



Staff Benefits

Booklet

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Annual Staff Events

Such events take place during the year including an annual summer event/Christmas Party and departmental/team Away Days. In accordance with tax liabilities such events are limited to a maximum of £150 per head per year which would include all the above events including the staff conference, etc. Our Away Days are limited to a maximum of £30/head including refreshments. Departments who decide to have their own summer event are not entitled to attend the main annual staff event. Nobody is entitled to benefit more than another and the overall total must be adhered to including all travel, venue hire, meals etc. For more information on cost please contact the finance team.

Bike Allowance

In accordance with HM Revenue & Customs Guidelines, members of staff who use a bicycle to undertake a journey on behalf of the Group can claim an allowance of 20p per mile.

Car Mileage Allowances

Where a member of staff or Board Member is required to use their own vehicle for Business travel a mileage allowance will be paid at:

	1000 - 1500 cc	Over 1500 cc
Up to 10,000 miles annually	45p	45p
Over 10,000 miles annually	20p	20p

All journeys must be authorised in advance by their line Manager.

If a passenger is carried, an extra 10p per mile is claimable per passenger, of which 5p is NIC and taxable through payroll.

Childcare Vouchers

We operate a Childcare Voucher Scheme. Vouchers are purchased via a salary deduction which can then be used at any child care establishment which is subject to an OFSTED inspection. The child care provider must also be registered with the voucher provider. The salary deduction is made prior to calculating Tax and National Insurance contributions resulting in savings for those employees purchasing vouchers. For full details please contact the Finance or HR department. This is a Salary Sacrifice Scheme.

Community Activities Leave

Employees who participate in community based activities are entitled to up to 1 day paid leave. The activity needs to demonstrate one or more of a combination of the following:

- Positive impact to a local community or function
- Supports regeneration
- Provides a recognisable 'service' to that community or function
- Ideally should be within one of our local communities or communities with which we have ties or within our main areas of activity (Shropshire/Herefordshire)
- Will help in personal learning and development of the staff member
- As a result of the activity will reflect positively on SHG's reputation

Examples of such previous activities include supporting a local work team to improve a local facility be it a school, community centre, sheltered site, woodland/pathways, play area etc, support to carnival or local fete, school govern duties.

Staff members would be asked to write a short article about the activity which would go into the Staff and Tenant's newsletter accordingly.

Company Vehicle Allowance

We offer a Company Car Allowance to Senior Management Team. This amount is paid pro rata each month with salary payments. The cash amount payable is equivalent to 10% of the annual salary, which is NIC and Taxable through Payroll. Any business mileage will be reimbursed at the rate of 20p per mile for both diesel and petrol and the taxable benefit will be calculated above the Inland Revenue's advisory limits.

The Monthly Rental Limit (including maintenance and VAT) will be 10% of spot salaries for all Senior Management Team.

Company Vehicles - TRL

The Group will issue company vehicles to TRL operatives in order for them to undertake their necessary duties. These vehicles can be used to travel to and from place of work and home but are only to be used for company business. See Vehicle & Mileage Policy for more details. The excess limit an employee will have to pay should they be found responsible for an accident in a company van or vehicle is £250.

Computer Share Scheme

We offer a Salary Sacrifice computer share scheme for computer purchases, capped at £2,000 Over 12 months.

Credit Union Ltd.

Credit Union is a not for profit, members only ethical and local financial co-operative which is regulated by the Financial Services Authority. Membership is open to anybody who lives in and/or works in Shropshire. Credit Union offer a savings and loan service, deposits and repayments can be made through your bank, from you payroll, at one of their community branches or at a post office.

For further details please ring 01743 252 325

Crisis & Compassionate Leave

Crisis Leave

Where an employee is required to take leave for a major domestic crisis up to 5 days paid crisis leave will be granted and, subject to the Manager's discretion, up to a further 3 days unpaid leave.

Leave may also be brought forward from future years to cover such eventualities (this is subject to a satisfactory completion of the probationary period).

Compassionate Leave

In the case of the death of a parent or guardian, spouse, partner or child, up to 5 days paid compassionate leave will be granted. It is left to each Manager to determine whether, in addition to the 5 days compassionate leave, unpaid or bringing forward of leave from future leave years, should be allowed.

