

# Your latest rent statement

irwell  
valley  
homes

## We're here to help you tackle your rent arrears.

If you're not already on a repayment agreement with us, please contact us today so we can work together to put one in place and see what other support we can offer. Dealing with the debt and paying your rent is important to secure your home.

We understand your situation might feel daunting, but we can help by providing support with your energy bills and food, plus financial support from the government and other organisations. We can only do this if you reach out to us.

Rent debt doesn't need to lead to legal action and we will not evict anyone who engages with us to seek support. Speak to our friendly team today and take the first step towards getting back on track. If you are already on a repayment agreement, please stick to the schedule we've agreed and contact us straight away if your circumstances change again.

Please  
contact us  
today about  
your rent  
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If you're  
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please ensure you  
keep to the schedule  
we've agreed.



This newsletter has been uploaded to our website [www.irwellvalley.co.uk](http://www.irwellvalley.co.uk) where you can use our accessibility tool to read.

The tool will allow you to translate into your preferred language; increase / decrease the font; change the font type and spacing; change the colour contrast or have the content read aloud.



Click on the icon to open the tool and select what you need.

If you need us to communicate or provide services in a particular way, please let us know. Email [contact@irwellvalley.co.uk](mailto:contact@irwellvalley.co.uk), call us on **0300 561 1111** or discuss with your Neighbourhood Officer.

To jest Twoje ostatnie zestawienie czynszu i biuletyn z Irwell Valley Homes. Zeskanuj kod QR, aby przeczytać go w języku polskim, korzystając z narzędzia ułatwień dostępu na naszej stronie internetowej.

Irwell Valley Homes هذا هو أحدث بيان إيجار ورسالة إخبارية من امسح رمز الاستجابة السريعة ضوئياً لقراءته باللغة العربية. باستخدام أداة الوصول الموجودة على موقعنا.

Irwell Valley Homes بين آخرين بيانه اجاره و خبرنامه شما از را اسکن کنید تا با استفاده از ابزار دسترسی در وب QR است. کد سایت ما، آن را به فارسی بخوانید.

ઇરવેલ વેલી હોમ્સ તરફથી આ તમારું નવનિતમ ભાડું નિવેદન અને ન્યૂઝલેટર છે. અમારી વેબસાઇટ પર સુલભતા સાધનનો ઉપયોગ કરીને તેને ગુજરાતીમાં વાંચવા માટે QR કોડ સ્કેન કરો.

Irwell Valley Homes کا نیوز ہ آپ کا تازہ ترین کرایہ کا بیان اور لیٹر ہے۔ ہماری ویب سائٹ پر ایکسیسیبیلیٹی ٹول کا استعمال کرتے ہوئے اردو میں پڑھنے کے لیے کوڈ کو اسکن کریں۔ QR

Support with  
your rent

Page 2

Sign up to our new  
online portal

Page 4

Opportunities to  
get involved

Page 5

# Support with your rent

When you contact us, we can work together to tackle your arrears and get back on track with your rent payments.

Our knowledgeable and approachable team can help with:

- £ Applications to additional financial support from trust funds, hardship funds and charities.
- 👤 Ensuring you're receiving all the welfare benefits that you're entitled to.
- 📅 Budgeting and managing your bills.
- 🏦 Opening a bank account
- 🏠 Finding affordable sources of credit.
- 🔌 Saving energy and lowering your household bills.

We may also be able to help with vouchers to help with food and fuel costs.



## Contact us today and let us help you.

Get in touch with us through our app; talk to us via live chat on our website [www.irwellvalley.co.uk](http://www.irwellvalley.co.uk); send us a direct message on social media [@IrwellValleyHomes](https://www.instagram.com/IrwellValleyHomes); email [contact@irwellvalley.co.uk](mailto:contact@irwellvalley.co.uk) or call 0300 561 1111 to get in touch. We're here to help.



## Free financial support

We also have Lesley, who is your dedicated point of contact for specialised financial support. Lesley has worked in our rents team for the last nine years, and there isn't much she doesn't know about welfare benefits and financial support that's available, and how to access it.

### She can help with a variety of things including:

- Checks to see if you're receiving all of the benefits you should be, helping to maximise your income.
- Housing Benefit and Universal Credit queries.
- The process of moving over to Universal Credit from other benefits.
- Council Tax Support applications.
- Discretionary Housing Payment applications.
- Budgeting.
- Reducing water and utility bills.

To get in touch with Lesley and access this support, register for our new portal ([see page 4](#)) and send us a request online. Alternatively, contact our Customer Service Team via Live Chat on our website [www.irwellvalley.co.uk](http://www.irwellvalley.co.uk); send us a direct message on social media [@IrwellValleyHomes](https://www.instagram.com/IrwellValleyHomes); email [contact@irwellvalley.co.uk](mailto:contact@irwellvalley.co.uk) or call us on **0300 561 1111**.

# An extra week in the financial year



How will this affect my rent?

