

TENANT NEWSLETTER

SUMMER
EDITION
01



Making a Difference Together

Shaping Services Together

Welcome to your summer
Tenant Newsletter



Supporting Residents

Over £1 million in aid
provided to help households
through ongoing financial
hardship

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How to Report Repairs

Council tenants can report
repairs online, by phone or in
person, quick & simple

4



Chance to win £50

Scan the QR code inside for
your chance to win £50.

3



**FOREWORD BY LANDLORD
SERVICES WORKING GROUP
TENANT REPRESENTATIVE,
BARBARA BARTLEY**

Hi there,

My name is Barbara and I am an Involved Tenant at West Lancashire Borough Council. I am pleased to introduce the Summer edition of our Tenant Newsletter.

Things have really changed in the last few years as we have been working together to make some positive changes to the housing services the Council provides.

As involved Tenants, we have worked alongside Officers to influence decisions that affect us all.

My experience with the Council and the Tenant Voice team has been positive, I have had so much fun, and I have learnt a lot about the inner workings of the Housing Service.

I really enjoy feeling part of the team and knowing there is a dedicated support system from the Tenant Voice Team to train, support and help us achieve.

As you may have heard, the Regulator of Social Housing came along to inspect how well West Lancs are doing as a Landlord, I was part of this process and it was wonderful to hear the news that we received a C1 grading. You can find out more about this on page 8-9.

It is important for West Lancs to hear your views and by getting involved like me, you can help to make changes too.

Barbara

Tenant Voice needs you!

Help shape the future of housing services in West Lancs by sharing your experiences, insights and ideas

Around two years ago, we - together with our tenants - refreshed how you can get involved and help influence and improve our services.

As a tenant, you are at the centre of our decision-making processes. We support with service development, as well as work alongside other colleagues and teams, to improve relationships with tenants and promote a diverse and inclusive range of engagement activities.

We want to ensure that all tenants are heard, respected and we want you to join us on this journey. Our focus is to ensure the voice of the tenant is at

the heart of everything we do and we have lots of opportunities for you to be involved, including:

- Scrutiny Sessions
- Mystery Shopping
- Block Champions
- Repairs and Servicing Group
- Community Walkabouts and more

So, if you can spare a couple of hours a month and are interested in helping us to improve our services, please get in touch today by emailing: tenant-voice@westlancs.gov.uk alternatively you can contact us on 01695 654010.



JOIN OUR TENANT VOICE TEAM

As a tenant, you are at the centre of our decision-making processes.



SHAPE THE FUTURE OF HOUSING



Privacy Notice – How We Handle Your Data

West Lancashire Borough Council is committed to protecting your privacy. We will keep your personal information secure and only use it for the purpose it was given. Once it's no longer needed, it will be safely destroyed. For more details on how we handle your data, please visit westlancs.gov.uk



SHARE YOUR VIEWS FOR A CHANCE TO WIN £50

Click here to find out more

We'd love to hear your thoughts on the latest edition of the Summer Tenant Newsletter.

Your feedback is really important and helps us make sure we're providing the information that matters most to you.

By letting us know what you found use-

ful - and what you'd like to see more of - you'll be helping us shape future editions to better meet your needs and interests.

It only takes a few minutes to complete our short online survey, and as a thank you, you'll be entered into a prize draw to win a **£50 Love2Shop voucher**.



Got a Leak, Creak or Squeak?

Need a repair? Here's how to get it sorted - don't forget to check the Tenants' Repairs Guide, too

[Find out more at westlancs.gov.uk](https://westlancs.gov.uk)

We offer quick and convenient ways to report repairs - from online access to local drop-ins, help is always within reach

We offer many different ways to report repairs, so you can get help quickly, in a way that works best for you. A quick way to report your repair is by visiting westlancs.gov.uk/repairs. The service is available 24/7 and saves you from waiting on the phone.

If you prefer to speak to someone, you can call 01695 577177 between 8.30am and 5.30pm, Monday to Friday. For emergencies outside these hours, a 24-hour answer service is also available.

You can also report repairs in person. Just visit one of the Council's Customer Service Points - either at the Derby Street offices in Ormskirk, open Monday to Thursday from 9am to 5pm and Friday until 4.45pm, or at the Concourse Shopping Centre in Skelmersdale, open Tuesday to Thursday from 10am to 3pm.

Not sure if the repair is your responsibility or the Council's? It's best to check first. The [Tenants' Repairs Guide](#) has a full breakdown and the same information

is available via westlancs.gov.uk. And if you'd rather speak to someone face-to-face about repairs or ongoing issues, Wates Property Services - the Council's repair contractor - holds a monthly drop-in session.

