cause nuisance.
- Not to use your home for any immoral or illegal purposes.
- Not to cause any ASB in or around your home.
- Not to engage in any ASB or criminal behaviour in or around your home.
- To take your own steps to resolve any ASB you experience if it is safe to do so.
- To keep us informed and provide evidence to support your ASB case.

## Service standards

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- We will treat you with fairness and respect.
- We will respond to ASB reports within one working day.
- We will fund a Community Support Officer in partnership with Telford and Wrekin Council Community Safety team, who will be designated to work on our estates in Telford.
- We will promote partnership working throughout the Group with partner agencies who work on our estates and may fund appropriate projects.
- We will provide a mediation service, free to our tenants and residents for ASB and other neighbour disputes.
- We will second a member of staff to the Telford Community Safety ASB team as a partnership approach to tackling ASB in our communities.

You can report ASB on the numbers below for your local area:

Telford ASB hotline: **01952 384384**

Shropshire ASB reporting line: **0345 678 9000**

Staffordshire ASB reporting line: **01785 619000**

You can also let us know by either calling our general enquiries number **01952 217100**, emailing **ASBreport@wrekin.com** or using the 'Log it' function on the Wrekin app on your smartphone.

If the ASB includes criminal behaviour you should report it to the Police or you can do so anonymously through Crime Stoppers by calling **0800 555 111**.

More guidance on ASB can be found on our website:  
**wrekin.com/Section/Handbook-Antisocial-Behaviour**.



# Mutual exchange, assignment and succession

## What we do

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- Give you permission to swap your home and tenancy with another suitable social housing tenant, anywhere in the country, if you request it and meet certain conditions.
- Provide access to a home exchange service to help you find another property. This may be through our own local service or an external national service.
- If the necessary conditions don't apply and we refuse your exchange, we will let you know within 20 working days.
- If exchanging into a flat you must be able to be alerted by the smoke/fire alarm and vacate the premises safely unaided.
- Allow you to transfer your tenancy to someone else living in the property in certain circumstances. This is called assignment.
- Should a tenant die, allow a qualifying resident to take over the tenancy. This is called succession. We will do this only once and rules will apply, dependent on the type of tenancy.

Succession applies to the tenancy, not the property itself. If you will be under-occupying the property, it has adaptations that you do not need or is designated for older people and you are not an older person, you may have to move to another Group property more suitable to your needs.

## What we expect from you

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- Proof of ID and to provide us with ID for all of those moving in with you aged 18 and above.
- Ask our permission to mutually exchange before you do so.
- Tell us if you wish to assign your tenancy.
- Make sure your rent account is clear.
- Make sure the property and location is suitable for your needs and is in good condition.
- Leave your property clean and tidy.
- Take responsibility for the property you are moving to. You accept the property in the condition that you find it in.
- Tell us if a tenant dies.
- You may be asked to provide up to four weeks' rent in advance.

## Service standards

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- If you apply to do a mutual exchange we will inform you of our consent, or not, within 20 working days.

For more information, please call our general enquiries line **01952 217100** or visit our website: [wrekin.com/Section/Handbook-Housing-Management](http://wrekin.com/Section/Handbook-Housing-Management).

# Thinking of moving?

## What we do

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- If you are thinking of moving, or your home is no longer suitable, we will discuss your options with you and work with you to achieve the best outcome for you.
- Allow you to transfer your tenancy to another Group home when it becomes vacant, if you qualify.
- Let vacant homes according to our Allocations and Lettings Policy.
- Provide information on the qualification criteria and how to apply for a transfer to another Wrekin Housing Group home online, and other ways by request.
- Let our properties ensuring all necessary health and safety works are carried out, but also agree any additional work required with each individual customer.
- Prosecute any tenant who obtains a tenancy through the provision of false information or other fraudulent means.

## What we expect from you

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- To contact us once you start thinking of moving so that we can provide you with advice and assistance. You will need to meet the following transfer criteria.

### **To transfer to another property you must:**

- Have a clear rent account and be paying your rent in advance.
- Pay for any overlap of rent when transferring to a different property.
- Keep your property clean and tidy, and well-decorated.
- Keep your garden maintained.
- Not have current breaches of your tenancy.
- Allow the prospective new tenant to view your home before you leave.

