

25 March 2020

134 High Street  
Blackheath  
West Midlands  
B65 0EE

**Direct Telephone:** 0121 561 1969

**Direct Email:** [operations@bchg.co.uk](mailto:operations@bchg.co.uk)

[www.bchg.co.uk](http://www.bchg.co.uk)

Dear Tenant,

### **Important Information about our service in the light of COVID 19**

We know these are worrying times for us all, impacting our normal way of life and causing untold hardship. I am writing to assure you that the health and safety of you, your neighbours and our staff colleagues is important to us. We are doing all we can to minimise the impact of the virus, and following the latest Government Guidance.

There are number of temporary changes we have had to make to our services to stop the spread of the virus, and we have asked many of our staff to work from home. I have set out below the changes we have made and how we will support you during these ever changing and unprecedented circumstances.

### **Temporary Service changes**

- All our offices are closed to tenants until further notice. The easiest way to access our services is via our website, or call us on 0121 561 1969 or email [operations@bchg.co.uk](mailto:operations@bchg.co.uk)  
We also have a Customer Portal for you to check your balance and report repairs.
- We will continue to respond to customer calls, emails, letters, social media enquiries and texts.
- We will continue to talk to you about any issues related to your tenancy and provide any necessary support over the phone or online
- We will be delivering emergency repairs only. An emergency repair is one that is needed to prevent harm to the resident or prevent long lasting damage to the building. Typically, these will be water leaks, heating failures, security of the dwelling and electrical problems. We will record all other repair requests and look to complete them as soon as possible after the national lockdown ceases
- If you are expecting a home visit we will be carrying out these appointments by telephone or 'virtually' where we can. If this is not possible we will call you beforehand to check your current situation. We are asking tenants to let us know if they are self-isolating or have a confirmed case of Coronavirus (COVID-19) so that we can agree arrangements to deliver essential services.
- Due to restrictions imposed this week to prevent spread of the virus, we have reluctantly had to limit the physical presence of colleagues on site. Scheme Managers are continuing to keep in touch

with tenants by phone to carry out welfare checks and provide support. Please let them know if you have any concerns or use the phone number or email above and we will call you back.

- Your emergency alarm service is running as normal and we are in daily contact with the alarm receiving centre to pick up any concerns.
- We have assigned managers to carry out essential health and safety inspections at schemes including weekly fire alarm checks but they are not able to contact tenants whilst on site.
- Some of our regular service contracts for communal gardening and window cleaning may temporarily not be operational during this time.

We know that there is a great community spirit amongst many of our tenants. We would encourage you to look out for each other over the phone or online. We will get through this if we work together and it will serve a greater good.

For any tenant worried about their rent payments we are here to support you, and want to reassure we are not evicting but will want to work with you on an affordable payment plan. We have additional support available during the current situation, so if you do have any worries it really is worth speaking to your Scheme Manager.

### **How to access repairs**

We will continue to carry out emergency repairs where it is safe to do so. The repairs number is 0300 555 0302.

If you have a heating or hot water problem, call the above number and press Option 2 for repairs, NOT Option 1 for heating and your repair will be passed through to Halesowen Gas who look after communal heating and hot water systems. There may be a longer response than normal due to demand and staff self-isolating.

Please keep checking our website [www.bchg.co.uk](http://www.bchg.co.uk) or via our social media channels for all our latest updates as we continue to review our services and what we're able to provide during this period. For those who do not have access to online service we aim to place notices on board when we can to update you.

We continue to encourage tenants to follow the NHS guidance on how to avoid catching or spreading coronavirus including regularly washing hands (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>) and are providing regular updates via our website and social media platforms.

Please be assured that our Leadership Team are daily keeping up to speed with coronavirus developments and Government Guidance. We will continue to work up plans for how we will operate and provide our services to you in the most effective way possible in these ever changing and unprecedented circumstances. The health and safety of our customers, contractors, our team and the wider community remains our highest priority.

We will do whatever we can to minimise any impact on our services to you, but please bear with us if we have to do things differently over the coming weeks or months.

Yours sincerely

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**Ramesh Malhan**  
**Head of Customer Relations**