



Forgewood  
Housing Co-operative Ltd

# Summer Newsletter

JULY 2020

Forgewood Housing Co-operative  
along with Garrion People's Housing  
Co-operative reached a

# 5,000 meals milestone!

as part of our response to COVID-19.

**SEE PAGE 8 FOR MORE**



Forgewood  
Housing Co-operative Ltd

## Contact with us during Covid-19

The Co-operative would like to thank all of our tenants and customers for their patience and understanding during the last 4 months, while our office and community centre have remained closed due to COVID-19.

It has been a challenging time for all and we have been working hard along with our partners to develop plans to help us move towards a safe re-opening of the office and community centre for the public. At present we do not have an exact date as to when that may be.

We will continue to work with the advice from the Scottish Government and Health Officials before opening up our community centre, office or communal hall at Law View. We are currently working to adopt a new and safe way of working for staff, tenants and service users. When this has been agreed we will advise you and will also display information on our website and Facebook page.

### ALSO INSIDE:

Covid-19 Service  
Delivery **p2&3**

Community team  
update **p8,9 & 10**

Benefits  
information **p11**

Update on repairs and  
maintenance service **p14 & 15**

# COVID-19

## Service Delivery



**Due to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak, and in line with Scottish Government and NHS advice, the Co-operative has made some changes to our Housing & Community Engagement Services.**

We are still here to help and will continue to support our residents with front line services at this difficult time by:

- **Welfare Checks:** Weekly welfare calls from community and housing staff to tenants to ensure our residents are safe and well with regular referrals to partners, external agencies and community organisations.
- **Food Provision:** Since (Covid-19) lockdown our community staff have provided, where requested our elderly and vulnerable with a regular food provision service. This includes essentials and assistance with emergency food packs or electric/gas top-ups.
- **Lunch project:** 300 meals are provided and distributed from the centre each week and remains in operation on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday between 11am to 12pm. This project runs from our car park area to allow for social distancing to protect all.
- **Befriending Service:** A telephone befriending service has been set up and have recruited volunteers as befrienders.
- **Positivity Packs:** The community team have created and delivered over 150 'Packs of Positivity' (activity packs for adults and children) each week.
- **Housing Application:** The housing staff are still responding to any requests for housing applications made and are being processed in the normal manner. Please contact the Co-operative should you require housing option advice.
- **Letting Our Properties:** The housing team have now commenced letting any properties which become vacant through our normal protocol.
- **Anti-Social Behaviour:** The Co-operative is aware it has been a difficult time for those residents and families having to stay at home. We ask residents to be considerate of each other and for those tenants who may be experiencing anti-social behaviour to contact your Housing Officer and we will still endeavour to deal with any complaints you may have.
- **AFTAR Project:** We are continuing to support all tenants with financial inclusion and money advice services via our AFTAR project. Should you experience financial difficulty and require welfare rights advice, debt advice, general or specialist advice please contact the Co-operative and we will pass your details to Maria at Citizens Advice Bureau via our AFTAR Project. She will contact you within 48 hours of receiving this request. Maria will carry out initial benefit/financial assessment and allocate a telephone appointment as necessary.
- **Rent Advice:** Your Housing Officer is available by telephone or email to discuss your rent payments. You can contact her on 07776990405 or e-mail [susan@forgewoodcoop.org.uk](mailto:susan@forgewoodcoop.org.uk). Details of ways to pay your rent is detailed within this newsletter.
- **Reporting Repairs:** Over the past few month we have been working closely with our reactive maintenance contractors, discussing ways of carrying out non-essential repairs safely. As you will be aware, we have only been carrying out emergency repairs since the end of March 2020.



We are pleased to inform you that we have resumed our non-emergency repairs service from Monday 6 July 2020. Further details of the service and timescales are detailed within this newsletter.

**General Enquiries:** If you have a general enquiry you can still contact us as usual on 01698 263311 between 9am- 4.30pm Monday to Friday. All staff are still providing a service to our tenants and we would encourage you to call if you wish to discuss anything. You can also email on [enquiries@forgewoodcoop.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@forgewoodcoop.org.uk).

# WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER

Please help us  
help You...

Due to COVID-19 you should still expect to be asked a series of questions prior to a contractor or staff member carrying out an essential visit to your home. We will ask a series of questions before any visits are agreed.

There are also procedures we would expect you and staff to follow prior to and during a visit to your home. This practice is to comply with Government guidelines and public health guidance to keep everyone safe. Should you wish to discuss please contact our office.

It is also important to observe and comply with all current social distancing measures with your neighbours that have been put in place by government.

To help us prepare for our visit there are a few **simple questions** our staff will ask **before** coming to see you:

## COVID-19

### Safety Measures

- 1 Are you or any members of your family displaying symptoms of Coronavirus, such as high temperature, new and near persistent cough, or loss of taste or smell?



- 2 Are you or any of your family considered vulnerable or have you been self-isolating?



- 3 Are you happy for us to enter your home and do you understand that we may need further access within it?



**Before** our staff member enters your home there are some **simple steps** you can take to help us do so safely. **If possible, please:**

- 1 Leave all internal doors open



- 2 Leave windows open for ventilation



- 3 Keep clear pathways within the home, and free of any obstructions



- 4 Keep all areas well-lit and open window coverings



- 5 Where possible other occupants of the house should vacate the property and stay together in one area such as the driveway or garden or, congregate in one other room



- 6 Shut pets away safely within another room



**7 simple steps** our staff **always** take to ensure everyone's safety

## COVID-19

### Safety Measures

- 1 At all times, our staff will ask questions from a safe distance and where possible will do this from outside of the property.



- 2 Our staff will wash or sanitise their hands before and after every home they visit.



- 3 Our staff may wear a fresh pair of disposable gloves at each home they visit. They will dispose of used gloves safely without compromising you.



- 5 Any equipment our staff may use will be disinfected before and after each use.



- 6 To minimise the time we spend within your home, we will try to complete our notes and forms outside of your property.



- 7 Our staff will take care to keep their own clothes clean during visits and will also wear fresh workwear daily.



- 4 Similarly, where required, staff may wear a fresh face covering at each home they visit. They will dispose of these safely without compromising you.



# Welfare Checks

To ensure the wellbeing and safety of all our residents, over the past few months we have been carrying out Welfare Checks with our tenants to check on your well-being and your safety during this difficult time.

Most of our tenants have already been contacted by telephone, however those who we do not have up to date contact details we may have been unable to reach.

If we do not have correct contact details for you please contact the office on 01698 263311 or email [enquiries@forgewoodcoop.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@forgewoodcoop.org.uk) to update us with your details so we can make a regular check on your health and wellbeing.

# Home Contents Insurance

We urge you to get peace of mind and insure your personal and household's belongings against theft, fire, flood and any damage. This is your responsibility as a tenant.

We insure the building, but not your furniture, contents or decorations.

Should you not have contents insurance we can provide you with information on a low cost home contents insurance scheme, for further details contact the office or visit [thistletenants-scotland.co.uk](http://thistletenants-scotland.co.uk).

# Skip Delivery/ Litter Picking Services



Unfortunately due to coronavirus pandemic, North Lanarkshire Council have restricted its service as they were unable to meet the requirements of a skip delivery schedule.

We will keep tenants advised as to when the service can resume, however we have provided one off estate bulk uplifts and litter picking within the estates as and when required.

# Close Cleaning Service

Our close cleaning contractors have been instructed since lockdown to provide an enhanced clean to all handrails, push bars, door entry system and window handles within the common close areas.

This service should be unaffected and operate as normal at this time.

# Garden Competition



It's that time of year again, the Co-operative is pleased to announce the commencement of the Garden Competition for 2020.

Around mid-September the Co-operative along with an independent judge will come along and judge the best gardens in the flats and the back & front doors in the Forgewood Area.

# Annual General Meeting

The Co-operative's Annual General Meeting will take place 16 September 2020. We will keep you all updated as soon as possible to confirm the timings and format of the meeting.

