



Tai
AELWYD
Housing

Winter Edition Newsletter 2022

Meet the
Team



Renting
Homes
Wales Act

AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME
EMMANUEL, WHICH BEING INTERPRETED
IS, GOD WITH US.

Matthew 1v23

Meet the Team

Aelwyd Housing is a small team where all members of staff support each other, but we also have small departments within the team. We have had a number of staff changes over the past year and thought it would be helpful for residents to have an understanding of who we are and what we do.



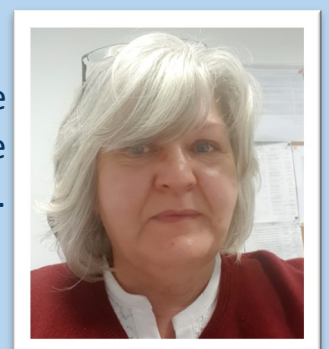
Hi I'm Sharon Lee and I've been the Chief Executive since 2020. I grew up in social housing and have spent almost 30 years working in the housing and homelessness sector, and have been involved in church and community projects for many years. I lead the organisation and ensure we focus on our vision to provide excellent services to residents and help people in housing need, whilst working closely with the Board.

Property Services Team



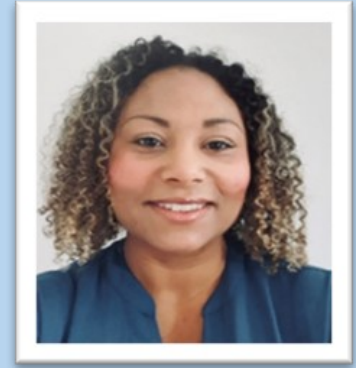
I'm Jeremy Dickson, the Director of Property Services and joined in 2019. I'm an experienced Building Surveyor. My role is to ensure we maintain our homes, ensure compliance with Welsh Government Standards and help prepare our homes for the future.

I'm Joan Mumford and I'm the Property Services Officer. I'm usually the first point of contact for day to day repairs and annual servicing. I liaise with our contractors to ensure you receive a good repairs service.



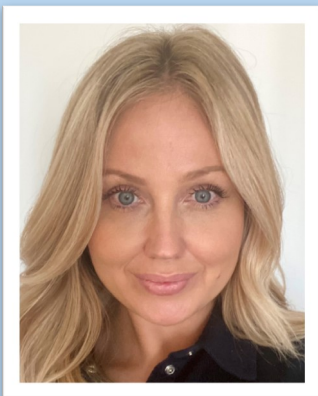
Housing Team

I'm Gemma Watkins the Director of Housing & Communities. I joined in July 2020. I've worked in housing for over 20 years and believe our "kindness first" is what makes Aelwyd Housing special. I lead on strategic housing issues that help us deliver excellent services to you, and enjoy spending time meeting and talking to residents.



Hello, I'm Lucy Clewlow and I'm your Housing Officer. I will be your point of contact for any Housing queries. I can support you to sustain your tenancy by obtaining support when you need it, providing advice when you may be faced with financial worries, or when you need advice to resolve problems within your community.

I'm Bethan Wright and I work within the housing team as an administrator. I help with allocations and lettings and take calls from residents. I produce the resident's newsletter, help to maintain the website and also assist with supporting our Board. I work part-time on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.



I'm Amy McMurray I have recently joined Aelwyd and work within the housing team as an administrator. I have completed a degree in Housing Studies and also worked for many years as a Healthcare Support Worker. My role at Aelwyd focuses on allocations and lettings and taking calls from residents.

Finance Team



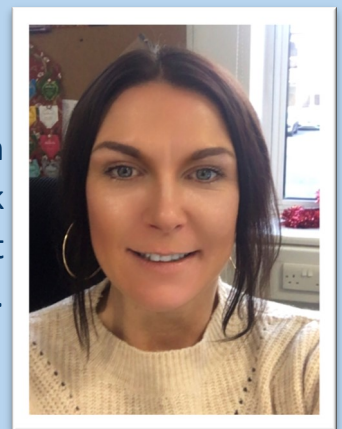
Hi I'm Sarah Mulcahy and I'm the Director of Finance. I joined in 1994 and lead the finance team. My role is to ensure we keep financially strong as an organisation so we can keep on providing good services and maintain our homes in the long term.

