

Your Newsletter

The tenants newsletter for Denbighshire Housing



Issue three - Autumn 2018

Your opinions matter to us

STAR Survey 2018, help us get it right!

The past year has seen some significant changes for Denbighshire Housing. We want to continue to raise our standards to the highest possible level and we need to work with you to achieve this.

In 2016's Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR), we asked 7 core questions which covered quality of your home, value for money with rents and service charges, your neighbourhood as a place to live, how we listen to you and act upon what you have said and the overall service we provide to you. A reminder of the results can be found on page 16-17.

We have used these results to make changes and develop our plans for the future.

Your continued feedback is vital to help us shape our services, to meet the challenges and opportunities we face in the future. You can complete our 2018 Tenant & Resident Satisfaction Survey either;

- Online by following the link to the site www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/star2018e, or
- Using the enclosed survey and returning it in the pre-paid envelope provided.

Turn to page 16 for more information.



Condensation

Now the weather is turning colder, we will see an increase in the conditions that cause condensation in homes. There is no magic cure for condensation, but it is important it is managed within the home.

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Contact centre

Welcome to the Housing Customer Service Team - we have recently streamlined our Denbighshire Housing Contact Centre to improve your customer experience. You can now contact us on 01824 706000 Mon - Fri 08:30 - 17:00

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Summer events

Hundreds of housing tenants have taken part in a series of roadshows across Denbighshire. Denbighshire Housing has delivered several events over the summer to engage with tenants, provide free activities for children and to raise awareness of services available.

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Bulletin Board



Careline
0300 123 3068

Customer Services
01824 706000

Out of Hours Emergency
0300 123 3068

Floodline
0345 988 1188

Gas emergency
0800 111 999

Electricity emergency
0800 404 090

NHS Direct Wales
0845 46 47



Introduction from Jamie Groves

Head of Facilities, Assets and Housing

Welcome to the Autumn edition of your newsletter, which updates you on the latest news from Denbighshire Housing and your communities.

Throughout the newsletter, you may notice we regularly refer to “investing in our communities”. The income from rents funds the work we do and it is vital you tell us what you think, so all of our plans are developed based on your feedback and priorities. In this edition, you will find our latest Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR) survey. This survey is carried out every two years and asks for feedback on how we are currently doing and what we should be focussing on, looking ahead. Please take the time to complete this survey, as it will help us develop our future plans.

I trust you will have noticed how much we are investing in our properties and communities. We want to improve your homes and the neighbourhoods you live in by arranging improvement programmes on existing homes and updating your environment. You can read all about our latest projects in the

newsletter. You will also find interesting and useful information on our new build homes programme and developments with Universal Credit.

I was delighted to be hear the news that Gina Jones, a resident from Rhyl, has been shortlisted for a prestigious Chartered Institute of Wales Housing Award, in recognition of her work in her community. What a fantastic achievement and well deserved.

Finally, I am pleased to announce that we have joined forces with Citizens Advice Denbighshire to help support our tenants through the implementation of Universal Credit. With winter on the way, we will also be able to help and advise you on how to manage your winter fuel bills, which is a big concern for many of us. We have included information on how to contact us and also some advice on managing condensation in your home throughout the winter months.

As always, please get in touch if you have any comments or concerns.

Message from Denbighshire Tenant and Resident Federation (DTARF)



Following the initial introduction to DTARF (Denbighshire Tenants and Residents Federation) in the last newsletter, we are pleased to say that Maes Esgob in Dyserth have attended recent meetings and are in the process of joining the group. However, there may be other council tenants in Denbighshire who have no association, but would like to join DTARF and they are more than welcome. Anyone can come along to a meeting as a community voice. The meetings are held on the third Thursday of every month at various venues within the county. For more information ring John Woodward on 01745 799083 or e-mail him johnwoodward@hotmail.co.uk.

DTARF monitor services such as grounds maintenance and housing repairs, which have vastly improved since the new housing team have been up and running. Denbighshire Housing keep the the Group up to date with developments in housing such as new builds and repairs. If more tenants joined DTARF we could become even more active.

Our next meeting is on January 17th 2019, 10:30am at Cysgodfa, Denbigh.

We look forward to seeing more new faces at the meetings so come along and join us soon.

Damp and Condensation

Now the weather is turning colder, we will see an increase in the conditions that cause condensation in homes.

Condensation is caused by moisture in the air settling on a cold surface. It can grow into black mould on walls and ceilings, as well as on furniture and possessions.

