



Family Housing Association Newsletter

Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2021

Understanding what our tenants think about the services we provide is very important to us. The survey results tell us what we are doing well and where we need to improve. We compare our results to those of other Housing Associations, with the aim of providing a better service to our tenants than our peers.



The results are shared with the Board of Family Housing Association and will be made available to tenants via the website. The results can influence the future aims, objectives and strategy of Family Housing Association.

That's why your views are so important to us. We will be in touch later this year with details of the survey. Tenants will have the option to remain anonymous and all completed replies will be entered into a Prize Draw. We will be grateful if you can share your views with us.

In this Issue:

- Welcome from Our CEO
- Electrical Work & Safety
- Staying Safe During Covid
- 10 Interesting Wirral Facts
- Famous People Wirral Connected
- The Danger of Asbestos
- Energy Projects Plus
- Wirral Mind Check In & Chat
- Covid 19 Vaccine
- Household Contents Insurance
- Fire Safety
- Struggling to pay your rent?
- ASB Out of Hours
- The Skills Toolkit
- Wirral Foodbank
- Citizens Advice

A Warm Welcome

Welcome to the latest edition of the Family Housing Association Newsletter. I hope this finds you safe and well and that 2021 will prove to be a better year for us all. I would like to take this opportunity of sharing with you how Family Housing Association have worked towards continuing to deliver services throughout the Covid pandemic.

The health and welfare of our Tenants, Staff and Contractors remains our absolute priority. Staff monitor the advice available from the Government, Public Health England, the Social Housing Regulator and the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) to ensure that services are being offered in the best possible ways. Whilst the office remains closed to personal callers unless by specific appointment, staff are working on a rota for coming into the office to deal with essential issues and then homeworking for much of the time. Most contact and advice is taking place via the telephone, text, website, email, and social media.

Staff are keeping in touch with each other and with other organisations via video conference software, with Board Meetings and Customer Panel Meetings taking place in the same way. We now all talk about using Zoom, when many of us had not heard of it before March 2020! Staff continue to post welfare benefits and other useful advice and information on the website and through social media. If you feel that you need additional support from Family Housing Association, please get in touch.



Government guidance allows for construction and repairs to continue. Family Housing Association is providing emergency and non-emergency repairs, but please be aware that non-essential repairs may take longer than usual.

Not all contractors are able to operate at full capacity and some tenants are self-isolating or not wanting to allow any visitors. The contractors also have a duty to protect their Staff. Government advice around social distancing and hygiene are being followed where contractors need to access tenants' homes and appropriate PPE is being used. Staff are required to ask whether anyone in a household is displaying virus symptoms or is self-isolating, prior to arranging any repair or home visit.



The Cyclical Planned Maintenance Programme continues at Port Sunlight, where contractors Novus Property Solutions began work in October 2020. Progress has been slower than might be expected in other years, as the contractor takes account of all safe working practices, including reduced number of workers on site and in tenants' homes at any one time. Work on properties surveyed last year in Wallasey has recently commenced. It is very important that gas servicing and electric checks continue, and the Social Housing Regulator and HSE are monitoring these requirements, so when you receive contact for appointments to be made, please respond.

Let us hope that vaccinations offer us all a positive way forward and that in future Newsletters we can talk about returning to something more like normality.

Very best wishes to you.

Neil Moffatt
Chief Executive

Electrical Work

Some people are tempted to carry out work to the electrics in their home rather than pay an electrician. Things like changing sockets, light switches or light fittings may appear quite straightforward but in reality, this work is fraught with danger. Failure to turn off the correct circuit can lead to electric shock which can cause serious burns or can even be fatal.



Sockets and light fittings can have numerous different wires behind them and not connecting them correctly can cause electric shocks or fires. Even if things appear to be wired correctly initially, if cables are not properly shaped they can work loose, which can cause a fire.

Never try to carry out work on any of the electrics in your home. The risks are simply not worth the small amount of money you may save. Always contact us and we can arrange for one of our contractors to carry out the work at our competitive rates.

Find us on Facebook



Family Housing Association is on Facebook where you can keep up to date with news, information, opportunities and details of any events.

