



cairn

FOCUS

Your tenants' newsletter

Spring 2020

From the whole staff team and board members across the Cairn Housing Group, we hope that you and your family, friends and neighbours are keeping well and healthy in these unprecedented and difficult times with the coronavirus emergency.

This newsletter details the service changes that are now in place, to protect our staff and tenants, and to keep the Association operating.

Our thoughts and attention are very much focused on maintaining services, advice and support to our tenants at this extremely difficult time. We know that many of you will be profoundly affected by the crisis, whether that is through the impact to your health, employment changes, family and caring responsibilities, or school closures. Everyone's normal lives have been turned upside down as we follow the common-sense advice to stay at home, socially distance and, where needed, self-isolate.

We are also very mindful of keeping our staff safe, and the team across the Cairn Housing Group are pulling together and responding very positively to face the challenges of this evolving situation. "Business as usual" has not really been possible, and we have had to make some difficult decisions where we cannot continue to provide our usual services, including office closures and an emergency-only repairs service.

We are acutely aware that our colleagues at Madelvic Square in Edinburgh, our sheltered and retirement courts, estate staff, Care & Repair team and the HomeWorks team and contractors are very much on the frontline

working at our properties and supporting tenants and other customers. Other members of the staff team are all working from home to ensure the organisation keeps functioning and services carry on where possible. Everyone is pulling together, and I am proud to be part of a One Team approach to getting the job done.

Since the emergency arrangements came into place across the country, we have continued to review how we work and the range of services we can and cannot provide to customers, based on the best available advice and guidance from the Scottish Government and NHS. Our Boards have oversight of how we respond, and we are in regular contact with our partners, especially local councils, our contractors and the Scottish Housing Regulator.

We are very grateful for your continued support and cooperation as we respond to this evolving situation. Please keep checking our website for the latest updates and information.

We will get through this together. Please continue to stay home and stay safe.

Jason MacGilp
Group Chief Executive
for Ancho and Cairn

Mary Black
ANCHO Chair

Michael Allan
Cairn Housing Association Chair

CHANGES TO OUR SERVICES

To keep our staff and tenants safe we have made a range of changes to our services:

- We are only carrying out emergency repairs. Any non-emergency repairs reported will be logged and we hope to be able to schedule those as soon as possible when rules around the lockdown are relaxed
- Our Care & Repair and Handyperson services in the Highlands are only completing essential works
- All new build contractors are off site and works postponed
- All planned maintenance works are now on hold
- All communal lounges and guest rooms at our sheltered and retirement courts are closed. Communal laundries are still open, but we have encouraged tenants there to be mindful of social distancing measures
- We have asked that only essential visitors enter our sheltered and retirement courts. Essential visitors include postal workers, carers and support staff, or families delivering food or medication. Social visits are not classed as essential
- Where possible, we have increased the level of cleaning being carried out in our courts, particularly

around touch points. In response to tenant feedback, Cairn will cover the costs of all additional cleaning provided at our sheltered and retirement courts. We will review these arrangements again on 1st June 2020

- We have stopped letting empty homes. There may be some instances where we work with local authorities to provide homes where there is an urgent need
- We have temporarily stopped carrying out ground maintenance, such as grass cutting, and window cleaning. This is for the initial lockdown period then we will review our position again.
- At the time of writing we are reviewing our contact centre opening hours. Please check our website for updates.
- We are carrying out welfare checks for our most vulnerable tenants
- Gas safety checks will continue in line with government social distancing guidance, and this will be updated if the guidance changes
- We have relaxed some of the criteria for our Community Fund to provide additional support to grassroots groups that are providing support to tenants and services in our communities

RENT ADVICE AND SUPPORT AVAILABLE

As a not-for-profit charity and housing association, rent is our primary source of income. It enables us to pay for the services we provide. It goes towards vital repairs and improvements, not only for your home, but for other homes across Scotland. It's important that tenants continue to pay their rent.

We understand that this is a worrying time for many of our tenants and that some of you may have lost your jobs or are working reduced hours. Our Tenancy Sustainment team are here to support you and if you have any concerns about your ability to pay your rent, please contact them as soon as possible. The earlier we know, the sooner we can help. Our team can talk you through your situation and the options available to you, including access to benefits and other support available.

