

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Why are you considering this merger?

We want to create a stronger, regional organisation that will bring significant benefits to you. Both housing associations believe that coming together will let us do more for all our customers and further increase our resilience to future change. The merger will allow us to balance keeping costs down while investing more in better services, doing more to make homes energy-efficient and building more new homes. We will have a stronger and more influential voice in the region, creating a positive impact on the local economy.

## What are the benefits for me?

Coming together will give us a greater capacity to improve services and maintain homes. It will also help us better address housing need by giving us the ability to build more new homes and increase investment in existing homes.

The new merged organisation will be:

- More resilient and able to invest in your home while also building more new homes
- Larger, but remain fully connected to the communities we serve across Shropshire, Staffordshire and Telford & Wrekin
- Able to provide more opportunities for our staff leading to even better services
- Be able to provide even better services for our customers

## What impact will it have on services I currently receive?

As merger discussions progress you shouldn't notice any change to the services you receive. It is business as usual. The top priority for both associations is to deliver great services and homes - and to keep improving on this.

## Who are Wrekin Housing Group?

The Wrekin Housing Group is a Community Benefit Society. They provide housing and care services which deliver social value across Telford & Wrekin, Shropshire and Staffordshire. They have over 13,000 homes located in Telford & Wrekin, Shropshire and Staffordshire for rent, rent to buy, retirement living and housing options for those with learning disabilities including supported housing and care homes.

The Wrekin Housing Group employs around 1,000 people and also consists of:

Choices, which provides a range of care and support services, including over 55 retirement living and supported living for people with learning disabilities.

**[www.choiceshousing.co.uk](http://www.choiceshousing.co.uk)**

ShireLiving, which provides people with individual self-contained accommodation, on-site care and support and housing management services, all of which ensure that residents can be independent in their own homes, rather than needing to go into a residential home.

**[www.shireliving.co.uk](http://www.shireliving.co.uk)**

Wrekin Revive, a social enterprise that recycles and upcycles furniture and electrical goods.

**[www.wrekinrevive.com](http://www.wrekinrevive.com)**

## How can I have my say?

There are many ways to share your views. You can:

1. Complete the survey we send to you
2. Drop into your nearest Homes Plus Community Hub  
**Burton Square Community Hub** - Burton Square, Stafford, ST17 9LT  
**Castlefields Community Hub** - 69 New Park Street, Shrewsbury, SY1 2LE  
**Meole Brace Community Hub** - 25 Maesbrook Road, Shrewsbury, SY3 9NL
3. Email  
**asksouthstaffs@homesplus.co.uk**  
**askstafford@homesplus.co.uk**  
**askshropshire@homesplus.co.uk**

We'll also be hosting community engagement events about the merger throughout 2024. We'll let you know when these are happening, and where they will take place.

## If it goes ahead, when will the merger happen?

Subject to all necessary consultation and consents, we are proposing to come together as one organisation on 31 December 2024. Other changes to how we restructure our services would be phased in over time and we want to ensure we take views on board in these future changes. Nothing will happen until we have completed our consultation with our customers and taken your views into account.

## What will the new organisation be called?

As we are still in the consultation stage, no decision has been made about the name of any new organisation.

## Are there any disadvantages to the merger?

We believe the proposal is in the best interests of Housing Plus Group (HPG) and our customers. Some tenants may be concerned about the growth in the size of their landlord.

However, we are confident that these proposals will enable us to maintain our local focus and strong connection with communities.

## My Services and the Merger

### Is my security of tenure affected?

No, your tenancy rights are not affected in any way.

### Will my rent and service charges be affected?

No, your rent and service charges will continue to be reviewed each year in the same way that they are now.

### Will this affect repairs and maintenance to my property?

No, there will be no immediate changes to the current repairs service if the merger goes ahead.

The top priority for both associations is to deliver great services and homes - and to keep improving on this. The merger won't distract us from focusing on this.

Longer-term, the merger will give us more funding for repairs, maintenance, services and the communities you live in.

## **Will any planned work be delayed because of the merger?**

As merger discussions progress you shouldn't notice any change to the services you receive. It is business as usual. The top priority for both organisations is to deliver great services and homes - and to keep improving on this. The merger won't distract us from focusing on this. Longer-term, the merger will give us more funding for repairs, maintenance, services and the communities you live in.

## **I live in a Shared Ownership property; will my rights be affected?**

You will not be affected – the terms of your shared ownership agreement and rights will remain the same.

## **Will I lose the 'Right to Buy' my property?**

Only certain tenants have the right to buy their home. All tenants who currently have that right will continue to have that right.

## **I am a leaseholder – how will this affect me?**

You will not be affected – the terms of your lease and your statutory rights will remain the same.

## **Would the merger affect my welfare benefits or entitlements?**

Your welfare benefits and entitlements would not be affected by the merger. They would only change if your own personal circumstances change.

## **Will I be able to move into a Wrekin home?**

There will be more choice in the future, but at this stage moving home options will be the same as they are now.

## **In becoming part of a larger organisation will HPG lose its local and personal touch?**

No. We will ensure that we don't lose our local focus, which is very much how we have always worked. We know it's important to you and it's essential to us too.

Our teams will continue to deliver services from our local areas as they do currently.

## **Will there be staff changes?**

In the short term, there will be no change for HPG employees. Both the Board and Senior Team will remain in place and will continue to have oversight of our finances and governance. This means that you will still deal with the same people as you do now.

## **How will customers be involved and engaged in the proposed changes?**

We will continue to engage and communicate with you, as this proposal develops. This consultation exercise offers you the opportunity to feed in your initial views on the proposed merger.

It is very important that you take this opportunity to respond so that we can take your views into account, so do please let us have your feedback on this.

## **Will my service levels change?**

In the short term, no.

## **Will I lose the 'Right to Acquire' my property?**

All tenants who currently have that right will continue to have that right.

## **How will tenants have a voice in the new structure?**

We will continue to work closely with all our involved residents through the merger. This will continue to be very important in the new group and your views will help to shape how this will look in the future.

## What are the costs of merging these two organisations?

The merger will involve some additional costs, including staff time and external advisors. However, none of these costs will be passed on to you. The savings made in the longer term would mean we are able to improve and add to the services you benefit from.

**A resilient organisation, making a positive  
difference to homes, lives and communities**