Stay Safe

Covid-19 is a potentially deadly virus that is spread through particles from the lungs of an infected person. People can spread the virus when they feel well. Some people carry and pass on the virus onto others without getting poorly at all. Wearing a mask is not so much about protecting yourself, although it does help a little. Wearing a mask is about protecting those around you.

Unless you are medically exempt, not wearing a mask in shops or on public transport is disrespectful to those around you, people that work there and the doctors and nurses in the NHS who are risking their lives to help those that have been infected. If you don't wear a mask in shops or public transport, those around you could see you as a very selfish person, who doesn't care if you kill those you come into contact with.



Virus particles that come from the mouth of an infected person can get onto hands, which then pass the virus onto anything people touch, such as door handles, banisters, keys and cash. If you touch anything contaminated and then touch your face, the virus can get into your lungs and you can become infected. This is why it is so important to wash your hands, or use hand sanitiser, whenever you touch anything that is shared with other people.

Stay safe, regularly wash your hands, wear a mask and leave lots of space between you and others.

Ten things you may not know about Wirral

1. Leasowe Lighthouse was built back in 1763, making it the oldest surviving lighthouse in Britain.



2. Wirral has the longest Promenade in Britain. New Brighton Promenade is just over 2 miles (3.5km) long.

3. The Beatles first gig with Ringo Starr as the drummer was in Port Sunlight.

4. Despite its small size, when compared to a large city like London; the Wirral has no less than 1,900 listed buildings, 215 churches, 50 towns and villages, 25 conservation areas, 10 lighthouses, 5 nature reserves, 2 watermills, one castle and one fort.

5. The first shot of World War One was fired from Fort Perch Rock in Wirral. It was a warning shot – just 30 minutes after war was declared.



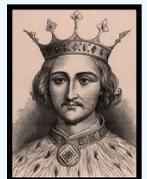
6. Central Park in New York was based on the design of Birkenhead Park.

7. West Kirby Marine Lake was the site of the World Windsurfing Speed Record at 42.16 knots (78kmh). It was held for two years before it was beaten in Australia.

8. Hilbre Island is the United Kingdom's smallest, inhabited island at just 11.6 acres.

9. New Brighton Tower was the tallest building in Britain when it opened sometime between 1898 and 1900. It stood at 567 feet tall. It was neglected during the First World War and dismantled in 1919.

10. King Richard II gave the entire Wirral peninsula Royal Park status in 1376.



Some Famous Wirral People

Paul O'Grady, popular TV personality and star of 'For the love of dogs', featuring the ups and downs of life at Battersea Dogs and Cats home.



Paul Hollywood of Bake Off fame.

John Peel, legendary DJ.

Daniel Craig, best known as James Bond.

Chris Boardman, Olympic gold medallist cyclist.

Harold Wilson, Prime Minister in the 1960's and 70's.



Ian Botham, Cricketer.

Wilfred Owen, First World War poet.

Patricia Routledge, best known as Hyacinth Bucket, pronounced 'Bouquet' obviously.

Elvis Costello, musician.

Simon Rimmer, from Channel 4 and restaurateur.

Eric Idle from Monty Python.

Shirley Ballas, Strictly Come Dancing judge.

Fiona Bruce, newsreader and presenter of Question Time and the Antiques Roadshow.



The Danger of Asbestos

A significant number of our homes contain some asbestos, but this will not be dangerous to you if it is not disturbed. The most common items that sometimes contain asbestos are:

**Vinyl Floor
Tiles**



**Soffit
Boards**



**Textured Coatings
or Artex**



It is very important that you do not disturb, drill or sand items that could contain asbestos as this could release harmful fibres that can get trapped in your lungs. If you want to carry out any DIY in your home, always ask us first so we can confirm it is safe, especially if it involves floor tiles or Artex on walls or ceilings.



Energy Projects Plus are a charitable organisation that aim to reduce fuel poverty in the community. They can help you reduce your energy bills by making sure you get the best deal from energy suppliers. They give advice on how to make your home more energy efficient and have good knowledge of Government grants / fuel vouchers that may be available. You can contact them direct on 0151 637 3670 or Family Housing Association can make a referral on your behalf.

