

# Your latest rent statement

irwell  
valley  
homes

Find out  
more about our  
new corporate  
plan inside



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 it.

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 Homes. امسح رمز الاستجابة السريعة ضوئيًا لقراءته باللغة العربية. باستخدام أداة الوصول الموجودة على موقعنا

Irwell Valley Homes این آخرین بیانیہ 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 નવીનતમ ભાડું નિવેદન અને ચૂકવેટર છે. અમારી વેબસાઇટ પર સુલભતા સાધનનો ઉપયોગ કરીને તેને ગુજરાતીમાં વાંચવા માટે QR કોડ સ્કેન કરો.

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



Need specialist  
financial support

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An update  
about our grounds  
maintenance service

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Find out how you  
can help improve  
our services

Pages 8-9

Access neighbourhood services & report ASB

Order and manage your repairs

Our online service offers a way to manage your home and tenancy online, at a time which suits you.

Check your rent account & make payments

Update your personal details any time

To request a log-in visit [www.irwellvalley.co.uk/contact-us/customer-portal](http://www.irwellvalley.co.uk/contact-us/customer-portal) and fill out the form.

You'll then receive an email from Rubixx - who we have worked with to develop the portal - with your temporary password.

Check your junk mail folder if you don't see it.



For more information and a handy how-to guide to help you get the most out of the new service, scan here.

☎ 0300 561 1111 🌐 [www.irwellvalley.co.uk](http://www.irwellvalley.co.uk) ✉ [contact@irwellvalley.co.uk](mailto:contact@irwellvalley.co.uk)

12:20

Report a Repair

In a few words tell us what the problem is \*

Add Photo

Choose File no file selected

Tell us more, like where in the house the problem is, and any more details that will help us get it right first time \*

Save Cancel

Account Settings

Update Email

Update NI Number

## Why not see if your local Credit Union can help you?



### Why not try your local credit union for smarter saving?

They offer a variety of affordable loans and savings solutions which also support the community. Credit Union's often have a savings account option, which can help you with budgeting throughout the year, as well as save up for big events such as the festive season at the end of the year.

To find your local Credit Union visit [www.soundpound.co.uk](http://www.soundpound.co.uk).

# We're here to help with financial support








## Your rent support officer is Tracey Buckels.

You can contact them by calling **0300 561 1111** and selecting option 1.

You can also reach us by using **Live Chat** on our website: [www.irwellvalley.co.uk](http://www.irwellvalley.co.uk), sending us an email at [contact@irwellvalley.co.uk](mailto:contact@irwellvalley.co.uk).

**If you're concerned about your finances or are struggling to pay your rent, please contact us as soon as your circumstances change.**

When you contact us, our friendly and approachable team will work with you to see what support we can provide. They can help with:

-  Applications for 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 for food and fuel, depending on your circumstances.

## Meet Lesley – here to help you access the right support

Lesley has worked in our rents team for over 10 years, and there's very little she doesn't know about benefits, what financial help is out there, and how to access the right support.

She can help with:

- **Checking you're receiving all the benefits you should be.**
- **Housing Benefit and Universal Credit issues.**
- **Support with moving from other benefits onto Universal Credit.**
- **Council Tax Support applications.**
- **Budgeting.**
- **Reducing water and energy bills.**



You can contact Lesley by calling **0300 561 1111** and selecting **option 1**.

# Could you be entitled to **extra income?**

You can find out if you're entitled to any extra income or benefits today by using our benefits calculator.

Over the last year we've helped customers unlock more than £500,000 in extra income. It only takes a few minutes to see if you are receiving all the money you're entitled to.

Scan the QR to check now.



## Removing the two-child cap

### What this could mean for your benefits

**At the start of April, the government removed the two-child limit on Universal Credit.**

#### What's changed?

The rule that limited Universal Credit being paid for the first two children in a family has now been removed. This means families will receive the **Child Element of Universal Credit** for every child in their household.

This only applies to the Child Element of Universal Credit and is separate from Child Benefit which has always been available for all children in a family.

**The Child Element of Universal Credit is worth £292.81 per month.**

Some households may not see the full increase if their Universal Credit is limited by the Benefit Cap. If anyone in your household has a disability or long-term health condition, or you receive certain types of support, you may be exempt from the Benefit Cap and should receive the full amount.

#### Do I need to do anything?

Most customers will not need to do anything as payments should update automatically.

However, if you don't see the change by May 2026, you can send a message in your Universal Credit journal or call the **Universal Credit helpline** on **0800 328 5644**.

If you're not currently claiming Universal Credit but think you may be eligible following the rule change, you can use our benefits calculator to check.

#### We're here to help

If you're unsure what this change means for you, or you'd like help understanding your Universal Credit claim, please contact our **Rent Support Team** by calling **0300 561 1111 (option 1)**.

