



coronavirus update #4



WE ARE HERE TO SUPPORT YOU!

Following the introduction of the second lockdown at the start of November, and with the uncertainties around which restrictions will apply in various areas after December 2, we want to provide you with some certainty by letting you know that we will be continuing with our current levels of service until at least the end of 2020.

Our priority remains keeping everyone safe, so please be reassured that we will continue to follow the latest government guidance if we need to visit you in your home.

All our offices are closed to the public, but you can contact us in the usual ways.

You can manage your account, report a repair, and change your contact details online via [myhomeonline](https://myhomeonline.org.uk) or contact our Customer Service Centre at enquiries@emhhomes.org.uk or call us on **0300 123 6000**.

If you have any concerns about coronavirus and how it has affected our services, please email coronavirusinfo@emhgroup.org.uk

Thank you for your continuing support and co-operation during this difficult time.

WHAT'S INSIDE

Your guide to the latest information about how we are continuing to support you with: our services, your home and your rent, safety practices and your wellbeing...



This table shows the current status of our services.

Services running as normal

Emergency repairs
Gas safety
Customer Service Centre
Financial Inclusion Officers
Grounds maintenance
Solid fuel appliance servicing and repairs
Renewable appliance servicing and repairs
Fire safety risk assessments
Alarms and emergency lighting
Asbestos inspections, surveys and sampling
Legionella risk assessment and testing
Lift maintenance
Domestic and communal electrical installation and testing
Planned replacement work ⁽¹⁾
Anti-social behaviour services

Services running with some changes

Estate inspections
Lettings
Mutual exchanges
Income management
Customer/Tenancy services
Sheltered Housing services
Non-urgent repairs (backlog) ⁽²⁾

Services not running just yet

Non-urgent repairs (new)
Public access to our offices
Communal rooms

¹ This includes component items such as kitchens, bathrooms, windows/doors, roofs and heating systems.

² We are currently working through the backlog and booking-in the repairs as soon as we can.



To keep up to date with changes to our services, please visit our website regularly or follow us on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#).



Making a difference

Our Housing and Income teams recently joined forces to help a resident who had fallen behind in his rent payments. This is just one example of the ways in which we help people every day.

When we had not heard from Mr. X for some time, despite trying to contact him by phone and letter about his arrears, one of our Housing Officers went to visit him in his home. When he answered the door, she immediately noticed that he did not look right and had lost a lot of weight.

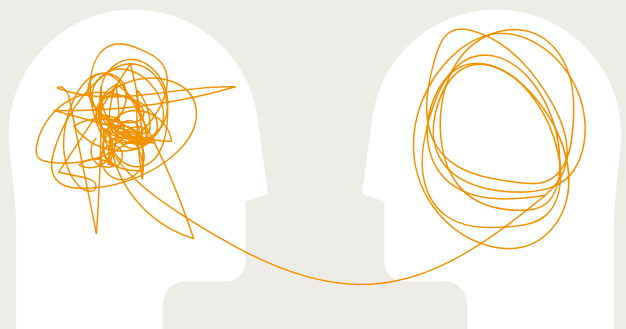
Mr. X informed us that his phone was broken, and that because of lockdown he had no idea how to contact us and was worried about being evicted. He had been homeless before and did not want it to happen again. Our Housing Officer assured him that we would help, passing his details to the Income team to help him set up his housing benefit claim.

When asked how he was feeling, Mr. X replied that he was struggling with his mental health and that he had recently been diagnosed with COPD. He was happy for our Housing Officer

to make a referral on his behalf for mental health support, and Mind agreed to carry out an assessment. The Housing Officer offered to call Mr. X back in a week to check that support had been put in place.

Our Income Officer helped Mr. X sort out his benefits claim – he had completed the forms incorrectly and thought that his housing benefit was being paid directly to us – and he thanked us for visiting him and said that if we had not shown up he did not know what he would have done.

"If all the other officers are like the two that helped me, I am more than happy to talk to anyone. I'm glad I'm with emh."



Financial advice

Our Financial Inclusion Officers are continuing to support residents to claim benefits, offer support with budgeting, and provide advice on priority debts.

If you would like to speak to a member of the team, please e-mail us at moneyadvice@emhhomes.org.uk or call us on 0300 123 6000, select option 4, and leave your name, contact number, tenancy number and/or address along with brief details and we will respond accordingly.

Please be aware that due to staff working remotely, customers may be contacted by mobile phone.

Please be assured that we will take every safety precaution when working in your home, whether it is for an emergency repair, safety check, or planned upgrade.



