



whg
**Round
YOUR
Way**

Winter 2022

Meet your

ROCCs awards winners

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What to expect when you report a repair

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Damp and mould

How to tackle the early signs

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Your top tips

Can you save money this winter?

Welcome to the **winter** edition of Round Your Way



We love to hear your thoughts, suggestions and tips about this magazine. You can contact the Round Your Way team at RYW.Magazine@whgrp.co.uk

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Repairs service **update**

We know some customers are having to wait longer than usual for repairs to be carried out, and that some appointments are being rescheduled at short notice. We are sorry for these delays.

Why is it taking so long to carry out repairs?

- We currently have a backlog of repairs caused by industrial action and a national shortage of some building materials.
- Labour shortages are making it difficult to recruit the skilled tradespeople we need to carry out repairs.

Our current wait times* are as follows:

*Wait times are subject to change. Please check our website for the most up to date information.

Doors and kitchens	17 weeks
Plumbing and replacement bathroom items	13 weeks
Plastering	14 weeks
Bricklaying and slabbing	9 weeks
Fencing	23 weeks

Please be considerate and polite to our colleagues. We do not tolerate aggressive or threatening behaviour.

Our Christmas **closing times**

Friday 23 December 2022

closed from 5pm

Saturday 24 December 2022 to Monday 2 January 2023

closed

Tuesday 3 January 2023

open from 9am

For an emergency repair, please call 0300 555 6666 (24/7)

Manage your home online, even when we are closed at whg.uk.com

Book a repair

Use our live booking system and get your appointment in the diary

Pay your rent

Keep on top of payments in our platform

Update contact details

Let us know of any changes to your details



Stamp out damp and mould

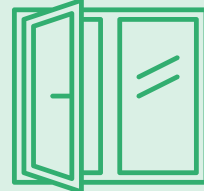
We take damp and mould seriously and want to work with you to identify and prevent it.

Over the next 12 months we are working with customers who have experienced damp and mould to design new ways of supporting you.

If you spot early signs of damp and mould, do...

Ventilate

- ✓ Use your extractor fans. **Tell us** if they're not working, or if you don't have a fan in your bathroom or kitchen, as we may be able to fit one for you
- ✓ Close your bathroom and kitchen doors when in use
- ✓ Open trickle vents above windows
- ✓ Keep furniture away from walls
- ✓ Open your windows when drying clothes



Treat

- ✓ Wipe down any early sign of mould with a fungicidal spray – we can provide you with this



Report

- ✓ Any leaks and blocked gutters
- ✓ Water pooled against your house as there may be a drainage issue



To help prevent damp and mould, don't...

- ✗ Use an unvented tumble dryer
- ✗ Use a calor gas heater
- ✗ Dry washing in a room with no ventilation
- ✗ Let your home get too cold

Contact us for advice if your dryer does not have an outdoor vent.

If you're worried about the cost of heating or energy, talk to us on **0300 555 666**.



Trickle vents help prevent condensation

Scan to watch our top tips video:



If doing all these things doesn't work then report it to us. You can do this quickly and easily via our online service at **whg.uk.com** or call **0300 555 6666**

We will get back to you and either fix the problem over the phone or carry out a survey of your home. We will then organise the necessary works to resolve the issue.

Once you have told us about damp and mould you must let us in to treat it.

Your top money saving tips

We visited customers at Rough Hay Community Centre in Walsall to find out what they are doing this winter to make their budgets stretch further.



I keep my Christmas cards and cut out the picture on the front to use as tags on presents the following year.

Julie



I buy my clothes off ebay – and I've had some amazing bargains. Try and buy out of season when they sell even cheaper. Now is a great time to search for summer items.

Judith

I plan what I'm going to have for dinner each night and then do a weekly shop so I know what I need to buy and only get what I need.

Jane



I knit my own scarves to keep warm. I also go to a local knitting group which has been a great way to meet people.

Yvonne



I make draught excluders by stuffing balls of socks into a pair of tights and then laying it across the bottom of my doors.

Sarah

I've turned down the flow temperature on my boiler. It sounds complicated but it's really not and I read somewhere it might save me £70 a year.

Simon

Find out how you can change your boiler settings at: moneysavingboilerchallenge.com or scan the QR code



Carve a shape into a potato to create a stamp. Get out the paint and get your kids stamping shapes onto old paper. This saves me money on wrapping paper and is a free activity to keep the kids busy.

