

CORONAVIRUS STAY HOME PROTECT THE NHS SAVE LIVES



derby homes  APRIL 2020

 01332 888777

www.derbyhomes.org

ContactUs@derbyhomes.org

 @DerbyHomes

 facebook.com/derbyhomes

Derby Homes COVID Service Impact & Advice



**A message from
Maria Murphy,
Managing Director of Derby
Homes**

These are challenging times. We've had to make some difficult and unprecedented decisions on how we can

continue to deliver essential services to our most vulnerable customers and the residents of Derby. The health and safety of our staff, customers and partners is our top priority and we are closely monitoring the situation around the coronavirus.

We've put this newsletter together to ensure you're informed on how our services are being affected by the COVID-19 crisis. Things continue to change on a daily basis both nationally and globally, so if you can, check our website and social media channels for the most up-to-date information and advice.

The middle pages give you an overview on the state of our services. Things may have changed by the time you receive this newsletter. We are constantly reviewing things and will attempt to return to normal services as soon as we can.

On the back page, you'll find information and contact details that will help you stay well and help those who are vulnerable. In particular, a new **Derby COVID Community Response Hub** has been set up to coordinate volunteers to help and support people who live alone or who are self-isolating.

Please also be mindful of scams at this time. It is a sad reality that there are some who see the current crisis as a way to exploit the vulnerable. Be extra vigilant and question anything that sounds suspicious.

Thank you for being patient and understanding. We're doing our best to help those who need it most.

Take care and look out for each other. *mmurphy*

Coronavirus advice

There are things you can do to help stop viruses like coronavirus spreading.

Do



Cover your mouth and nose



Throw tissues away



Wash your hands

Don't



Don't visit a GP



Don't touch your face



Don't come into close contact

nhs.uk/coronavirus

Repairs & Maintenance | ESSENTIAL WORK ONLY

In order to follow to the government advice, reduce the spread of infection and protect customers and staff, we are currently only carrying out repairs for essential work.

The reporting of non-urgent repairs online through MyAccount has been temporarily suspended to allow us to focus on protecting the most vulnerable.

We hope to return to full service as soon as the situation allows. To report an emergency repair, call us **01332 888777**, and choose **Option 6**.

Essential work includes:

- ✓ Total Loss of power or lighting
- ✓ Dangerous electrical appliances
- ✓ No heating or hot water
- ✓ Badly blocked drain
- ✓ Fire alarm repairs
- ✓ Furniture pack fridges and cookers
- ✓ Shower or bath (no other means of bathing)
- ✓ Health & Safety work
- ✓ Fire equipment servicing
- ✓ Major leaks
- ✓ Door entry systems

Rent | TALK TO US IF YOU NEED HELP

You may be concerned about paying your rent right now and wondering why it's still being charged. The rent you pay goes directly to fund essential services linked to your tenancy. If your circumstances have not changed, please play your part by continuing to pay what you should.

We recommend you use non-contact methods of payment (direct debits, standing order, online payments, and telephone payments). If you normally use Pay Point or pay at the Council House, please consider one of the options listed above instead. We do not expect you to have to make a special journey to pay your rent. In line with Government guidance, on behalf of Derby

City Council, we will be suspending court and eviction requests for a period of 3 months to the end of June 2020, when we'll review things. During this period the Government expects tenants and landlords to work together to establish affordable repayment plans, taking into account individual circumstances.

If you are concerned about paying your rent or service charges because of a reduced income, please contact us and we can advise you on help available.

You can also contact our Money Advice team for more general money and benefits advice (see back page).

Housing Management | ESSENTIAL WORK ONLY

In response to the government's guidance on social distancing we have implemented temporary changes to our services.

All of our Housing Office locations are temporarily closed. This includes our Allenton, Stockbrook Street and Sussex Circus Housing Offices.

Our staff are still working, but all contact should now be done using telephone and email.

We are now proactively contacting all customers who are vulnerable and in need of most support to ensure their health and safety.

There is a temporary change to how we conduct sign-ups for new tenants, with most of the appointments carried out over the phone and the physical signing of the tenancy agreement carried out in person, but adapted to follow social distancing guidance.

We are only processing emergency orders for door entry fobs. Existing fobs will continue to operate normally.

All of the 22 community rooms we manage across the city are now temporarily closed for externally booked activities and resident use, to encourage social distancing.

Anti-Social Behaviour | ESSENTIAL WORK ONLY

We are receiving a high volume of calls and complaints of ASB and must prioritise those that need more urgent responses. We also are receiving calls about social distancing and reports of people not following the current stay-at-home advice.

We are unable to carry out any enforcement action against people who are not following the government's guidance. We are also not able to write to tenants with regard to allegations of members of their household not following the Government's advice.

We strongly encourage everyone to adhere to the national guidance by following the direction of the Prime Minister to help save lives. **Stay at home. Do not meet others, even friends or family. You can spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms.**

If you are concerned and witness clear and obvious breaches of these guidelines you should contact Derbyshire Constabulary on their website or through Facebook or Twitter.

