

## **Service Update**

As the advice from The Scottish Government and the NHS continues to evolve, we are trying to provide regular updates to our tenants on how to stay safe and well during this crisis as well as providing advice on how we are continuing to provide a service.

As you will be aware, our office recently closed to the public in line with a government directive and our staff have been working remotely from home.

Our Staff are doing their very best under difficult circumstances to ensure that all tenants are able to receive advice and assistance as well as being able to pay their rent and access the necessary services.

## **Service Issues**

Unfortunately, we have recently experienced a critical failure in our IT system, which has resulted in us being unable to log in to the main server to gain access to tenant and property information as well deal with repairs and maintenance issues.

We are working closely with our IT consultants to rectify this issue but it is clear that this will not be resolved quickly. We anticipate that it could take anything up to two weeks to get us up and running again.

## **Contact Information**

So, very fortunately, the failure in our IT system has not affected our ability to communicate directly with our tenants, give advice and assistance or take rent payments.

You can continue to contact us in the following ways:

You can text us on: **07797800658** (this number does not accept calls);

You can email us at: [enquiry@faifleyha.co.uk](mailto:enquiry@faifleyha.co.uk);

You can visit our website at: [www.faifleyha.co.uk](http://www.faifleyha.co.uk) and send a message through our 'Contact us' page;

## **Rent Payments**

Despite recent media coverage in relation to the idea that Landlords should consider 'rent free' periods for tenants during the Coronavirus Pandemic, the Association is not in a financial position to provide this option. Any reduction in income would have an immediate and detrimental effect on our long-term sustainability and the services we provide.

We do however, recognise that some of our tenants may be facing significant financial restrictions due to the ongoing crisis and we will work closely with anyone who finds themselves in a furloughed or redundancy situation as well as providing advice and assistance to any tenants who need to make a claim for Universal Credit.

## **Rent payment methods**

Our rent payment methods and timescales haven't changed. You can continue to pay your rent in the following ways:

You can also use your Allpay account to make payments via your mobile phone. To do so, please download a QR reader and use the following barcodes:

QR reader for Android



QR reader for Apple



Internet on line service: [www.allpayments.net](http://www.allpayments.net)

Allpay Telephone Payment: **0844 557 8321** – use your Allpay card

Chip and Pin: Call us with your debit/credit card details on: **07950508238**

Allpay Rent payment card:\_ To order a card please text us on: **07797800658**

Please note: you can make your rent payments, weekly, fortnightly or monthly as long as we receive your full monthly rent charge by the 28<sup>th</sup> of the month.

### **Help to Pay Your Rent**

If your income has been affected due to the virus, there are options to get help towards your rent. You should look into claiming benefits and other financial support that is available as soon as you can.

#### Emergency Funds

For immediate assistance with emergency funds, you should contact West Dunbartonshire Council, Scottish Welfare Fund on **01389 737640**.

#### Universal Credit

You can apply for Universal Credit by telephoning the Government helpline on: **0800 328 5644** or sending a text to: **0800 328 1344**. You can also apply online at: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit>

#### Changes in Income

If you already receive benefits and your income has changed, you should update the relevant authorities:

- West Dunbartonshire Council – Housing Benefit - One stop shop: **01389 737000**
- GOV.UK website at: <https://www.gov.uk/manage-your-tax-credits>

#### Welfare Benefits Advice

We continue to use the services of the Independent Resource Centre in Dalmuir. Although they are not holding surgeries at the moment, they are still providing emergency advice from their offices between the hours of 9am – 5pm. These hours may change. You can contact them on **0141-951-4040**.

## Furlough

To find out whether your employer would be eligible for the furlough scheme and how much you would receive, please check the GOV.UK website at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-if-you-could-be-covered-by-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme>

## Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)

For information on Statutory Sick Pay (SSP): <https://www.gov.uk/statutory-sick-pay>

## Layoffs and Short-Term working

For information on Layoffs and Short-term working: <https://www.gov.uk/lay-offs-short-timeworking>

## **Payment Arrangements**

Staff will continue to make contact with tenants who have rent arrears to identify ways in which to assist the repayment of these arrears.