Cycle Scheme

The Cycle Scheme allows us to provide cycles and safety equipment to employees as a tax-free benefit. How it works: you hire the bike from SHG using salary sacrifice (salary deduction made prior to calculating Tax and NI contributions resulting in savings) over 12 months, then buy it at the end of the period for a fair market value payment. You have the potential to make savings on new bikes (off retail prices). The cycles are primarily meant to be used for commuting to work (or for use during work), although leisure use is permitted. You can access all leading bike brands & through local bike shops and at the end of the loan period, you can purchase the bike at the current fair market value (around 5% of the original cost + VAT). For full details please contact the HR department.

Drinks - free tea & coffee

Staff are entitled to free tea and coffee, facilities for this are provided on each floor and fridges are also available for storage of food and drinks.

Discovery Centre Discount

All employees are entitled to a 10% discount from the Restaurant in the Discovery Centre. To redeem this discount you must produce your SHG ID badge when purchasing items. This discount can only be used on handmade products from the coffee shop and does not apply to goods that the Centre buy in for selling on e.g. crisps, canned drinks etc.

Employee Wellbeing.

An employee wellbeing service with Health Assured offers support, information, expert advice and specialist counselling to help you prepare for life's predictable milestones and cope with its unexpected events. Free and confidential advice 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call 0800 030 5182 or visit www.healthassuredeap.co.uk

Enhanced Maternity, Paternity Adoption Benefits

We offer enhanced maternity benefits that go beyond the statutory entitlements. These are briefly summarised below:

Maternity/Adoption (please refer to the Maternity/Paternity/Adoption Policy for full details)

These enhanced benefits are subject to length of service of 2 years or more.

- 26 weeks Ordinary Maternity Leave at normal earnings:
An entitlement to take a further 26 weeks additional Maternity Leave, 13 weeks of which will have an entitlement to Statutory Maternity Pay.

Paternity (please refer to the Maternity/Paternity Policy for full details)

- For employees with at least 26 weeks continuous service; an entitlement to 1 week at full pay and one week at statutory paternity pay.
- For employees with 2 complete years of service at the date the baby is born; an entitlement to 2 weeks at full pay.

Shared Parental Leave (Please refer to the Shared Parental Leave Policy for full details)

- Up to 50 weeks Shared Parental Leave is available to be shared during the 12 months of the birth of the child, or the placement of the child for adoption.

Eye Tests and Spectacles for Computer Use

Specsavers vouchers are available from the HR department; these entitle the employee to an eye test and if spectacles are required for VDU (computer) use a pair from the £45 range.

Flexible Working Hours (please refer to the Flexible Working Policy for full details)

Flexitime - Use of flexitime is agreed and monitored by Line Managers in each department

Part-time Working

Any employee may make a request to their Manager in writing detailing their request to work part-time. You should indicate your reason, suggested new hours and proposed start date. Your Manager will reply to your request in writing within 10 working days indicating whether your request is accepted or not in principle and whether arrangements need to be further negotiated.

Compressed Hours

Compressed hours are an arrangement of the full time working week to be worked in a different way over less than the usual 5 full time working days e.g. 35 hours in 4 days or 2 working weeks in 9 working days. Any employee may make a request to their Manager in writing detailing their request for compressed hours. You should indicate your reason, suggested new hours and proposed start date. Your Manager will reply to your request in writing within 10 working days indicating whether your request is accepted or not in principle and whether arrangements need to be further negotiated.

Holiday Entitlement

Holiday Entitlement is allocated according to level on the following scale:

Chief Exec/Directors	25 days
Levels 5 to 7	24 days
Levels 1 to 4/Operatives	23 days

This entitlement is increased by three working days in the case of officers who have completed three years' service and a further two days after five years' service. In addition to this two further days are awarded in recognition of 10, 15 and 20 years' service. This additional leave will only be awarded in the year of the anniversary and is not an ongoing entitlement. In addition to the above entitlement Officers are granted four extra statutory days. One day at Easter following Easter Monday, one day at Christmas following Boxing Day and the other two extra statutory days to be taken, as advised, between Christmas and New Year to enable the offices to close. In some circumstances it may be possible to carry up to 5 days leave entitlement over to the next year, following discussion between you and your Line Manager. Should this be agreed this leave must be taken within the first 3 months of the new year.

Internet Usage (Please refer to the IT Usage and Social Media Policies for further details)
Members of staff are free to use the internet during break periods or outside normal working hours including outside flexitime. Occasional short term use of the internet during working hours will not be frowned upon. However, it should be noted that all use of the internet is monitored and a log will be kept which tracks each user's activity.

