

Making positive contributions across our neighbourhoods

Winter 2025

My Home

Customer Magazine



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programme update

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Christmas with North Staffs
and Cheshire Mind

Our Christmas closure

Welcome

A warm welcome to our winter edition

As we head into the colder months, I'm delighted to welcome you to our Christmas edition of MyHome – filled with updates, achievements, and stories from across our communities.

This winter, our focus remains on making everyday life better for you, our customers. Throughout this edition, you'll see how your feedback continues to shape the way we work - from improving repairs and investing in safer, warmer homes, to celebrating your vibrant neighbourhoods and communities.

Our latest performance shows we're moving in the right direction - more of you are letting us know you're happy with our services and how you feel you're treated. Safety remains our priority, with 100% of essential checks completed, and our teams stay committed to delivering the very best for you.

Of course, we know winter can bring its own challenges. That's why we're always listening - whether it's through our OASIS customer group, Community Walkabouts, or the stories and feedback you share. Your voices help us keep improving and ensure we're putting people first in everything we do.

This edition also highlights the work we've been doing together to make a difference - from building new homes and transforming neighbourhoods, to supporting wellbeing, tackling financial worries, and spreading kindness through the festive season. Every small act of community makes our neighbourhoods stronger, safer, and more welcoming for all.

If you need support - whether with your tenancy, finances, or wellbeing - please remember our teams are here for you. You'll find helpful advice and contact details throughout this edition, including how to reach our Money Advice team if you're facing financial challenges this winter.



Thank you for helping us to shape and improve our services. I hope you enjoy reading this edition, and I look forward to seeing what we achieve together in 2026 and beyond.

Have a lovely festive season and a fabulous new year!

Andrei Szatkowski
Executive Director of People



Our Christmas Closure

As the festive season approaches, our offices will be closed during the Christmas period. We will be closed from **1pm on Christmas Eve and will reopen at 8am on Friday 2nd January 2026.**

Whilst our offices may be closed, we want to assure you that essential services will still be available during this time, and we are encouraging all customers to use **MyAccount** portal for non-urgent matters.

For emergency repairs

Our phone lines will remain open as normal throughout the festive period. Please don't hesitate to call us if you're facing any urgent issues that could pose a risk to safety or property. We'll ensure your repair is dealt with promptly to keep you and your home safe.

For all non-urgent repairs

We kindly ask customers to log all their requests through MyAccount, our customer portal. This allows you to report issues at your convenience, 24/7. Once logged, we'll handle your repair request as soon as possible when our offices reopen.

How MyAccount can help you

We encourage all customers to make full use of MyAccount during the closure period and beyond. Through the portal, you can:

- Report non-urgent repairs quickly and easily
- Report any ASB. You can report incidents 24/7
- Pay your rent at a time that suits you
- Send us messages or enquiries for our team to respond to when our offices reopen.

If you haven't already registered for MyAccount, now is the perfect time to sign up. It's simple and accessible from any device, making it easier for you to stay on top of repairs, payments and communication.

Our latest performance April - August 2025



Overall Satisfaction



of customers living in rented homes are satisfied with the **overall service provided by Aspire**

Maintenance



of **emergency repairs** were completed within target



of customers are satisfied that **we provide a home which is safe**

Engagement



of customers said they are **treated fairly and with respect**

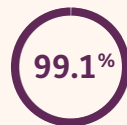


of customers said they were satisfied that they are **kept informed about the things that matter to them**

Complaints



Aspire received **30.89 on average complaints per 1,000 homes between April 2025 – August 2025** (stage one and two complaints)



of **Stage one complaints** were completed within timescales

Building Safety

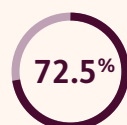


of **Gas Safety checks** were completed in our homes

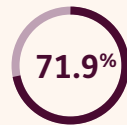


of **Water Safety, Lift Safety, Asbestos Safety and Fire Safety checks** were completed

Neighbourhoods



of customers are **satisfied with Aspire's ASB handling approach**. On average, 27.82 cases of ASB were reported per 1,000 homes



of customers are satisfied **we make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods**

Our Home Transformation programme update:

Exciting improvements to your repairs services

✦ Improving our repairs service for you

As Christmas approaches, we're delighted to share some exciting updates that reflect our ongoing commitment to improving our repairs services for you.