### **If you are moving out of a Wrekin Housing Group home you must:**

- Pay all rent owed and any charges at the end of your tenancy.
- Return your keys to us prior to or at the end of the tenancy.
- Return the property to us empty of all belongings unless you have a written agreement to leave items for the ingoing tenant. You will be recharged for any items we have to remove.
- Leave the property in a clean, decorated condition.
- Maintain the garden up to the end of the tenancy.
- Provide us with your forwarding address.

## Service standards

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- If you tell us you are thinking of moving, we will give you an appointment with your Housing Executive.

To speak to us about moving, please contact your Housing Executive on **01952 217100**.  
For more information about the Allocations and Lettings Policy visit our website:  
[wrekinhousingtrust.org.uk/Find-a-Home/](http://wrekinhousingtrust.org.uk/Find-a-Home/).

# Customer service

## What we do

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**We make it as easy as possible for you to access our services by providing the following:**

- A range of easily accessible, local access points within our communities.
- Our Customer Contact Centre.
- An out of hours emergency service.
- An informative and interactive website.
- A Customer Portal, on our website, where you will be able to access information that relates to you and interact with us digitally, if that is your preference.
- Personal visits to your home.
- Newsletters.
  
- We make information available in a range of ways to suit your needs.
- We provide services that are available in person, by telephone and in some cases digitally.
- We do our best to give you a great customer service.
- We continually develop new ways of communicating with you or allowing you to access our services, to keep pace with modern ways of working. As these are developed we promote them on our website, through social media and other channels.

## What we expect from you

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- Be respectful and polite to our staff.
- Let us know if something goes wrong.
- Give us the opportunity to put it right.
- Notify us of changes in your contact details.
- Let us know if your circumstances change, especially those that could impact on safety in your home.
- Be in for arranged appointments.
- Comply with the conditions of your tenancy agreement.
- Not to be abusive or threatening to any member of staff or contractor working on our behalf.
- To register on our Customer Portal if you are not already registered. Information about how to register is on our website [wrekin.com](http://wrekin.com)

## Service standards

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- We will treat you with fairness and respect.
- We listen to what you tell us, and improve our services by learning from complaints and other feedback.
- We will ask you if you are happy with the overall standard of service and publish satisfaction levels on our website.
- We will publish key operational policies on our website.
- We aim to complete Subject Access Requests within one calendar month of an authorised request.
- We will keep you informed about things that affect you in a variety of ways that are easy to understand and meet your needs.
- We will develop a set of service standards for core operational services and will comply with these standards.
- We will agree a Wrekin Tenants' Charter, which contains our Together with Tenants Commitments. See pages 22 and 23.

For general enquiries, please call **01952 217100**. If you'd like to report a repair, call us on **01952 217217**. You can make a complaint by emailing [complaints@wrekin.com](mailto:complaints@wrekin.com), calling **01952 217100**, visiting any of our local access points or by writing to us.

# Complaints and compliments

If you would like to make a complaint or pass on a compliment you can do so in person at any of our local access points or by:

Email: [complaints@wrekin.com](mailto:complaints@wrekin.com)

Telephone: **01952 217100**

Write to: **Complaints, The Wrekin Housing Group, Colliers Way, Old Park, Telford, TF3 4AW**

More information about complaints and the Housing Ombudsman can be found on our website along with a copy of the Housing Ombudsman's Complaints Handling Code.

## What we do about complaints

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- **Informal complaint:** We will attempt to resolve all complaints or expressions of dissatisfaction, to the customer's satisfaction at the first point of contact.
- **Stage 1 formal complaint:** If we cannot resolve a complaint immediately or the customer is unhappy with the resolution initially offered or indicates that they wish to make a formal complaint then it will be logged on the complaints system. The relevant Service Manager will contact the customer within 24 hours and aim to resolve the complaint to the customer's satisfaction within five working days or if they can't let the customer know why and agree a new timescale.
- **Stage 2 Senior Manager review:** If the customer remains unhappy following stage 1 of the complaints process they can request a review of the complaint. A Senior Manager, who was not involved at stage 1, will review the complaint and try to find an acceptable resolution for the customer. We aim to complete the review within 10 working days where possible.
- **Stage 3 the complaints panel:** Should the complaint still not be reasonably resolved, customers can appeal to a review panel where an Executive Director, Customer Voice Panel member and a Head of Service will review the complaint and resolutions offered. A date for the panel review will be agreed with the customer who may attend in person. The panel will aim to hold the review meeting within 10 working days or at the date agreed with the customer and make a final decision within five working days of the review hearing. The complaints process will then end.
- **Housing Ombudsman:** If a customer remains unhappy following stage 3 they can appeal to the Ombudsman, but must do this within 6 months of the Groups complaint process ending. The Housing Ombudsman will not normally accept complaints that have not been through our complaints process. The Housing Ombudsman operates a 'Democratic Process' for referrals to them, the Wrekin Tenants' Panel is a Designated Tenants' Panel under the scheme, alternatively complainants can apply to the Housing Ombudsman eight weeks after their complaint has been closed. More details can be found on the Housing Ombudsman's website [www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk).

