



**Spire Homes has taken steps to support tenants with debt, job or money worries, by working in partnership with the Citizens Advice Bureau and JobCentre Plus.**

### **Citizens Advice Bureau and JobCentre Plus**

The partnership with Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), launched in January 2009, helps Spire tenants who are struggling with the increased costs of living. Customers needing help get a priority referral to CAB for free, independent advice.

This venture is just one way in which the association is helping people to manage their finances. There is a 'making the most of your money guide' - which gives tenants access to advice and top tips on budgets - and support for local credit unions. A new Tenancy Support Officer also supports tenants in maintaining their tenancies, and offers advice on finance and benefits to help people maximise household incomes.

Where people have lost their jobs or been out of work for some time, Spire offers the chance to access extra employment opportunities. A local employment partnership with JobCentre Plus offers support through 'prepare to work' training, one-to-one mentoring and positive recruitment practices.

Each year, the association has committed to recruit a small number of people through New Deal. These vacancies are ringfenced to lone parents, people with disabilities and candidates who have been unemployed for a long time. There is even a job interview guarantee where qualifying candidates meet at least half the vacancy criteria.

When a successful candidate is chosen, they get the opportunity of a three-week 'job trial'. This helps them make sure that the job is right for them without risking their benefit entitlement. Two employees have already been recruited in this way, which led to permanent jobs with Spire Homes.