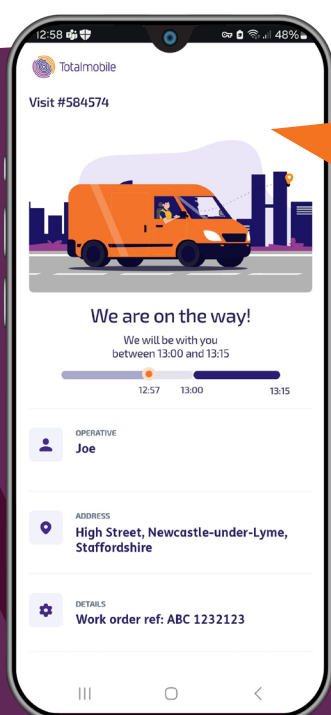
From new technology to operational enhancements, here's what's changing - and how it will benefit you.

✦ 'We are on the way' Updates for your appointments

In our last edition, we previewed the upcoming 'We are on the way' feature. We're thrilled to announce that our **'We are on the way' system is now live!**

This new feature keeps you informed every step of the way: once our trade colleague completes their previous job, you'll receive a text message with a link to show that we are on the way. You'll see an **estimated time of arrival for your appointment**, so you'll know exactly when to expect us.

We've also **improved our appointment scheduling**, making it easier for you to book times that suit your schedule. Soon, we'll be introducing shorter repair appointment slots to give you even more clarity and convenience.



✦ New van fleet arriving soon

Efficiency and reliability are central to our service. That's why **we're investing in a brand-new fleet of vehicles**, helping us carry out repairs more quickly and effectively while reducing costs. Our new vans are **more reliable** and **environmentally friendly**, supporting our sustainability goals. By streamlining our fleet contracts, we're also saving time for our trade colleagues and generating savings that can be reinvested into further improving your service.

✦ Gas and electrical safety: Strengthening standards

Keeping you safe is our top priority. We've recently completed a comprehensive review of our gas and electrical compliance processes. In the new year, we'll be making it even easier for you to arrange these essential safety checks. Please remember allowing access for servicing and home improvement surveys visits is vital. These checks keep your home safe and help us prioritise future improvements. We have a legal responsibility to carry out these inspections, and your cooperation makes a real difference.

✦ New subcontractor management system: Improving delivery

We're introducing a new subcontractor management system, streamlining communication and collaboration with our partners. This digital solution will improve our service to you, enhancing efficiency, reducing delays, and ensuring that everyone involved in delivering services is aligned and informed.

✦ Customer satisfaction

We're proud to report significant improvements in customer satisfaction between April and August, thanks to the hard work of our teams and ongoing investment in your homes. You'll find a summary of our performance on page three of this edition. To view our annual Tenant Satisfaction Measure (TSM) results, please visit: aspirehousing.co.uk/TSMs



Bring people together this

Christmas season: Spreading hope with North Staffs and Cheshire Mind

The festive season is often a time of joy, but for many, it can also bring feelings of loneliness, grief, or isolation.

At North Staffs and Cheshire Mind, we're determined to ensure that no one in our community feels forgotten this winter.

With the generous support of Aspire Housing and its colleagues, we have raised vital funds to help people experiencing poor mental health across Staffordshire and Cheshire.

These funds are supporting **festive initiatives** designed to bring people together, **rebuild confidence**, and remind everyone that **they belong to a caring community**.

✧ Festive meals and shared moments

A highlight of our winter activities is our **annual festive meal**, where clients and service users are invited to enjoy an afternoon of warmth, laughter, and connection. For many, it's the only festive celebration they'll have - making these moments of togetherness especially meaningful. Sharing a meal helps break down barriers, offering a chance to talk, smile, and feel part of something again.