# How your feedback is shaping our services and helping us to improve

Your experiences of living in our homes and communities helps us to understand how we're doing, what's going well, and what we need to do better.

**YOU SAID**  
**WE DID**

**Thank you...** to everyone who has engaged with us in all sorts of ways – from filling out a survey to attending a focus group or being a member of one of our customer groups. Here are some of the improvements we've made based on what you've told us.

## You said...

It's really frustrating when a job can't be completed because Irwell Valley Homes colleagues don't have all the materials they need.

## We did...

We completed a stock check of our vans to make sure they are equipped with the things they need to get jobs done.

## You said...

When I report an emergency repair, it would be reassuring to get a confirmation that everything is in hand.

## We did...

We introduced a text message confirmation for emergency repairs, giving you peace of mind that someone is on the way to help.

## You said...

The importance of being a considerate, respectful neighbour should be highlighted with every customer from day one.

## We did...

We created a brand-new **Good Neighbour Toolkit** and Agreement. This is now given to every new customer when they move in.

## You said...

It's unclear what an 'accessible ready' new home is. How do I know if a particular home is suitable for me?

## We did...

We improved the description of what an accessible-ready home is, to help make it clearer what features they have and what further adaptations might be needed to meet individual needs.



## You said...

The cost of living is really high and getting support with rent should be as quick and easy as possible.

## We did...

We have added a new phone line. If you press 1, this now connects you directly with our **Rent Support Team**, making it easier and quicker to get help.

# Keeping our green spaces looking great

**Thank you...**  
to everyone who has shared their experiences of the grounds maintenance service through the *Rate My Gardener* surveys.



**We know there have been issues with the grounds maintenance service and we have been working hard to put plans in place to improve things ready for this spring and summer. From this spring, part of the service will be delivered by a new team employed by Irwell Valley Homes and working as part of our own estates team.**

This new service will focus on our largest estates of Sale West in Trafford and Haughton Green in Tameside. Thank you to customers who joined us at our feedback sessions to discuss these new services last month. We're delighted that one of our customers has been successful in their application to join the team!

Our current contractor, Goulds, will continue to look after our other green spaces across Greater Manchester, and with less ground to cover, they'll be able to focus on delivering a more consistent and responsive service for these areas.

We'll keep reviewing the service, listening to your feedback, and acting on what you tell us.



If you'd like to tell us about the grounds maintenance service in your area, you can complete our Rate My Gardener survey by scanning this QR code



# Get involved and make a difference in your area



## Join us as a **Community Connector** this year!

Helping to make your community a great place to live, our Community Connectors will support us to drive the improvements which matter most where you are.

It's all part of our latest Communities Strategy, which we launched last year, with three goals:

- **Promoting safe and peaceful neighbourhoods.**
- **Maintaining clean and green spaces.**
- **Working with customers and our partners to make a difference.**



### **Did you know you could win £250 just by completing one of our short service experience surveys?**

We issue these quick surveys to customers when they've received a service from us – for example after a repair - to ask how things went. If you complete the survey, you'll be entered into our prize draw which takes place every three months.

It's a great way for you to share your views, help us improve our services, and be in with a chance of winning £250!

Our Community Connectors will be our eyes and ears on the ground ensuring our Neighbourhoods Team and Customer Engagement Lead respond to what's needed.

Whether that's working with our partners to tackle hotspot areas of anti-social behaviour or putting forward ideas for community projects which could benefit from grant funding from our Irwell Valley Foundation charitable investment fund.

## Join our **Customer Communications Group**

Help us improve our communications like this newsletter!

**We want our communications to be professional, friendly and easy to understand - containing the information that you want and need to know.**

You can help by giving us feedback on things like our newsletters, leaflets, emails and annual report before they go out.

You can do this from the comfort of home and at a time that suits you.

Everyone who provides feedback will be entered into our annual prize draw to **win £150** in shopping vouchers.

If you'd like to join our Customer Communications Group, email [involve@irwellvalley.co.uk](mailto:involve@irwellvalley.co.uk). Membership is flexible, so you can get involved whenever you have time.

# Live in a home with a shared space? Our new communal living group needs **you!**

**This year we're also launching a new customer group focused on the issues and priorities of people who live in a building with shared spaces.**

The Communal Living Group will be focused on tapping into issues and trends affecting our buildings and the customers living there. From bin stores to building safety and communal cleaning to considerate neighbours, this new group will gather insight and experience to help us improve our homes and services.

## What's involved?

- One meeting every three months, normally in person.

## Why does it matter?

- We know that satisfaction among our customers who live in a place with a shared space is lower. We want to better understand what is driving this so we can make improvements.

## What's in it for me?

- The chance to have a positive impact on you and your neighbours.
- The opportunity to meet new people and develop new skills.
- A £20 retail voucher for each meeting you attend.

