

Your latest rent statement

irwell
valley
homes

Reach out
if you need
any support



This newsletter has been uploaded to our website 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, 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 آخرین بیانیہ اجارہ و خبرنامہ شما از را اسکن کنید تا با استفاده از ابزار دسترسی در وب QR است. سایت ما، آن را به فارسی بخوانید.

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

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

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Rent worries?

Reach out to see how we can help

If you're worried about your finances or are struggling to pay your rent, please get in touch as soon as your circumstances change.

We're here to support you, and together we can help you manage your situation and keep your rent account on track.

If you're in arrears it's important to reach out to us so we can talk through your circumstances, see how we can help, and set up a manageable repayment plan. If you're already on a repayment plan, please keep to the schedule we've agreed and get in touch if anything changes so we can see what more we can do.

Our friendly and knowledgeable team can help with:

- £ Applying for financial support from trust funds, hardship funds and charities.
- 🏠 Making sure you're receiving all the welfare benefits you're entitled to.
- 📅 Budgeting and managing your bills.
- 🏦 Opening a bank account.
- 🏠 Finding affordable credit options.
- 🔌 Saving energy and reducing your household bills.

We may also be able to help with vouchers for food, fuel, furniture, and other essential household items – depending on your circumstances.

Contact us today and let us help you.

Your Specialist Recovery Officer is Tracey Buckels.

If you need any help or support with your rent account you can contact them through Live Chat on our website; by sending a direct message through our customer portal or on social media @IrwellValleyHomes; by emailing contact@irwellvalley.co.uk or calling 0300 561 1111.

Remember, if you need our support, please reach out to us.



How we helped our customer Lucy with her rent

When Lucy took over her tenancy in Bolton following the death of a relative, she had little experience of what was involved in managing a home and tenancy,

The 23-year-old was receiving Universal Credit and Personal Independence Payments but was struggling to stay on top of her bills and manage her money.

Her dad moved in to help, but the pressures continued to mount and her arrears carried on increasing – creating more worry and anxiety.

When our Financial Inclusion Officer stepped in to help, she found that Lucy wasn't claiming all the benefits she was entitled to.

We helped Lucy complete the necessary applications for the housing element of Universal Credit and for Council Tax Support.

She now receives an extra £452 a month through Universal Credit and council tax support which reduced her weekly bill from £32 to just £5.61.

She is now managing the tenancy successfully without the worry of rent arrears hanging over her.

💬 **Thank you for your support, it's been a big help for us. – Lucy's dad.** 💬

**name has been changed.*

What is Council Tax Support?

You could be eligible for a reduction in your Council Tax if you're on a low income or receive benefits.

The amount of discount depends on:

- Where you live - each council runs its own scheme.
- Your circumstances (*for example income, number of children, benefits, residency status*).
- Your household income - this includes savings, pensions and your partner's income.
- If your children live with you.
- If other adults live with you.

For more information search your local council's website.

Why paying your rent is important

As a not-for-profit organisation, the rent you pay to us goes directly towards paying for the services we provide you as your landlord.

- For every **£1** of rent and service charges, here's how we spend it:
- **37p** Repairing and maintaining homes.
- **15p** Neighbourhood management.
- **20p** Finance and loan repayments.
- **17p** Depreciation*.
- **10p** Service costs (*e.g. maintenance of communal areas; grounds work, cleaning*).
- **1p** Future investment.

* Depreciation is the reduction in the value of our assets over time as they get older or as wear and tear occurs.





How we're working to make your neighbourhood cleaner, greener, and safer through our new communities strategy.

Here for you in your community

This month we launched our new communities strategy focused on delivering what matters most to you in the neighbourhood where you live.

We gathered feedback from customers in various ways to help us focus on your priorities. We did this through a series of focus groups towards the end of last year, dubbed The Big Customer Conversation.

It focuses on:



Promoting safe and peaceful neighbourhoods.

Including launching a new 'good neighbour' campaign ([read more about our toolkit on the next page](#)); further training for colleagues to help us improve our service for those affected by domestic abuse; and working with our partners including the local authority and police to tackle hot spots of anti-social behaviour.



Maintaining clean and green spaces.