# Anti-Social Behaviour



The Co-operative would ask residents to be considerate of each other at this difficult time by thinking about how noise from your home could be causing problems and upset to others. For the same reason, we would urge everyone to be more tolerant and patient with noise and activity that they won't be used to hearing. However, should you be experiencing any problems of continuous anti-social behaviour we would urge you to contact the Co-operative and your Housing Officer will make every effort to assist you.

All complaints received will be dealt with in a sensitive and confidential manner.

The following agencies may also be able to assist if you are experiencing any anti-social behaviour:-

- **Police Scotland**

Telephone 101, in the event of an emergency or telephone 999 or email [www.scotland.police.uk](http://www.scotland.police.uk)

- **Crime stoppers**

To report crime information anonymously you can contact Crime stoppers by telephoning 0800 555 111 or going online [www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org)

## SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

### At Home Shouldn't Mean At Risk...

Anyone experiencing domestic abuse which could be behaviour in the form of a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, frighten or controlling behaviour ....help is still available even through the coronavirus outbreak.

You can do so by speaking in confidence and calling Scotland's Domestic Abuse 24 hr helpline on 0800 027 1234 or visit [safer.scot](http://safer.scot).

## Scottish Communities Fund



On 18th March, the Scottish Government announced an investment of £350 million to support local communities and households in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thanks to The Health and Wellness Hub who have secured funding through the Scottish Communities Fund which is part of the Scottish Government support, we have been given grant funding of £2,000 To support our local project. This funding will help us to continue supporting people in our local communities through the COVID -19 pandemic.



# Do I need to pay my rent during Covid-19?

**The Co-operative recognises these are exceptionally difficult and challenging times for everyone.**

One area of concern you may have is paying your rent. It is essential that you continue to pay your rent as normal.

## **What if I am having difficulty paying my rent due to Covid-19?**

We urge you to get in touch with your Housing Officer, Susan Kane as soon as possible!

We will do all that we can to help you through any financial difficulties caused by this situation and can establish an affordable repayment plan, taking into account your individual circumstances.

For information, help and support, please contact your Housing Officer, Susan Kane by email [susan@forgewoodcoop.org.uk](mailto:susan@forgewoodcoop.org.uk) or phone on 07776990405.

We can also refer you to a Welfare Benefits Advisor through our AFTAR Project who can complete benefit checks and maximise your income.

We will continue to support our tenants during this time of uncertainty and financial hardship.

It is vital you contact us as soon as possible should you be experiencing difficulties as failure to meet your rent payments can put your tenancy at risk as you have a legal and contractual obligation to do so.



## **Benefits and Money Advice**

If you require welfare rights, general or specialist advice via our AFTAR Project please contact the Co-operative and we will pass your details to Maria at Citizens Advice Bureau. She will contact you within 48 hours of receiving the request. Maria will carry out an initial benefit/financial assessment and allocate a telephone appointment as necessary.

Telephone only appointments are available during the outbreak as Citizens Advice Bureau continue to support financial inclusion and money advice services.

# How do I pay my rent?

**You can pay in many ways without the need to leave your home!**

**Online banking:** You can set up payments via online banking to pay your rent. It is a convenient way for you to manage your payments. All you require is your unique rent reference number (as detailed within your rent increase letter) and the Co-operative's bank details -

Branch Name: Bank of Scotland  
Sort Code: 80-09-15  
Account Number: 00357497

**On The Internet:** You can register online at [www.allpayments.net](http://www.allpayments.net) using your 19 digit reference number from your payment card to use this service. This enables you to pay your rent online, free of charge, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. You will be asked for the details on the allpay card that we have issued and you can pay by using your debit or credit card.

**By Phone:** Have your payment card, pen and paper handy with your debit or credit card when you dial 0844 557 8321 for Allpay's automated phone payment service, available 24/7. Each time you use this automated service you will be given an authorisation code as proof of payment. Please keep a note of this code.

**Text message:** You can use your payment card and debit or credit card to register for this service at [www.allpayments.net/textpay](http://www.allpayments.net/textpay). Text 'pay' plus the text code provided to you during registration along with the amount you want to pay and your password (the last four digits of your debit or credit card) to 81025.