There are usually 52 weeks in a financial year, but every so often there are 53 weeks. This year is one of these years.

## I'm on Universal Credit. How does this affect me?

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) calculates your housing cost payment based on a 52-week year. The DWP has confirmed it won't alter how they calculate your benefit entitlement to take into account the extra week.

It means you will need to pay the additional week's rent to us, even if your housing costs are paid directly to Irwell Valley Homes.

Please contact us if you would like to discuss your payment options.

## What if I pay by monthly Direct Debit?

You don't need to do anything. We will calculate and adjust your payments automatically and take the correct payment each month, which takes into account the extra week.

## What if I pay by monthly standing order?

If you pay by monthly standing order, you'll need to adjust your payments yourself.

This means taking your weekly rent charge - which we will send to you in the post in August - and multiplying it by 53 to get your total for the year. If you have arrears or a Court Order and are on a repayment plan, add your agreed amount to the weekly rent before multiplying.

Then divide this amount by 12 to give you your monthly payment.

Once you've calculated your new monthly payments, please update your standing order with your bank.

## What happens if I have rent free weeks?

Your four or two rent free weeks will still apply, as per the conditions of your tenancy. However, this year you'll have one more weekly rent charge than usual.

This means from 7th October 2024, if we charge your rent weekly, you will be charged 53 times instead of 52.



This also affects tenancies with rent free weeks.

This means if you usually pay rent 48 weeks of the year, you'll pay for 49 weeks this year.

And if you usually pay rent 50 weeks of the year, you'll pay for 51 weeks this year.

## What if I pay weekly?

Your payments will only be affected by any changes to your rent and service charges that come into effect on 7th October.

## What if I claim Housing Benefit?

If you receive Housing Benefit, you don't need to do anything as your Local Authority will pay the extra week.

## Where can I get help if I need it?

We understand this can be confusing, especially if you've not had to deal with an extra week before. Our rents team is here to help, so reach out to your Rent Support Officer - their details are opposite if you have any questions or concerns.

# Sign up to our new customer portal and be in with the chance of **winning £200!**

Did you know we have launched a new online service offering a way to manage your home and tenancy at a time to suit you?

## When logged into the portal you can:

- Report a non-emergency repair, including photos or video to illustrate the problem... and keep track of when appointments are booked in.
- View your rent account and any repayment agreements you might be on.
- Report anti-social behaviour.
- Access information we send and important documents about your home and tenancy.
- Read the latest news from Irwell Valley Homes.
- And much more!

To request a log-in for this exciting new service, scan the QR code or visit [www.irwellvalley.co.uk/contact-us/customer-portal](http://www.irwellvalley.co.uk/contact-us/customer-portal) to fill out the form.

Alternatively, live chat with us on our website [www.irwellvalley.co.uk](http://www.irwellvalley.co.uk) or send us a direct message on social media @IrwellValleyHomes.



## Log in for your chance to win £200 in shopping vouchers!

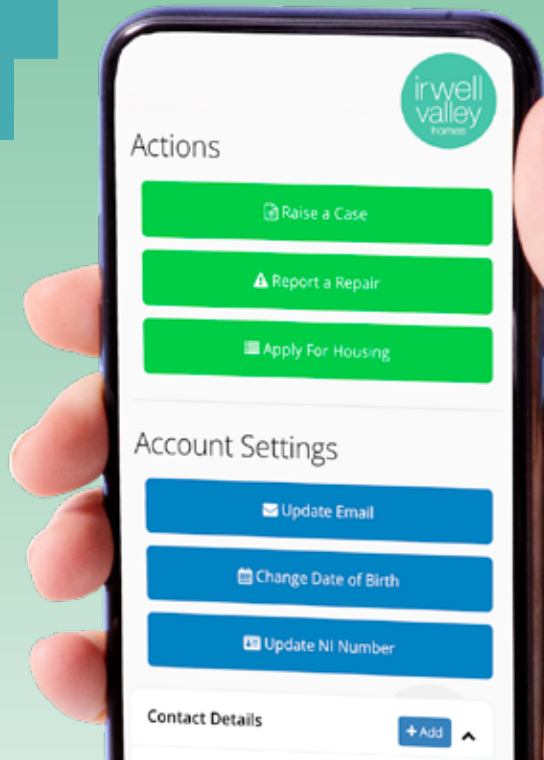
You can also use the portal to let us know about any special requirements you or a member of your household has and tell us if any of your circumstances have changed.

This summer we're asking customers to log into their portal account, check the 'About me' section and fill in or update the information there. If there's nothing to add or update, tick the box which confirms that everything is correct and up to date – simple!

Providing us with up-to-date information about you and your circumstances will help us to deliver the best services for you and your household.

Everyone who does this between now and September 30th will be entered into a prize draw to win £200 in Love2Shop vouchers.\*

*\*the winner will drawn at random and notified by email.*



We've worked with a company called Rubixx to develop the new online service - that's why the email you receive with your log-in details will come from them and you'll see their name in the website address.