Including increasing our estates team and giving them specific areas and buildings to manage; revamping how customers can feedback to us about the standard and performance of the grounds maintenance and communal cleaning services; and developing a calendar of clean-up events across the communities we serve which we'll share with you on our website.

Working with you and our partners to make a difference.



Including launching more localised hubs in core areas and neighbourhood drop-in events across our communities; recruiting new customers to the panel of our Irwell Valley Foundation charitable investment fund to help us prioritise funding where it's needed most; and working with customers to develop a programme of community events and initiatives that people want to see in their areas.

Promoting the importance of being a good neighbour

We've worked with our Customer Communications Group to develop a new Good Neighbour Toolkit – designed to help our customers live well alongside each other.

We want to support and empower people to resolve neighbourly issues early, and to stop them developing into more serious anti-social behaviour.

The toolkit includes tips for managing common sources of tension, as well as guidance on when and how to involve us as your landlord.

You can view the Toolkit on our website www.irwellvalley.co.uk or scan the QR code.



scan me

We'll continue to review and improve our toolkit and would love to hear from anyone who has further feedback about what makes a good neighbour and how we can support people to be considerate neighbours. Get in touch by emailing involveme@irwellvalley.co.uk or call **0300 561 1111**.

You could be entitled to cheaper broadband!

Did you know that many mobile and broadband providers offer 'social tariffs' for people who receive certain benefits, such as Universal Credit and Pension Credit?

Social tariffs are cheaper broadband and phone packages and typically cost between £10 and £20 a month. Some providers call them 'essential' or 'basic' broadband.

These social tariffs work in the same way as any normal package, just at a lower price. To find out more, contact your broadband provider, or visit www.ofcom.org.uk/phones-and-broadband/saving-money/social-tariffs.

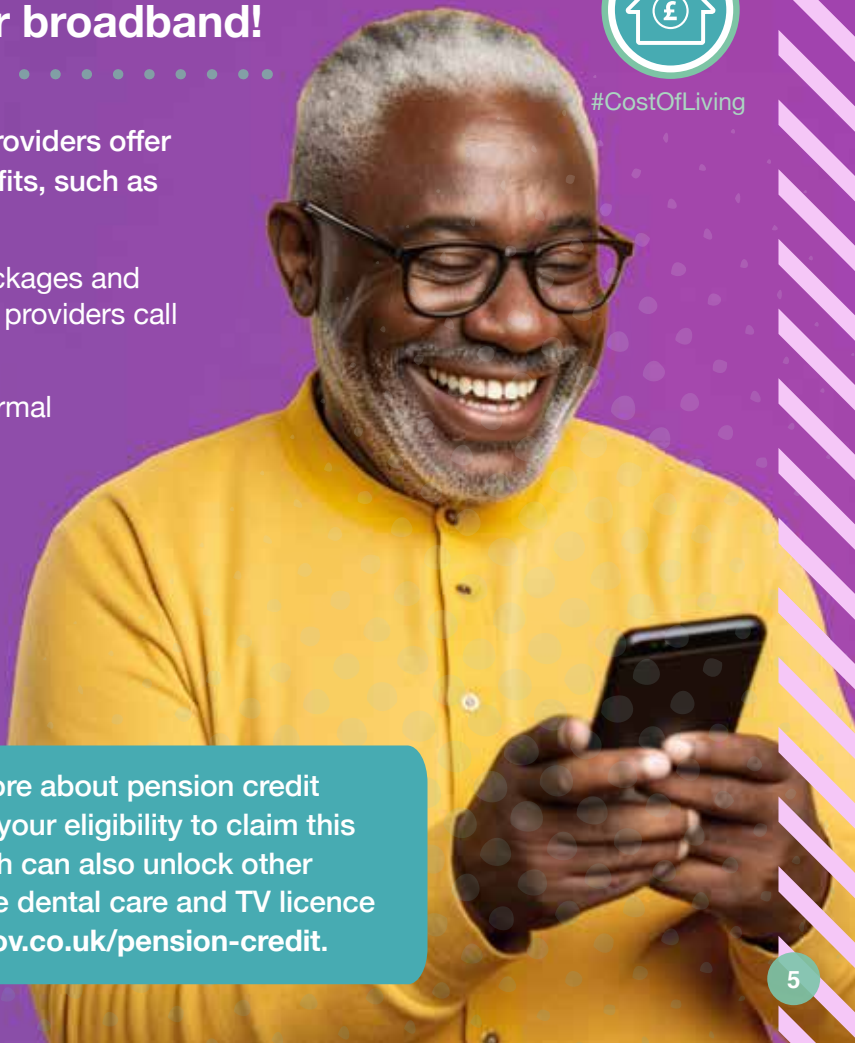
If you don't currently have a broadband provider, you could visit your local library or Citizens Advice, where you can access support to help you get connected.