Those concerned about paying their rent can claim Universal Credit from the Department for Work and Pensions which includes support for housing costs, if eligible. The UK Government has introduced some temporary changes to make this easier. Go to www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/coronavirus to find out more.

The UK Government has announced a range of

benefits and support for employees, the self-employed, and business owners. Please visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk for a guide to the support available and links for additional information. We are committed to ensuring that we provide advice and support to anyone who finds themselves in financial hardship as a result of the pandemic.

We will work with you to find an arrangement that you can manage. When the current crisis eases, we can review this arrangement and agree a way for the arrears to be cleared over a longer period of time than we'd usually agree to.

There are a variety of ways you can pay your rent:

- Direct debit
- At your bank, a post office, or a shop offering the PayPoint service
- Online through My Cairn, your self-service portal
- Using Allpay – either online, through their app, by text message, or calling them on 0844 557 8321
- Calling us on 0800 990 3405 to make a payment over the phone

Please contact us if you need to speak with our Tenancy Sustainment Team who can provide specialist advice and assistance.

We have launched a new and improved My Cairn!

Log in to MY**CAIRN** from anywhere at anytime

Pay your rent, report a repair, and much more...

Go to cairnha.com to sign up now

If you already have a My Cairn account, you will have to create a new one as this is a brand new system

HOW ARE WE LOOKING AFTER OUR STAFF?

- Our offices in Inverness, Bellshill and Edinburgh are closed and all office-based staff are working from home
- We have sought clarity on which of our staff should leave their homes to carry out essential work, and our definition at present is: staff providing essential services at our sheltered and retirement courts, all staff at our extra care housing in Edinburgh, staff who carry out emergency repairs, and Care & Repair staff.
- We have been trying to source personal protective equipment (PPE) for staff who need them, however this has proved challenging due to the global shortage. We have given staff training to make sure they are following the correct health and safety

- procedures whilst at work
- We have updated our policies and procedures regarding staff absences to support those who are unwell or looking after children or other dependents
- When you report repairs, we are asking if you are self-isolating or quarantined. We are passing this information to our teams or contractors for their safety
- We are looking at roles and responsibilities of all staff. Some staff are being redeployed to assist with other duties including cleaning in our courts or welfare calls to tenants
- Our services may be further impacted by staff absences or government guidance



STAY HOME. PROTECT THE NHS. SAVE LIVES.

The Government are encouraging everyone to stay at home

- Only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home)
- If you go out, stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people at all times
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home
- Do not meet others, even friends or family
- You can spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms.

Please check www.gov.uk/coronavirus for up to date government guidance.

HELPING OTHERS WITHOUT PUTTING YOURSELF, OR THEM AT RISK

The Scottish Government are advising people with diagnosed coronavirus, those who show symptoms of the virus, those over the age of 70, pregnant women, or anyone who has an underlying health condition to stay at home.

If you are well and don't have to isolate you may want to help friends, family or neighbours who need help with shopping or errands. It's great to look out for each other but we all need to be careful not to inadvertently put ourselves or others at greater risk of infection.

- Try to pick up food for other people when you are doing your own shopping to limit trips outside
- Help someone to place an online shopping order. Many supermarkets are prioritising home deliveries for the most vulnerable
- Offer to pick up prescriptions when you go to the pharmacy, or help to arrange a home delivery
- If you are dropping off shopping, leave it on their doorstep for your neighbour to take into their home
- Wash your hands thoroughly for at least twenty seconds before and after helping with errands

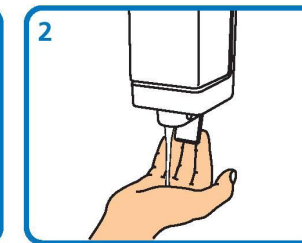
Be careful not to share or accept personal details when you don't feel comfortable or do anything that makes you feel unsafe such as helping people in the dark or late at night.

Remember, you can also help those who are isolating with cheery phone calls, videocalls, or emails. Having someone to talk to, especially when conversation doesn't revolve around the virus is a good way to soothe anxiety and prevent loneliness in those who are isolating.