You'll find them at the Customer Service Point in the Concourse Shopping Centre on the last Wednesday of every month. So whether it's something small or more serious, don't put it off. Help is just a click, call or visit away.



- 1 Online**
Visit westlancs.gov.uk/repairs to report repairs any time, day or night.
- 2 By Phone**
Call 01695 577177. Mon-Fri, 8.30am to 5.30pm.
- 3 In Person**
Visit a Customer Service Point at our Derby Street offices, Ormskirk (Mon-Thurs 9am-5pm, and Fri 9am-4.45pm) and the Concourse Shopping Centre, Skelmersdale (Tues-Thurs, 10am-3pm).
- 4 Ask the Experts**
Wates Property Services, who carry out repairs for the Council, are available in person at the Concourse Customer Service Point on the last Wednesday of every month.

We're Here to Help Keep Your Home Gas Safe

Annual gas checks protect your home. Can't make it? Call Liberty for a new date

All social housing landlords must carry out an annual gas safety check in every property that they manage - and we are no exception to this rule.

It is important to keep your appointments so that we can keep you safe in your home. We are committed to your safety and we take our responsibilities on gas safety very seriously.

Failure to allow our engineer or contractor access to complete the annual gas safety checks is a breach of your tenancy agreement and may result in legal action.

This could result in us obtaining an injunction allowing us to force access or obtain possession of your home.

Should you miss an appointment, or if you need to rearrange the appointment we send to you, please contact our contractor Liberty on 03303 335 782.

Annual Gas Checks

Ensure Tenant Safety

[Keep appointments scheduled](#)



Annual gas inspections identify faults, ensuring appliances function safely and efficiently.

Electrical Inspections

Occurs Every Five Years

[Report issues promptly](#)



Regular checks maintain safe wiring; report problems to prevent potential hazards.



Fire Risk Assessments in Communal Areas

[Maintain clear exits](#)



Assessments identify fire hazards; tenants should ensure exits remain unobstructed.

Damaged Socket or Floorboard? Act Quickly

[Report It Promptly](#)



Faulty sockets or loose floorboards can cause injury or fires. Report immediately.



INVESTING IN HOUSING IN WEST LANCS



Asset management is a key part of the housing service at the Council. We are responsible for making sure that your homes are in line with government standards and regulations, as well as carrying out programmed works if they do not meet them. Our homes need regular investment to ensure that they remain energy efficient and safe to live in.



HELP CREATE CLEANER & SAFER ENVIRONMENTS FOR ALL

Walkabouts & Staff Volunteering

New for 2025, we have combined some of our estate and neighbourhood walkabouts with a litter pick, helping to create cleaner and safer environments for us all.

Our officers, along with local partners, tenants and colleagues, have been on walkabouts and litter pick days across the borough on various days throughout the year.

We would love to see you join us on any of the future dates below:

- Schwartzmann Drive, Banks - Thursday, 28 August
- Birch Green - Tuesday, 23 September
- Moorside - Tuesday, 21 October
- Digmoor - Tuesday, 18 November
- Tanhouse - Tuesday, 9 December

If you would like to join us, or would like more information, please email tenantvoice@westlancs.gov.uk



What is a Community Impact Day?

Impact days give residents an opportunity to speak out, share views on local services & clear household clutter

The neighbourhoods that we live and work in are important to us all. You told us that you want us to be visible in your communities, so we have planned a calendar of local events where you can have the opportunity to speak to officers, highlight any issues and let us know your views.

Council officers from across all teams have been on the road once again this summer for a series of Community Impact Days aimed at giving tenants and residents a stronger voice - and a chance to tidy up.

This is a great opportunity for you to have your say and for us to gain an insight as to what we are doing well, but also identify areas where we could improve.

But it's not all talk. In a practical boost for households, a skip will be available at each event, giving residents a chance to dispose of unwanted domestic items at no cost

It's strictly for household waste, so no tyres, paint, oil, asbestos or white goods like fridge freezers. We are a council that is committed to creating a clean environment for all our residents and we are thrilled to provide an opportunity for the community to dispose of items they no longer want or need in a safe way.

- **Thursday 14th August 2025**
10am to 1pm at Whittle Drive
- **Thursday 18th September 2025**
10am to 1pm at the Evermore Hub
- **Thursday 9th October 2025**
10am to 1pm at Blakehall Flats

If you would like to suggest your neighbourhood, primary school, community group or venue for one of the next Impact days, focus groups or community walkabouts, or any other engagement event please get in touch by emailing: tenantvoice@westlancs.gov.uk or call 01695 654010.





