

Delivering services safely



Your safety is paramount

We want to provide the best service we can, but health must come first. We can only begin to reintroduce services if and when we can do this safely.

We understand that some customers are vulnerable or shielding and we will always be mindful of this. If we or one of our contractors need to visit your home to carry out a repair we will always contact you in advance to discuss how we can do this safely and whether you are happy for the work to go ahead.

We ask that all customers maintain a minimum 2 metre distance from all LYHA staff and contractors, and we will do the same. By working together, we can help ensure that everyone stays safe.

We've all had to make some big adjustments in our lives recently to protect one another's health.

At LYHA we have been maintaining services as best we can, whilst following government guidance and minimising the risks to customers, colleagues and contractors. Our team is currently working from home, but we are staying connected and are absolutely committed to providing the best service possible.

We can't do everything we usually do, but we're working with our contractors to make our service as seamless as possible, whilst

investing in the latest technology to improve the customer experience. Our team has also been busy contacting our older and more vulnerable customers to check in and offer support.

As you know, the government has recently relaxed some of the lockdown restrictions and has issued guidance to landlords about restarting services. Your health and wellbeing will always be our top priority and we are writing to you now to outline how we intend to provide services safely going forward and how to access support if you need it.



If you have any questions, you can contact our Customer Services team: Tel: **0113 278 3335**; Email: **info@lyha.co.uk**. You can also find lots of useful information and support on our website: **www.lyha.co.uk**

Please note, our offices will remain closed at this time.

Estate services

Our gardening team returned to work as soon as possible to ensure that customers can enjoy the communal gardens. They have been getting stuck into the grass cutting, litter picking, hedge pruning, weeding and keeping our estates safe and tidy. We have not been able to reintroduce all cleaning services yet, but we are maintaining standards wherever possible and keeping this under review.

Our block inspectors are also continuing to carry out their regular checks of the fire safety equipment in all properties with shared communal areas. If you notice any items left in shared areas or have any concerns about the general condition of your building, please get in touch with us. If you see our teams out and about, please stop and have a chat, but make sure you maintain social distancing to keep everyone safe.



New lettings

We have recently begun letting our empty homes again and supporting customers to move (in line with government guidance). Wherever possible we are offering new customers 'virtual viewings' and this is working well.

"The lettings process was really straightforward. The LYHA Neighbourhood Officer was very helpful. They explained everything clearly to me and provided a socially distanced tour of the property which was really helpful. I am excited to be moving in very shortly."

Leigh, Barnsley

Repairs & home visits

We have continued to undertake essential repairs throughout lockdown and maintained a log of any routine repairs reported. Following the recent change in government advice, we are now working our way through these routine repairs and will be contacting customers to discuss how and whether we can undertake the work safely. If you wish to log a new repair, please be aware that because of the backlog, you may have to wait slightly longer than usual.

When we arrange to visit your property we will call beforehand and ask you a number of questions to ensure safe working. You must tell us if anyone in your household is over 70, has a long-term medical condition, or a weakened immune system,

or if anyone has any COVID 19 symptoms e.g. high temperature or a new continuous cough. We will also discuss the safety precautions that we will be taking:

- We ask that you remain in a different room whilst the work is taking place
- All operatives will wear suitable protective equipment (including face masks)
- We will thoroughly clean all work and access areas before leaving (removing any debris)
- We will clean all tools, wash hands, and replace disposable protective equipment in between jobs

Our essential gas servicing visits are also continuing, following the same guidelines as above.

Financial support

Rent arrears are increasing due to COVID 19 and we are in regular touch with customers to provide support and assistance, helping people to maximise their income and agreeing alternative payment arrangements if needed. LYHA will not evict anyone experiencing financial hardship due to the current crisis.

We ask that you prioritise paying your rent. If you are struggling to do this, please speak to one of our Income Officers as soon as possible. They can answer your questions and signpost you to support: www.lyha.co.uk/paying-your-rent

We are currently setting up a LYHA Support Fund to help customers who are struggling. We will be releasing further details in the coming weeks.

Please check www.lyha.co.uk/supportfund for information.

- If you receive Universal Credit and your income has changed (or you wish to make a new claim), visit the DWP website: www.gov.uk/universal-credit
- If you receive Housing Benefit, you should contact your local council benefits/welfare team
- You may also be eligible for Council Tax Support - again please contact your local council

You can read the latest government advice at: www.gov.uk/coronavirus or **Citizens Advice Bureau** is a useful source of impartial financial/welfare support: Tel **03444 111 444**; www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Free training

We have teamed up with Interserve to provide free digital training for LYHA customers. Please see enclosed flyer.

Interserve has a great reputation for providing first class training and it's an ideal opportunity to learn new or improve existing skills. This training is also free to friends and family, even if they are not LYHA customers, so please pass on the information to others that you think may benefit.



Please look after yourselves and don't hesitate to get in touch if you need assistance or are struggling to access essentials. We are here to help.

How we are supporting customers at this time

We've contacted all customers who are 70+, or 65+ in age restricted accommodation, to see if they need support



Customers have appreciated the calls. Most reported being safe and well, with support from friends and family



We've made follow up calls to all customers that asked for them



We've created directories of useful support and contacts in the areas where our customers live



We've set up a LYHA support fund to help customers in financial hardship



We've supported customers in financial hardship with payments and benefits advice



We've made referrals to food banks



We're supporting local charities



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