To find out more about pension credit and to check your eligibility to claim this benefit - which can also unlock other things like free dental care and TV licence - visit www.gov.co.uk/pension-credit.



#CostOfLiving



An update about our repairs service



We know our repairs service is a top priority for you, just as providing safe and well-maintained homes is a top priority for us.

We're pleased that our repairs service continues to improve, with increased satisfaction rates on the surveys we issue after each job and customers waiting less time for repairs to be fixed.

Our team of tradespeople has now moved to work together in an area-based team which we hope will lead to more improvements going forward.

The service will be more responsive and efficient by reducing travel time between jobs and will also help our colleagues to build up a better knowledge of our homes in their area. We hope it will also enhance relationships between our colleagues and our customers.

Your Homes Team Manager is **Alan Taylor**

Your Repairs Supervisor is **Rob Broaders**

They are joined in this area team by a skilled team of plumbers, roofers, electricians, joiners, labourers and inspectors who are here to manage the repairs we are responsible for in your home.



Did you know?

We've produced a series of how-to videos which can help with some of the common issues you might experience which come under your responsibility as the tenant.

From low pressure on your boiler to bleeding your radiators or checking your electrics, scan the QR codes to watch and find out more.

scan me



For a recap on who is responsible for what in your home, search our website for a handy chart or scan the QR code.

scan me





Meet Jennifer – your new Customer Engagement Lead

We're excited to introduce Jennifer Smith, our customer champion who ensures residents are at the heart of what we do by listening and learning from you.

She's keen to get more customers involved in our work and would love to hear from you if you're interested in using your feedback and experiences to help us shape our homes and services in the future.

We currently have spaces on all of our customer groups including:



Resident Scrutiny Panel

Who take a deep dive into different service areas to review how it works and report their findings and recommendations to our board of management.



Customer Standards Group

Who review and challenge how well our services are performing, including performance against the Tenant Satisfaction Measures.



Building Safety Forum

Made up of customers who live in our high-rise buildings who review how we manage and communicate about important building and fire safety matters.



Irwell Valley Foundation Panel

Made up of customers from across our communities who decide where to issue grants through the charitable investment fund.

Need more flexibility? Join us on an ad-hoc basis

We know a customer group isn't for everyone, so we offer plenty of other ways to get involved or share your feedback.

This includes focus groups about specific issues or projects; our policy review group and our customer communications group who review materials from home and provide feedback remotely; and the grounds maintenance and communal cleaning services feedback surveys.

The 'Rate my gardener' and 'Rate my cleaner' surveys are quick and easy to complete online and can be done as part of your daily routine – like checking the stairwell on your way home or looking at the grassed areas while walking the dog.

You can complete them as little or as often as you like. We'll review the feedback every week and share any issues with our contractors directly, so they can be addressed quickly.

To find out more about the different opportunities available and to access the 'Rate my...' surveys, visit www.irwellvalley.co.uk/for-customers/customer-involvement/get-involved

Our Resident Scrutiny panel meets monthly while the others meet every three months. Expenses are reimbursed and we offer shopping vouchers as a thank you for your time. If you're interested in finding out more, get in touch with Jen for a chat: Jennifer.smith@irwellvalley.co.uk / 0300 561 1111.

Celebrating the 'heart' of our communities

Thank you to everyone who nominated someone in our first ever Heart of the Community awards!

This Valentine's Day we were full of love for our communities as we celebrated our first ever awards recognising the incredible work being done by customers and community groups across the neighbourhoods we serve.



A huge thank you to everyone who took the time and trouble to put a nomination forward.

From good neighbours looking out for those living next door, to community groups and eco-champions doing wonderful things to make their area a great place to live, the entries were awe-inspiring.