Why we ask for your Next of Kin

As part of the housing application form, we ask for contact details for your next of kin. During yearly home visits, we also check the next of kin details we have are up to date. You might question why your landlord needs your next of kin details.

We need them so that there is someone we can contact in an emergency or an urgent situation. If we have not been able to contact you about an urgent tenancy matter, we may ask your next of kin to pass on a message. Recently we needed to contact someone's next of kin because the tenant had fallen over and was lying on the floor unable to move.

Please be assured, we will not discuss sensitive information with your next of kin about your tenancy without your permission.

If Family Housing Association does not have your up to date next of kin contact details, please get in touch so we can update our records. Please remember to get permission from your next of kin for Family Housing Association to have a record of their contact details.

Wirral Mind are offering a 'Check in & Chat Service' for people who feel isolated, lonely, anxious and afraid due to being unable to access services.

They can provide practical and emotional support to anyone whether its to find out where to get essential supplies or just to speak to a friendly voice at the end of the phone. Contact them direct on 0151 512 2200 or Family Housing Association can make a referral on your behalf.



Covid-19 vaccine – are you going to have it?

The Coronavirus pandemic has resulted in over 100,000 people losing their lives in the UK alone. This is more than was killed during The Blitz in the Second World War. The vaccines available significantly reduce the risk, yet some people are considering rejecting it.

There is a lot of false information being shared on social media and this is likely to lead to more people dying needlessly from this disease.



Some of the **fake news** stories include:

- The vaccine can give you Covid-19 – It can't, the technology used to develop the vaccine means this is not possible.
- Covid-19 is being spread by 5G masts – These masts are being built to allow faster transfer of information to mobile devices using radio waves. We have used radio waves for years, to watch TV, listen to the radio and for mobile phones. Suggesting that 5G causes Covid-19 is similar to suggesting playing a different note on a piano can cause Covid-19, it is just a different frequency of wave.
- The vaccine is not safe for minority communities – There is no evidence that the vaccine is harmful to minority communities, but there is evidence that those from minority ethnic communities are at higher risk of dying from the disease, and a vaccine could help prevent this.
- The vaccine contains a microchip so Bill Gates can track us – This technology does not exist, there is no microchip in the vaccine. Bill Gates stepped down from leading Microsoft in 2008 and has since dedicated his time to charitable causes including a goal to eradicate Polio from the world population.

Don't rely on Social Media for medical advice. If you have any concerns about the Covid-19 vaccine, talk to your doctor.

Shower Pull Switches - What are they for?

You know that pull-cord switch for your shower? The one that is very difficult to pull? The reason it is difficult to pull is because it is called an 'isolation switch' and is only there for an electrician to turn the shower off if there is a problem. It is not the on/off switch for your shower. It is not designed to be used under load.



Don't worry that it's using lots of electricity when you see the little light on. Even those with a continuous power light or soft-start switch will only be drawing a few milliamps, costing very little to run. You should always switch the shower on and off at the shower box. On a Mira electric shower, the upper dial turns from left to right and this is what you should use to turn your shower on and off.

Can you afford to lose everything in your home?

One of our tenants has recently experienced a fire in their home. Whilst they were not to blame, nearly all their possessions were damaged by fire or smoke. Fortunately the smoke alarms woke the family and they were rescued by the Fire & Rescue Service. Sadly they did not have Contents Insurance and lost almost everything. Contents Insurance is not expensive and can cover you against fire, flooding, theft or accidental damage.



Family Housing Association insures the building but you are responsible for insuring your homes contents. Please get in touch if you would like us to arrange for someone to contact you who specialises in contents insurance for social housing tenants. For more information visit thistlemysocialhousing.co.uk

Fire Safety



Fire Safety has always been a high priority, but now more than ever following the tragedy at Grenfell Tower. Small things can make a big difference to keeping people safe. If you live in a block of flats with internal communal areas, we are responsible for reducing the fire risk in these areas. That's why you will see:

- ◆ Emergency Lighting
- ◆ Fire Exit Signs
- ◆ No Smoking Signs
- ◆ Closers on Internal Doors
- ◆ Intumescent strip around internal doors
- ◆ An Evacuation Plan.