Kayleigh

If you're using your oven, leave the oven door open once you have finished so the heat warms up your room.

Milan



I've downloaded the Olio app and have been collecting unwanted food from local shops for free.

Mo

Find out more at: olioex.com or scan the QR code for more



For more information and advice on what support is available if you are struggling you can visit helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk

Our ROCCs award winners

A huge congratulations to everyone who was nominated for our Recognising our Customers and Communities (ROCCs) Awards 2022.

This year our judging panel consisted of a team of our customers. We anonymised all the nominations and our judges had a tough

time deciding on winners as all the entries stood out.

In the end though, they had to whittle it down. Here are the final seven, who have all gone the extra mile to make a real difference in their communities. Each winner will receive a £100 gift voucher as a thank you for all their hard work.



Shannon Sandhu

Diversity champion Under Veil

Under Veil provides support for the LGBTQIA+ Community in Walsall, focusing on people from Black and Asian communities who are at risk of being discriminated, bullied, harmed or isolated from their community due to their sexuality. The charity offers a much needed private and safe space for pastoral and social support.

Good neighbour Patricia Sherret

Patricia has been instrumental in bringing together residents where she lives. Her coffee mornings, weekly get togethers and vibrant floral displays have helped create a real sense of community. Patricia has helped make the scheme a happy place to live.

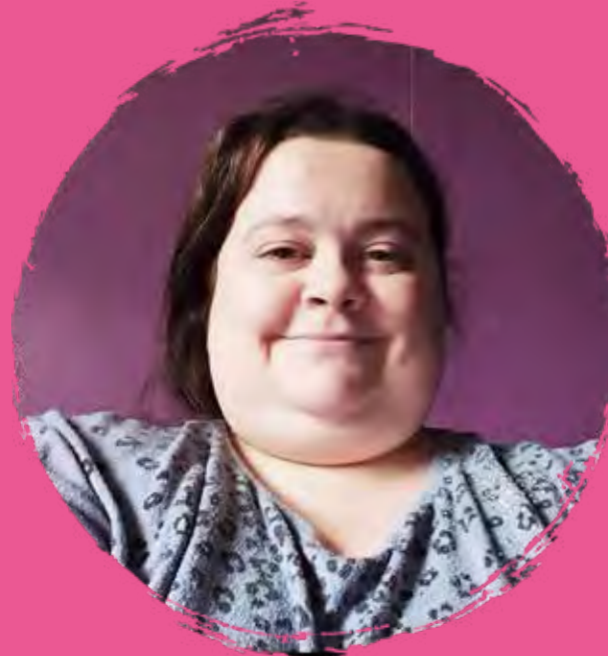


Maureen Lewis

Outstanding community group

Walsall Black Sisters Collective

Walsall Black Sisters Collective has worked tirelessly to improve the lives of people across Walsall. Through their work, which includes projects that empower women to look for work, a befriending service, daycare and financial support they are making a real difference to deprived and vulnerable communities.



Environment champion Samantha Richardson

Through her love of recycling and reusing Samantha is not just doing her bit for the environment but also supporting rough sleepers. Samantha uses plarn, made from recycled plastic bags, to weave sleep mats for homeless people and recycles old jumpers to make beds and hats for their dogs.





Young hero James Roberts

For the last three years college student James has dedicated his spare time to volunteering with The Inspire Group in Walsall. He helped set up a sports youth group and now coaches children aged five to 12, inspiring young people to reach their potential and stay fit and healthy.



Benjamin Williams

Digital champion Kicsters

Digital pop-up youth club Kicsters is a vital lifeline for young people, providing a safe place off the streets where 10 to 18-year olds can learn, grow and thrive. Young people are supported to make a positive impact in their community and learn digital skills to help improve their future success.

Living your best life Jennifer Tobin

Jennifer has overcome numerous obstacles over the last few years to achieve her goal of returning back to a career as a dental nurse. It has not been easy but through determination and resilience she has turned her life around and is now thriving.

Let's talk about fly-tipping

Astonishingly we spend around **£500,000 removing fly-tipping every year** – that's money that could be spent on improving your homes and communities. Flytipping and rubbish not only make a place look bad, it is also bad for wildlife and the environment.