Hi I'm Dawn Wigmore and I work in the finance team as the Rents and Income Officer. I joined in 2014 and process rent and housing benefit payments, and help co-ordinate our Services Charges. I'm here if you have any queries or concerns about your rent or payments.



I'm Ffion Leftley and I work in the finance team maintaining the purchase ledger, banking and managing payments to suppliers and contractors. I am a Welsh speaker and work part-time Monday, Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

I'm Charlotte Smith and I work as a Finance Officer, I deal with producing the monthly accounts and finance administration. I work part-time on a Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday at the moment but will be working Thursday and Fridays in the New Year.



Happy Christmas from Aelwyd Housing

We trust many of you are looking forward to celebrating this Christmas time with family, friends and loved ones. For the past two years, our Christmas celebrations may have been slightly more constrained due to Covid-19 and whilst Covid has by no means gone away, we are hoping this year will be Christmas without isolation and restrictions.



However, this Christmas brings different challenges for many people with the cost-of-living crisis here in the UK. Whilst in other countries like Ukraine, they face the prospect of a Christmas amidst war. It is easy to feel hopeless at times like this but as the carol O Holy Night says we can know a “*thrill of hope*” in the midst of “*a weary world*” through the birth of Christ. If for any reason you are struggling in the lead up to Christmas, please reach out to us so that we can try to help you. There are also several organisations working hard to ensure nobody is left struggling this Christmas time.

The Silver Line—0800 4 70 80 90

A free confidential helpline providing information, friendship and advice to older people, open 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

Age UK Advice Line—0800 678 1602

Lines are open 8am-7pm, 365 days a year

Age Cymru Advice - Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm

All information and advice queries including benefits, health, money, housing or care. Call us: 0300 303 44 98 (charged at local rate) Email us: advice@agecymru.org.uk

Samaritans— support helpline 24 hours a day, 365 days a year

Call -116 123

The Trussell Trust - 0808 2082138

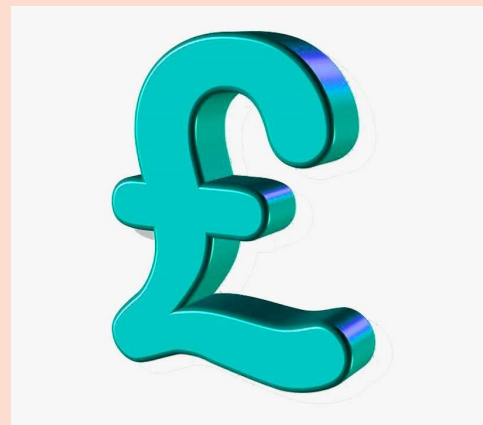
Friendly advisers can help you get the support you need if you’re struggling to afford essentials like food, heating and toiletries.

Support with the Cost of Living Crisis

We understand that the rise in the cost of living is of great concern to many residents. There are several ways you can get help and support during these difficult times.

Cost of Living Payment

Households on means tested benefits, including Universal Credit, Pension Credit and Tax Credits, will receive a payment of £650 this year, paid automatically in two instalments.



The first payment of £326 was made in the summer months. The second payment of £324 was made in November.

Disability Cost of Living Payment

From 20th September 2022, residents who were in receipt of the following disability benefits received an automatic one-off £150 payment.

- Attendance allowance
- Personal independent payment
- Disability living allowance for adults

The payment is intended to help disabled people with the rising Cost of Living, acknowledging the higher disability-related costs they often face, such as care and mobility needs. This is in addition to the £650 Cost of Living Payment.

Pensioner Cost of Living Payment

In the winter months pensioners can get between £100 and £300 to help pay heating bills. This winter, they will also receive an extra one-off £300 Pensioner Cost of Living Payment, which will be paid as an automatic top-up to the Winter Fuel Payment.

Welsh Government's Winter Fuel Support Scheme

Eligible households can claim a one-off £200 payment from their local authority to provide support towards paying their fuel costs.

You can find out more information regarding this from your council's website or by calling them directly.

Household Support Fund

Support for the most vulnerable to cover their essential daily costs, like energy bills. Recipients include pensioners, to check if you are eligible contact your local council.

Help paying your water bill

Many water companies run hardship schemes or fund independent charitable trusts which can help you pay your bills.