## What we do about compliments

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- We will pass compliments on to the individual involved with a copy to their manager. Compliments will also appear in our internal staff communications to give employees the recognition they deserve.

## Service standards

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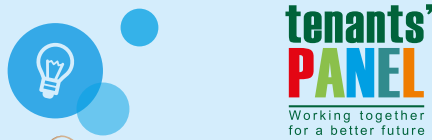
- We will comply with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaints Handling Code.
- We will treat you with fairness and respect.
- We will provide a resolution focussed timely complaints service which deals with complaints fairly, aiming to give a full response within five working days or keep you informed if we can't.
- We will listen to what you tell us, and improve our services by learning from complaints and other feedback, and inform you of what has changed.

# Resident involvement

We have many ways you can get involved in influencing the services the Group provides.

## Tenants' Panel

The Tenants' Panel is made up of residents from the wider tenant body to represent all tenants. The panel influences policies, strategies and service delivery, by working with The Wrekin Housing Group to improve services from the start.



## Tenant Audit Group

Tenant Auditors work closely with us to look behind the scenes of the services we deliver and make recommendations on any improvements they think we should make. Training is provided.



## Customer Assurance Panel

The Customer Assurance Panel reviews our performance against the national and local standards. This assures the Homes and Communities Agency, The Wrekin Housing Group's Board, employees and tenants that we are doing what we say we're doing.



## Real Shoppers - Proactive real time feedback

Become a Real Shopper and earn rewards. If you've used any of our services, we want you to tell us how it was – good, bad or indifferent; you could earn up to £30 worth of vouchers a year.

## Feedback surveys

Our surveys are an opportunity to let us know what you think about your home and the services that we provide.

## Complain, compliment or comment

Tell us whether you're happy or not with our services.

☎ 01952 217100

✉ [Complaints@wrekin.com](mailto:Complaints@wrekin.com)



## Tenants' Unite - Providing a two way movement of information

Our quarterly meetings allow you to discuss and learn more about our services and what we're doing. They also give you the chance to have your say.



## ShireLiving and retirement living meetings

If you live in a retirement living or ShireLiving scheme you can get involved in your regular scheme meetings as well as all the things above.

For more information on any of these groups and opportunities please call **01952 217181** or email [getinvolved@wrekin.com](mailto:getinvolved@wrekin.com).

## Volunteering

We support and encourage volunteering and have a number of opportunities for you to get involved in. We also offer work experience placements for those looking to gain skills and move into employment. Our opportunities are designed to add value to the community and our customers. We have various hours available to suit you and fit around your existing commitments. If you are interested in donating a few hours a week or developing new skills or growing in confidence, please get in touch by calling **01952 217326** or emailing [opportunities@wrekin.com](mailto:opportunities@wrekin.com).

## Service standards

- We will agree and maintain our Customer Engagement Framework which results in direct representation to the Board. These customers hold the Wrekin Housing Group to account.
- We will give you the appropriate level of support, mentoring you and training you if you wish to be involved in the work of the Group.
- We will keep our tenants' handbook up to date and regularly inform you of how you can get involved.

## Relationships

We will treat all tenants and residents with respect in all of their interactions. Our relationships with tenants and residents will be based on openness, honesty and transparency.

### Local service standards that we work to:

1. We will treat you with fairness and respect.
2. We will publish our key operational policies and key performance on our website and update it on a quarterly basis.
3. We will aim to complete Subject Access Requests within one calendar month of an authorised request.

