



Update on your services

Thanks again for your patience while we run a restricted range of services as a result of the pandemic.

Services are being re-introduced in phases as quickly as we can in line with Scottish Government lockdown guidance. The following have resumed in recent weeks:

- › grass-cutting and landscaping in back courts and shared garden areas;
- › essential repairs in customers' homes and communal areas;
- › letting homes to people who are homeless or in crisis.

More will be re-introduced soon. Please read more on our plans for the next phases in this newsletter and check our website www.wlhp.org for updates.

Our top priority is to ensure the safety of customers and their families and our staff in all we do, and that will continue to be the case as we go forward.

Although many of our employees, including housing officers, are continuing to work from home, please be assured we're here to help you and your family 24/7.

Lynsey Fotheringham
Head of Housing

Repairs

As lockdown restrictions ease, we're increasing the range of essential repairs we're able to carry out. For instance we can:

- › sort a persistent leak;
- › replace showers for vulnerable customers;
- › repair heating where temporary heating has been in place for a week;
- › replace security windows and doors;
- › renew and repair security and controlled-entry doors.

Unfortunately, we can't, for now, do repairs where it's difficult for staff to socially distance and common repairs that need more than one tradesperson or involve working in an attic.

At the moment, there is also a shortage of some materials such as glass, and of manufactured items such as some doors, which might restrict the common repairs we can carry out.

Please be assured staff follow strictly all health-and-safety guidelines, including wearing Personal Protective Equipment - as and when appropriate - while carrying out emergency and essential repairs.

Gas servicing

We need to complete an annual gas service for your home. This work is a really important part of keeping you and your home safe.

We will be in touch to arrange a suitable day and time to carry out these visits. All staff will be following Government guidelines on social distancing and will wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment.

It's a legal requirement that we carry out these checks, and if you don't let us in we would have no option but to force access to your property.

Here to help

We're doing all we can to support our customers.

Our housing officers have carried out thousands of welfare calls since lockdown began, helping people with a

wide range of support.

For instance, over 25,000 emergency food deliveries have been made already to vulnerable Wheatley Group customers. Thousands more have received help through the

Group's Emergency Response Fund and others have been supported to access Universal Credit.

If **YOU** need help, please speak to your housing officer, email or call us. We're here to help.

Environmental services

Several have resumed and our Neighbourhood Environmental Teams (NETs) are getting round all areas as quickly as possible to:

- › weed and tackle overgrown grassed areas;
- › clean up back courts, including bin areas;
- › clear paths of weeds and moss;
- › apply weedkiller to hard-standing areas.

However, it will take time to reach a maintainable standard in all areas, so please bear with us.

We'll resume working in common areas such as stairs as soon as Government guidance allows. Common areas we have not visited during lockdown will be deep cleaned. This will include sanitising handrails and cleaning doors, windows, sills and light-fittings, on top of all standard cleaning measures.

Letting

In line with Scottish Government guidance, letting homes to people who are homeless or in crisis continues to be the priority for all Scottish social-rented landlords.

Although we're not advertising homes at the moment, you can still apply for a house or tell us about a change in circumstances on our online portal, MyHousing. We expect to start getting back to normal letting soon. If you have a question, contact your housing officer.

Our housing officers

Some housing officers might be out in our communities carrying out essential visits, where it is safe to do so. They will be following all Government guidelines on social distancing and wearing Personal Protective Equipment where appropriate.

Safety first

We can't emphasise enough that all working practices and the restricted range of services currently being provided are aimed at keeping you, your family and our staff safe and well.

Next phases

From August to October, we hope to:

- › start to get our letting service up and running with virtual viewings and new-build homes available on MyHousing;
- › introduce more services including close cleaning; and
- › have more of our staff out and about in communities.

From November to January, we hope:

- › to have a full repairs and maintenance service up and running;
- › our letting services will be getting back to normal, with home viewings available online;
- › our investment work will be starting up.



Help with rent

If you're finding it difficult to pay rent, contact us immediately. The sooner you get in touch, the quicker we can help. Please don't be tempted to do nothing. We can support you in a number of ways.

Our expert welfare benefit advisors can help with Universal Credit claims, as well as making sure you claim all the benefits and tax credits you're entitled to. We can also help you budget and manage your money.

Our EatWell service can help if you're struggling to put food on the table, and our fuel advisors can help you cut your gas and electricity bills.

Get in touch

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