



Housing Association Ltd

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26<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Resident,

Thank you for your continued support and understanding and for following expert guidance to stay at home and help keep us all safe. The safety of residents and staff is our primary concern so please do let us know if you are self-isolating or if you or a member of your household is experiencing any coronavirus symptoms.

We sent you SMS message on 24th March 2020 to tell you about the measures we had put in place to make sure we were maintaining emergency, essential, and health and safety-related functions during this unprecedented time. I wanted to take this opportunity to write to you to share further guidance and advice with you on how we're working within the restrictions of the national Covid-19 response, to deliver housing services to our customers.

### **We are listening to you**

We're doing everything in our capacity to support our residents and the most vulnerable during these difficult and challenging times. We're in regular contact with those residents who may need additional support. Residents are telling us about the challenges their households are currently facing and we are listening and ready to support you. If we have not contacted you and you would like us to check on you, please contact us by email [info@westwayha.org.uk](mailto:info@westwayha.org.uk) or telephone us on 020 8964 2323.

### **Need a helping hand?**

We understand from our contact with you, just how hard finances are for many of our tenants right now. In response, we have allocated limited welfare funds which aim to give little extra help for household essentials like the emergency food, utility top up, and others. Please get in touch to find out more about **the helping hand fund** by emailing us on [info@westwayha.org.uk](mailto:info@westwayha.org.uk) or 020 8964 2323.

### **Rent and service charges**

We want to support you to keep up with the payment of your rent and service charges. If you are having difficulty paying your rent and service charges please contact us and speak with a member of the team. We want to hear from you so that we can assist in your specific situation and arrive at a solution that can work for you. Our housing team can be contacted on [HousingDept@westwayha.org.uk](mailto:HousingDept@westwayha.org.uk) or 020 8964 2323

Our income and Tenancy Officer (Janet) has been supporting customers who may be struggling to pay their rent and service charges by putting in place personal payment plans when needed.

In addition, the Department for Work and Pension (DWP) has made temporary arrangements for benefit claimants impacted by the coronavirus. Please check DWP's [information about coronavirus and claiming benefits](#) page regularly for updates

Visit [www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/coronavirus/](http://www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/coronavirus/) to find out more.

## **Emergency Repairs**

We are currently only carrying out emergency and essential repairs, where there is an immediate danger to people or work is needed to make a property safe. Emergencies include no heating or hot water, total loss of power, major leaks, broken toilets, blocked drains, and major structural damage. If you are in any doubt about the critical or urgent nature of your repair, please contact us to discuss this.

Where your repair does qualify as an emergency, we aim to attend to your repair within 24 hours to either make it safe or undertake the repairs required. If we can't attend within 24 hours, we will let you know. Following government guidance, we may, in some circumstances, call you to see whether you can resolve the issue without us attending. Our priority will remain to ensure you and your household and your homes are safe.

If you or anyone in your household have symptoms of coronavirus or if you're self-isolating, please let us know this when you report an emergency and essential repair.

We have a legal obligation to maintain and service gas appliances in your home to ensure your gas appliances are safe. We will, therefore, continue with our annual gas checks and communal safety checks. Our gas contractor VHL will notify you when the inspection is due. If you do not give us access because you are shielding or self-isolating or have the virus, in these circumstances, we will rearrange our visit for the earliest date after the shielding and isolating period.

## **Fire safety**

As most of us are spending more time at home there is an increased risk of an accidental fire happening, which means we need to take extra care to prevent this. You can read our fire safety leaflet on our website for some useful tips. [www.westwayha.org.uk](http://www.westwayha.org.uk)

## **Estate services**

Our communal cleaning has continued and we recognise the importance of maintaining hygiene at all times especially wiping of banisters, door handles, light switches and etc. In addition, we are addressing issues on communal obstructions. Gardening work has also been carried out whenever possible.

Parking control in your estate has been temporarily suspended until further notice.

If you have any issues with the cleaning and gardening and any other estate service please contact us on [HousingDept@westwayha.org.uk](mailto:HousingDept@westwayha.org.uk)

## **Considerate neighbours**

Even knowing that we're doing the right thing by staying at home can feel frustrating and a challenge right now, but please try to be mindful of others in your community:

- Aim to keep noise levels to a minimum
- Please keep communal areas clean and clear
- Remember, a balcony is not space for cooking or for storage of items, or for placing unwanted rubbish. Please do not have barbecues on your balcony as this be a fire hazard.
- No fly-tipping. We're aware some council's services have been reduced but you must dispose of your waste properly. Fly-tipping is a crime and you can be prosecuted and also time and funds will pact on your service charge payment. Please help us to keep the estate cost down by not fly-tipping

If there is anything we can do to help you during this difficult time, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us [at info@westwayha.org.uk](mailto:at info@westwayha.org.uk) or 020 8962 3346.

Please visit our website for future update [www.westwayha.org.uk](http://www.westwayha.org.uk)

Yours sincerely



Leonard Brown  
Interim Head of Housing

Robert Greene  
*Chairman*

**Ricky Scipio**  
*Chief Executive*

**Westway Housing Association Ltd**



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