## Communication

Tenants and residents will receive clear, accessible and timely information from us on the issues that matter to them, including important information about their homes and local community, how we are working to address problems, how we are run, and information about performance on key issues.

4. We will keep you informed about things that affect you in a variety of ways.
5. We will keep our Tenants' Handbook up to date, and regularly inform you of how you can get involved.
6. We will communicate with you in a way that's easy to understand and meets your needs – for example:
  - Large print or audio;
  - Use a translation service on our website;
  - Language Line for personal contact; or
  - Any other method that is needed and reasonable.

## Voice and influence

Views from tenants and residents will be sought and valued, and this information will be used to inform decisions. Every individual tenant and resident will feel listened to by us on the issues that matter to them and can speak without fear.

7. We will listen to what you tell us, and improve our services by learning from complaints and other feedback, and inform you what has changed as a result.
8. We will ask you if you are happy with the overall standard of service we provide and publish satisfaction levels.
9. We will involve customer representatives in the specification, selection of contractors and monitoring of contracts relating to:
  - Services provided to blocks of flats, communal areas or retirement living/ShireLiving schemes including communal cleaning and grounds maintenance; and
  - Contracts for improvements to individual homes, such as new kitchens/bathrooms.
10. We will make it as easy as possible for you to become involved and have your voice heard, individually and collectively through an agreed menu of involvement.

## Accountability

Collectively, tenants and residents will work in partnership with us to independently scrutinise and hold us to account for the decisions that affect their homes and services and the quality of the homes and services we provide.

11. We will give you the appropriate level of support, mentoring and training you need, if you wish to be involved in the work of The Wrekin Housing Group.
12. We will agree and maintain our Customer Engagement Framework which results in direct representation by customers to the Board. These customers hold The Wrekin Housing Group to account.

## Quality

Tenants and residents can expect their homes to be good quality, well maintained, safe and well managed.

13. We will let our homes to applicants who are ready to move and hold a tenancy.
14. We will develop a set of service standards for core operational services and we will comply with these service standards.
15. We will improve homes to a higher level than that set out in the government's Decent Homes Standard or an equivalent standard.
16. We will aim to complete repairs on the same day they are reported or by an agreed appointment, unless we agree that the repair needed is an emergency situation and we will attend this within two hours.
17. We will aim to get repairs right first time and use your views on whether we achieve this to measure and report on performance.
18. We will involve customers in our re-let process, which includes an accompanied viewing. We will base our approach on an agreed re-let standard and allow customers to influence additional works to be carried out to the home.
19. We will carry out periodic inspections at agreed intervals of communal parts of our properties to make sure that they are hazard free, healthy and safe areas, acting on any findings where possible on the same day.
20. We will fund a Community Support Officer in partnership with the Telford and Wrekin Council Community Safety team, who will be designated to work on The Wrekin Housing Group's estates in Telford.
21. We will provide a mediation service, free to The Wrekin Housing Group tenants and residents for anti-social behaviour or neighbour disputes.
22. We will second a member of staff to the Telford Community Safety Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) team as a partnership approach to tackling ASB in our neighbourhoods.

## When things go wrong

Tenants and residents will have simple and accessible routes for raising issues, making complaints and seeking redress. Tenants and residents will receive timely advice and support when things go wrong.

23. We will provide a complaints service that deals with complaints fairly and is focused on finding a resolution, aiming to give a full response within five working days or keeping you informed if we can't.
24. We will provide an out of hours emergency service for both repairs and housing related emergencies.
25. We will make it as easy as possible for you to access our services:
  - In person, through a range of local offices or personal visits to your home;
  - By telephone, through our contact centre between 8am - 8pm, 7 days a week or an out of hours emergency call line; and
  - Digitally, through an interactive website and an app that you can use on your mobile phone.
26. If you miss any payments we will let you know quickly, to prevent you from getting into more debt. We will then work with you to agree an affordable payment plan.
27. We will offer a free money advice service to help manage household bills or debts and access benefits.
28. We will identify those who are vulnerable and offer them on-going support either through our Tenancy Support team or other agencies.

## Frequently asked questions

### Why must you service my boiler and gas appliances?

As a landlord, it is our responsibility to ensure gas appliances in the homes we rent are safe. By law, we must check all Wrekin Housing Group gas appliances every year.