Please play your part by ensuring you do not leave bulky waste in communal areas and disposing of all your rubbish in the correct way.

Our top tips for waste removal:

1. Use your council's bulky waste collection – they will collect white goods and bulky furniture from your door, often for around £10.
2. Visit your local tip – most are open from 8am and over weekends.
3. Space in the car? Why not double up – ask your neighbour if they need anything taking to the tip too.
4. Need a bigger bin? If you live in larger households you may be eligible for a larger bin from your council.



See it, report it!

Report fly-tipping to either your local council or us on:
0300 555 6666.

If you live in Walsall you can report it to: flytipping@walsall.gov.uk or on **01922 653 355**

Before After



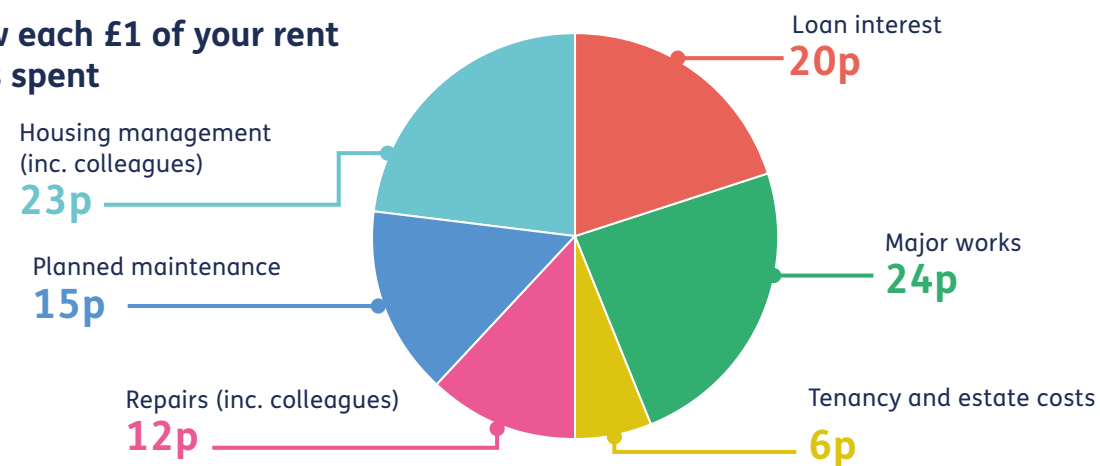
Bonner Grove

How did we do?

It's important that we share how we are performing as an organisation. Each year we publish an annual report that looks at how well we are serving you and all our customers.

Spending and investment

How each £1 of your rent was spent



£53.2m spent on improving homes

(2020/21: £41.7m)

Routine repairs £12m

(2020/21: £10.3m)

Planned maintenance £16.2m

(2020/21: £15.1m)

Major works £24.9m

(2020/21: £16.3m)

Last year, we spent **£53.2m** improving homes. **£41.1m** of this was spent on planned maintenance and major works. This includes renewal, repair and maintenance jobs that we do to your building that we can plan for in advance, such as structural improvements and work to improve and modernise your home.

Last year our planned maintenance and major works programme included fitting **327** kitchens, replacing **191** bathrooms, upgrading **662** roofs, rewiring **121** homes and installing **1,409** heating and boiler systems.

Earlier this year we selected three new contractors who will be working with us for the next seven years on these planned works and improving the energy efficiency of our homes. You can find out more on page 20.

Keeping homes in good repair

Repair appts. kept **91%**

(2020/21: 90%)

Homes meeting Decent Homes Standard

100%

(2020/21: 99.9%)

Repairs within timescale

96.83%

(2020/21: 96.66%)

Average time for repair

23 days

(2020/21: 15 days)

Customers satisfied with repairs service

78%

(2020/21: 83%)

Our skilled repairs team carry out a range of repairs, from electrical work to heating issues.

Last year **91%** of repair appointments that were made were kept, which is similar to other housing providers. Sometimes we have to rearrange appointments, for example if we can't get the right part to fix the problem.

97% of repairs were carried out within the performance target timescales we set ourselves. For example, the number of days it should take us to complete a certain type of repair. We measure this to make sure we are delivering an efficient service to customers.

To improve our repairs service, we are launching a new satisfaction survey to get better feedback about the service you receive and how we can make it better.

