

Working Arrangements due to COVID 19 Virus (Coronavirus)

The Association is following the guidance from the Scottish Government very carefully. South Lanarkshire Council area was placed in Tier 4 of lockdown restrictions and this is anticipated to last until 11 December 2020.

This unfortunately means that from Friday 20 November until Friday 11 December 2020 we will only be able to carry out emergency repairs. Provided we move back into Tier 3, we will be able to carry out normal routine repairs thereafter.

Repairs Service

We are carrying out:

- Emergency repairs only.
- Essential safety checks – these include smoke alarm replacements and electrical safety checks.

We would encourage you to assist us by allowing access to our contractors to carry out essential safety checks as we are permitted to carry these out.

When you report a repair you will be asked to fill in a Covid 19 questionnaire. This is part of our safe working methods. Our contractors have put in place risk assessments to allow your repair to be carried out. They will have personal protective equipment (PPE) on while they are in your house. They will ask you to stay in another room while the repair is being done.

Estate Management Visits and Close Inspections

Our Housing Management team has commenced the programme of estate management visits. The purpose of these visits is to make sure our tenants are keeping their gardens tidy, cutting grass and not putting large items in gardens.

You should now be able to arrange for a special uplift by South Lanarkshire Council but you will need to fill in an on-line form to be able to do this. This is a link to allow you to arrange this.

https://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/forms/form/199/en/bulk_uplift_request

Allocations

We are continuing to allocate empty properties in line with Scottish Government guidance and following the risk assessment developed for this process.

Home Visits

We advised you previously that we would only be able to carry out home visits if it is absolutely necessary. While we are in Tier 4 of lockdown, we will not be able to carry out home visits at all.

Neighbour Disputes

We appreciate these are very difficult times for our tenants so we are asking you to be considerate to your neighbours. Please try to keep noise to a minimum, particularly in the evenings. We appreciate that neighbour disputes are very distressing and we hope that the advice and information we give you is helpful.

Paying your Rent

Please continue to pay your rent. We appreciate these are very difficult times but rent is our primary source of income and is crucial to funding the services we provide.

We know that unfortunately, the ongoing situation with Coronavirus may affect your income and if this is the case, you should contact us immediately. If you are currently part of the Government's furlough scheme and anticipate you will not be returning to your job when the scheme ends, please get in touch with us. Our Housing Management staff will be able to assist and support you if this applies to you.

We can provide you with advice and information on how to claim Universal Credit. Please note the following:

An application for Universal Credit can be made to those experiencing a change in circumstances which may affect their income. Universal Credit can help with both daily living expenses and Housing Costs. Our staff can provide you with advice and assistance in relation to making this claim – just call us. Alternatively you can contact Universal Credit directly here: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit>

Universal Credit helpline

Telephone: 0800 328 5644

Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm

Do you qualify? Use an independent benefits calculator to find out:

- what benefits you could get
- how to claim
- how your benefits will be affected if you start work

These are free to use, anonymous, and have replaced the Benefits Adviser service.

<https://www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators>

Allpay

If you are unable to get to a pay point to pay your rent, please note the following:

- Pay online- allpaypayments.net- Add an account-choose a password. You will be asked to add your PRN No. which is the 19 digit number on your payment card. Your housing officer can also supply this number if requested.
- By Phone – Call 0844 557 8321 (calls charged at 7p per minute)
- By Text- Register at www.allpayments.net/textpay
- You can telephone your Housing Officer who can take a payment over the telephone or set you up with a direct debit.

If you would rather set up a standing order or direct debit to pay your rent, please contact the Association and we will arrange this for you. If you do not currently have an Allpay card but would like one, we will arrange this for you.

If you are on Housing Benefit, this will continue to be paid directly to us. If you are on Universal Credit and we have what is called a “managed payment to landlord” this will continue to be the case. Please let us know immediately if there are any changes to your circumstances which could affect your Universal Credit.

Any concerns you have about paying your rent, please contact us immediately and we will do what we can to help.

We appreciate that these have been very distressing times for all of us and we are committed to providing the best service we possibly can in the circumstances.

Your co-operation in these trying times is very much appreciated.

Yours faithfully

Joe Gorman



Chief Executive