### What does a gas service check involve?

Our registered Gas Safe Engineers will need access to your home to clean and test all Group owned gas appliances. This usually takes between one to two hours, depending on the amount of gas appliances you have.

### How do I know it is a Wrekin Housing Group Gas Safe Engineer?

We will book an appointment time with you to carry out your gas service check, so you should be expecting us. All our engineers carry identification and, if you are at all unsure, they won't mind waiting while you call us.

### What happens if I refuse a gas service check?

Allowing us access to conduct gas service checks is part of your tenancy agreement, so you must let our engineers into your home. If you don't, we may have to take legal action. Please remember, this is for your safety. Why put yourself and others at risk?

### How do I book a gas service check?

We will normally contact you to arrange an appointment, but please get in touch if:

- You haven't had a gas service check within the last 12 months.
- You have had a gas meter installed (even if you have no gas appliances).
- You are worried about the safety of gas equipment.
- You are unsure if you need a gas service check.

### Who do I speak to about how to use my central heating system?

Contact us on **01952 217217** and we will arrange for a gas engineer to visit you.

### How do I get my gas and electricity supply connected?

If we have not told you who your supplier is you will need to ring **0870 608 1524** for Gas and **0845 603 0618** for Electric. You may need to show both the gas and electricity supplier proof that you are the new tenant, your tenancy agreement will be enough to prove this.

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### Do I need home contents insurance?

It's a good idea to get home contents insurance. The Wrekin Housing Group insures the structure of your home but the cover doesn't include what's inside it, such as your furniture and personal belongings. If something were to happen, replacing the contents of your home could be expensive. Having home contents insurance means your personal belongings are insured against events like fire, theft and flooding.

The Wrekin Housing Group work with the UK's largest insurer to offer home contents insurance that can be paid in weekly/fortnightly/monthly instalments. Unlike some policies, there are no excesses to pay in the event of a claim. You can apply on our website [wrekin.com/pages/home-contents-insurance](https://wrekin.com/pages/home-contents-insurance) or request a paper application by calling **01952 217100**.



# Frequently asked questions

## Can I keep a pet in my home?

- Yes you can keep a normal domestic dog or cat, as long as it doesn't cause nuisance, fouling or damage to the property or nearby communal areas and the size of your property is suitable for the size of the pet and you live in a house or bungalow.
- You do not need to gain permission but we would ask you to let us know if you do have a pet.
- **We will not allow you to keep a pet if:**
  1. We are aware of any previous pet being removed due to ill health or cruelty.
  2. The pet is to be kept for breeding purposes.
  3. The pet is not a normal domestic pet, e.g a farm animal.
  4. The pet is listed in the Dangerous Dogs act 1991 or requires a license.
  5. If a pet is not being kept under control and causing nuisance, fouling or damaging the property or nearby communal areas we may no longer allow you to keep it.

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## How can I stop condensation and mould?

Condensation occurs when the warm air in a room comes into contact with a cold surface, such as a window, mirror or wall, and turns into water droplets, which can then turn into mould. This does not mean your home is damp. We add moisture to the air all the time just by breathing, as well as from cooking, from drying clothes, and from our pets and house plants.

- Wipe water droplets from windows, sills and tiles on a regular basis.
- Don't dry laundry on radiators.
- Dry clothes outside or on a clothes airer in a cool well ventilated room.
- Make sure tumble dryers are vented correctly and even with a condensation dryer make sure the room is well ventilated.
- Keep lids on pans when cooking and ventilate the room while cooking.
- Whilst cooking or bathing, close doors to other rooms.
- If you have an extractor in the kitchen or bathroom, use it.
- If you have window vents keep them open.
- Do not block or seal off any window vents.
- If it's not damp outside open the windows.
- When running a bath, start with cold water first.
- After a bath or shower ventilate the room to the outside not to the rest of the home.
- Hang wet coats outside of your main living area.
- Use a dehumidifier.
- Don't place furniture against an outside wall.
- We advise tenants not to use steam strippers when decorating as they can damage plaster. We may charge you for any damage as a result.

If after following these guidelines you are still getting a build-up of condensation in your home, contact us and we may be able to help you to find an answer to the problem.

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## What is the Customer Portal?