**Bank Payment (standing order):** Standing Order is a reliable and convenient way to pay your rent. Contact the Co-operative to obtain a form or download and complete from the Co-operative website [www.forgewoodcoop.org.uk](http://www.forgewoodcoop.org.uk).

**Phone app:** You can make debit or credit card payments to your rent account using the allpay payment app, which is available to download for free for Apple and Android smart phones. Visit [www.allpay.net/app](http://www.allpay.net/app) for more information.

Please remember that it is still important to pay your rent. If you are facing any difficulties, please call us on 01698 263311 and ask for your Housing Officer, Susan Kane.



## Rent Increase 1 April 2020

**As you are aware the Co-operative recently applied an increase to your rent charge from 1 April 2020.**

**Have you increased your payments to reflect this?**

**Do you claim Universal Credit?**

If you are currently claiming Universal Credit you must create a note in your journal to update the new rent charge and confirm the increase was

from 1 April 2020. If you do not update this your current housing costs will not cover your rent charge and you will be responsible for paying the outstanding rent.

**Do you pay by standing order?**

If you pay by standing order you must contact your bank to increase your payments as this will not be done automatically.

**Do you receive Housing Benefit?**

The Co-operative notifies North Lanarkshire Council of your rent increase and they automatically increase your payments so there is no need to worry about this is if you currently receiving Housing Benefit.

If you are unsure of your new rent charge or wish to discuss this further please contact your Housing Officer, Susan Kane who will be happy to help.

# COMMUNITY TEAM UPDATE

## Welcome and Update

We are pleased to welcome Isla Dundas to the Community Team who started two weeks before lockdown and has been heavily involved in our community response to COVID-19.

Isla previously worked as a Community Regeneration Assistant, Digital Inclusion Officer and a Universal Credit Adviser. Through her experience with this she brings a wealth of community development, welfare advice and digital inclusion experience.

Sadly all of the wonderful projects and activities that took place in Forgewood Community Centre stopped on 17th March due to the start of COVID-19 lockdown. We know the loss of these activities has been felt within our local community and like you we are looking forward to a time when the centre is busy again.

We are currently looking at ways in which we can safely and gradually re-open the centre and help support groups and activities to re-start.

## HELPING SOFTEN THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

# Forgewood and Garrion People's reach 5,000 meals milestone!

**Forgewood Housing Co-operative** and **Garrion People's Housing Co-operative** provided their 5000th meal this week as part of their response to COVID-19.



Marvellous Meals project is being delivered as part of our response to COVID-19 and on Friday 3rd July our 5000th meal was given out, a wonderful Steak Pie with potatoes and vegetables!

Our Marvellous Meals project will continue until Monday 10th August.

**Forgewood Housing Co-operative** in partnership with **Garrion People's Housing Co-operative** secured more than £40,000 of additional funding. This funding delivered a series of activities to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 within the communities of

Forgewood in Motherwell and Gowkthrappe in Wishaw.

In response to the COVID-19 crisis we provided:

- 600 meals each week
- Emergency Food Packs or electric/gas top-ups
- Set up a telephone befriending service and recruited volunteers as befrienders
- Weekly welfare calls from community and housing staff to tenants with regular referrals to partners, external agencies and community organisations.
- Creating and delivering over 150 'Packs of positivity' (activity packs for adults and children) each week.

Our COVID-19 response is being delivered by **Forgewood Housing Co-operative** and **Garrion People's Housing Co-operative**.

This has been supported with funding from the National Lottery Community Fund, Forgewood Holdings, the Scottish Communities Fund\*, the GOLD Group, ForgeAhead Volunteer Group, Forgewood Housing Co-operative and Garrion People's Housing Co-operative.



# Cash For Kids

As part of our response to COVID-19 we applied for the basic essential fund provided by Cash for Kids.



The grant was open to organisations like ourselves who could identify households where they had children that would benefit during these uncertain and challenging times. On obtaining consent from these households we could then apply on their behalf for this grant.

We are pleased to say we were successful in obtaining £2,555 of funding.

The funding was provided in the form of an ASDA voucher amounting to £35.00 per child.