We also recognise that not everyone can join us in person. For those facing anxiety, mobility challenges, or other mental health issues, we're **delivering festive meals directly to their homes** - bringing comfort, nourishment, and a message of hope right to their door.

To find out more about the support we offer, visit:

✧ North Staffs Mind | nsmind.org.uk

✧ Cheshire Mind | midcheshiremind.org.uk

 **mind**
North Staffs
and Cheshire

✧ Community partnership in action

"Our partnership with Aspire Housing is a fantastic example of local organisations working together for the good of the community. Through fundraising and community engagement, Aspire Housing's team and partners help us continue supporting those most in need during the colder, darker months. Their commitment truly reflects the spirit of community at the heart of our work at Mind."

✧ Together we make a difference

Now more than ever, community connection matters. Thanks to Aspire Housing's generosity and the kindness of local people, this festive season will be brighter for hundreds across North Staffordshire and Cheshire.

As you celebrate, we invite you to help spread kindness and connection - together, we can make sure everyone has something to smile about this Christmas.



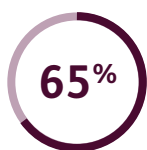
Your voice is shaping our future

★ Listening to you and acting on your views

This summer, we invited you to take part in Chat2 Aspire 2025 - and we were thrilled when **over 2,600 of you responded**. That's **30%** of our customers, sharing honest and thoughtful feedback that's helping us shape the future of Aspire Housing services.

What you told us.

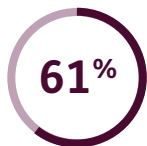
The results were largely positive:



of comments praised our speed of service, friendly colleagues, and how easy it is to get in touch



Three out of four customers said it was easy or very easy to get the help they needed



told us they're keen to stay engaged, whether through surveys or community events

But we also heard where we need to do better.

Customers who left neutral or negative comments, highlighted frustrations, particularly with follow-up quality and consistency - especially around repairs, contractor visits, and updates on ongoing issues.

Shared Owners also raised questions about property condition and long-term investment and sometimes felt unsure about what support is available.

What's next?

We're committed to using your feedback to make meaningful change. This includes:

- Strengthening our follow-up processes
- Improving support for Shared Owners
- Expanding opportunities for you to get involved and have your say

Thanks to the 99.5% of you who shared Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) data, we're now able to update our records to better understand your needs and consider how we might adapt our services to support you more effectively.

Your voice matters

Chat2 Aspire 2025 wasn't just a survey - it was a conversation. Your voice matters, and we're committed to turning your feedback into real, positive change. **Thank you for helping us build a better Aspire Housing, together.**



Coping with antisocial behaviour over the Christmas season

Our approach to ASB

The Christmas period is a time for celebration and connection, but we know it can also bring challenges - especially if you're affected by antisocial behaviour (ASB) in your community. We understand how upsetting ASB can be, particularly during a season that's meant to be joyful. Help and guidance are at hand - if you're experiencing ASB, follow our tips and advice below.

Looking after yourself

ASB can cause real stress and disrupt your peace of mind. If you're feeling overwhelmed, try these tips to protect your wellbeing:

- **Reach out** to trusted neighbours, friends, or family for support.
- **Take breaks** and do something you enjoy to help take your mind off things.
- **Access support services** such as ASB Help Victims' Hub or Shelter for advice and reassurance.

Preventing and managing issues

The Christmas season often means more gatherings, visitors, and celebrations. Here's how everyone can help keep the peace:

- **Let your neighbours know** in advance if you're planning a party or expect extra noise - they're more likely to be understanding.
- **Be considerate with parking:** Remind your visitors to avoid blocking driveways or causing obstructions.
- **Respectful communication** goes a long way - if issues arise, try to resolve them calmly and kindly.

What counts as antisocial behaviour?