To find out more or to access support with paying your water bill please phone:
0300 034 3333

Energy support scheme

The Energy Bills Support Scheme provides a £400 non-repayable discount to eligible households to help with their energy bills over winter 2022 to 2023. The discount is automatic. If you get a message asking for your bank details, this could be a scam. You can report messages you think are suspicious.

All households with a domestic electricity connection in England, Scotland and Wales are eligible for the discount. You do not need to apply for the discount, and there's no need to contact your energy supplier.

The discount will be applied to your monthly household electricity bill for 6 months starting in October 2022. You'll get:

- £66 in October and November
- £67 in December, January, February and March

You'll get the discount monthly, even if you pay for your energy quarterly or use a payment card.

Traditional prepayment meter users will get equivalent vouchers that you will need to redeem - see if you have a traditional prepayment meter for more information.

Your electricity supplier will be able to provide more guidance on the scheme.

Grwp Golwg Resident Consultation Groups

A big thank you to all the residents who have helped with our Grwp Golwg groups this year. We will be holding our Grwp Golwg meetings next year on weeks commencing **17th & 24th April** and also **16th & 23rd October**. We hope you'll be able to join us.



Renting Homes Act (Wales)

The Renting Homes Act is the biggest change to housing law in Wales for decades. It seeks to simplify the rental sector and protect Tenants who will now be referred to as Contract Holders. Here at Aelwyd Housing we have been making changes and preparations for several

months in readiness for the implementation of the Act from **1st December 2022**. The biggest change for residents will be the issuing of 'Occupation Contracts' replacing your 'Tenancy Agreements', these will be secure contracts. These new contracts will not diminish any rights you currently have with your existing tenancy. There are also several changes to terminology for example Registered Social Landlords, such as Aelwyd Housing are now referred to as Community Landlords. If you wish to find out more about the Renting Homes Act you can do so on the Wales Government website

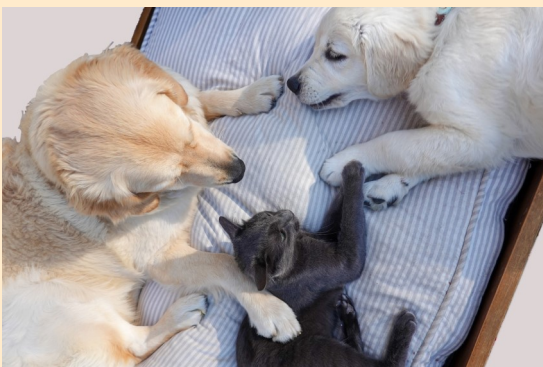
[Tenants: housing law is changing \(Renting Homes\) | GOV.WALES](#)

If you have any queries about your new Occupation Contracts or how the Renting Homes Act will affect you, please contact Gemma on gemmaw@aelwyd.co.uk or 02920 481203.



Contractor Appointments

We just wanted to take the time to remind all residents of some golden rules with regards to contractor appointments:



- You will be notified in advance that a contractor will be calling out to visit.
- Contractors and members of staff will always carry ID badges to identify themselves
- If you leave keys with neighbours, please be aware that you do so at your own risk and neither Aelwyd Housing or our contractors will accept any liability for any items considered lost/ damaged or stolen
- If you have pets, then you must remain home throughout the appointment to ensure that they are not distressed and to ensure the safety of staff/contractors whilst they carry out their duties.

You Said

You Said We Listened



We Listened

We need to have scheme specific issues sorted before we can think about wider policy or service issues in Aelwyd Housing.

We have arranged quarterly resident scheme meetings for all of those schemes that indicated they would like more contact from staff.

There is still some jargon in the terms of reference that doesn't need to be there but we got the aim of the group and frequency of meetings right. The terms are mostly easy to understand.

We have amended the statement of purpose, using everyday language to make it clearer for everyone.

Really enjoy the 'new look' newsletter, lots of variety of articles, good size font and colourful, enjoying the updates from other schemes and the puzzles. The frequency, tone and balance of articles is right, between advice and information, some residents may prefer to not receive a hard copy but access a digital copy, most of our residents want recipes that are already tailor-made for smaller household sizes

We will publish the latest newsletter on the website and in future will offer residents the option to 'opt out' of a paper copy newsletter and will publish recipes from a variety of ethnic cultures that are for one or two people, we will also provide advice on how to scale up or scale down the recipe.