This would provide essential items for those children such as food, baby milk, clothing or gas / electricity top up. We know how much this will have supported a lot of families during this pandemic and are extremely pleased we were able to provide them with this.

It is our intention to apply for Cash for Kids again during the Christmas period. It would therefore be in your best interest to contact the Co-operative and check that we have all the up to date details of who is living in your property. This is essential as we can only apply for children who are registered as living with you on our database.

## Kitchen Upgrade

Thanks to £4,000 of funding from Forgewood Holding, Motherwell Community Solutions Programme in partnership with health and social care (hosted by North Lanarkshire carers together) and Forgewood Housing Co-operative the community centre was able to upgrade its kitchen!



This upgrade includes additional worktops, cupboards, fridge space along and the addition of a double oven, microwave and hob. This will make a massive difference to the amazing All Stars Café, senior's lunch club and youth groups who utilise the kitchen.

Hopefully it won't be too long before the groups can get safely back to the centre to make the most of its lovely new kitchen!

## Back to School Uniform Bank

We have created a back to school uniform bank, donation of reusable school clothes can be dropped off outside Forgewood Community Centre from 9am and 12pm any Monday, Wednesday or Friday.

While we would love for you to be able to choose the uniform you would like from a rail, due to the COVID-19 restrictions this may not be possible (although guidance is changing regularly).

We will ensure any practice adopted is one which will keep everyone as safe as possible.



# Breastfeeding Friendly Scotland



**Forgewood Community Centre is one of the first businesses in Lanarkshire to join the new Breastfeeding Friendly Scotland (BFS) Scheme.**

With the support of NHS Lanarkshire the centre will help to promote, support and protect the rights of mothers who want to breastfeed in public places.

The BFS scheme is being rolled out nationally by the Scottish Government. It will replace, and build on the success of, NHS Lanarkshire's former breastfeeding welcome initiative.

Lanarkshire currently reports some of the lowest breastfeeding rates in Scotland. Around half (50.3%) of mothers choose to breastfeed, dropping to less than one in three (28.6%) after 6-8 weeks. A contributing factor can be that women feel inhibited to breastfeed outside their home.

In Scotland, all babies are protected by law and it is an offence to prevent a baby from being fed milk in a public place. Wherever families see the "Breastfeeding Friendly Scotland" logo and signage, they know that staff are aware of their obligation under the law, and can be assured of an extra warm welcome. Membership of the scheme demonstrates the business understands and accommodates the needs of breastfeeding families.

Anne Marie Bruce, Infant Feeding Development Midwife at NHS Lanarkshire, said: "Our aim is always to ensure that mothers and babies have the support they require from the NHS. Regardless of how they feed, responsive parenting and feeding are encouraged".

"UNICEF Baby friendly found that 80 % of women stopped breastfeeding before they wanted to. In Lanarkshire, we want to

normalise breastfeeding and change the culture and the conversation. This being to create an environment that is supportive of breastfeeding, wherever mothers may be. We hope that by promoting safe environments for breastfeeding outside the home through the BFS Scheme, more women will feel comfortable and continue to breastfed for as long as they wish."

Delighted to sign up to the BFS scheme, Paul Lennon, Depute Director of Forgewood Housing Co-operative, said "The centre is a well-used community hub with a wide ranges of activities for people of all ages. It is popular with young families and we want breastfeeding mums to feel welcome and comfortable in our environment.

"The Breastfeeding Friendly Scotland scheme is a really good idea and we hope that more organisations and public spaces will sign up so that women know they will be supported and feel comfortable when breastfeeding out and about in the community."

Businesses interested in joining the BFS Scheme can receive more information by contacting [BreastfeedingFriendlyScotlandLanarkshire@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:BreastfeedingFriendlyScotlandLanarkshire@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk)





**Due to the COVID-19 crisis the Government announced that the Universal Credit standard allowance for the next 12 months will increase by £1,000 per year.**

If your regular income has reduced or stopped as a result of COVID-19 restrictions, you may be entitled to claim for Universal Credit.

### **How to claim**

Apply for Universal Credit online. You have to apply as a couple if you and your partner live together. You do not need to be married. The Universal Credit team might phone you after you've sent your application if they need more information or if you cannot verify your identity online.