ASB can include noise disturbances, intimidation, vandalism, or other disruptive actions. Occasional parties, like New Year's Eve, are expected this time of year and won't be treated as ASB. However, if a party escalates and you feel unsafe, please contact the Police.

How to report ASB over the Christmas period

- **Keep a record of incidents** - note dates, times, and what happened. Photos or videos can help if it's safe to collect them. Download a Noise/Nuisance log from our website - aspirehousing.co.uk/asb
- **Report non-urgent ASB** to us via email or your online portal MyAccount. We'll respond as soon as our offices reopen.
- **For urgent matters or if you feel threatened, contact the police** - they are best placed to respond to immediate risks. The police will liaise with us if an urgent follow-up is needed.

Useful contacts and resources

- ASB Help
- Shelter
- ASB Help Victims' Hub
- Police (in emergencies): 999
- Non-emergency police: 101

Our commitment to you

Our Neighbourhoods team will be unavailable over the holidays, but even when our offices are closed, we remain committed to your safety and wellbeing. If you need support or have concerns about ASB, please don't hesitate to reach out through MyAccount. You're not alone - together, we can help keep our communities safe, welcoming, and supportive for everyone.

**SPOT IT,
REPORT IT,
WE'LL ACTION IT**

Make Christmas greener: Recycling, reusing, and Christmas tree collections



✦ Making a positive contribution to your neighbourhood

Christmas is a time for giving, celebration, and making memories - but it can also lead to more waste than usual.

This year, let's work together to make Christmas greener by recycling, reusing, and making the most of local tree recycling schemes.

✦ Top Christmas recycling tips

- **Wrapping paper:** Only recycle paper wrap - foil, glitter, or plastic-coated paper can't go in your recycling bin.
- **Cardboard boxes:** Flatten boxes and remove plastic or tape before recycling.
- **Christmas cards:** Recycle cards without glitter or embellishments.
- **Food waste:** Compost peelings and recycle packaging where possible.
- **Decorations:** Reuse next year or donate unwanted items to charity.

✦ Real Christmas Tree Recycling

If you have a real Christmas tree, don't let it go to waste!

- **Staffordshire:** Take your tree to a local recycling centre for composting or check if your council offers kerbside collection.
- **Cheshire East:** Chop up your tree and place it in your garden waste bin or take it to a household waste recycling centre. Some charities offer collection for a donation.

Reuse and share: Apps and local options

Don't just recycle - reuse and share! There are lots of ways to give items a second life:

- **Freecycle:** Join the Freecycle community to give away or request items for free from your neighbours in and around Staffordshire and Cheshire. Visit www.ilovefreecycle.org/ for more information
- **Olio:** Use Olio to share or find items locally, helping to beat waste and connect with others in your area. Download the Olio app to get started.
- **LoveJunk:** For large items, create a free listing on the LoveJunk app. You'll get a quote from licensed waste collectors or people wanting to reuse your items, with secure payment and nearly everything reused or recycled.

✦ Other ways to get rid of unwanted items

- **Donate to charity:** Local shops are always happy to accept good quality clothing, toys, books, and more.
- **Larger items:** The Salvation Army and the British Heart Foundation may collect furniture, white goods, or electricals for free - just contact them to arrange.
- **Sell or give away:** Try Facebook selling groups, eBay, or Gumtree. There's always someone looking for a new (preloved!) item - and they might even collect from you.

Let's make a difference together

By recycling, reusing, and sharing this Christmas, we can help build a cleaner, greener community for everyone. For more on local recycling and tree collection dates, visit:

- **Staffordshire Recycling & Waste**
- **Cheshire East Waste & Recycling**

Thank you for doing your part and making Christmas more sustainable for all.





Park Road: a thriving community for independent living

Park Road Community Living - affectionately known as The Dell - has long been a peaceful and friendly place to call home.

Customers enjoy the comfort of bedsits and one-bedroom bungalows, surrounded by green spaces and a close-knit community.

Recently, Park Road has been buzzing with renewed energy and excitement. **A bright mini-makeover has transformed the communal lounge**, making it more welcoming and inspiring customers to see it as a true asset for gatherings and activities.