If you are struggling to pay your rent, you should contact us **immediately** to discuss possible repayment arrangements. Any arrangements will be on an individual basis and subject to personal circumstances.

## **Evictions**

In line with Government instructions, we would advise that the Association will not evict any tenant from their home because of rent arrears which have occurred as a direct or indirect result of the COVID19 situation.

## **Gas Safety Checks and Servicing of Boilers**

The Coronavirus Act 2020 has been brought in due to the current situation and we are awaiting further guidance on the provision of emergency repairs and gas safety.

In the meantime, our Contractors, City Building (Contracts) LLP and the McDougall Group Ltd will provide emergency services in the following circumstances:

- Building disrepair that threatens safety or wind and water ingress of your home;
- Boiler breakdown/disrepair that causes tenants to have no heating and or hot water for washing etc;
- Plumbing breakdowns or disrepair that threatens health and safety hygiene

For those tenants with boilers getting close to the annual service and safety check date, City Building where it can, will attempt to carry out necessary servicing and safety checks and give you a gas safety certificate. City Building is aware of the need for protective clothing and is equipping itself as fast as possible.

We will update you again in these Website updates if the annual checks and services become impossible or the Government relaxes the requirement.

The phone numbers for Emergency Repairs are:

Central Heating and Boiler Repairs: **0800 595 595** (City Building)

Emergency Trade Repairs: **0333 123 1011** (McDougall group) – Freephone number

Please note that these numbers are for emergencies only, so please consider before phoning if this applies to your repair.

### **Local Authority bulk uplifts and Bin Collection services**

We have received notification from West Dunbartonshire Council that their bulk uplift services **have been suspended indefinitely** and the waste collections are currently under review.

**From 30 March 2020**, the following applies:

#### **Bin Collection**

**General Waste (grey/green/black) bins only:** these will be collected weekly rather than fortnightly. All residents should present their household **(grey/green/black)** bin each week on the usual collection day.

As the service is moving to weekly, additional bags will not be required or uplifted.

#### **Recycling Services**

There will be **no recycling collection** during this period so please **do not present blue or brown bins**.

Ferry Road and Dalmoak Recycling Centres are closed until further notice.

Please refer to the WDC website for further updates:

<https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/rubbish-and-recycling/>

### **Faifley HA bulk uplift services**

Our own environmental services, whereby we clear the area of discarded bulk refuse five times a week, is also suspended in response to government provisions to limit the spread of the Epidemic.

If you are aware of any discarded bulk refuse that is blocking fire exits, close mouths back or front, or otherwise presenting a hazard, please let us know by at least one of the means above. We can deal with these as serious emergencies as long as that is what they are.

### **Stair cleaning services**

Our close cleaning Contractor, Caledonian Maintenance Services is currently unable to carry out the weekly close cleaning services due to a reduction in workforce and the threat from COVID19.

They have agreed however, to visit the properties on a weekly visit, starting on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020, to carry out antibacterial cleaning to any areas that people come into physical contact with when either living at or visiting the property, e.g. doors, handrails etc.

Workers will wear Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) to ensure that no tenant or their family is under threat from infection. To ensure appropriate social distancing, only one man will be working in a property at any given time.

We would ask that you protect the health of you and your family and the Caledonian staff by maintaining social distancing at all times while staff are cleaning.

### **What we need from you?**

#### Telephone number

To ensure that we provide the best possible service that we can, we need to be able to contact you quickly. If you have not received a text message from us, the likelihood is that we either don't have a number for you or you have changed it and have not advised us.

We would ask that you notify us of your mobile number via one of the contact numbers or emails provided in this leaflet.

#### Self-Isolation

If you or any of your household are currently self-isolating, please let us know so that we can advise our staff and Contractors.