English Baptist Mission—Central Street, Ystrad Mynach, CF82 7EL

- Christmas Day Service—10am

Skewen Methodist Church - 91 New Road, Skewen, Neath, SA10 6HG

- Christmas Day at 10am—Rev Rosemary Davies

Emmanuel Christian Fellowship — Cross Street, Ystrad, Pentre, CF41 7RF

- Christmas Day at 10am—Festive Service of Celebration

Oasis Church, Pentre - 22 Llewellyn St, Pentre CF41 7BQ

- Christmas Day 10:30am—Christmas Morning Celebration

Blaenau Gwent Baptist Church — 11 Victoria St, Abertillery NP13 1PG

- Christmas Eve - 11:30pm
- Christmas Day service - 10am

Bethel Baptist Church Centre - Heol Miskin, Pontyclun, CF72 9AJ

- Christmas Eve Candlelit Services at 4pm and 7pm
- Christmas Day Service at 10:45am

Magor Baptist Church — The Square, Magor, Caldicot NP26 3HY

- Sunday 25th December - 10am Christmas Day service - bring a wrapped present to unwrap together!

TLC Community Church - Two Locks, Cwmbran NP44 7HG

- Christmas Day Service at 9:30am

E45 Fire Safety

Our Fire Risk Assessor has highlighted that there is a potential danger for users of E45 and other similar paraffin based emollient creams.

Recent incidents of fire elsewhere in the United Kingdom, some of which have been fatal, have identified that the regular use of such products can increase the risk of fire to users.

The product can permeate the fabric of dressings, bedding and clothing and ignite readily when an ignition source is introduced. The fire risk remains, albeit at a slightly lower level, even following the washing of dressings, bedding and clothing.

We would therefore advise that you discuss with your pharmacist what alternative non-flammable products may be available for you to use and that any items of bedding or clothing that may have become contaminated are replaced.



How to Opt Out of Junk Mail

Junk mail, or the unwanted post we receive such as flyers, competition entries etc, can be irritating and often can be scammers attempting to draw you in to competitions to get your details. The details are often then shared resulting in more junk mail.



There are various ways you can opt out of junk mail:



1) If you are on-line, you can register with Mail Preference Service (MPS). It is a free service that searches your details and removes them from the lists that companies use. To register for free, go to their website <https://www.mpsonline.org.uk/>

2) If you are not on-line you can contact Royal Mail. This is a door-to-door opt out service. However, any post addressed to “the occupier” will not be stopped.

To opt out of Door-to-door mail, write to FREEPOST Royal Mail Customer Services, requesting your name and address to be added to the door-to-door opt out scheme.



3) Finally, the other option is to contact the companies direct, citing Article 21 of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). This states that any organisation must stop using your personal information for direct marketing purposes if you ask them to do so. This is effective as they cannot refuse to take your name and address, or other personal information, off their mailing list.

After 31 January 2023, regular stamps without a barcode will no longer be valid. You can either use up these stamps before this deadline or swap them for the new barcoded ones. Special Stamps with pictures on and Christmas Stamps without a barcode will continue to be valid and don't need to be swapped out.



Welsh Housing Awards 2022

We're delighted to tell you that Aelwyd Housing recently won a Welsh Housing Award for Excellence in Customer Service. The annual awards showcase the good work that housing associations and local authorities are doing throughout Wales. The judges were impressed by our 'Kindness First' approach to how we deliver services, and how we try



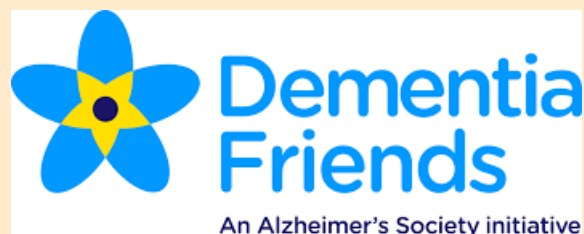
to focus on the things that matter to residents. Our resident satisfaction figures also confirm that residents are happy with us as a landlord. As a small organisation we were sponsored to attend the event which was attended by our Chief Executive Sharon Lee, and Finance Officer Dawn Wigmore.

Celebrating National Older Persons Day at Llys Siloh

In celebration of National Older Persons Day, staff joined residents at Llys Siloh along with Chris Hodges from the Alzheimer's society, to discuss all things dementia and provide advice and support to residents living with dementia, or caring for someone living with dementia.