The sense of ownership and pride is growing. A joint 'kitchen clear-out' is on the horizon, with volunteers working together to organise and refresh the space. **Thanks to a thoughtful donation from a customer, a new freezer is being added to support future events and shared meals.**

Community partnerships are thriving too. The local Parish Council has teamed up with Park Road to host popular events for older members of the community, including **afternoon teas and festive celebrations** - so well-attended that each had to run over two days!

Another Christmas event is already planned for this year, promising more opportunities for connection and joy.

Outdoors, customers are making their mark as well. Inspired by a neighbour's gardening efforts, a group is now raising funds to replant a **large border near the lounge, making the site even more welcoming for everyone.** Preparations for Christmas hamper raffles are already underway, with the revitalised hall serving as the heart of these activities.

Park Road is a shining example of how small changes, teamwork, and community spirit can create a place where everyone feels at home.

Here's to even more shared moments and new beginnings at Park Road.



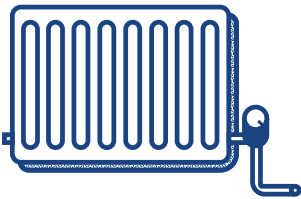
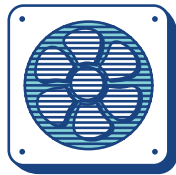
Condensation, damp and mould

Getting ready for winter



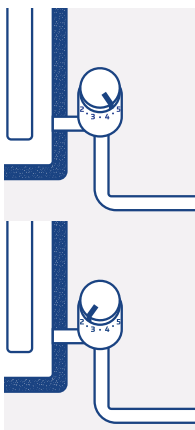
02.

Opening windows or turning on your **extractor fan** when cooking, showering, bathing and drying clothes on a drying rack indoors helps moist air escape.



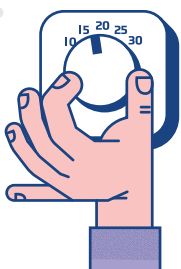
04.

Keeping your home heated helps to prevent condensation from forming on surfaces.



06.

Radiator valves control the temperature in each room. You can turn to a higher setting in rooms you want to be warmer and lower in rooms you don't use as often, using your energy more efficiently and cost-effectively. Typical settings are 4-5 in living areas and 2-3 in bedrooms.



07.

If you can, **setting your thermostat to the lowest comfortable temperature** (recommended between 18 – 21°C) will help to keep you and your home healthy while keeping your energy bills down.

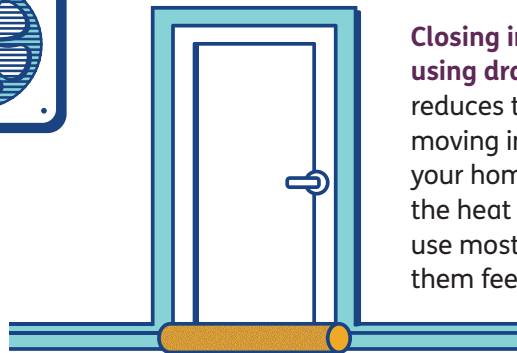
01.

Drying clothes releases moisture, so **drying clothes outdoors helps to prevent excess moisture** in your home.



03.

Closing internal doors and using draught excluders reduces the amount of heat moving into colder areas of your home. This helps keep the heat in the rooms you use most often, making them feel more comfortable.



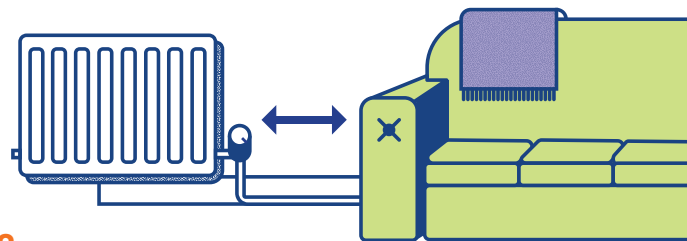
05.