After you've completed the website form requesting a log-in, we'll create the account and Rubixx will issue the email. This can take up to 5 working days but is usually quicker.

Please check your spam or junk folder if you don't see the email.

It contains your temporary password and a link to the log-in page. The first time you log in you'll also need a code sent to your mobile phone.

### How-to guide

We've created a how-to guide for the portal – highlighting its different functions and sharing how to get the most out of it.

You can see this here [www.irwellvalley.co.uk/contact-us/customer-portal](http://www.irwellvalley.co.uk/contact-us/customer-portal).

### Trouble logging-in?

If you have a problem logging into the portal, please live chat with us on our website [www.irwellvalley.co.uk](http://www.irwellvalley.co.uk), send us a direct message on social media @IrwellValleyHomes or call us on 0300 561 1111.



## Become a local champion for your area

Thank you to everyone who has shared their feedback about their communal gardening and/or cleaning services through our Neighbourhood or Building Champions surveys over the last few months.

We launched them this spring to offer another way of holding the services to account on the standards being delivered.

Becoming a champion is easy – we'll send you a link to a survey to complete as often as you'd like rating the services and highlighting any areas of concern. The results go directly to our contractor so they can pick up issues and make improvements.

**Every three months, everyone who has completed a survey will be entered into a prize draw to win £100 in shopping vouchers.**

Our first winner was Mr Hulse from Trafford – join up today and next time it could be you!



## Get involved, make a difference and be rewarded!

However you want to use your voice to get involved, we're ready to listen!

We currently have two vacancies on our Resident Scrutiny Panel (RSP). This group of customers reviews different areas of our services and reports back to our Board of Management about how we can improve - taking the voice of tenants to the most senior people in the organisation.

You can read more about the latest work of the RSP and the impact for customers on our website here [www.irwellvalley.co.uk/for-customers/customer-involvement/impact-of-customer-involvement](http://www.irwellvalley.co.uk/for-customers/customer-involvement/impact-of-customer-involvement).

If it looks like something you'd like to contribute towards, we'd love to hear from you.

Email [involve@irwellvalley.co.uk](mailto:involve@irwellvalley.co.uk) with your details and we'll get in touch with further information. You'll receive shopping vouchers as a thank you for every meeting you attend.



## Help us improve our communications to customers – like this newsletter!

We want our communications to be professional, friendly and easy to understand – containing the information customers want and need to know.

We aim for our annual report, leaflets, newsletters and e-mail newsletters to be accessible for everyone and representative of the communities we serve. You can help by providing feedback on these communications before we send them to customers. This can be done from the comfort of your own home at a time to suit you!

Every year we'll organise a prize draw to win £150 in shopping vouchers and everyone who has provided feedback on our communications in the previous 12 months will be entered.

Email us at [involve@irwellvalley.co.uk](mailto:involve@irwellvalley.co.uk) if you're interested in joining our Customer Communications Group. Membership is very flexible – you can offer feedback from wherever you are, whenever you have the time.



# Your safety is our top priority

We're committed to providing safe homes for our customers where they can live with peace of mind.

An important part of this is the programme of annual inspections we carry out in your home.

Every year we attend to complete a gas safety check of pipework, appliances and flues that we provide and issue you with a gas safety certificate.

We also attend to carry out electrical testing and – where customers live in high rise buildings – a check of flat front doors to ensure they meet fire safety standards.

It is really important to allow our teams access when they attend at your home for these reasons,

as highlighted in our tenancy agreement with you. Not only does it help to keep you and your loved ones safe, completing the inspection on the first visit also saves time and resources. As a not-for-profit housing provider, this is also really important.

To help us budget and plan for future improvements work needed in our homes, we sometimes also instruct companies to carry out surveys on our behalf. We really appreciate customers who allow access to their homes to do this, as it helps us to prioritise what work needs doing and when.

## Keep track of how we're doing

In case you missed it – this April a new set of national consumer standards governing social housing came into force.

You can read more about these and how we're meeting our obligations on our website: [www.irwellvalley.co.uk/for-tenants/service-standards-and-policies](http://www.irwellvalley.co.uk/for-tenants/service-standards-and-policies).

It includes the results of our most recent Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) survey, as well as other performance information and the results of surveys we send out after customers have received a service from us.

You can also read about what we're doing to improve.

Throughout July and for the next couple of weeks, you might receive a phone call from a company called The Leadership Factor carrying out our next TSM survey. It won't take long but will help us to identify what's going well and where we need to improve. Thank you to everyone who gives their time to share their feedback.

## Enjoy the summer safely!

To read our summer health and safety update offering information and advice for staying safe at home during warmer weather, visit our website [www.irwellvalley.co.uk/about-us/our-news-updates-for-customers](http://www.irwellvalley.co.uk/about-us/our-news-updates-for-customers).



The Safety and Quality Standard.



The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard.



The Neighbourhood and Community Standard.



The Tenancy Standard.