

# Tenantmatters

'Meeting each household's aspirations'



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



At the time of writing, our office remains closed to the public. All staff are working from home and can be contacted by calling **0800 093 6909** or emailing **info@manorestates.org.uk**

Staff will not be available on the following dates due to public holidays

- Friday 3rd July & Monday 6th July
- Friday 18th and Monday 21st September

While the office is closed, you can still access our emergency repairs service by contacting the following numbers:

For all gas and central heating repairs, contact **Lothian Gas** on **0131 440 4666**

For all other repairs, contact **Novus** on **01506 242 120** or **0800 093 8823**

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## FOR INFORMATION VISIT OUR WEBSITE!



www.manorestates.org.uk

## A MESSAGE FROM YOUR CEO

Welcome to the summer edition of Tenant Matters. At the time of writing, we are still in lockdown and trying our best to continue to provide services whilst working at home and not having the usual daily contact with colleagues and tenants. Hopefully, by the time you are reading this newsletter, lockdown will have eased somewhat, and we will all be starting to return to a level of normality.



I should like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for the patience and understanding you have shown as we work through these unprecedented and challenging times in particular for the messages of appreciation that staff have received.

We are also aware of many acts of kindness – neighbours coming together to help each other, with some really going that extra mile to offer assistance to those who need it most. Which is why we are taking this

opportunity to launch a **Good Neighbour Award** - if one of your neighbours has taken some time to help you out in the last few months, we want to hear about it. This is your opportunity to show thanks for what they have done for you - further information is available on Page 2 of the Newsletter.

All of us at Manor Estates sincerely hope that you and your families are staying safe – and thank you again for your support.

Claire Ironside, CEO

## BOARD NEWS

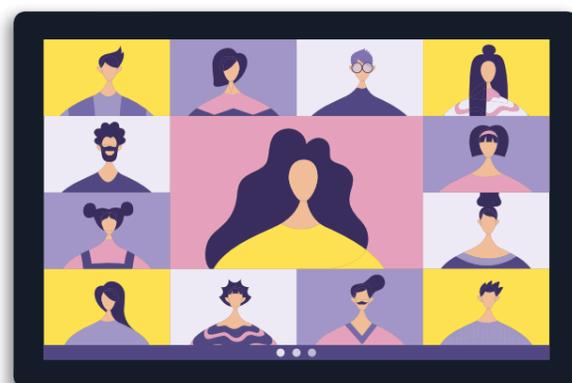
The Board continues to meet regularly to discuss issues that are of importance to the future of the Association and to review performance in a number of key service areas.

In April and May, meetings were held 'virtually' with all Board and senior staff members accessing the meeting from their homes, and able to see and talk to each other through the wonders of technology.

Key areas of interest for the Board recently have been the approval of the Association's budget for the coming year, plus a number of policies in respect of HR management and Rechargeable Repairs. Members are also considering options for this year's Annual General Meeting, due to be held in September but likely to be affected by the current pandemic situation.

Later in the year, the Board is required to submit an **Assurance Statement** to the Scottish Housing Regulator confirming that the Association complies with their Regulatory Standards – during the year, the Board has been considering reviews of each of the Standards to ensure that they are assured that this is the case.

In the coming year, the Board intends to review 2 of the 7 standards in more detail – and would be delighted if any tenants would like to be involved. If you think this would be of interest to you, please contact **Carolyn Hughes** (**chughes@manorestates.org.uk** or telephone **0800 093 8823**).





## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Association is due to hold its **25th Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 9 September 2020**

### PLEASE NOTE –

**This date may have to be changed**

**Venue: To be confirmed**

At the moment, our staff are still working from home and it is not clear how the phased easing of lockdown will develop. It may be that we will have to change the date of the AGM or seek to hold the meeting in an alternative format.

- Please check our website regularly for updates.
- The AGM will be followed by a Special General Meeting which is required to seek approval to changes to the Association's Rules
- Once we know what the final arrangements are, all members of the Association will be advised directly.

## BOARD MEMBERSHIP

The Association is governed by a Board, elected from our membership. All members of the Board are volunteers and give freely of their time to agree the future direction of the Association, approve policies, ensure we are complying with legislative and regulatory requirements and monitor our performance. Members undergo induction and training – so as well as offering their time and experience to the Board, members can get opportunities to develop a range of skills.



If you are interested in becoming involved in the Board of the Association, please contact **Carolyn Hughes**. Currently, we are hoping to attract members from those interested in the work of the Association and who would be willing to make a contribution towards helping others - please contact us if you want to consider this opportunity.