This is the second Dementia Roadshow that the Association has held as part of our ongoing commitment to become a Dementia Friendly Organisation.



Slow cooked Beef Tagine Recipe

Ingredients

- 1.3kg (2 1/2lb) beef topside, cut into chunks
- 1tbsp plain flour
- 15ml (1tbsp) sunflower oil
- 2 onions, sliced
- 2 peppers, sliced
- 2tbsp harissa paste
- 1 beef stock cube
- 800g chopped tomatoes
- 400g (13oz) chickpeas, drained
- handful dried apricots, halved
- 250g (8oz) couscous



Method

1. Heat the oven to gas 4, 180°C, 160°C.
2. Dust the beef in the flour and some seasoning. Heat the half oil in an ovenproof casserole dish with a lid and brown the beef in batches removing to a plate once browned. Add the rest of the oil and the onions and cook for about 5 minutes, stirring often, until softened. Add the peppers and harissa paste cook for 1 minute more.
3. Crumble in the beef stock cube, tip in the tomatoes, half a can of water, chickpeas and apricots. Return the beef, bring up to a simmer and put the lid on top. Cook in the oven for 1 1/2-2 hours, until the beef is really tender. Check the meat with two forks, it should pull apart easily. If not return for another 20 minutes and check again.
4. Make the couscous, put into a bowl with some seasoning, cover with 250ml (8fl oz) of boiling water and cover with cling film, leave to absorb for 5 minutes then fluff up with a fork and serve with the beef tagine.

What is a Tagine?

A tagine, sometimes spelled “tajine,” is a traditional Moroccan cooking vessel made of ceramic or unglazed clay with a round base and low sides. A cone-shaped cover sits on the base during cooking but you can also use a covered casserole dish for this recipe.

Leftover Turkey Casserole

Ingredients

2 onions, finely chopped
1 eating apple, cored and chopped
2 tbsp olive oil
1 tsp dried sage, or 5 sage leaves, chopped
2 tbsp plain flour
300ml vegetable or chicken stock
2 tbsp wholegrain mustard
2 tbsp runny honey
400g-500g leftover turkey, shredded
about 350g leftover roasted vegetables like roast potatoes, parsnips, celeriac and carrots, chunkily diced

This one pot stew uses up all your roast dinner leftovers in one go and has a great honey mustard tang

Method

Step 1

Fry the onion and apple in the oil until softened in a casserole or deep pan. Stir in the sage for 1 min, then stir in the flour. Gradually stir in the stock followed by the mustard and honey.

Step 2

Bring up to a simmer and stir in the turkey and roast veg. Cover and gently simmer for 15 mins until turkey is piping hot. Season and eat with mash or jacket potatoes.



Recipes to Share

If you have any recipes you would like to share with us please email enquiries@aelwyd.co.uk and these could be featured in our next newsletter.

Christmas Puzzle

Have a go at this Christmas puzzle just for fun!

Christmas Joy



DIRECTIONS: Fill in the crossword grid with the provided words.