We regularly inspect communal areas to check that there are no fire hazards. This includes items left in the hallway. Items in the hallway can add fuel to a fire or block an escape route. Please do not leave any items in the communal hallway.

For any tenant, regardless of whether you have communal areas, please think about your fire escape route. There should always be a clear route to escape your property. Have a discussion with everyone in the household so everyone knows what to do in the event of a fire. Fires can occur in any part of the house, so have different plans for different scenarios. Also think of a 'Muster Point' where everyone in the household would meet when they have escaped the fire. This would allow you to check if anyone is missing and advise the Fire Service.

Hopefully you will never have to use these plans, but spending a couple of minutes thinking and talking about it now might save a life.

Struggling to Pay Your Rent?

The Coronavirus Pandemic has caused many people to experience a significant drop in their income. If finding the money to pay your rent each week is becoming more difficult, it is important to talk to us about it. Ignoring the problem will often make matters worse and could result in you losing out on benefits that you might be entitled to.

Our website at www.familyha.org contains useful information about Universal Credit and provides links to expert advice from Citizens Advice and from the Government. It also contains a link to make a claim for Universal Credit.

Where our tenants have complicated financial circumstances we can refer them for independent expert advice. The advisors will help them claim all the benefits they are entitled to and can also help them to manage their debts.



ASB Out Of Hours Service

Family Housing Association has an out of hours service for reporting Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB). If you ring our office (0151 647 5000) outside of office opening hours, you have the option to select option 3 and report ASB.

This will put you through to Magenta Living's Out of Hours Security Team. We have an agreement with them to provide an ASB out of hours response service. This service is provided for your benefit, please don't hesitate to use it.



Do we know your Email address?

One thing Lockdown has shown us is how important it is to be able to communicate with our tenants. More and more people like to have the ability to communicate online. As part of the housing application form and annual home visits, we ask for your email address. An email address provides another way we can communicate with each other.



As we go into the future, we may be able to give you the opportunity to receive certain information by email rather than letter. This can be more convenient for those tenants who prefer online contact and will save postage costs for Family Housing Association, which can be spent on improving services elsewhere. It would also help reduce our carbon footprint. Please let us know if you have a new Email address you would like us to use to contact you.

The Skills Toolkit is a new online learning site that gives people access to free, high-quality digital and numeracy courses to help build up their skills, progress in work and boost their job prospects. Please go to:



Visit theskillstoolkit.campaign.gov.uk to boost your skills.

Wirral Infobank is an online resource to help you find support services near you. It is available to support Wirral residents requiring advice, guidance and additional help during this ongoing and difficult coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis.

Wirral InfoBank

Visit wirralinfobank.co.uk for more information.

Help with Money

Family Housing Association works with the Citizens Advice to deliver a Money Management Service. The aim is to help people get the most from their money. There are lots of ways to make your money go further, from negotiating the best tariffs for your gas and electricity, to managing debt. Citizens Advice is independent and their advice will benefit nobody except you. They can help you:

- Maximise Your Income
- Understand your Finances
- Get The Right Benefits
- Reduce your Fuel Costs
- Manage your Debts
- Advice on when to use Credit Cards
- Advice on Payday Loans
- Make the most of your Money



Think about it. What have you got to lose? Don't wait, pick up the phone now and call Citizens Advice on 0300 330 0111 and book your free appointment.

Getting involved with Family Housing Association

We need more tenants to help staff ensure we are providing the services you want and to the standards you expect. All tenants can apply to join the Customer Panel, where you can influence the work we do.

During lockdown, we have held meetings using zoom, so that everyone remains safe. If you don't like the idea of attending meetings, there are lots of other ways you be involved, via post, via telephone or online via email. If you are interested, please just contact Family Housing Association's office for more details

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Call the office for Out of Hours
Emergency Repairs /
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