## MEMBERSHIP

Whilst all tenants are welcome to attend the AGM, only those who are shareholding members may participate in the business of the meeting and vote on matters that require it. If you are interested in becoming a member, please contact **Sarah McKay** at the office and she will arrange to send you the necessary application form.



 **More information on the Association's governance arrangements and the work of the Board (including minutes of meetings) is available on our website – [www.manorestates.org.uk](http://www.manorestates.org.uk)**



**GOOD NEIGHBOUR AWARD**

## GOOD NEIGHBOUR AWARD

We are aware that many people have been showing extreme kindness to their neighbours and communities in these unprecedented times.

We would like to express our thanks to all our tenants who have taken the time to help others – and give you the opportunity to show your gratitude to anyone who has helped you.

We are now launching our **Good Neighbour Award for 2020**. We want to hear from you if your neighbour has helped you in recent months or has done something to help the wider community.

**THE WINNING ENTRY WILL RECEIVE**

**A GIFT VOUCHER FOR £100**



**There will also be 2 runner up prizes of £50 each**

If you would like to nominate someone, please submit the details outlined below either by post to **Manor Estates Housing Association, 11 Washington Lane, Edinburgh EH11 2HA**

or by email to **[info@manorestates.org.uk](mailto:info@manorestates.org.uk)**

## WHAT WE NEED TO KNOW:

- Your name, address and contact details
- The name, address and contact details of the person you are nominating (please let them know beforehand that you are giving us this information)
- A short description (no more than 100 words) of what they have done to help either you, someone you know or the wider community

**CLOSING DATE FOR NOMINATIONS IS**

**FRIDAY 31 JULY 2020**



## FIRE SAFETY/ SMOKE DETECTOR UPGRADES

New standards as regulated by the Housing (Scotland) Act 1986 have been issued by the Scottish Government.



The regulations noted in 16.2 of the Act will come into force in February 2021. We are running a programme of upgrades across all our properties, installing mains operated detectors fitted in the hall, stair landing and living room, as well as a heat detector in the kitchen and a carbon monoxide alarm where there is a fuel burning appliance such as a gas boiler. All

alarms will be ceiling mounted and interlinked. We have already installed new detection systems to 372 properties however, we have many more to do in order to meet the deadline. We will be in touch to let you know when we are re-starting installations and would encourage you to make contact to arrange an appointment to receive the upgrade as it will provide improved fire safety in your home.

## REPAIRS SERVICE

As you are already aware, we have been operating an emergency-only repairs service during the current pandemic. This was to enable us to protect you, our staff and contractors and we thank you for your patience during this time.

At the date of writing this article, we are beginning to see a phased easing of lockdown restrictions – at the same time recognising that some of the timescales may change if there is any upward trend in the number of identified cases of Coronavirus.

We are now in discussions with our contractors about how we will move to providing a full repairs service and reintroducing planned improvement works. This is likely to be on a phased basis – and we will still be looking for you to help us comply with social distancing rules.

At the moment, we do not have a firm date for a return to full service provision – once further information is available, we will alert you by email or text that details are available on our website. If you would prefer to receive a written copy, please let our Property Services team know your contact details. We will issue written information to those tenants for whom we do not have an email address or mobile phone details.



**If you have any further queries regarding repairs please contact us on 0800 093 8823 or by emailing [repairs@manorestates.org.uk](mailto:repairs@manorestates.org.uk)**



## UNIVERSAL CREDIT

Have you had a reduction in your income or a change of circumstances? It may be that you are entitled to Universal Credit. You can find out more about Universal Credit at <https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit>.

You can also contact your Housing Officer on **0800 093 8823** for advice and assistance on how to apply.

Remember...It is your responsibility to pay your rent on time. If you are experiencing any problems paying your rent please **contact us straight away**.

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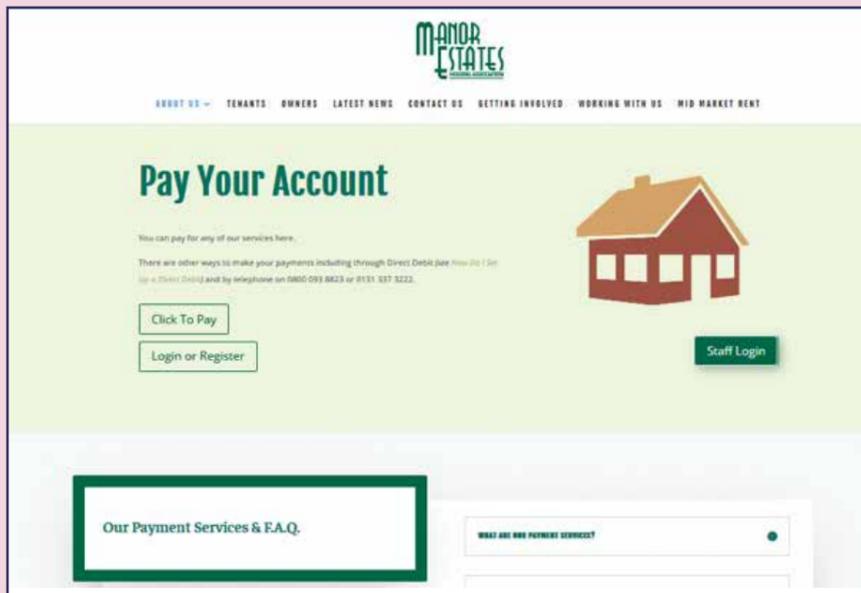
## WELFARE RIGHTS SERVICE