Black mould can be damaging to your health and can irritate respiratory problems and other health conditions. It is important to wipe any condensation off windows and walls as soon as it appears. If black mould appears, this should be cleaned as soon as possible with diluted bleach.

One of the most common causes of increased moisture is drying clothes on radiators. This can significantly increase the existence of mould spores in the air, which can be linked to many respiratory and other health problems.

Condensation can be avoided by ensuring there is a constant temperature within your home and plenty of ventilation.

To help avoid condensation you need to:

Rooms
Try to avoid only heating certain rooms in your home as this can create conditions for condensation as warm air and moisture travels and finds cold surfaces to cause condensation.

Bedroom
People produce a significant amount of moisture, for example throughout the night in a cold bedroom condensation can still form due to people sleeping in a room.

Kitchen
When cooking when steam is produced you should open a window or use an extractor fan if you have one.

Tumble Dryers
When drying clothes in a tumble dryer always ensure the tumble dryer is correctly vented.

Ventilation
Ensure there is ventilation in your home and a through flow of air to stop condensation forming. Open windows slightly and do not block air vents.

Bathroom
Ventilation is particularly important when you are having a bath or a shower so open a window or use an extractor fan if there is one.

Drying Clothes
Always dry clothes outside where possible or use a clothes dryer in a ventilated area away from heating if you need to do this indoors.

Heating
You may find that having your heating on for longer periods managed by a thermostat is cheaper than using it intermittently to warm a room quickly and reduces the risk of condensation.

Tai Sir Ddinbych
Denbighshire Housing

If you have tried all these suggestions and you're still concerned or have any questions about condensation, please contact us on 01824 706000 for more information.

sir ddinbych
denbighshire
Council

We are here to help

If you feel you have a problem with dampness or condensation, please report this to us on 01824 706000 or email housing@denbighshire.gov.uk, so we can look into it. Sometimes, it is not a repairs and maintenance issue, so it is important to follow the advice outlined here.

We all worry about heating bills, especially at this time of year. In our last edition, our DTARF Secretary, Marion Bryon suggested some money saving tips on how to switch providers. If you would like any further advice on ensuring that you are getting the best deal for your energy bills or how best to manage your heating system, please get in touch. We have partnered with Citizens Advice Denbighshire to provide independent advice on best use of heating, energy bills and tariffs.



Tenant Home Improvements

Carrying out improvements and alterations to your council home.

We want you to feel comfortable in your home and we understand that sometimes you'd like to make some changes. We can help and advise on projects and some work will need our permission before it goes ahead.

- Gas fires & electrical suites
- Kitchen units & bathroom fittings inc showers
- Garages, sheds, and outhouses
- Fences & gates and pathways
- Hard standings/dropped kerbs
- Porches, windows, doors, lean to's and conservatories
- Water meters
- Fish ponds and outside taps.
- Retaining garden walls

What work counts as improvements or alterations?

You must seek approval before erecting, removing or installing:

- Walls, roofs, windows, doors & floors (with exception to carpets)
- Electrical sockets/fittings
- Central heating including radiators and pipework.

In some cases, improvements or alterations may require building regulations approval or planning permission. If this is the case, we will forward your enquiries to the relevant department. If you require advise or clarification on improvements or alterations, please do hesitate to contact us to discuss your proposal first.

If works are carried out without permission, we may take a number avenues to put your home back to the way it was. We can refuse permission if we consider the work to be dangerous or if it reduces the value or restricts the property in anyway.

To apply, contact us by email housing@denbighshire.gov.uk or write to us at Denbighshire Housing, Caledfryn, Denbigh, Denbighshire, LL16 3RJ



Cynnal a chadw
Maintenance

Adaptations

Each year, Denbighshire Housing completes a number of adaptations to the housing stock to ensure our residents can continue to live independently and safely in their homes. Major adaptations may include the removal of an existing bathroom and the installation of a wet floor shower room or the installation of a stair lift to make first floor accommodation more accessible. Minor adaptations may include the installation of internal grab rails, hand rails, external ramps and key safes.

If you feel you would benefit from an adaptation to your home, please contact SPAO on 0300 456 1000 or email them on spoa@denbighshire.gov.uk for more information.



A Year On



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Bro Havard, St Asaph - environmental improvement project update

We are pleased to inform you that our major £1.2m environmental improvement project is almost finished. This project forms part of our commitment to invest in our communities and support a positive place to live while improving neighbourhoods, infrastructure and the wider community. The highways and footpath reconstruction is almost complete, providing areas with better parking facilities and traffic calming measures.