Intranet

We have a well-developed and extensive intranet site available to members of staff. There are many useful features such as easy access to all policies, procedures, rules and regulations, information on pay scales, pensions, staff newsletters, and press releases, ordering stationery, phone lists, online road maps and much more. In addition there is a comprehensive selection of useful reports, business and operational plans, copies of committee and board papers and a section for logging IT problems.

Life Cover

Staff that are not eligible to join one of our Pension Schemes will, on completion of the Probationary Period, be included in a Life Cover policy to the value of one year's gross pay in the event of death in service. You should be aware that if you decide to opt out of the auto enrolment pension scheme that you NOT be eligible for the Group's Life Insurance benefit.

Leisure Centre Discount Membership Scheme

All employees are entitled to a concessionary discount on the Teme Leisure Centre Corporate Club Card Scheme (this has to be made at the main centre in Ludlow). Go to the Ludlow centre and show your ID badge to get this discount.

Long Service Award

On completion of 25 years service, the employee is entitled to a long service award up to the value of £250, i.e. clock, jewellery.

Motor Bike Allowance

In accordance with HM Revenue & Customs guidelines where a member of staff undertakes a journey on work related journeys a mileage allowance will be paid at the rate of 24p per mile for first 10,000 miles and 20p thereafter.

Parking at Craven Arms Offices

Parking is currently available for some members of staff free of charge in the car park adjacent to the building at Craven Arms; there is a free public car park in Corvedale Street.

Parking at Wem Offices

Parking is currently available for staff members free of charge at Edinburgh House in the car park adjacent to the building.

Payment of Professional Fees

We encourage all staff to consider formal training in relevant areas of study. Subject to management approval. Any members of staff who have completed an appropriate course of study and who are members of the appropriate professional body will be reimbursed the annual subscription. The list of professional bodies given here is not exhaustive:

Chartered Institute of Housing
Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors
Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy or equivalent
Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators

The subscription will only be paid for a maximum of two bodies. If an employee is a member of more than two bodies the fees will be paid in respect of the most appropriate organisations in relation to that employees post. For more information please contact the L&D Team.

Pension Scheme

Staff who joined as part of a direct transfer from both South and North Shropshire District Councils were admitted to the Local Government Pension Scheme. Other, non-transferring, staff have been eligible to join one of the Social Housing Pension Schemes.

From the 1st May 2014 all staff meeting the eligibility criteria will be automatically enrolled in SHPS Defined Contribution scheme which provides a life cover insurance payment equivalent to 3 years' salary in the event of death in service. Other staff may choose to opt in if they so wish. If you are an eligible job holder and you have chosen to opt out, you will not be covered by the company life insurance, which provides, by way of benefit, a payment equivalent to 1 years' salary in the event of death in service.

With effect from 1 Jun 16 all staff who joined the organisation **before** this date are also able to join the Social Housing Pension Scheme (SHPS) CARE 1/120th scheme following satisfactory completion of their probationary period. Any staff joining the organisation from 1st Jun 16 will only be auto enrolled and following successful completion of their probation will be able to join the Group's alternative DC scheme that attracts high contribution rates. These schemes are all administered by the Pensions Trust. The Group

will contribute 5% towards these 2 pension Schemes. The auto enrolment scheme attracts a lower employee and employer contribution.

Remote Working

No member of staff works from a location other than their current office/workplace on a permanent basis but they may occasionally work from home.

Shredder

Members of staff are allowed to use the shredders which are located on the first and second floors at Craven Arms and in the Board Room at Wem to shred personal documents.

Sick Pay

All employees who have satisfactorily completed their probationary period/a minimum of 6 months' service whichever is the longer will be entitled to receive Company Sick Pay (this includes statutory sick pay) from the Group at the following rates:

	Full Pay	Half pay
Following completion of probation but during first year of service	1 month	2 months
During second year of service	2 months	2 months
During third year of service	3 months	4 months
During fourth and fifth years of service	4 months	5 months
After five years' service	6 months	6 months

Employees who unjustifiably fail to keep in contact/engage with support provided or fail to comply with the Attendance & Absence Policy will lose entitlement to the company sick pay (i.e. eligible for Statutory Sick Pay only);

Staff Consultation Group

The Staff Consultation Group is an open forum which consists of departmental representatives. All staff are encouraged to put forward their views and suggestions via their representative. The Staff Consultation Group is able to make recommendations to the Executive Team for their consideration. It also discusses terms and conditions annually with the Remuneration & Nominations Committee.