We would like to remind tenants what we are working in partnership with Link Housing to offer a Welfare Rights Service to our tenants.

**Anna Riva** is employed by Link Housing and can offer advice and assistance on a wide range of social security benefits, including Universal Credit, Housing Benefit and Personal Independence Payments, ensuring that tenants are accessing everything they are entitled to. Anna is with us 2 days per week.

Access to the service is by referral, so if you feel you could benefit from this service, please speak to your Housing Officer in the first instance.

**If you have any further queries please contact us on 0800 093 8823 or by emailing [info@manorestates.org.uk](mailto:info@manorestates.org.uk)**



## ONLINE PAYMENT PORTAL

We have recently been working on updating our online payment portal. The new portal can be accessed through our website <https://manorestatespayment.org.uk/>

We use PayPal to process online payments, you don't need a PayPal account to use the service.

You can login to PayPal or you can scroll to the bottom of the page and just enter your card details. If you have a PayPal account then logging in gives you a record of the payment in your account.

If you experience any difficulties accessing the portal, please contact a member of the the Housing Management Team in the first instance.

## YOU SAID, WE DID

During the recent pandemic, we took the opportunity to contact all tenants by letter, phone, text, and email, making the most of available technology to keep everyone as up to date as possible. As part of this, a number of tenants who did not have any immediate family available or were simply anxious about the current situation requested regular contact. As a result of this we were able to call those tenants weekly for a quick chat and to make sure that they were staying safe at this difficult time.

As part of this process we would like to encourage any tenants who would like an additional type of contact to let us know. We can email, text and are able to contact through Facebook or WhatsApp. If you would like to communicate with us in this manner please get in touch and let us know.



## COLD-CALLING - REMINDER

★ We know that tenants are sometimes approached by companies offering to carry out works or survey your homes. Whilst these offers may be worthwhile and genuine, we would ask that you contact the Association before allowing any works or surveys to go ahead.

We would also take this opportunity to remind you that you should never allow anyone into your home unless you know who they are, what organisation they are from and they have appropriate ID.

## DIRECT DEBITS

Tenants have now been able to pay rent by Direct Debit for some time. This is the most effective way to pay your rent and we can set one up to come out of your account on a day that suits. We can set up your Direct Debit over the telephone if you call **0800 093 8823** and speak to a member of the Housing Management Team.



Direct Debits offer you an easy way to ensure that your rent is paid on time. We will automatically update your Direct Debit each April to cover the changes to your rent increase. You will receive notification of any changes being made. Other than for the rent increase we will only ever update your Direct Debit with your permission.

You are also covered by the Direct Debit guarantee whereby in the rare event there is an error in the payment of your Direct Debit you can contact your bank to have this resolved. This means that you will always be notified of changes and that if there are any issues arising from actions by your bank, building society or Manor Estates then you are entitled to a full and immediate refund.

You can also cancel your Direct Debit at any time simply by contacting your bank. If you do have to cancel your payment, we would ask that you also contact your Housing Officer to confirm the cancellation and advise how you intend to make your future rent payments.

**Please contact any member of the Housing Management Team for further information about paying by Direct Debit.**

## FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK AND TWITTER

- ✓ Do you regularly use Facebook and Twitter?
- ✓ Have you followed Manor Estates?
- ✓ We are on Facebook and Twitter @ManorEstatesHA

Follow us to keep updated or to contact us if you have a query. However, you should be aware that if you have an emergency you should call our office on **0800 093 8823** as we do not monitor social media 24/7.



## CONTACT MANOR ESTATES HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD.

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Edinburgh  
EH11 2HA

Tel: 0800 093 8823  
Email: [info@manorestates.org.uk](mailto:info@manorestates.org.uk)  
Web: [www.manorestates.org.uk](http://www.manorestates.org.uk)



You can follow us on **Facebook** and **Twitter** - **@ManorEstatesHA**