Only call 101 when it is absolutely necessary.

Homelessness and Allocations

We have temporarily suspended the allocation of all general needs housing for Derby City Council and Derby Homes properties for up to six months, to enable us to support households who may be unable to follow Government guidance.

Property adverts will continue for our over 60's properties as usual, but we are not progressing with the allocations process on these homes until restrictions are lifted.

Existing applicants will be able to bid on Council or Derby Homes properties at a future date when things






return to normal. We appreciate that this will be distressing for anyone looking forward to moving into their new home, but it is essential that we have the capacity available to act quickly to protect the most vulnerable in the city.

We will continue to support people who find themselves homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. This is primarily through phone and email support, with priority given to households who are most vulnerable.

If you are concerned about becoming homeless, please call us on **01332 888777** (option 5).

Fire Safety - PLEASE BE EXTRA CAREFUL

This is a stressful time for all of us. It's easy to forget things or take our eye off the ball. Please be extra vigilant about fire safety whilst you stay home. Take extra care to reduce your risk of the most common causes of household fires, such as:

-  **Don't leave cooking unattended**
-  **Don't overload extension leads**
-  **If you smoke, put it out**
-  **Keep an eye on children**
-  **Check your smoke detectors**

The wider impact on our services means it will be unlikely that we'll be able to move you, should your home suffer damage. We may also be unable to provide replacement white goods if yours are damaged.

Take some time to break from what's happening in the outside world and focus on the basics in your home. Not only will this keep you and your family safe, it will help to reduce the strain on emergency services and NHS at this critical time.

For more information and advice on home fire safety, go to **www.derby-fire.gov.uk**

Looking after yourself and each other

This is a very uncertain time and it will be stressful and challenging for all of us. Especially so for those who are unwell, looking after children, isolating alone or vulnerable and struggling to cope with the pace things are changing and the new ways of living we have to adapt to.

Take care of your physical & mental health

It's hard, but look after yourself. Try to get a routine, eat healthy, take exercise and give yourself a break or some time out to do something you enjoy. You need to stay well even if you're responsible for looking after others.

Be a good neighbour

Now, more than ever, it's vital that we start to look out for each other. Being stuck at home means we're all closer to our neighbours than ever before. Please be considerate

and respect distancing guidance, particularly if you live in a shared building. Think about the impact that excessive noise from music, television or children might have on others.

Look out for others

Even at a distance, most of us are aware of what's going on on our street or in our block. Try to be aware of anyone around you who might need a little extra help. Maybe they would struggle to get shopping, don't get a lot of visits or just need to hear a friendly voice in amongst all the chaos. You can still reach out to someone and keep to distancing advice.

If you're worried about another tenant or you haven't seen someone in a while, get in touch with us.

Useful Contacts

Derby Homes 01332 888777

Phone options

- 1 How we use your data
- 2 Pay your rent
- 3 Rent enquiries
- 4 Homeless tonight
- 5 Homeless and rehousing advice
- 6 Emergency repairs
- 7 Anything else

Money Advice 01332 643394

Phone options

- 2 Money advice
- 3 Welfare Rights (Benefits advice)

✉ money.adviceteam@derbyhomes.org

Derby & Derbyshire

Derby City Council 📞 01332 640000

🖥️ derby.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid19

minicom: 01332 640666

Adult Safeguarding 📞 01332 642855

✉ AdultsMASH@derby.gov.uk

Crime

Derbyshire Constabulary 📞 111

📘 /derbyshireconstabulary

🐦 /DerPolContact

Action Fraud 📞 0300 123 2040

Victim Support (help after crime)

📞 0808 16 89 111 🖥️ victimsupport.org.uk

Domestic Abuse

National Domestic Violence Helpline

📞 0808 2000 247

🖥️ nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk

Womens Aid 📞 0808 2000 247

🖥️ womensaid.org.uk

Respect 🖥️ respect.uk.net

(Male perpetrator/victims & abusive young people)

Mental Health

Mind 📞 0300 123 3393

Sane Line 📞 0845 767 8000

Samaritans 📞 116 123

Coronavirus 🖥️ gov.uk/coronavirus

🖥️ nhs.uk/coronavirus

Community Response Hub

Derby City Council are working with Community Action Derby, Derby Homes and a number of community organisations across the city, to help with shopping, collecting prescriptions and befriending for anyone who is:

- self-isolating because someone in their household is at risk
- struggling to meet their basic needs
- pregnant
- at risk because of underlying health conditions
- aged 70 or over

Community Action

We need volunteers!

If you need help or want to volunteer, **contact DerbyDirect on 01332 640000**. Lines are open between 8.30am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday. Please encourage anyone who may need help to get in touch.

There's also a dedicated email address if you're unable to call: covidsupport@communityactionderby.org.uk

📞 01332 640 000



covidsupport@communityactionderby.org.uk