

Summer 2023

## Welcome to your Summer newsletter

We hope you find this newsletter interesting and informative, If you have any queries please contact our office on [meal@manorestates.org.uk](mailto:meal@manorestates.org.uk) or by calling [0131 510 8540](tel:01315108540).



### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Our office will be closed on the following dates:

**Friday September 15th**

**Monday September 18th**

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 **0131 510 8540**

Please note that staff will be unavailable between 9.00am and 11am every Wednesday for staff training.

## Looking out for your Neighbours!

# It can start with a simple 'hello'.



Nowadays everyone seems to lead very busy lives – in many areas, people tend to keep themselves to themselves, and are sometimes frightened that they will be considered 'nosy' or 'interfering' if they show any interest in what their neighbours are doing.

You may also have seen recent tragic stories in the news about people who have been found dead in their home after several months – or in one case, several years.

We would encourage you to take time to look out for your neighbours.

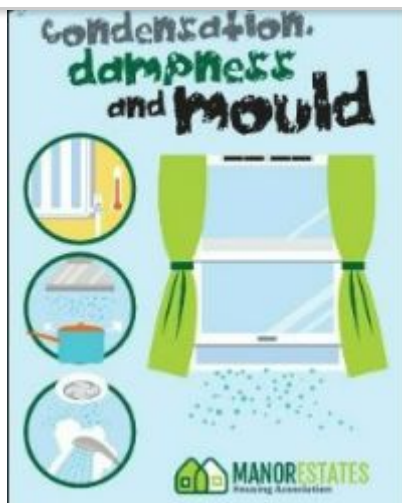
- Do you know any of your neighbours?
- Would you notice if anything was wrong?
- What would you do if you thought something was wrong?

If you have reason to believe that someone who lives near you may be ill, or needing help, please let us know. We are not asking you to spy on your neighbours, but would simply ask you to bear the following points in mind:

- Is there a neighbour you haven't seen out and about for a while?
- Is this unusual?
- Are the curtains always closed – or always open?
- Do you see lights going on when it gets dark, or is the house always in darkness?
- Can you see mail piling up behind the door?
- Is your neighbour putting their rubbish out for collection?

If you have any concerns about these types of issues, please contact your Housing Officer on 0131 510 8540 option 5. Anything you raise with us will be treated in the strictest confidence, but we will do our best to help.

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## Guide to Dealing with Damp and Mould

Damp and mould in your home can be a health hazard, as well as being unsightly, it can sometimes cause damage to furnishings and decoration. Making sure your home is free of mould and damp is important for your health and your enjoyment of your home. The Association will deal with extreme and serious cases. At the same time, there are actions that you can take to help prevent damp and mould occurring and some of them are very easy to put in place. Below are some suggested actions that can help stop damp and mould issues occurring in your home.

### PREVENTION

**Air your property regularly** - Open windows regularly to make sure your property is well-ventilated. Even when it's cold, moisture can gather in the home. Opening the window allows some of this moisture to escape.

**Keep doors closed** - Keep bathroom or kitchen doors closed when having a shower or bath, or when cooking. This will prevent moisture from spreading to other parts of the property.

**Wipe away condensation** - Cleaning the condensation from windows and frames every day will minimise the spread of black mould. You can use a cloth or towel to wipe away condensation.

**Turn your heating on** - Running your heating can avoid cold spots, dry out damp, and reduce your chances of getting mould. This does not need to be at a high temperature.

**Dry clothes in a ventilated room** - Don't dry clothes on radiators. The water

can be a mould risk. If you do need to dry clothes inside, use a clothes dryer in a bathroom. Open a window, use the extractor fan or use a dehumidifier to reduce the spread of moisture indoors.

**Dehumidifiers and damp traps** - Using a dehumidifier is a great way to take the moisture out of the air, especially if you dry your clothes indoors. You can buy an inexpensive one from a local hardware store or online. Disposable damp traps can be cheaper, but over time, you might find it cheaper (and environmentally friendly!) to use an electric dehumidifier.

**Use extractor fans** - If you have an extractor fan in the bathroom, always make sure it is running when you're having a shower or bath. If you have an extractor fan in the kitchen, you should also use it to disperse moisture and cooking smells. If you don't have an extractor fan, open a window when you cook to allow the moisture to escape.

## DAMP AND MOULD SPOTS

Condensation is moisture that forms on cold surfaces and where there is limited air movement. The moisture is often created in kitchens and bathrooms but can cause damp or mould in other rooms (even if they are warm). It forms when there is too much moisture in the air or when it cools down quickly on cold surfaces.

Condensation commonly occurs in the bathroom, on exterior facing walls and around window and door frames. Keep an eye on these problem areas and clean the moisture and condensation regularly to minimise your chances of getting black mould.

Most black mould spots can simply be wiped off with a damp cloth. Be sure to dry the affected area after and leave the room to ventilate.

If you do see mould forming, be sure to use gloves and a face mask before cleaning. Ventilate the room well when cleaning mould spots. When working with chemicals, you must always follow manufacturers' instructions. Dispose of any rags that you have used to clean mould after using.

If there is a more ingrained mould problem, such as in a bathroom or exterior wall, follow these steps:

*Use a mould treatment spray, these are widely available in supermarkets.*

### Report any issues to us

If you need more advice on mould or condensation, please let us know by calling our Property Services Team on 0131 510 8540 option 4 and we can arrange a Technical Inspector to visit you.