The next phase of the project, due to be completed in Spring 2019, includes landscaping, planting of trees and shrubs which will support the Council's environment corporate priority. The environmental landscaping will provide biodiversity, create a more attractive and protected environment and reinforce the community's well-being.

Investment in the project has come from Denbighshire Housing, with support from the wider County Council, Welsh Government and Natural Resource Wales. A number of our investment programmes are supported by £2.5m a year Welsh Government Major Repairs Allowance (MRA).

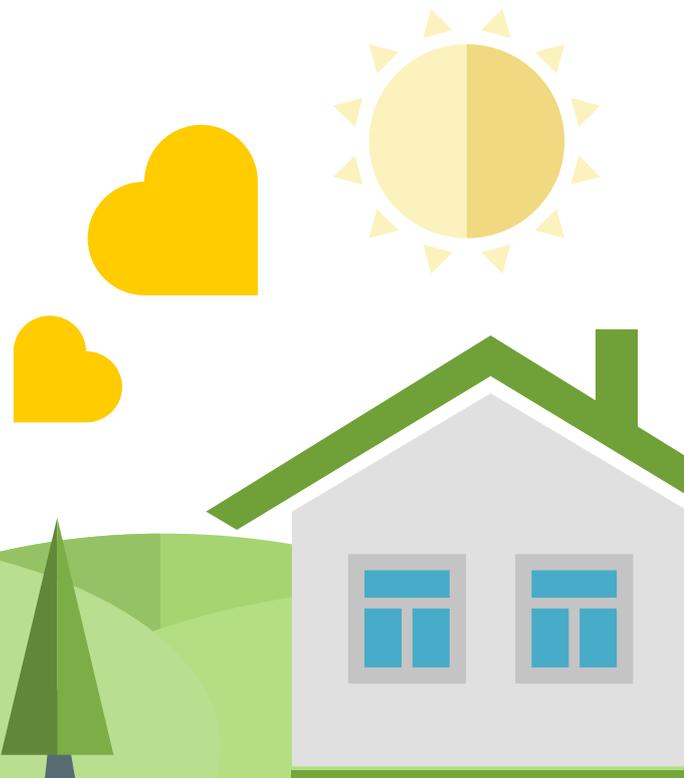
Before and during photos of the improvement work



Plans for the next phase of environmental landscaping:



Tychydig o enghreifftiau o liwau y byddwch yn eu gweld drwy gydol y flwyddyn.
Some examples of the colours you will see throughout the year





Contact Centre

Welcome to the Housing Customer Service Team - we have recently streamlined our Denbighshire Housing Contact Centre to improve your customer experience.

You can now contact us on 01824 706000 Mon – Fri 08:30 – 17:00, select option 3 and then;

Press 1 for Rents

Press 2 to report a Housing repair

Press 3 for Gas problems

Press 4 if you wish to make or enquire about a housing application

Press 5 for all other housing matters

We have a dedicated team of Customer Service Advisors ready to take your calls. We will answer any enquires wherever possible, or make sure your enquiry is passed on to the right person who can help. Our busiest days are Monday and Friday afternoon so at those times you may experience a delay getting through.

You can also email enquiries through

<https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/resident/contact-us/general-enquiries.aspx>



How you can get involved?



We want all our tenants to:

- have a voice on how our services are delivered,
- work in partnership with us to continue to improve homes and communities,
- be able to provide us with feedback to improve our services, and

To help us achieve this we are keen to hear from you. If you would like to volunteer and get involved, we have a number of opportunities and working groups including:

- Newsletter editorial
- Tenant feedback
- Digital inclusion
- Financial inclusion
- Community development

If you feel you have any skills that would benefit our commitment to investing in and improving our communities, or want to develop new skills, then please contact us on 01824 706000 or housing@denbighshire.gov.uk



Gardening this Winter

These are our top tips from the Greenspace team.

These are our top tips from the Greenspace team on how to prepare your garden for the winter. If you would like more information, check out the advice section on the RHS website www.rhs.org.uk

December

1. Raise containers off the ground to prevent waterlogging.
2. Finish planting hanging baskets and borders with winter bedding plants.
3. Check your greenhouse heaters are working and insulate outdoor taps.
4. Prune apple and pear trees, and acers and birches. You may want to take some hard wood cuttings as well.
5. There is still time to plant any deciduous trees and shrubs.

