

The Bulletin

The dedicated newsletter for Sion House residents from Housing for Women.

COVID-19 Service Update

Our offices and remote sites are now closed for the foreseeable future and our staff are now working remotely. This is to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. Our staff will be carrying out appointments via telephone.

Our priority is to complete emergency repairs only at present. An emergency repair is classed as something that can immediately impact the health and safety of our residents, staff and the general public and/or something that may cause significant damage to our buildings.

If you have a routine non-urgent repair, we can still log your request and will store this for a later date. **Please stay safe.**

Welfare Calls

Housing for Women staff are making weekly welfare telephone calls to vulnerable residents and those over the age of 55, to check that you are well and are coping with the current COVID-19 climate. If you have yet to receive a call, it may be because we do not have up-to-date contact details for you. Please contact us as soon as possible to allow us to update our records and ensure that you have all the help you need.

Some of my neighbours are not following the government's rules to stay at home/or having visitors. What should I do?

Everyone should be observing the Government's rules to only go out to exercise, buy food or in an emergency. If you feel comfortable talking to your neighbours, please remind them we are all being asked to stay at home in order to reduce the spread of Coronavirus, especially to those who are more vulnerable. The police now have powers to enforce these new rules. You can contact your neighbourhood officer with any ASB complaints, who can take action within our Anti Social Behaviour policy. **We appreciate your cooperation in helping to keep everyone safe and well.**

Contacting the Police: You can contact the police by calling **101** to report a non-urgent crime or incident such as suspected drug use or dealing in your neighbourhood. Please only contact the Police regarding COVID-19 measures if you feel there is a significant issue or serious breach of the Government's mandated restrictions.



Housing for Women

Rent Payments: You can pay your rent by calling the Allpay automated telephone line on **0330 041 6497** (you must have your rent card and a debit/credit card with you to make the payment).

You can also set up a Direct Debit to make the rent payments directly with Allpay. Please visit: www.allpayments.net.

You can access your Housing for Women account online to view your rent balance via our Customer Portal. Visit www.hfw.org.uk/resident-area/customer-portal/ to sign up.

If you are struggling to pay your rent, our Neighbourhood and Income Officers are available to support and signpost you to relevant debt and advice agencies that can give you additional support. Please let us know immediately if you've lost your job, your work hours have reduced or are in any other situation that makes paying your rent a challenge.

You may also find it useful to contact your council about Housing Benefit or the DWP about Universal Credit. If you have multiple debts and would like to discuss your problem with an independent adviser, we recommend 'Stepchange'. You can choose to remain completely anonymous if you wish. Please visit: www.stepchange.org

It is vital that rent and service charges are paid, as this income pays for the services we provide and allows HfW to continue to meet our obligations around repairs and health & safety.

Don't let arrears build up, get in touch, we are here to help you.



Introducing Mandy, Elly & David!

We are pleased to welcome Mandy Dunstan, Director of Asset Management and Elly Farthing, Head of Repairs to the Housing for Women team. We are sure over the upcoming months you will notice improvements in the service we offer you.

David Anderson is your new caretaker who will be visiting your estate weekly to check the communal areas, rotate bins, liaise with the council's environmental health team, monitor door entry security systems and assist the neighbourhood officer to enhance resident satisfaction.

Reporting Repairs

Please report all emergency repairs immediately to us on **0207 501 6120** to ensure we can act on it promptly.

All other non-urgent repairs should be reported either by phone or to repairs@h4w.co.uk. We endeavour to deal with all email enquiries within 1-2 working days, but in busy periods this can take slightly longer.

Resident Training Grant

Our Training Grant provides eligible residents and women in our services with a grant of up to £500 to help pursue training and development opportunities. Visit: www.rebrand.ly/rtgrant to find out more or email Natalie.Baker@h4w.co.uk.

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Repairs and improvement updates

The redecoration of the block has been completed and we hope you can see a big difference! We are currently recruiting for a Surveyor, who will handle any further projects & ensure our work is up to standard.

There are currently no plans to replace windows throughout the block as these have been found to be generally repairable. Please ensure you inform us of any specific issues with the windows in your property, so we can handle this for you.

Residents will be contacted regarding kitchen and bathroom upgrades (where needed), once the next phase of our planned programme has been confirmed.

We have had to pause the door entry upgrade work due to the current COVID-19 crisis, as suppliers have closed temporarily. The work will resume once restrictions have been lifted. In the meantime, HfW will maintain the current system and keep the building secure, please continue to report repairs issues in the normal way. We apologise for the delay and look forward to completing the upgrade work as soon as possible. We look forward to consulting with residents about these works in the upcoming months.

Parking Control

We have appointed PCM (UK) Limited as our new parking control company. PCM offers residents a range of services such as: free parking permits, provision for visitor's parking, regular patrols, a dedicated site manager, removal of abandoned vehicles and bespoke signage for each estate. You will be contacted directly by PCM after COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted and given instructions on how to apply for parking permits. There will be a settling down period during which your car will not be ticketed. This will help to ensure that you have time to apply for and receive your parking permit.



Introducing Just Ask Estate Services

We are proud to be working with Just Ask Estate Services to keep the inside and outside of HfW's communal areas clean and tidy.



Here is a brief summary of what Just Ask will provide:

Routine Cleaning Services

External Areas: pathways, stairs/stairwells, open balconies, drying areas, store shed areas, refuse & bin stores, garage/ scooter areas, car parking and communal hard surface areas.

Internal Areas: All communal entrance halls and lobbies, hallways, stairs/stairwells, lifts, landings, corridors, any other shared communal areas.

Routine Gardening Services

External Areas: pathways, stairs/stairwells, open balconies, access roads where identified, drying areas, store shed areas, refuse & bin stores, garage/ scooter areas, car parking areas and other communal hard surface areas.

Your service teams will be wearing purple and black uniforms. All staff will display photo identification badges.

Contact your Local Citizens Advice

Citizens Advice gives free information and confidential advice to people with money, legal, consumer & other problems.

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Fly-tipping and Rubbish Disposal

We are appealing to all residents to dispose of their household and bulk rubbish appropriately as there has been an increase in the inappropriate disposal of rubbish.

- Inappropriate rubbish disposal creates health & safety risks, such as attracting vermin.
- It encourages others who do not live on your block to dispose their own rubbish on your block.
- It will cause an increase in service charges for all residents, in order to recover for the increased cost of disposal.

Please let us know if you witness anyone disposing of their rubbish inappropriately. All communications will be treated in the strictest confidence.



As most of us are now staying at home, there will be an increase in household waste, so please take the following steps:

- Try to minimise the amount of rubbish, recycling and food waste you produce.
- Avoid doing big clear-outs, which create more rubbish and recycling. Hold onto large items such as furniture and mattresses until the outbreak is over and then consider donating these items to a charity shop such as the British Heart Foundation or Emmaus.
- You can also contact Lewisham Council once COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted on 020 8314 6420 or by email envirocasework@lewisham.gov.uk to arrange a collection of your bulk disposal for a small fee.

Your Neighbourhood Officer: Chima Ezeilo

Tel: 020 7501 6141 **Mob:** 075 4012 2695

Email: Chima.Ezeilo@h4w.co.uk

Repairs: repairs@h4w.co.uk or call 0207 501 6120

www.hfw.org.uk

Income Officer: Dawn Blake

Tel: 020 7501 6131 **Mob:** 07968 888022

Email: Dawn.Blake@h4w.co.uk

Complaints: complaints@h4w.co.uk

Housing Management: Housing@h4w.co.uk