You can read an update about our repairs service on page 3.



Putting safety first

Gas checks
100%

(2020/21: 99.98%)

Lift safety checks
100%

(2020/21: 95.65%)

Fire checks
99%

(2020/21: 99.7%)

Water safety checks
100%

(2020/21: 100%)

Asbestos checks
100%

(2020/21: 100%)

Keeping your area clean and safe

Customers satisfied with their neighbourhood
81%

(2020/21: 90%)

Number of ASB incidents
1164

(2020/21: 1157)

We carry out regular checks to our homes to ensure they are safe.

We have a legal duty to check all the gas appliances in your home every 12 months and give you a valid gas safety certificate. We make every possible effort to carry out these important checks, but sometimes the figure can drop below 100% if we are unable to access a property when the appointment is due.

We conduct water safety testing in 43 of our blocks where we have shared water systems and carry out a legionella risk assessment every two years.

We also check and service lifts, including platform lifts for wheelchair users, in all our blocks four times a year. We carry out fire checks in our high rise blocks and wellbeing schemes every 12 months. Fire risk assessments of low rise blocks (blocks of three floors or less) are carried out every two years.



Our Neighbourhood Services Team conduct regular, scheduled inspections of communal blocks and areas ensuring they are well maintained, tidy and free from graffiti. They also check the maintenance of shared facilities such as lifts, fire safety systems and play area equipment to make sure they are safe and fit for purpose.

We are currently exploring what we can do to improve your satisfaction with where you live and have created a programme of regular community events so that we can work with you to improve your neighbourhoods.

Last year we focused on regular walkabouts in our areas to get an understanding of your needs and we have looked at increasing recycling at certain sites where you had identified issues with litter.

You can find out about how we are tackling flytipping on page 11.

Putting things right

Expressions of dissatisfaction
2,446

(2020/21: 1,406)

Formal complaints
265

(2020/21: 141)

If you aren't happy with our service we want to know, so we can put it right and make sure it doesn't happen again.

We follow the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code which sets out exactly how we should handle all complaints. This means you can be sure we will handle your complaint fairly and reasonably. You can find out more about how we handle your complaint and our full complaints procedure on our website.

Last year we received **2,446** expressions of dissatisfaction. These are informal complaints that we aim to resolve in three days.

We also had **265** formal complaints.

Other housing providers have also had an increase in complaints, many of these were linked to the challenges caused by the pandemic as we continued to recover our services.



Having your say

whg listens and acts upon views
71%

(2020/21: 77%)

Would recommend whg
80%

(2020/21: 84%)

Customers satisfied with services
78%

(2020/21: 86%)

Customers engaged for feedback
4,419

(2020/21: c.5000)



We are creating more ways for our customers to get involved in what we do and have their say on how we do it.

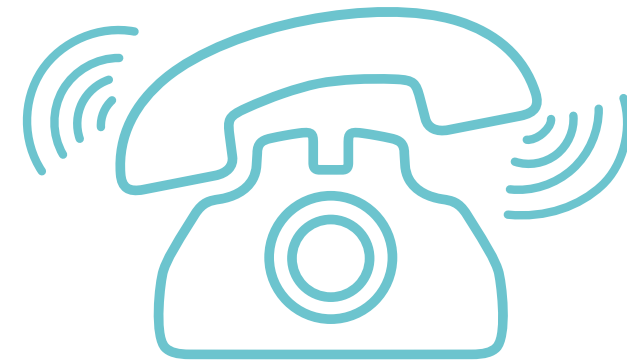
In 2021 we launched our first Customer Voice Interest Group, focussed on health and wellbeing. Interest groups for home, neighbourhoods/communities and, environment followed. These groups enable you to get involved and influence decisions on issues that matter to you.

We plan to expand our community groups and launch a new Customer Voice platform to give you even more opportunities to have your say.

You can find out more about getting involved on page 18.



Don't miss our call!



We will be ringing you in the next 12 months for a quick survey about the service you receive.

Here's how it works:

1. You'll get an automated call from 01922 218638
2. Choose to either **take part straight away** or **request a link** to online version
3. **Answer** quick and easy questions
4. **Add a short comment** with any feedback or suggestions
5. It only takes five minutes and will really **help us find out what we can do better.**



We need you!