The Customer Portal is your personal area of our website, where you can see your information, pay your rent online and self-serve a growing number of services. We will be continually developing the interactivity of this area. If you need help to log in call our contact centre on **01952 217100** or email [enquiries@wrekin.com](mailto:enquiries@wrekin.com).

# Useful telephone numbers

## Telford

Council general enquires..... **01952 380000**  
Housing Benefits.....**01952 383838**  
Council Tax.....**01952 383838**  
Citizens Advice Bureau.....**01952 459268**  
Safeguarding team.....**01952 385385**

## Shropshire

Council general enquires..... **0345 678 9000**  
Housing Benefits.....**0345 678 9002**  
Council Tax.....**0345 678 9002**  
Citizens Advice Bureau.....**0344 499 1100**  
Reviive Shrewsbury.....**01743 588458**  
Reviive Oswestry.....**01691 679817**  
Rockspring Community Centre  
Ludlow Furniture Scheme..... **01584 874922**

## Stafford

Council general enquires..... **01785 619000**  
Housing Benefits.....**01785 619478**  
Council Tax.....**01785 619279**  
Citizen Advice Bureau.....**03444 111 444**

## Cannock

Council general enquires..... **01543 462621**  
Housing Benefits.....**01543 464292**  
Council Tax.....**01543 464285**  
Citizen Advice.....**03444 111 444**

## Lichfield

Council general enquires..... **01543 308000**  
Housing Benefits.....**01543 308900**  
Council Tax.....**01543 308900**  
Citizen Advice Bureau.....**03444 111 444**

## Staffordshire Moorlands

Council general enquires..... **0345 605 3010**  
Housing Benefits.....**0345 605 3010**  
Council Tax.....**0345 605 3016**  
Citizen Advice Bureau.....**03444 111 444**

## Newcastle-under-Lyme

Council general enquires..... **01782 717717**  
Housing Benefits.....**01782 715500**  
Council Tax.....**0345 234 9977**  
Citizen Advice Bureau.....**03444 111 444**

## Wolverhampton

Council general enquires..... **01902 551155**  
Housing Benefits.....**01902 551166**  
Council Tax.....**0800 180 4464**  
Citizen Advice.....**03444 111 444**

To find out who supplies electricity  
to your home.....**0845 603 0618**

To find out who supplies gas  
to your home..... **0870 608 1524**

To find out who supplies gas to  
your home if you live in Cheshire... **0845 270 9101**

TRANSCO (gas leaks)..... **0800 111 999**

Quantam gas meter enquiries.....**0845 600 0055**  
(48 hrs to reset meter)

New gas meter enquiries..... **0845 955 5510**

New gas meter card enquiries..... **0845 766 0111**

British Gas.....**0800 048 0202**

Swalec Gas..... **0800 052 0567**

npower.....**0845 714 5146**

Powergen..... **0845 519 1523**

Scottish Power..... **0845 270 0700**

Southern Electric.....**0845 758 5401**

Severn Trent water..... **0845 750 0500**

West Mercier police.....**0300 333 3000**

如果你不明白這份文件的內容, 請致電 01952 217100 求助。

W razie problemów z przeczytaniem tego dokumentu prosimy zadzwonić pod numer 01952 217100.

اگر آپ کو اس خبر نامے کا ترجمہ اردو میں درکار ہو تو ہر اے مہر مانی اسپے کسی ایسے دوست سے ہمیں 01952 217100 پر رابطہ کرنے کو کہئے جو انگریزی بولتا ہو۔ ہم آپ کیلئے ترجمے کا انتظام کریں گے۔

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਖ਼ਬਰਨਾਮਾ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿਚ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ 01952 217100 'ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸ ਦਿਓ ਜਾਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਮਿੱਤਰ/ਸਹੇਲੀ ਜਾਂ ਰਿਸ਼ਤੇਦਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਫੋਨ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਕਹੋ ਜੇ ਅੰਗ੍ਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਵਿਚ ਗੱਲ ਕਰ ਸਕੇ।

## Privacy notice

The Wrekin Housing Group is committed to ensuring that your privacy is protected. We will process any personal information we have about you in accordance with the terms of the General Data Protection Regulations 2016. Our full privacy notice can be found on our website [wrekin.com](http://wrekin.com)