TOGETHER WE IMPROVE



Growing Young Minds: School Allotments for Future Food Heroes

Partnering with Wates to help 16 schools grow fresh fruit and vegetables together

Sixteen primary schools across the Borough are set to get their hands dirty in the best possible way - thanks to a new initiative between West Lancashire Borough Council and contractor Wates.

Aimed at encouraging children to explore the benefits of growing their own fruit and vegetables, the scheme will see dedicated allotment spaces created

on school grounds. The green-fingered project hopes to inspire pupils to learn about healthy eating, sustainability and where their food comes from - all while having fun outdoors.

As well as nurturing crops, the initiative aims to help young minds flourish by offering a hands-on approach to environmental education.





YOUR FEEDBACK GUIDES HOW WE DO THINGS

Listening, Learning, Improving Together

Every year, we invite our tenants to complete the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) surveys, which help us understand how well you think that we are performing.

These surveys are an important part of our commitment to transparency and continuous improvement.

They cover a range of areas including how satisfied tenants are with the overall service we provide, the condition of their home, how we handle repairs, and how we listen to and act on their views.

The feedback we receive directly influences the way we shape our services, helping us identify what's working well and where we need to do better.

We carry out the TSM surveys to ensure all tenants have a chance to take part in a way that suits them.

The survey results are shared with our Council Members and Tenant Voice groups to ensure that tenant priorities are reflected in our decisions. They will also be published on our performance page at westlancs.gov.uk on 30th July 2025.

Your voice matters and, by taking a few minutes to complete the survey each year, you play a vital role in helping us deliver better services and create homes and communities that meet your needs.

We want to hear from you – still time to act

More than 40 per cent have already responded to our survey, but there's still time to take part and win £50

A massive thank you to those who took the time to tell us about themselves in our getting to know you survey, which started last June.

More than 40 per cent of you responded, helping us update our records so we can shape and improve the services we deliver to better meet your needs.

Thanks to the information shared, we were able to reach out to tenants experiencing anti-social behaviour or

reporting damp in their homes - offering support and advice where needed.

As a thank you, we gave Love2shop vouchers to the winner of our first prize draw.

And good news - this incentive is still available for anyone who hasn't yet completed the survey.

We'll be continuing this activity over the next few months, so there's still time to get involved.



HAVE YOUR SAY & WIN £50

Survey participants help improve homes and services across the Borough.



C1 Awarded For Housing Standards Thanks To Support From Tenants

We're proud to have met the housing standards following a recent inspection, thanks to the dedication of our tenants, whose feedback helps us improve homes, strengthen services and support local communities



In November 2024, we had a visit from The Regulator of Social Housing.

The regulatory team came to see how we manage our responsibilities as a landlord and this is assessed against four main standards:

- The Safety and Quality Standard
- The Transparency, influence and accountability Standard
- The Neighbourhood and Community Standard
- The Tenancy Standard

We are proud to announce that

we achieved the highest grade, a C1. This means that we are meeting the standards and continue to improve our services for our Tenants. We want to say a special thank you to all involved tenants who contributed to this achievement, a lot of hard work and effort was put into the inspection process.

We recognise we still need to improve our services and there are lots of opportunities for us to work with you to continue this journey. Your feedback is vital to helping us make changes, to do this, you can get in touch with Tenant Voice today at tenantvoice@westlincs.gov.uk



WE'RE WORKING SMARTER TO HELP YOU

Liberty and WPS Team Up For You

Liberty and Wates Property Services joined forces in October 2024, and now they're working together to give you an improved service.

Wates Property Services is now called WPS. WPS and Liberty both have new logos to match the Wates Group style.

You'll start seeing new uniforms and updated logos on letters and appointment cards.

Don't worry - it's still us. Just keep an eye out for the new logos so you can spot official staff and avoid any bogus callers.

WPS will keep handling your repairs and maintenance, and sometimes Liberty staff will help out too.

Liberty will still take care of heating and safety checks such as your annual gas inspection. By teaming up, we're aiming to make things smoother and more efficient for you.



Make Sure Your Home Is Covered

Contents insurance helps cover your household items, so you're protected when life catches you off guard

No matter how careful you are, life has a way of catching us off guard. Whether it's a burst pipe, an accidental breakage or a burglary, contents insurance could help you cover the cost of replacing your things if the worst happens.

Contents insurance is there to protect your household items - from furniture and TVs to clothes and kitchenware - giving you peace of mind that you're covered if something goes wrong.