Get involved and help us improve our services

We want to hear from you! Whether you have a few minutes or a few hours spare each month there is a way for you to get involved:

On the go

with a quick survey, phone call, video or poll



At home

join a virtual meeting



In the community

in a one-off local meeting



At our office

as part of a regular group



Find out how you can have your say:
whg.uk.com/haveyoursay
 or scan the QR code



Keeping your home in great condition

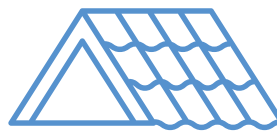
You may have spotted some new faces working out and about in your area. These new teams are working with us over the next seven years on homes due for an upgrade as part of our planned investment works. This includes:



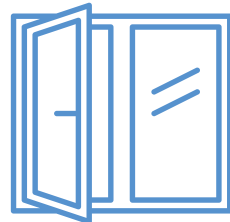
New bathrooms



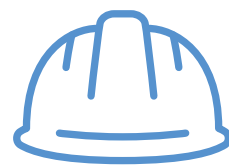
New kitchens



New roofs



Replacement windows and doors



Building safety works



Modernising whole blocks

Find out more at:
whg.uk.com/197m-home-improvement-works-begin
 or scan the QR code



We have appointed the following partners to carry out this work on our behalf. If your home is due for these works, you will be contacted by the partner for your area.



Your questions answered

Will my home be getting an upgrade?

It depends on several factors, including the age and condition of your home. You will not need to contact us in order to be considered for these upgrades. If your house is due for an upgrade the partner for your area will be in touch.

My neighbour is having work done. Why aren't I?

You may not get the same work done as your neighbour, as works vary from property to property according to age and condition. For example, dependent on condition we aim to replace kitchens every 20 years and bathrooms every 30.

Why are you doing all this work?

We are always investing in our homes to keep them in good repair. Last year we spent £53.2m improving homes – this included major works, like what our new partners will be doing for us, and also day-to-day repairs.

Do I have to agree to home improvement works?

Yes - if you are offered an upgrade, it's because these works are essential for your safety, comfort and wellbeing.

Who do I contact if I need a repair to my home?

Routine repairs are carried out by our own in-house team. You can report a repair by calling 0300 555 666 or book your own appointment online at www.manageyourhomeonline.whg.uk.com