Curtains and rugs help to keep your home warm. Curtains should stop between the edge of the windowsill and above radiators. Opening them in the morning and closing them at dusk helps to let warmth in and keep the cold out.



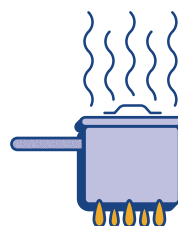
08.

Moving sofas and other furniture away from radiators or heaters helps the heat to travel more effectively around the rooms in your home.



09.

Putting lids on pans when cooking prevents excess moisture in the air (and helps save on your energy bill!)

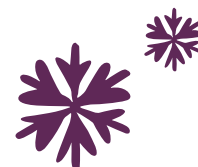




New Year, new opportunities:

The Employment & Skills team

is here for you in 2026!



Thinking about a fresh start this New Year?

Whether you're hoping to get into work, learn something or try your hand at volunteering, Aspire Housing's Employment & Skills team is ready to support you every step of the way.

Our friendly team is based at The Workshop on High Street, Newcastle-under-Lyme, and at The Kidsgrove Hub (just behind the Town Hall).

We offer free, welcoming support for Aspire Housing customers and their households, including:

- Personalised advice on the job market
- Help with CV writing and interview skills
- Access to a wide network of partners for training and job opportunities

- Use of our IT equipment for job searching and applications
- Potential funding to help overcome barriers to employment (subject to approval)
- And much more!

We're proud to have helped many people move into work, training, or volunteering - and we're here to help you too.



Please note:

Our Hubs will be closed from Friday 19 December 2025 and will reopen on Tuesday 6 January 2026.

Getting in touch is easy

Just send your name, address (including postcode), and contact details to:

 employmentskills@aspirehousing.co.uk

Or pop into one of our Employment & Skills Hubs for a chat and to find out more.



Building better futures:

Creating positive contributions across all our neighbourhoods

We believe in more than just building homes - we're committed to creating thriving, supportive communities. Our Development and Regeneration team are delivering high-quality, affordable homes that make a real difference across North Staffordshire and beyond.

A new chapter for local neighbourhoods

We're proud to showcase a range of exciting new developments, each designed to meet the needs of local people and help our neighbourhoods flourish. Every new home is a step towards stronger, more resilient communities - places where people feel safe, supported, and connected.

Investing in Chesterton: Transforming the heart of the community

We're embarking on a journey that will transform the heart of Chesterton, creating sustainable homes for local people and leaving a lasting positive legacy.

Here's how we're making a difference in Chesterton:

- **£20 Million Investment:** A major commitment to the future of Chesterton and its residents.
- **91 Brand New Homes:** Providing a range of high-quality apartments and houses for the community.
- **Beautiful, Sustainable Design:** Every home is thoughtfully designed to be attractive, comfortable, and environmentally friendly.
- **Modern Living Features:** Including electric car charging points and energy-efficient heat source pumps, supporting greener living for years to come.

This investment is about more than bricks and mortar - it's about creating opportunities, supporting local people, and building a neighbourhood where everyone can thrive.





Silkworks at Cross Street, Chesterton

We are delighted to present Silkworks - a landmark development for Chesterton, offering a collection of modern 1-bedroom apartments and spacious 2- and 3-bedroom affordable homes to rent, right in the heart of Newcastle-under-Lyme. Already, we're seeing families settle into their new homes, bringing fresh energy and community spirit to the area. As we look to the new year, we're excited to welcome even more new customers to Silkworks and continue building a vibrant, inclusive neighbourhood together.

Kilnworks at Cross Street, Chesterton

Just across the road from Silkworks, Kilnworks is another standout development for Chesterton, designed exclusively for people over 55. This thoughtfully planned scheme will provide a range of 1- and 2-bedroom apartments, 1-bedroom walk-up apartments, and 2-bedroom bungalows - each offering comfort, independence, and peace of mind. Kilnworks is set to open its doors from late 2026, giving customers a wonderful opportunity to enjoy high-quality, accessible living in a welcoming community.