It's worth remembering that we don't

insure your personal belongings as part of your tenancy. If you haven't already arranged contents insurance, now's a good time to think about it.

If you would like to apply for home contents insurance, or need some help and advice, please contact the team at insurance_services@westlancs.gov.uk and an application pack can be emailed directly to you.

Alternatively, please telephone 01695 585047 and we will be able to set up your policy over the telephone.





LISTENING TO TENANTS

Raising Standards Through Feedback

Your feedback matters - help us improve by taking a quick, friendly survey after receiving our service

Voicescape carries out short phone surveys on our behalf, helping us gather valuable feedback from you about your most recent experiences.

These 'transactional surveys' are triggered after you've received a service from us, giving you the chance to tell us what went well - and what could be better.

The surveys are conducted through automated phone calls from a local number and only take a few minutes to complete.

If you raise any concerns during the

call, a member of our team will follow up directly to discuss the issue in more detail.

Your feedback helps us identify what's working and where we need to improve.

Based on what you tell us, we aim to make meaningful changes to the way we work - whether that's reviewing a process, adjusting a policy or improving how we deliver a service.

We truly value your input. If you receive a call, please take a moment to complete the survey - your voice makes a difference.





HELP AVAILABLE ONLINE OR BY
CONTACTING THE ADVICE TEAM

[Click here to find out more](#)

REAL HELP DELIVERED

Council Team Delivers Vital Help Worth Over £1 Million

Our Money Advice Team helped tenants access over £1million in financial support in 24/25 through a range of benefits, grants and hardship funds.

In total, £1,060,751.66 worth of support was delivered to help ease the burden of the ongoing cost-of-living crisis.

This included support with 613 Universal Credit claims, 121 Discretionary Housing Payments, and 382 Household Support Fund applications.

The team also issued 666 Food Bank vouchers and 212 Fuel

Vouchers, offering immediate help to residents facing urgent financial difficulties. An additional £113,349.15 was allocated to assist tenants struggling with heating charges over winter, helping vulnerable households stay warm.

We understand that costs continue into the summer months, so the team partnered with Skelmersdale FUSS to provide free school uniforms to families across various West Lancashire schools. More details are available at: [skelmersdalefuss.co.uk](https://www.skelmersdalefuss.co.uk)

The Household Support Fund, which offers direct cash payments

to those in financial hardship, remains available to all tenants and residents.

To apply, visit: westlancs.gov.uk/moneyadvice/household-support-fund

For personalised advice or help, contact the Money Advice Team on 01695 585252 or email moneyadvice@westlancs.gov.uk

Further updates, including support available over the summer holidays, will be shared on the Council's [social media channels](#) or by visiting: westlancs.gov.uk/moneyadvice

Struggling With Bills? Talk To Us And Get Free Advice

Get practical, personalised help with budgeting, benefits & more from our experienced Money Advice Team

If you're finding it hard to make ends meet, you're not alone - and we're here to support you. Our friendly, confidential Money Advice service is designed to help you take control of your finances and feel more confident about managing your money.

Whether you're dealing with debt, rising living costs or simply unsure about what support you're entitled to, our experienced team is ready to guide you through it. We offer practical help with things like Universal Credit, benefit advice, fuel and food support, Pension Credit, budgeting tools and even mental health and digital support.

We know that everyone's situation is different. That's why we take the time

to listen and tailor our advice to your needs. If you're one of our tenants, we can even come to your home to chat things through. Or, if you'd prefer, we can meet you at our customer service point in Skelmersdale's Concourse or at Ormskirk Town Hall.

Getting help is easy - just call us on 01695 585252, give us your name, address and a quick summary of your situation. One of our team will call you back to talk things through. You can also email us directly at moneyadvice@westlancs.gov.uk

We're here to make sure you have the tools, information and support you need to stay on top of your money. Let's tackle it together.



CONFIDENTIAL MONEY ADVICE

WHERE TO FIND HELP, SUPPORT & ADVICE

1

Apply for Support

Visit: westlancs.gov.uk/moneyadvice/household-support-fund.aspx

2

Contact Money Advice

Call 01695 585252 or email moneyadvice@westlancs.gov.uk

3

School Uniform Help

More information available via skelmersdalefuss.co.uk

4

More Help Online

Visit: westlancs.gov.uk/moneyadvice





MODULAR HOMES OFFER STABILITY FOR LOCALS

Modular Homes Proposed For Local Families

We are proposing to use the recently cleared Elmstead garage site to create modular housing units for local residents in need of emergency accommodation.

This would support those for whom a B&B isn't a suitable option — for example, families or individuals needing to maintain stability around school, work and daily life.