January

1. Recycle your Christmas tree.
2. Clean pots and greenhouses ready for spring.
3. Put out food and water for hungry birds.
4. Start to plan your vegetable crops for the coming season.
5. Wrap up warm with a nice cuppa.

February

1. Prune winter flowering shrubs which have finished flowering.
2. Cut evergreen hedges and renovate overgrown deciduous hedges.
3. Prepare vegetable seed beds, you can start to sow some veg undercover as well.
4. Plant out bulbs "in the green" such as bluebells and divide snowdrops.
5. Cut back deciduous grasses.



Green Rangers

Can you spare a few hours a month?

Are you interested in shaping how your environment looks in the community?

If so, why not be one of our Green Rangers!

If you're interested, please contact:

Sarah Jones
Community Development Coordinator

01824 706000



Mannau gwyrd
Greenspace





Greenspace Update

Geufron Community Food Garden

Working in conjunction with Countryside Services, we are well underway in transforming this area of waste ground in Rhyl into a community growing space. The area now comprises of a selection of flat and raised beds in a range of sizes, which are available to rent as part of the Denbighshire Allotment Scheme. If you would like any more information, please contact Garry Davies on 01824 706000.

Keep an eye out for our opening event on social media.



Aberwheeler

A number of our investment programmes are supported by £2.5m a year Welsh Government Major Repairs Allowance (MRA).

Tenants at Porth y Wern have seen an upgrade to their outside space this year, with planting of neighbourhood trees, and shrubs to improve and encourage a welcoming environment for residents. The programme of works included improved parking and better access to properties, using a resin bound, permeable surface.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Before



After



Community Development This Summer/Autumn

Summer events programme:

Hundreds of housing tenants have taken part in a series of roadshows across Denbighshire.

Denbighshire Housing has delivered several events over the summer to engage with tenants, provide free activities for children and to raise awareness of services available.

More than 500 tenants took part in our roadshows in Denbigh, Rhyl, Prestatyn, Meliden, Dyserth, Rhualt and Llangollen.

Cllr Tony Thomas, Lead Member for Housing, Regulation and the Environment, said: "The housing roadshows over the summer were a great chance for us to engage with tenants and provide fun activities for children. They were well attended and provided some great feedback and I'd like to thank everyone who took part.



"These events gave us the opportunity to talk to residents to get an understanding of the community and to share information about services that are available to them.

"Providing housing that meets the needs of Denbighshire residents is a priority for the Council.

"Denbighshire Housing will be providing 170 additional Council homes throughout the county over the next four years."

Activities for children included face painting, arts and crafts, bridge making, sports games, robotic programming, virtual reality headsets and online safety while organisations who attended included North Wales Police, Age Connect, Menter Iaith as well as a number of Council services.





Nature for Health

Denbighshire Housing, supported by Countryside Service, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and Bangor University have launched a 'Nature for Health' project to help improve people's lives through health and wellbeing activities.

This 18-month pilot project will run in The Marsh in Rhyl, Morfa Gateway in Prestatyn, Pengwern in Llangollen, and Corwen. It will help individuals and communities connect with the countryside and adopt healthy habits for life. Protecting the environment and encouraging people to develop behaviours that contribute to good health and well-being are both priorities for the Council and these projects help us achieve this.

Would you like the chance to learn new skills, meet new people, explore your community or take part in a weekly walking or environmental volunteering sessions? If yes, why not come along.

Weekly walking sessions:

Llangollen	Canolfan Gymunedol Pengwern / Pengwern Community Centre	Dydd Llun / Monday	1pm – 3pm
Corwen	Canolfan Hamdden Corwen / Corwen Leisure Centre	Dydd Llun / Monday	10am – 12pm
Prestatyn	Porth Morfa / Morfa Gateway	Dydd Iau / Thursday	1pm – 3pm
Y Rhyl / Rhyl	Glan Morfa, Marsh Tracks	Dydd Iau / Thursday	10am – 1pm

Weekly volunteering sessions:

Llangollen	Canolfan Gymunedol Pengwern / Pengwern Community Centre	Dydd Mawrth / Tuesday	10am – 1pm
Corwen	Canolfan Ni	Dydd Mercher / Wednesday	1pm – 3pm
Prestatyn	Porth Morfa / Morfa Gateway	Dydd Iau / Thursday	10am – 1pm
Y Rhyl / Rhyl	Glan Morfa, Marsh Tracks	Dydd Iau / Thursday	10am – 1pm



We look forward to seeing you soon. For more information contact us at housing@denbighshire.gov.uk, countryside@denbighshire.gov.uk or 01824 706000

New Build Plans – Housing development

In the last edition we told you about progress we were making with our programme to provide 170 new council homes throughout the county, over the next four years.

