

20th August 2020

Subject: An update from our CEO

It has been a few weeks since I last wrote to you to provide an update on our services. In that time, we have seen a further ease on the national lockdown restrictions alongside a tightening of restrictions at a local level in some parts of the country.

This all adds to the uncertainty that all of us face over the coming months and, as we look forward, there are undoubtedly difficult times ahead for many. At Two Rivers we will continue to do everything we can to support our tenants throughout the pandemic.

Our welfare, benefit and debt team is ready and waiting to provide guidance and support to any tenant that is facing financial difficulty. Our experienced team can help tenants manage debt and apply for the benefits they are entitled too.

If you are having difficulty paying your rent or other bills, please do get in touch with the team who will be able to help. Please bear in mind that the earlier you contact the team for help the better, as they are seeing an increase in people who require advice and help.

Throughout the lockdown, we've had to adapt our services to fit within the government's guidelines. As restrictions have eased, we have been able to reinstate many of our core services and, where necessary, have adapted them to help keep our tenants and our team safe.

We have put new safe systems of work in place for those members of our team that are working in and around tenants' homes and carried out risk assessments for the work they do. We are confident that, with your support, we can keep everyone safe and provide the excellent service that you have come to expect from the Two Rivers team.

As I have mentioned in my previous emails, we are currently working through a backlog of repair jobs that were reported during the lockdown. In order to keep our repairs team safe, we have been focused on completing external and emergency repairs.

The team has also been looking at how we can safely work on repairs inside our homes. I'm pleased to say that we have now started completing some internal repairs, where it is safe to do so. Now more than ever, we need your help and support to keep everyone safe.

Before our team book a repair, they will ask you questions about the health and well-being of the people in your home. You will also receive a phone call from the operative before they come to carry out the repair. For the safety of everyone, it is vital that you answer their questions truthfully.

If a member of our team visits your home, we will also need you to follow the guidance set out below. This will help us keep you, your family and our team safe while our team members are in your home:

- You should allow our team members to isolate from members of your household. This means staying out of the room or area that they are working in and keeping a minimum of two metres away at all times.
- Please clean all the surfaces around the area that our team member will be working before they arrive.
- If possible, please open any doors and windows in the area that our team members are working, this will help with ventilation and reduce the need for our team members to touch door and window handles.
- Please do not let visitors into your home while our team is working on your property.
- Please do not offer our teams food and drink they will have their own.

Our team will not carry out repairs in a property where it is not safe to do so and have a right to leave the job if they feel that their safety is compromised.

If you have already reported a repair, our team will contact you when we will be able to complete the work. If we have not contacted you, we will not be able to provide any further updates on your repair. Please only contact us if the issue you reported has got worse since you reported it, or to report a new repair, this will help us to work through the repairs backlog more efficiently.

If you are not going to be available at the agreed time, please contact our customer service team as soon as possible. This will help us manage the team's time more effectively and reduce the backlog of repairs more quickly.

We have also restarted our planned maintenance programme and are currently completing external maintenance work. Over the next few weeks, we will be working with our contractors to understand how we can safely restart our internal maintenance programme including replacement kitchens, bathrooms, windows and doors. We will provide an update on this as soon as we can, but we will not start this work until we can be sure it is safe for our tenants, team members and contractors.

Many of you have asked about our mutual exchange programme. Although not up and running again yet, we are reviewing our process to make sure it is safe for all involved and are planning to restart again during September. Please look out for further updates over the coming weeks.

The quickest way to get up-to-date information on our services is through our website www.tworivershousing.org.uk/coronavirus-information.

The Coronavirus outbreak has meant that we have had to cancel our community events this summer, including our popular Holiday Club for children. Instead, we have created some summer activity packs to help keep the kids entertained and launched a children's competition where we are asking children aged 13 and under to design their dream home. There will be two winners,

each will receive a £20 gift voucher. To enter and for the full terms and conditions visit our website:
<https://www.tworivershousing.org.uk/design-your-dream-home-2020/>

In many ways, the coronavirus has brought communities closer together and Two Rivers will be looking to say thank you to those neighbours that have made a difference to our tenants throughout the pandemic with a special award later this year. The details of our 'Good Neighbour Award' will be published in our Autumn edition of Tenant Topics.

Finally, I'd like to thank you all for your patience and the many well wishes we have received. We have been sharing these with the team and they have really appreciated your messages of support and kind words throughout the pandemic.

Keep safe and stay well.

Garry King
Chief Executive
Two Rivers Housing