4 Letter Words

BELL
SNOW

5 Letter Words

ANGEL
COCOA
ELVES
HOLLY

6 Letter Words

LIGHTS
SLEIGH
TINSEL
WINTER
WREATH

7 Letter Words

CHIMNEY
GARLAND
PAGEANT
RUDOLPH
SNOWMAN

8 Letter Words

CAROLING
DECEMBER
EXCHANGE
ORNAMENT
PRESENTS
REINDEER
WRAPPING

9 Letter Words

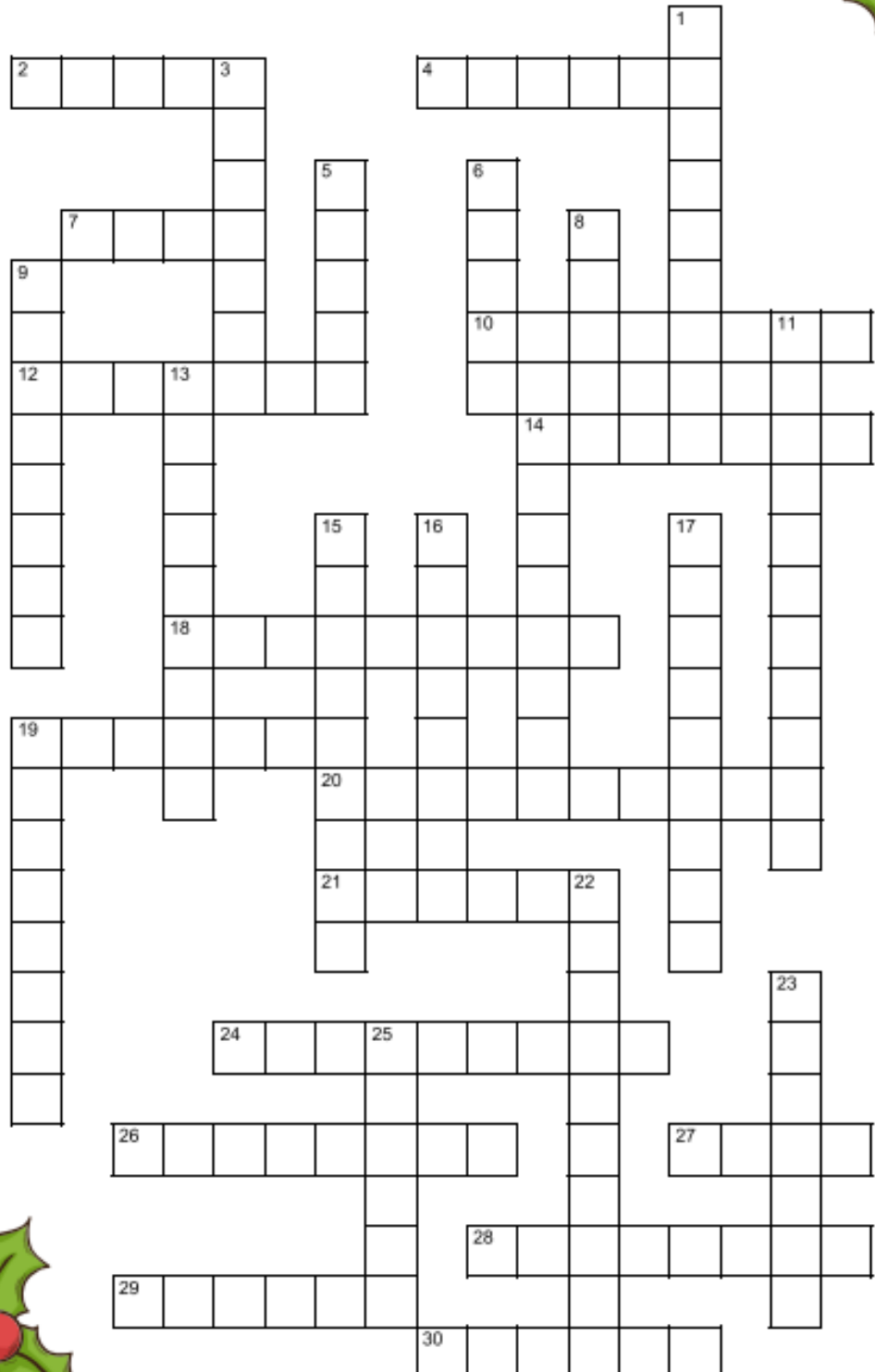
CHESTNUTS
CHRISTMAS
EVERGREEN
FRUITCAKE
MISTLETOE
NORTH POLE

10 Letter Words

POINSETTIA
SANTA CLAUS

11 Letter Word

GINGERBREAD





Christmas Opening Hours

Our Office will close on Friday 23rd December at 4:45pm and re-open on Tuesday 3rd January at 8:45am

For any emergency housing or repair issues when the office is closed, please call **Merthyr Lifeline on: 01685 383120**

Emergency Numbers

Electrical Power Cuts

Call the National Power Cut Helpline on 105

(24 hours, 7 days a week)

Gas Leaks

If you have a gas leak or can smell gas, leave the house and phone the National Gas Emergencies immediately on 0800 111 999

If you can do so safely, turn off your gas supply.

On behalf of Aelwyd Housing, we wish you all a very peaceful and joyous Christmas and a blessed 2023

CONTACTUS



Office and Telephone Payments (Mon-Fri: 8:45 - 16:45)

02920 481203

Out of Hours - 01685 383120

Email - enquiries@aelwyd.co.uk

**Office Address - 9 Ty Nant Court, Morganstown, Cardiff,
CF15 8LW**



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