## Anything else I should know?

- We'll reimburse the cost of any mileage or arrange transport for you to attend meetings if needed.
- Meetings may be held in the daytime or the evening depending on the commitments and preferences of members. If you would be unavailable during the day due to other commitments, please flag this when you apply – thank you.



## Thank you... for shaping our service standards

A big thank you to everyone who took part in our series of focus groups this February and March, exploring what should go into a set of standards outlining what you can expect from our core services.

Your input helped us understand what matters most to you and how best to share this information so we're more accountable for the services we're delivering.

We really appreciate you taking the time to share your views – keep an eye on our website over the coming weeks where we'll be launching the new standards.

For more information or to register your interest in any of these opportunities please email [involve@irwellvalley.co.uk](mailto:involve@irwellvalley.co.uk) or give us a call on 0300 561 1111.

## We're looking forward to hearing from you!

# Make sure we're up to date with how **we can support you in your home**

Thanks to everyone who has updated us when we've contacted you over the last few months to complete a customer check in.

This is an opportunity for us to run through a few questions with you about your home and circumstances, to check everything is going well and to see if there is any further support you need.

Having up to date information about you and your household helps us to deliver better services for you.

In some cases, the check-in might lead onto a visit from one of our team to discuss in more detail what you need and how we can help.

The check-ins will continue over the coming months - we really appreciate everyone who takes the time to fill us in.



## Did you know?

You can update us about your circumstances and other information like your contact details in our customer portal.



Visit our website [www.irwellvalley.co.uk/contact-us/customer-portal](http://www.irwellvalley.co.uk/contact-us/customer-portal) to log-in or request an account.

## Do you need support managing your tenancy from a relative or friend?

**We know that sometimes it can be helpful to have support managing your home and tenancy from a relative, friend, or other representative.**

But we are unable to speak to these people on your behalf unless you have given us signed consent, through our permission to discuss form.

This form is part of our security arrangements for keeping your details safe and secure and will need to be completed before we are able to discuss your home or tenancy with your representative.

If you'd like to set one up, please get in touch.



# Your safety is our priority



Keeping you and your home safe is our top priority. That's why we carry out regular safety checks, inspections and repairs. Please help us to help you by giving us access to your home for appointments.

Allowing access for these safety checks and inspections helps us spot issues before they become a hazard, keep your home safe and well-maintained, and plan future repairs and improvements.

It also means we're more likely to complete checks on the first visit, which reduces disruption and the need for further appointments.

Since October, Awaab's Law has set clear legal timescales for landlords to act when damp and mould is reported. This was introduced to make sure issues that could affect your health are dealt with quickly and safely. To keep you safe and meet these timescales, it's really important that we can get into your home to inspect, diagnose, and fix problems as soon as possible.

You can find out more about **Awaab's Law** and how we respond to damp and mould by scanning the QR code here:



If you can't make an appointment, please let us know as soon as possible, by calling **0300 561 1111**, or using LiveChat on our website **[www.irwellvalley.co.uk](http://www.irwellvalley.co.uk)**, so we can rearrange it at a time that works for you.



## Top tips from our trades

Did you know that we've produced a series of how-to videos which can help with some of the common issues you might experience at your home, and which come under your responsibility as the tenant?

From low pressure on your boiler and bleeding your radiators, to checking your electrics – we've got a video and a written summary to help you.

Scan the QR code to watch and find out more.



# Help us to keep your home healthy



We're carrying out Healthy Home Surveys across our communities to help make sure your home stays safe, comfortable, and in good condition.

These surveys are quick and simple, and there's no need for you to do anything.

**And don't worry - this isn't an inspection of you!**

We just need to have a quick look at the different parts of your home, like the kitchen, bathroom, and windows. This is so we can plan for any repairs or upgrades your home might need in the future and keep your home safe and in good condition.

## What to expect

- The survey usually takes around 30–60 minutes.
- A surveyor will look at the inside and outside of your home.
- All surveyors will carry official Irwell Valley Homes ID.

If you're due to have a Healthy Homes Survey, we'll have been in touch by email, text or letter. So please keep an eye out.

Don't forget to allow us access when an appointment has been made, so we can get things done quickly and safely.

## Support with the cost of living

We know it's difficult right now, so we urge anyone who is concerned about their finances to contact us so we can see where we or our partners can help.

Greater Manchester Combined Authority's Helping Hand web pages include details of how to access a wide range of help, both across the region and in your local area.

From support with food and energy costs, to help accessing childcare and employment, as well as details of the various hardship funds offered by different local councils, the site highlights the help available if you're affected by the cost-of-living crisis.



Visit [www.greater-manchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/helping-hand](http://www.greater-manchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/helping-hand) or scan the QR code.