These homes would support individuals and families facing homelessness due to reasons such as the end of a private tenancy, unsafe living conditions or domestic abuse.

Priority would be given to those with an established local connection to West Lancashire.

The modular homes are high-quality, visually appealing and offer the flexibility to be relocated if needed.

They are vital in helping meet the growing demand for secure, short-term housing in the area.



Support When It's Needed: One Woman's Story of Help

Our team acted quickly, providing compassionate support & safe temporary accommodation when it mattered

When escaping domestic abuse, knowing where to turn can make all the difference.

One woman, who was living in the area at the time that she needed help, shared how we stepped in during her time of need.

"It sounds bad but I had a really poor view of the council before this, but they have been brilliant and it's been such a positive experience for me."

Reaching out in an emergency, she contacted the Council's out-of-hours line:

"I was trying to flee domestic abuse and I rang the out of hours Council line and they sorted me out with safe, temporary accommodation."

The response was swift and compassionate:

"My situation was dealt with quickly, with a housing officer coming to visit me and then I was linked up with the Birchwood Centre"

Birchwood is a charity tackling homelessness, mental health issues and wellbeing in Skelmersdale.

"The support was so personal and I felt like the officers really cared about me."

She now has a safe and stable home: "It's a little out of the way and I feel safe. I want to let anyone who is going through domestic violence to know that the Council is there to support and they really do care."



FLEXIBLE, LOCAL HOUSING

New modular homes provide safe, short-term housing for local families.



THINKING ABOUT MOVING?

[Click here to find out more](#)

Tenants Able To Swap Homes Via National House Exchange Scheme

House Exchange offers West Lancashire tenants a practical way to swap homes, with special support and incentives for those aiming to downsize comfortably

How Mutual Exchange Helps Tenants Move

The Mutual Exchange scheme lets West Lancashire Borough Council tenants swap homes with other tenants, locally or nationally. It's ideal for those wanting a bigger or smaller property or a new location. Supported by House Exchange, it's free to use. Downsizing tenants may also be eligible for cash incentives. Email lettingsteam@westlancs.gov.uk or visit houseexchange.org.uk

If you're a West Lancashire Borough Council tenant and thinking about moving, the Mutual Exchange scheme could be just what you need.

This service allows you to swap your home with another tenant – either within the borough or elsewhere in the country – as long as both tenants agree and the exchange is approved by the relevant landlords.

A mutual exchange can be especially useful if you're looking to move to a new area, need a larger or smaller property or simply want a home that better suits your current needs.

The Council works with House Exchange, a national provider that helps match tenants looking to swap homes.

Their easy-to-use website lets you register your property, search for suit-

able matches, and connect with other tenants. You can visit houseexchange.org.uk to get started.

In addition, tenants who are thinking about downsizing may be eligible for cash incentives through the Council's Downsizing Scheme.

This option is aimed at helping tenants move into smaller, more manageable homes, while also freeing up larger properties for families in need.

Whether you're after more space, less space, or a fresh start, the Mutual Exchange scheme offers a flexible way to find a home that better fits your life.

If you're interested in downsizing and would like more information about the scheme and how to apply, please contact the Lettings Team at lettingsteam@westlancs.gov.uk

West Lancs Aims Higher on Recycling

We are already leading the charge when it comes to recycling, with local residents achieving an impressive 44.5 per cent recycling rate in recent years.

But there's always room for improvement. To make sure your recycling counts, use your blue bin for plastic bottles, pots, tubs and trays, along with glass bottles, jars and metal tins and cans. Your green bin should be reserved for paper and cardboard only.

Keep plastic bags, nappies & other unwanted items out - they'll stop your bin from being accepted.

For more information, visit westlancs.gov.uk/refuse

BOOSTING GREEN EFFORTS

How to Get in Touch & Access Our Services



1

In-Person

West Lancashire Borough Council has two main customer service points in the Borough. The Council offices in Ormskirk, which are open Monday to Thursday from 9:00am to 5:00pm and Friday from 9:00am to 4:45pm, and the Customer Service Point in Skelmersdale, which is open Tuesday to Thursday from 10:00am to 3:00pm.

2

By Phone

The main contact number for all enquiries is 01695 577177, you can contact us during office hours – Monday to Friday

3

By Post

West Lancashire Borough Council, PO Box 16, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk L39 2DF



HELP AVAILABLE ONLINE OR
BY CONTACTING THE TEAM

[Click here to find out more](#)

WHY NOT GIVE US A FOLLOW



Keep up to date with what's happening by following us on our social media channels