### **What you need to apply**

You'll need:

- your bank, building society or credit union account details (call the Universal Credit helpline if you do not have one)
- an email address

- information about your housing, for example how much rent you pay
- details of your income, for example payslips
- details of savings and any investments, like shares or a property that you rent out
- details of how much you pay for childcare if you're applying for help with childcare costs

If you do not provide the right information when you apply it might affect when you get paid or how much you get.

You also have to verify your identity online. You'll need some proof of identity for this, for example your:

- driving licence
- passport
- debit or credit card

If you cannot verify your identity online:

The Universal Credit team will phone you to help you verify your identity. If you have an interview booked, you do not need to go to it at the moment because of coronavirus (COVID-19). The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) will contact you to let you know what you need to do instead.

## **New Style Job Seeker's Allowance**

**You may be able to claim New Style Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) with, or instead of, Universal Credit, depending on your National Insurance record.**

If you are unemployed or work less than 16 hours a week you may be able to get New Style Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA).

New Style JSA is a fortnightly

payment that can be claimed on its own or at the same time as Universal Credit and is a contribution based benefit. Normally, this means you may be able to get it if you've paid and/or been credited with enough National Insurance (NI) contributions in the 2 full tax years before the year you're claiming in.

If you qualify, you can get New Style JSA for up to 182

days. After this your work coach will talk to you about your options.

If you qualify for both New Style JSA and Universal Credit, any New Style JSA you receive will be taken into account as income for Universal Credit.

For more information please go to <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/new-style-jobseekers-allowance>



# Social Security Scotland Benefits

Social Security Scotland has introduced a number of benefits in the last year that you may be entitled to depending on your household circumstances.

These include:

- Best Start Grants and Best Start Foods
- Funeral Support Payment
- Carer's Allowance Supplement
- Young Carer's Grant

For more information on these grants, find out if you are eligible or apply, visit [www.mygov.scot/benefits/](http://www.mygov.scot/benefits/) or call 0800 182 2222.

# Planned Maintenance



A number of social landlords in Scotland have decided to cancel all planned maintenance programs for 2020-21 due to the uncertainty around the pandemic.

We are pleased to announce with the support of our management committee, we will carry out a reduced program of planned maintenance for 2020-21. This year's planned maintenance program will consist of bathroom renewals.

We will be in contact with you over the next few months if your property is included in this year's program. We are hopeful to deliver our programs before 31st March 2021, however due to the restrictions of the pandemic we will have a better understanding of the number of properties later in the year.

# Energy Advice

**During the lockdown and the on-going pandemic many of us will have been spending more time at home and you might be worried about the effect this could have on your energy bills.**

Many people who top up their gas and electricity via payment meters will find themselves topping more regularly and that in turn will put extra strain on your finances.

The suppliers have agreed emergency measures to make sure vulnerable people and those with prepayment meters don't get cut off during the coronavirus outbreak.

Get in touch with your energy supplier to find out what support they can give you but please remember phone lines are busier than usual, so use email and web chat for non-urgent issues if you can.

In addition the AFTAR Project offers



our tenants the opportunity to have Home Energy Efficiency visits. These are carried out by the Energy Adviser. The Energy Adviser will provide support and give advice on how to help reduce energy usage and/or energy costs.

Advice includes help to:

- Swap energy providers
- Claim for energy efficient home improvements
- Learn about Warm Home Discounts and other sources of help with energy bills
- Access tips about energy saving around the home.

This service is by appointment only so please contact the office to be referred for your Home Energy visit.



# Scottish Government tops up Discretionary Housing payments with Extra £5m

**It has been announced that Scottish Government have invested an additional £5 million to support tenants under financial pressure during the COVID-19 outbreak.**

If you are struggling to meet a shortfall in your rent you may be able to get extra help by applying for a 'Discretionary Housing Payment' (DHP).