We've recently had our proposals for a new culvert across the site of the old Bodnant School in Marine Road, Prestatyn approved by Natural Resources Wales and we'll shortly be starting work on its construction. This will clear the way for us to start building new homes on the site.

Over the summer, consultations have been taking place about proposals for new homes at The Dell in Prestatyn and, in conjunction with Grŵp Cynefin, on the site of the former Pennant Flats in Denbigh. These consultations have now closed and an application for planning permission for the development in Prestatyn is currently being processed and we should hear the outcome before Christmas.

A local contractor has just started work on converting the property we've bought in Brighton Road, Rhyl into three new apartments and work is expected to be completed next spring.

We've also just been told that the Welsh Government will be giving us £650,000 towards the cost of building 24 new Council homes to the energy efficient Passivhaus standard off Henllan Street in Denbigh. Architects have now been appointed to start designing the new homes and we'll be consulting the local community about these proposals at the end of the year.

As you can see, the programme is well underway and we'll be bringing you more news about these exciting developments in future editions.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government





Housing Awards 2019

Denbighshire Housing is proud to announce that we are organising our first annual Tenant and Community Awards. We are hoping that this will be a prestigious event celebrating the achievements and participation of you, our tenants, the work within your communities and projects happening across Denbighshire.

We are hoping that over 80 delegates, including key housing professionals and tenants will be attending the event on 17th April 2019, 1891 Restaurant, Rhyl.

Our award categories will include:

- Tenant of the year
- Housing resident / Community Group of the year
- Customer services award for Denbighshire Housing
- Young tenant of the year
- Garden of the year – Community/ Communal area
- Garden of the year – Tenant/individual
- Community projects of the year
- Denbighshire Housing Award

Keep an eye out in the New Year when we will officially announce the awards and explain how to enter. Winners from the Denbighshire Housing Tenant Awards will be nominated, where possible, for the TPAS Cymru Participation Awards 2019.



Housing Champions Awards – Welsh Housing Awards 2018

We are delighted to announce that Gina Jones, Chairperson of Resident Committee / Phoenix Centre Coordinator has been shortlisted for the Housing Champions Welsh Housing Awards. This special award recognises either an individual or small team whose passion, enthusiasm and commitment has made a real difference to the lives of others in their community.

Gina and the other volunteers at the Marsh Community Association of the Phoenix Centre, Rhyl have radically turned around

the community centre. This is down to Gina's vision, hard work, passion, commitment and drive to improve the lives of the people in her community. With the support of Nikki and the help of external partners, Gina has turned her vision into a reality and given her community back their Centre. Because of the real difference that Gina has made to the lives of people in her community, we cannot think of anyone more deserving of this award.



Yn Agor

Opening

Gwanwyn 2019

Spring 2019

SC2

Mae SC2, atyniad hamdden newydd a chyffrous Cymru, yn barod i agor ei ddrysau. Gyda sleidiau ysblennydd, padlo arddull traeth ac arena TAG Actif gyntaf Cymru, mae rhywbeth i bawb.

SC2 Wales newest and most exciting leasured attraction is getting ready to open its doors. With breathtaking flumes, beach style paddling and Wales first TAGactive arena, there's something for everyone.



www.sc2rhyl.co.uk

ymholiadau@sc2rhyl.co.uk

enquiries@sc2rhyl.co.uk



Trem Y Foel, Ruthin

Mon	Tea & chat	10am
	Holy Communion (monthly)	11 am
	Armchair exercise	1:30pm
	Whist Drive	7pm
Tue	Bowls & light refreshments	2pm
Wed	Social Club Bingo	2pm
Thu	Tea & chat	2pm
Fri	Bingo	7pm (fortnightly)

Llys Y Felin, St Asaph

Bi Monthly	Llys Y Felin Resident Meeting
1st Monday every month	Social cards and games
Thur	Bingo 2pm
Weekly	Bonus Ball & Coffee morning 10am

Maes Emlyn

Mon	Coffee morning
Tue	Bingo 7pm
Wed	Lunch
Fri	Bingo 7pm
Sat	OCC Party Night



What's on in
your nearest
community centre?