Staff Recreation Room & Outside Seating Areas

A staff recreation room is provided on the 3rd floor of the Gateway. The room is equipped with café style tables and chairs, a comfortable seating area, TV with Sky and PS2 games available, vending machine, water cooler machine, fridge, oven, microwave and tea and coffee making facilities. There is a staff recreation room available for Wem staff on the ground floor of Edinburgh House with similar facilities available.

Staff Suggestion Scheme

Staff are encouraged to place their suggestions in the suggestion boxes located on various floors at the offices of Edinburgh House and Craven Arms, or to add them to the SCG share point page. Suggestions are added to the Staff Consultation Agenda for discussion at its regular meetings.

If a suggestion is implemented, it will be recorded in the staff newsletter with an acknowledgement of where the suggestion originated from. It will also be recorded on the SCG share point page and mentioned in updates that SCG give in house to a variety of meeting forums. SCG actively encourage staff to put forward ideas.

Stress Management Workshops

The company recognises as part of maintain staff health, well-being and resilience stress management is crucial and therefore workshops are made available to all staff and their managers on a regular basis. These workshops usually take place early in the calendar year. More information can be provided by contacting the L&D Team.

Subsistence Claims in relation to meetings or training:

In order to make a subsistence claim for lunch or drinks the rule of thumb is that an employee or Board member needs to be over 5 miles away from their usual place of work for over 5 hours. The usual place of work would be any of the offices or sites that the Group are based and operate from. Where meetings are scheduled to run all day on one of our sites we will factor in a lunch break so people can bring or get their own lunch. Tea and coffee will be provided. This will also apply to any internal training that takes place on site. Where any external training is provided on site that runs for over 5 hours then in such circumstances lunch can be provided at a cost of no more than £5/head. Food can be provided at central lunchtime briefings provided these are in the nature of training as this is the only time all could be brought together; this is limited to main corporate briefings and not team/directorate meetings. There will also be occasions when business entertaining will be allowable e.g. contract renewal, consultants, scheme launches however a rule of thumb is that there should be no more than 50:50 staff: external customers/suppliers. It is the responsibility of the person making the claim or approving the order to ensure that where meal costs are incurred there is sufficient narrative on the invoice/claim to identify the nature of the entertainment or training course, the person If insufficient evidence is provided your claim may be declined or in the case of invoices and credit cards, recharged to you.

Training and Training Expenses

We encourage employees to undertake further training leading to professional or vocational qualifications with the proviso that such training is beneficial to Shropshire Housing. Employees wishing to undertake any specific training courses should discuss the matter with their Manager. Should a training course involving day or part-day release be approved the following expenses are payable by us. Travelling expenses based on standard class return rail fare will be used at all times unless unreasonable to do so. In this event, the employee, prior to use of a car, must seek permission of the Manager.

- If a car is used, the travelling rate to be claimed will be based on the allowances shown in the section entitled **Car Allowances**. Average cases are restricted to 20p per mile.
- Full salary
- All relevant course and examination fees
- Reasonable Subsistence Allowance

Employees undertaking correspondence courses will be entitled to revision and exam leave.

Employees who leave their employment before the end of a two year period after the date of completion of training will be required to reimburse an appropriate proportion of the fees attributable to their training, (i.e. leaving after one year, half of training costs would be repayable). Short term training projects, such as one-day seminars, conferences and so on are excluded from the repayment arrangement.

For more detailed information please contact the L&D Team.

Study Leave

All employees studying for a qualification sponsored by us are entitled to time off for each examination along with one day per exam for preparation. All other associated studying must be undertaken in employee's own time.

Will Writing Service

A will writing service is available via WDS & Co. Ltd. Normal costs as at April 2016 are:
£150 + VAT for a single will
£250 + VAT for a pair of mirror wills
Other services are also available - contact 0800 056 2015 or email
info@wdsassociates.co.uk

Working Hours

Normal working hours for office staff are 9am to 5.00pm with one hour for lunch. For Total Response operatives the normal working hours are generally 8.45am to 5.30pm (Mon-Thurs); 8:45 to 3:30pm (Fri) with half an hour for lunch. It may be possible to vary working hours. (See section entitled **Flexible Working Hours**).

Xmas Break

The office closes at end of business on Christmas Eve and re-opens the day after New Year's Day Bank Holiday.

This booklet has been designed as a quick reference guide for all members of staff.

Please note that new members of staff with less than six months service will not be entitled to all benefits until they have successfully completed their probationary period.

Further detailed information on all related policies, procedures and regulations are available on the staff intranet or from the HR Team

If you require any further information regarding staff benefits or any other related matter please contact

Human Resources
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01588 676 256/257/284 or 01939 238 862