Everyone who made a nomination was entered into a prize draw. Rachel, who nominated St Mary's Food Bank in Haughton Green for Community Group of the Year, was our winner taking away £100 in shopping vouchers.

Congratulations to everyone who was nominated and of course to our wonderful winners!

Our winners



Bloomin' Marvellous Award

Roger Snowden, who works tirelessly to keep the Sale West estate clean, green and flowering with nature.



Inspirational Person Award

Rayne Wallwork-Hough, aged 10, whose passion and commitment to keeping his community clean and tidy is an exceptional example to everyone.



Good Neighbour Award

Mehmooda and Iqbal Patel, who care so much about everyone on their Bolton cul-de-sac, and show their love through delicious deliveries of home-cooked food.



Community Group Award

The Castle Community Centre CIC in Patricroft, who have created a welcoming home from home for the people of Eccles, giving them a cosy space and diverse activities programme to enjoy in the heart of their community.



Community Champion

Cathy Newton, who leads and inspires a devoted band of volunteers in the Forever Green community group in Haughton Green, organising everything from life-saving defibrillators to Christmas afternoon tea.



Find out more about what they do and why they were chosen in our film – where you can also see the moment we surprised them with the news they had won! Scan the QR code to watch.

scan me



Tell us how we can tailor our services to you

We want to provide homes and services that meet your needs.

We know everyone is different and some people may need us to do things a bit differently when we communicate with you or provide services to you in your home.

So that we can do this, we're asking you to let us know about any special circumstances or requirements you or a member of your household might have.

You can do this via the "About Me" section in our customer portal or speak to your scheme co-ordinator or via our Customer Service Team.

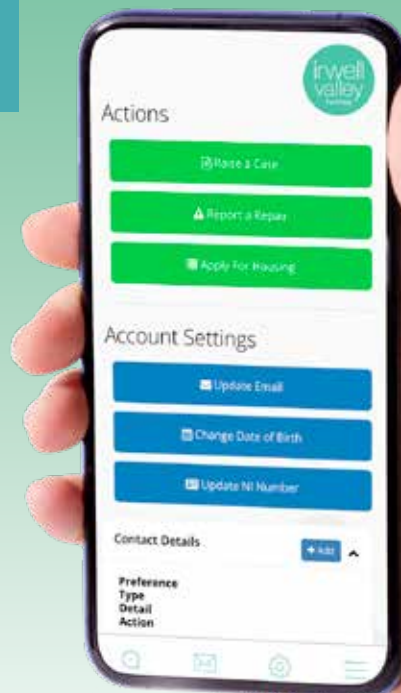


The information you share will be stored securely and in line with General Data Protection Regulations. We'll only use the information to help us deliver a more personal and effective service for you.

Congratulations to customers Susan from Walkden and Lisa from Bury who updated us with their details via our latest survey earlier this year and walked away with a £250 shopping voucher in our prize draw.

Don't have a portal account? Here's how to get one!

Along with updating the details we hold about you, our online portal is a one-stop-shop for managing your home and tenancy – from checking your rent account and raising non-emergency repairs, to keeping track of the information we send to you and contacting our team.



Access neighbourhood services & report ASB

Order and manage your repairs

Check your rent account & make payments

Update your personal details any time

If you'd like to set up an account and join the thousands of other customers already benefitting from this 24/7 service, visit our website: www.irwellvalley.co.uk/contact-us/customer-portal.

Money worries?

Citizen's Advice can help.
Come along and speak
to an adviser for free.

We can help you deal with debt, get expert guidance about managing your money, benefits, Universal Credit and tax credit.

Citizen's Advice
FREE advice sessions

.....

**Every other
Wednesday
10am - 1.30pm**

**Oasis Community
Resource Centre**

2 Tatton Road, Manchester,
United Kingdom, M34 7NP

We are here to help

We know that everyone's circumstances are different and so we will listen to you and tailor our support to suit your needs. We will always offer you confidential and non-judgemental advice.

**citizens
advice**

☎ 0300 561 1111

✉ contact@irwellvalley.co.uk

📘 [/irwellvalleyhomes](https://www.facebook.com/irwellvalleyhomes)

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