Discretionary Housing Payments can provide extra money to you or your landlord if you already receive Housing Benefit or Universal Credit (including

Housing Costs towards rental liability) but there is a shortfall between the rent you have to pay and the Housing Benefit/ Housing Costs you receive. DHP's are usually paid for a few months to help you through a crisis or short-term problem, but can pay for longer periods in exceptional circumstances.

North Lanarkshire Council will administer this benefit and will look at your circumstances to firstly see whether you're eligible. They will then decide on the amount to award you and for how long.

## How to apply

You can contact North Lanarkshire Council direct to request an application form or you can :-

- Downloading an application form
- calling to speak to Susan Kane your Housing Officer on 07776990405.
- contacting the office and asking for a telephone appointment with Robert, Welfare Rights Advisor who can assist with this.

## Health & Wellbeing Advice Services

# Clear your head...

**A national campaign to help people cope during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic launched on 21 April 2020.**

The Scottish Government's 'Clear Your Head' campaign highlights the practical things people can do to help them feel better whilst continuing to stay at home, acknowledging these are worrying and uncertain times for many.

Simple steps to taking better care of our mental health and wellbeing over the coming weeks include:

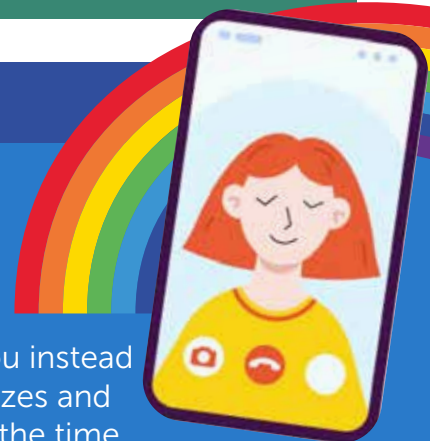
- » **Keeping to a routine** – trying to sleep and wake at the same time, and eating at regular times.
- » **Moving more** – staying active, within the current guidance, to boost your mood.
- » **Taking a break** – limiting exposure to the news on social media if you feel things are

getting on top of you instead use fun games, quizzes and apps online to pass the time.

- » **Making time for yourself** – simply taking a breather or doing something you enjoy.
- » **Keeping in touch** – phoning family and friends to ease worry and feel connected.

Along with a range of tips on how to stay positive, the campaign website [clearyourhead.scot](http://clearyourhead.scot) will signpost sources of help and advice including NHS Inform, and helplines including NHS24, Breathing Space, SAMH and the Samaritans.

The campaign, which will run across television, radio, and online, is part of a package of measures announced by the Scottish Government to help people look after their mental health during and after the coronavirus outbreak.



# An update on our Repair & Maintenance Service during Covid-19

## Non-essential Repairs Service

**The Co-operative would like to thank each and every one of you for your understanding during this very difficult time for our repairs service.**

Over the past few months we have been working closely with our reactive maintenance contractors, discussing ways of carrying out non-essential repairs safely. As you will all be aware, we have only been carrying out emergency repairs since the end of March 2020.

We are pleased to inform you that we will resume our non-emergency repairs

service on Monday 6th July 2020. As I am sure you will understand we have had to make a few changes to our timescales. This is due to our contractors having to take more precautions to ensure both yours and their safety.

The new repairs timescales will be as follows:

- Emergency Repairs – We will attend within 6 hours of you reporting the repair.
- Routine Repairs 5 – We will attend and complete your repair within 5 working days.

- Routine Repairs 10 – We will attend and complete your repair within 10 working days.
- Technical Inspections-Maintenance Officer/ Assistant Visit – We will inspect your property within 3 working days.

Please contact our office on 01698 263311 should you need our assistance. If you have already reported a non-essential repair during the lockdown, a member of our team will be in contact with you to progress the matter.

*Please take a note of this free phone number!*

Our contractor Rodgers & Johnston has a new free phone number for tenants to use to report any out of hours emergency repairs. The new number is **0800 999252**.

## Gas Servicing & Repairs

Gas servicing and repairs has continued as normal during the lockdown. Our gas contractor Saltire have been taking extra precautions at each visit depending on the circumstances of the household.

If you are due your gas service or require a repair to your gas central heating, please contact Saltire on **0845 606 1555** or our office on **01698 263311**.