The Parks, Uttoxeter

We're proud to introduce The Parks - a charming new development in Uttoxeter, featuring nine beautifully designed three-bedroom homes. With four sets of semi-detached houses and one detached home, each property comes with two dedicated parking bays and is equipped with energy-efficient air source heat pumps, supporting greener, more sustainable living.

It's been wonderful to see families already settling into their new homes - just in time for Christmas! The Parks is more than just a collection of houses; it's the start of a close-knit, thriving community where families can grow, connect, and enjoy all that Uttoxeter has to offer.

Blythe Bridge

At Blythe Bridge, we're excited to be creating 12 modern apartments that will provide essential housing for the local community. Thoughtfully designed for comfort and convenience, these new homes represent our ongoing commitment to meeting local needs and supporting people to put down roots in this popular village location. Blythe Bridge is set to offer a welcoming environment where new residents can truly feel at home.

Worried about money this winter?

Our Money Advice team is here for you



The festive season should be a time for comfort and celebration - but we know it can also bring financial worries. Whether you're facing changes to your benefits, struggling with bills, or just feeling uncertain about what's next, our Money Advice team is here to help you every step of the way.

Navigating benefit reviews and Universal Credit

Have you received a Housing Benefit review letter? Don't panic! Councils regularly check claims to make sure you're getting the right support. You might be asked for updated details about your income, rent, or household changes. Responding quickly and accurately helps keep your payments on track. If you're unsure what's needed, our team can talk you through it and help you gather the right paperwork.

Universal Credit reviews are happening more often too. If you spot a message in your online Universal Credit journal, it's just a routine check. Please don't ignore it - if you don't reply, your claim could be closed and payments stopped. We know it can be confusing, but we're here to help you respond and avoid any bumps along the way. **And remember:** if your housing costs are paid directly to us, you should still answer "yes" when asked if you receive housing costs.

Universal Credit migration: What to expect

Universal Credit is replacing older benefits like Housing Benefit and ESA. If you're still on these, you may soon get a Migration Notice from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). This letter gives you a deadline (usually three months) to apply for UC - missing it could mean losing your benefits and any extra support you're entitled to. The process can be confusing, especially if you have health concerns or limited access to technology. Whatever your situation, we can guide you through every step.

If you haven't received a Migration Notice yet, don't worry. The final phase is rolling out into early 2026, especially for those on income-related ESA. If you're unsure, just ask - we can help you get prepared.

Let's work together to keep your finances on track this winter and beyond.

We're always here to help.





Stay safe: Beware of loan sharks

Sadly, some people take advantage of financial stress. Loan sharks may seem friendly at first but can trap you in a cycle of debt and fear. If someone offers you a loan without paperwork, adds unfair charges, or uses threats, they're breaking the law - not you. You don't have to repay a loan shark.

For confidential help, call the Stop Loan Sharks team on 0300 555 2222 or visit stoploansharks.co.uk

If you need a safe alternative in an emergency, Just Credit Union may be able to help. Call 01743 252 325 or visit justcreditunion.org

Drop in and talk to us - Every week

You don't have to face money worries alone. Our FCA-regulated Money Advice team offers free, confidential, and independent support. Whether you need help with benefits, debt, or just want some friendly advice, we're here for you.

Weekly drop-in sessions (No appointment needed):

Monday: 9.30am – 1pm
Chesterton One Stop Shop

Monday and Wednesday: 9.30am – 1pm
Kidsgrove Customer Hub

Tuesday and Thursday: 9.30am – 1pm
The Guildhall

Friday: 9.30am – 1pm
Ramsey Road Community Centre

Just pop in and chat with our team or get in touch to book a one-to-one appointment if you prefer.

Let's work together to keep your finances on track this winter and beyond. We're always here to help.





Talk to us



Search Aspire Housing



aspirehousing.co.uk



Please recycle me



Approved by our engaged customers



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