[To view our leaflet on Damp and Mould click here.](#)

### MMR PROPERTY INSPECTIONS

As part of our ongoing management of the development our Housing Team will be arranging to carry out property inspections.

Limited appointment times will be available. If you have received a letter about an inspection you can contact our office to arrange a suitable date and time if it is unsuitable.

You can speak to the team on 0131 510 8540 option 5.

### Welfare Rights Service

Are you struggling with the cost of living increases? Have you had a change in your income and not sure how you will be able to pay your rent?

Our Welfare Rights Advisor, Anna Riva is 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 now with us 3 days per week.

Support is available to tenants in our mid-market rent properties however access to the service is by referral, so if you feel you could benefit from this service, please speak to our housing team by calling 0131 510 8540 option 5 in the first instance.

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Manor Estates Associates Limited (MEAL) is a subsidiary of Manor Estates Housing Association.

If you wish to discuss your tenancy, make a neighbour complaint or have a query please contact our office on

**0131 510 8540** or at

[meal@manorestates.org.uk](mailto:meal@manorestates.org.uk)



## Protect yourself from Scams

Knowing what to look out for when it comes to scams is one of the best ways to protect yourself. Some examples to look out for include:

- **Unsolicited or unexpected contact** - If you've received any kind of contact, but particularly a phone call, out of the blue, it is best to avoid it. Since January 2019, there has been a ban on cold calling about pensions. This means you should not be contacted by any company about your pension unless you've asked them to.
- **Email address** - If you get an email, expand the pane at the top of the message and see exactly who it has come from, it could say it's from TV Licensing but if you click or hover over the name it might reveal something different. If it's a scam, the email address the message has come from might not match up with the sender's name, have misspellings, random numbers or be from one of your contacts that's been hacked.
- **Text messages** – Modern scammers can make their numbers look like ones you trust, like your bank's. The scam text message might even appear in the same conversation as legitimate texts you've had before. This is known as 'number spoofing'. Just in case, don't click links in text messages, and if in doubt, contact the company directly using contact

message.

**If it sounds too good to be true, it usually is.** This is something you normally find with pension or investment scams, where the fraudster guarantees you huge returns, but tells you it is low risk. Personal details, full PIN codes and passwords and the main things no legitimate company will ask you for.

**Are you being pushed into making a quick decision?** If you are, be suspicious. Scammers don't want you to have time to think about it. Any legitimate company who calls you won't mind if you hang up and call them back later. Use the phone number you find on letters from the company or the back of your card.

Random competitions, particularly if you don't remember entering them, should ring alarm bells as should receiving emails or texts with spelling errors or poor grammar.

**The next step to avoiding scams is to know how to protect yourself both off and online.**

**Avoid any unexpected contact.** Don't answer phone calls, letters or emails if they look unfamiliar. If you're a customer of the company use the contact details given to you in official paperwork or on their website to check if the person approaching you is legitimate.

**Never give out personal information.** This can be used to steal your identity and access accounts. In particular, you should never share your full PIN or password with anyone. Your bank will ask you to use a card reader or ask for a few digits of your password if they need it.

**Keep computers and virus protection software up-to-date.** Don't ignore updates as these can often include patches to protect against new kinds of scams, viruses and ransomware. This goes for mobile devices as well.

**Make sure all your accounts have strong passwords.** Don't use the same password for multiple accounts and change them regularly.

**Don't make any payments until you are sure the company you're dealing with is legitimate.** Check with the company directly before making any payments.

**If you think you have been scammed you should take immediate action.**

2. Stop sending money immediately.
3. If you have been targeted you should contact Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or call the Police on 101

### Need to report a repair?

You should call 0131 510 8540 and either select the option for Novus or Lothian Gas.

### Report a Repair

#### CONTACT DETAILS

Do we have your up to date contact details? Please make sure you keep us updated on any changes to home or mobile telephone numbers. You can update your details by emailing [meal@manorestates.org.uk](mailto:meal@manorestates.org.uk) or by calling 0131 510 8540.

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### Staff Changes

The Association has had a number of staff changes in recent months – details below.

#### Property Services Team

After a successful recruitment process, Pam Urquhart will be joining the team as a Property Services Administrator on 19 June 2023.

We have also had a further change with Stewart Elliot, Technical Inspector recently leaving Manor Estates to take up a new role

#### Corporate Services Team

Iwona Nowak joined our team in January 2023 as our new Senior Finance Officer and has settled easily into the team. From end of June 2023 we will be saying goodbye to our IT Officer, Neil Wardrope who is moving on to new ventures.

#### Housing Management Team

From end of June 2023, Housing Officer, Claire Treger will also



At the end of March 2023, Our Retirement Housing Manager Anne Paget retired from working at our three developments. Anne had worked with Manor Estates since 2006 having been previously employed by Dunedin Canmore Housing Association and working at our development at Greenlaw. We wish Anne all the best for the future.

We were also successful in recruiting a temporary Retirement Housing Manager Alexis Kouvatias who will be working mornings at Greenlaw Rig.

We welcome all our new staff to the Association and look forward to working with them all in the coming months.

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#### **Follow us on Facebook and Twitter**

Do you regularly use Facebook and Twitter?

Have you followed Manor Estates?

We are on Facebook and Twitter @ManorLtd



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 0131 510 8540 as we do not monitor social media 24/7.

#### **YOUR NEWSLETTER**

This is your newsletter - if there is information you would like us to include please email [meal@manorestates.org.uk](mailto:meal@manorestates.org.uk). Any comments or suggestions for improvements welcome.

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