Before starting work on a kitchen upgrade, we will send you a letter setting out the following steps we will take to keep everyone safe:

1. Every day before work starts you will be asked if anyone in your household has started to show any symptoms of Covid-19 or has been in contact with anyone showing symptoms.
2. Every day we will check that no operative is showing any symptoms of Covid-19 or has been in contact with anyone showing symptoms.
3. Any operative showing any symptoms will immediately be stopped from working and sent home, along with anyone they have been in contact with.
4. Operatives have been issued with the appropriate PPE.
5. Operatives will observe social distancing by keeping at least 2 metres away at all times.
6. Before starting work, we will agree arrangements for you to use one point of entry/exit to your property during the working day while the work is carried out.
7. Every morning a dividing screen will be put up between the kitchen and the remainder of the house and taken down again every evening.
8. The electrician will require access to the consumer unit. If this is not in the kitchen, you will need to vacate the relevant area while this work takes place.
9. All surfaces that the operatives have been in contact with in your home will be wiped down at the end of each working day (e.g. door handles, sides, etc.).
10. Operatives will have access to their own welfare facilities in which they will be able to regularly wash their hands.
11. Hand sanitizers have also been issued to operatives to use while working in your home.
12. The operatives are under strict instruction not to use any of your facilities (e.g. toilet).
13. Please do not offer the operatives any drinks or food.
14. Please do not ask the operatives any questions while they are working in your property. The site supervisor will be happy to answer any questions you may have. You will have been informed of who this is and their contact details before the job started.



HOME CONTENTS INSURANCE



We have teamed up with Thistle Tenant Risks to offer you *My Home Contents Insurance*, a specialist insurance scheme for social housing tenants. The scheme can offer you insurance for the contents of your home, including cover for items such as furniture, carpets, curtains, clothes, bedding, electrical items, jewellery, pictures and ornaments.

You can find full details of the scheme and how to apply on our website:

emhhomes.org.uk/money-matters/home-contents-insurance/



Do you have an elderly parent or relative who may need some extra support this winter (they do not have to be an emh homes tenant)?

Lifeline is a personal alarm service with help available 24 hours a day at the push of a button.

The alarm can help people who:

- ▶ are housebound
- ▶ are vulnerable - whether young, elderly or disabled
- ▶ are living with a long term medical condition
- ▶ have recently been discharged from hospital and require additional support

From as little as £3.32 a week Lifeline gives customers the confidence to live independently, and their loved ones reassurance that their personal safety is being monitored 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

T. 0300 123 0701

07827 984 228 / 07792 098 644

E. enquiries@lifelineonline.org.uk

www.lifelineonline.org.uk

Lifeline is a branded product of emh homes.



WELLBEING CALLS

Since the start of the pandemic we have continued to make #keepingintouch wellbeing calls to make sure our vulnerable residents are looking after themselves and able to access everything they might need.

We can help with referrals for food and medicine deliveries, signpost you to other support in your area, or just be a friendly voice on the end of the line.



If you would like us to receive a #keepingintouch call, please call our Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 6000 and leave a message, and someone will get back to you.

You can find details of organisations in your area that can provide a range of advice and support on our website:

emhhomes.org.uk/local_support

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR CLOSING TIMES

Please note that our Customer Service Centre will close at 12pm on Thursday 24 December 2020 and reopen again at 8am on Monday 4 January 2021.

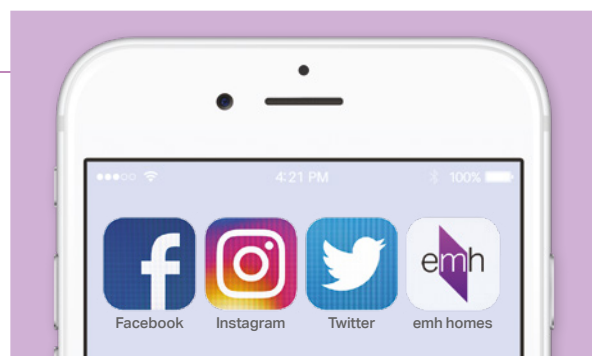
You can still call us on 0300 123 6000, and you will be put through to our out-of-hours service.

CONTACTING US

The easiest way to access our services is online, particularly via myhomeonline.

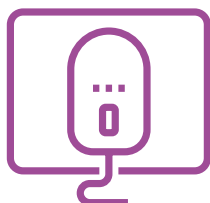
Over the last few weeks our Customer Services team has been contacting customers who have registered for **myhomeonline** but not used it for a while, reminding them of how easy it was to do the following:

- ▶ **Pay your rent**
- ▶ **Set up a Direct Debit**
- ▶ **Report anti-social behaviour**
- ▶ **Send us a direct message**



You can find myhomeonline on the homepage of our website. It is also available as an app.

This is simply a handy link to the portal on the home screen of your phone. To install the app go to: www.emhhomes.org.uk/contact-us/download-app/ and follow the simple instructions.



You can email us at:

enquiries@emhhomes.org.uk
or visit **www.emhhomes.org.uk**

Follow us on social media:



Text us on: **07860 024 523**

- ▶ Text the word '**Bal**' or '**Balance**' and your account balance will be automatically sent back to you
- ▶ Text the word '**Callback**' and a member of our Customer Services team will ring you back

You can still call us on **0300 123 6000** but please only try and do so if it is an emergency or if you have been asked to do so via communication from us.