It's competition time!!

For a chance to win 1 of 10 £50 vouchers, please submit your STAR survey to us by 14 December 2018.

All surveys completed online

www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/star2018e

will earn 2 entries into the prize draw and all surveys returned by post will earn 1 entry into the prize draw. Any surveys received after this date, up until 11 January 2019 will not be entered into the prize draw, but will still be included in the survey results.

We would like to assure you that all your answers will be treated in the strictest confidence and used for research purposes only. This means that it will not be possible for any person or address to be identified from the survey findings. Your details will be needed however, if you wish to be entered into the prize draw.

Terms and Conditions:

The winners will be chosen at random and all decisions will be final. The closing date for the prize draw is 14 December 2018 and the winner will be contacted shortly after this date (please note you must provide your contact details in the space provided when completing the survey if you wish to be entered into the prize draw).

If you have any questions about this survey, please contact us on 01824 706000 and the results of the survey will be published online and in the next tenant's newsletter.



STAR Survey - Survey of Tenants and Residents

The past 18 months has seen some significant changes for Denbighshire Housing. We want to continue to raise our standards to the highest possible level and we need to work with you to achieve this.

This Autumn we will be carrying out our third STAR survey. In 2016-17, we asked you 7 core questions specific to properties. These covered quality of home, value for money with rents and service charges, your neighbourhood as a place to live, how we listen to you and act upon what you said and the overall service we provide.

In addition to this, we asked some general questions about our reputation as a housing Service, priorities, trust, staff, digital access, communication and health and wellbeing

to give us a better insight in to how we can improve in these areas.

Here is a summary of what you said:



3,344

surveys were mailed out.

592 (18%) completed surveys were received, **561** paper copies and **31** online.



86%

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

2nd in Wales when benchmarked against **7** organisations.



85%

of our tenants said they were satisfied with the **overall neighbourhood**.

3rd in Wales when benchmarked against **7** organisations.



85%

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

3rd in Wales when benchmarked against **7** organisations.



85%

of our tenants said they were satisfied with the way we deal with **repairs and maintenance**.

1st in Wales when benchmarked against **7** organisations.



84%

of our tenants said they were satisfied with our **overall service**.

3rd in Wales when benchmarked against **7** organisations.



71%

of our tenants said they were satisfied with the way we **listen and act**.

3rd in Wales when benchmarked against **7** organisations.



45%

of tenants who responded use the **internet**.



71%

agreed or strongly agreed when asked "I lead a **healthy lifestyle**".



LLANGOLLEN & RHUDDLAN

tenants mainly commented on issues with **interior repairs, exterior repairs** and **heating**.



DENBIGH, RHYL & PRESTATYN

tenants mainly commented on issues with **rubbish, gardens, lighting** and **dog fouling**.



CORWEN & ST ASAPH

tenants mainly commented on issues with **parking**.



RUTHIN

tenants mainly commented on issues with **traffic** and want to see **more community events, more officer presence** and a **better bus service**.



OUR TENANTS TOP 3 PRIORITIES

1

Repairs & maintenance

2

Listening to residents views & acting upon them

3

The overall quality of your home

YOU SAID, WE DID

BASED ON THE RESULTS FROM THE 2016 STAR SURVEY, WE HAVE INVESTED SIGNIFICANTLY IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS.



WE NOW HAVE A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TEAM TO:

Improve how we **listen and act**
Support a number of projects that improve our tenant's **health and wellbeing**
Improve our **engagement in communities**, for example Pengwern and Rhyl



ST ASAPH

Invested in **parking improvements**



FINANCIAL AND DIGITAL INCLUSION

Appointed an officer to see how we can **improve internet access for our tenants**.

WE ARE STILL WORKING ON:



REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

Seeing if we can **improve the service**



WEBSITE

Developing a **tenant focussed website**



SUPPORT

Ongoing **support for neighbourhood issues**.

Did you know...?

Denbighshire Housing is here to help and is committed to helping with the transition to Universal Credit.

We can provide assistance and advice with the following:



Digital Support and getting online



Information on organisations that can provide low cost IT equipment for use at home



Budgeting support & managing your money



Debt management



Applying for Council Tax Reduction



Applying for Free School Meals



Arrears management and managing your tenancy



In some instances, with your consent, we may refer you to other providers for assistance. For more information you can contact the housing team on **01824 706000**.