# Electrical Inspection Condition Report

**We carry out Electrical Inspection Condition report at the change of a tenancy, or within a 5 year period. This is to ensure your property is electrically safe.**

Any remedial works which are identified at your inspection, will be made safe or rectified as soon as possible.

John Smith Electrical will be carrying out this essential work for the Co-operative. If you are due an electrical inspection John Smith will be in contact with you before your due date.

Please note, we have seen an increase in the number of our tenants carrying out electrical works to their home.

Any electrical work carried out to your home is not permitted unless you have permission from the Co-operative before work commences. Application forms for Alterations are available upon request by contacting the office.



## Fire Protection New Legislation

**Due to new government legislation, every social landlord in the United Kingdom are required to meet a new standard in Fire Protection to every tenanted home by February 2021.**

The new standard requires us to install:

- One smoke alarm to the room most frequently used for general daytime living purposes.
- One smoke alarm to every circulation space on each storey, such as hallways and landings.
- One heat alarm to every kitchen.
- One carbon monoxide detector if a gas appliance is present.

All alarms should be ceiling mounted and interlinked. There is no requirement for carbon monoxide detector to be interlinked to the other detectors, or to be ceiling mounted.

We are using Fire Angel Wireless Alarms. The advantage of using wireless alarms is there will be no need to install electrical cables or cause any damage to your decoration.

We have instructed John Smith Electrical to carry out this work for us. Works will be planned on a street by street basis and you will receive a letter in advance of the Co-operative commencing this work to your home.

If you require any further information, please contact our office on 01698 263311.



# Landscaping Contract

Due to the outbreak of Covid19, our procurement process was delayed on our landscaping contract. Please accept our apologies for the delay in the contract being awarded.

During our procurement process we wanted to ensure we had given clear instructions to all the tendering contractors. As part of the process we:

- Consulted with our tenants and Management Committee.
- Consulted with our staff.
- Reviewed and enhanced our plans for the area.
- Reviewed and enhanced our specification for the area.
- Arranged site visits for all interested contractors.

We appointed idverde in May 2020 as our landscaping contractor for the next year.

We have been monitoring their performance and we do not feel the specification, programme and standard of works have been met. We are currently closely monitoring the contract and have raised our concerns with them.

We would take this opportunity to apologise to tenants and ask you bear with us during this time and hope that you will notice a vast improvement in all areas very soon.

Thank you to those tenants who have contacted the Co-operative over the past few weeks with their comments. As your feedback is important to us please continue to pass any concerns or compliments to us regarding the landscaping in your area.

## Useful Numbers (Including Emergency Contacts)

» **Saltire Facilities Management Ltd**  
Emergency Repair Number **0845 606 1555**  
(all gas central heating faults 24 hours)

» **Saltire Facilities Management Ltd** Servicing  
Number **01698 743647**

» **Rodgers and Johnston** (all other out of hour  
EMERGENCY REPAIRS) **0844 247 2120**  
(New Freephone number **0800 999 2520**)

» **North Lanarkshire Council** (housing benefits  
and council tax) **01698 403210**

» **North Line** – North Lanarkshire's **01698 403110** contact centre dealing with Bulk

uplift, bins, roads and lighting, abandoned vehicles, Dog fouling, dog nuisance, gritting

» **TRANSCO (National Grid)** (smell of gas)  
**0800 111 999**

» **POLICE SCOTLAND 101 (999 EMERGENCY)**

» **FIRE BRIGADE (999 EMERGENCY)** or text  
"FIRE" to **80800** from your mobile phone

» **SCOTTISH WATER 0800 077 8778**

» **ELECTRICAL DAMAGE** to electrical supply  
or network equipment Call **105** or your own  
electrical supplier

» **CRIMESTOPPERS 0800 555 111**

## CONTACT US



**FORGEWOOD HOUSING CO-OPERATIVE LTD**  
Forgewood Community Centre, 49 Dinmont Crescent,  
Motherwell, ML1 3TT



**01698 263311**



**enquiries@forgewoodcoop.org.uk**



**www.forgewoodcoop.org.uk**



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