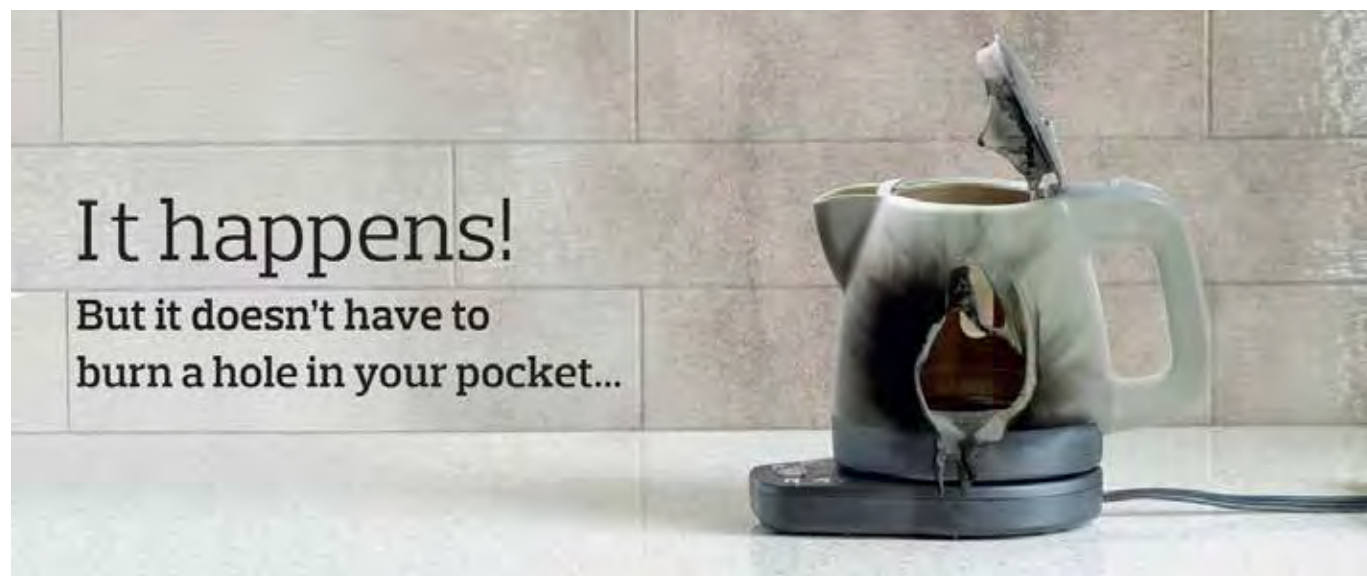
Beware the "no win no fee" scam

If you are unhappy about the condition of your home and are thinking of making a claim talk to us first.

'No win no fee' agreements are not always as good a deal as they first appear to be. They can take many months to finalise, and you may not be in control of the process. In successful claims, the solicitors take around half of the pay out, while if you lose your case you could be ordered to pay our legal costs - which could be thousands of pounds.

If you're unhappy with our service the best thing to do is follow our complaints procedure which is available on our website at: whg.uk.com/feedback-and-complaints/

or scan the QR code



It happens!
But it doesn't have to
burn a hole in your pocket...

Having home contents insurance can't prevent floods, thefts or fires from happening, but it can help you get back on your feet.
Find out more about protecting your furniture and personal possessions.
Call: 0300 555 6666

Terms and conditions apply, contact above.
The policy is underwritten by Aviva Insurance Limited. Aviva Insurance Limited, Registered in Scotland Number 2116.
Registered Office: Pitheavlis, Perth PH2 0NH. Authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the
Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority.
FP.ENT97LC.WAH



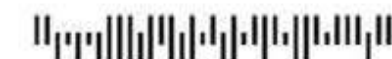
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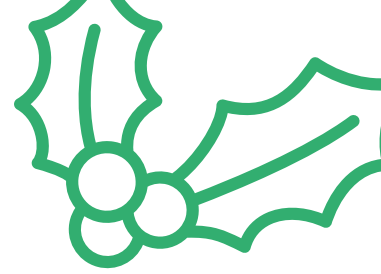
Freepost RUCU-GZUG-ZUJE
Round Your Way
whg
100 Hatherton Street
Walsall
WS1 1AB



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Just for fun



Win a £100 shopping voucher

We've hidden the name of the **most festive food** in the wordsearch. Find out what it is for a chance to win!

T	R	E	E	Y	U	M	S	F	R	I	B	B	O	N
A	S	D	F	P	Y	U	L	E	Y	B	S	H	K	L
S	O	C	K	H	S	D	G	O	M	S	B	D	M	G
W	W	M	I	U	I	T	H	A	G	I	O	T	J	I
C	H	I	H	K	S	L	E	L	G	H	W	G	R	F
A	O	S	R	H	A	D	V	N	T	R	T	S	G	T
R	K	T	C	F	N	A	K	S	A	G	H	C	B	G
O	D	L	R	D	T	V	S	T	A	R	W	H	E	A
L	W	E	U	N	A	H	S	S	K	W	R	Y	L	L
W	F	T	K	K	Y	T	Y	H	N	B	T	D	L	M
G	N	O	M	H	Q	J	Y	E	S	S	H	S	S	F
I	K	E	C	D	H	S	N	O	W	M	A	N	T	W
M	I	A	D	A	M	E	W	W	H	O	T	A	H	G
D	T	F	A	A	F	J	G	Y	L	H	O	L	L	Y
M	I	N	C	E	P	I	E	I	D	B	N	S	Q	N

- Bow
- Mistletoe
- Snowman
- Yule
- Star
- Santa
- Tree
- Gift
- Sock
- Carol
- Holly
- Bells
- Ribbon



For your chance to win, return this form for free by cutting this page out, following the instructions on the back and popping it in the postbox.

Name: _____

Contact number: _____

Contact email: _____

I give my permission to be contacted by phone about sharing my views on whg Yes No

I give my permission to be contacted by email about sharing my views on whg Yes No

Please see how we process your personal data by reading our privacy notice

www.whg.uk.com/privacy-policy/

If you wish to withdraw consent you can do so by contacting customervice@whgrp.co.uk

To be in with a chance of winning a £100 shopping voucher

Which festive food is hidden in the wordsearch? _____

Competition closes 13 January