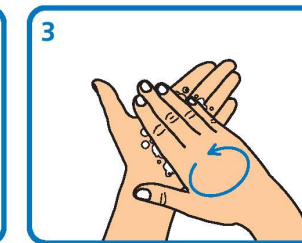
Hand-washing technique with soap and water



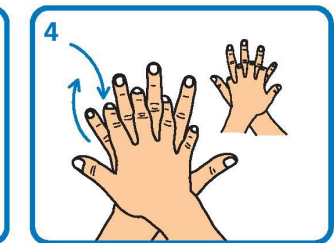
Wet hands with water



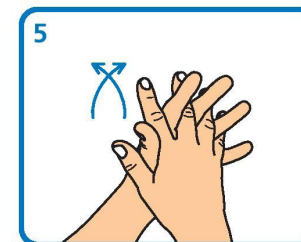
Apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces



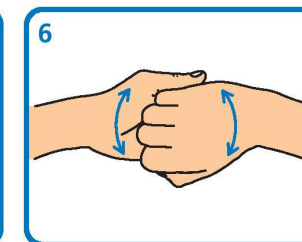
Rub hands palm to palm



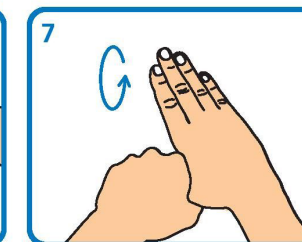
Rub back of each hand with palm of other hand with fingers interlaced



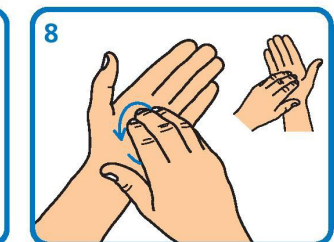
Rub palm to palm with fingers interlaced



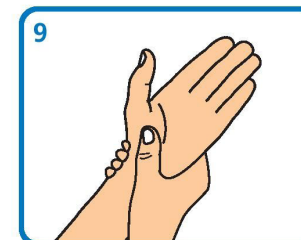
Rub with back of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked



Rub each thumb clasped in opposite hand using a rotational movement



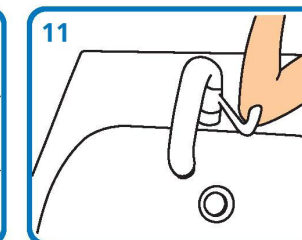
Rub tips of fingers in opposite palm in a circular motion



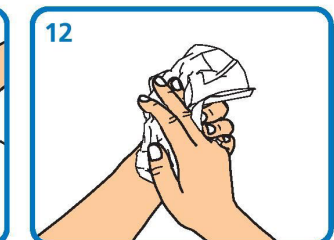
Rub each wrist with opposite hand



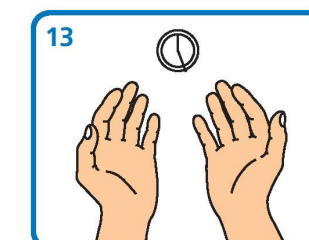
Rinse hands with water



Use elbow to turn off tap



Dry thoroughly with a single-use towel



Hand washing should take 15-30 seconds



LOOKING AFTER YOUR MENTAL HEALTH IN CHALLENGING TIMES

We all have mental health, and now more than ever, it's important to make sure we try to protect our mental wellbeing. Many of us are feeling worried or stressed about how coronavirus could affect our lives, and those of our loved ones.

We are now having to spend more time at home, perhaps isolated from the friends, family and other relationships that we know are vital to keeping ourselves mentally healthy. It may also be harder for us to do the things that normally help keep us well.

There are things we can do to look after our mental wellbeing during this time.

Move more every day

Being active reduces stress, increases energy levels, can make us more alert and help us sleep better. Even at home, there will be lots of ways to exercise and keep your body moving. Getting exercise doesn't need to be difficult – clear some space in the living room and try one of the 10-minute workouts from the NHS. Why not jump on the Joe Wicks (The Bodycoach) bandwagon? PE with Joe can be found on his YouTube channel and streams Monday to Friday at 9am.

Try a relaxation technique

Relaxing and focusing on the present can help improve your mental health and lighten negative feelings.

Try some different meditation or breathing exercises to see what helps.

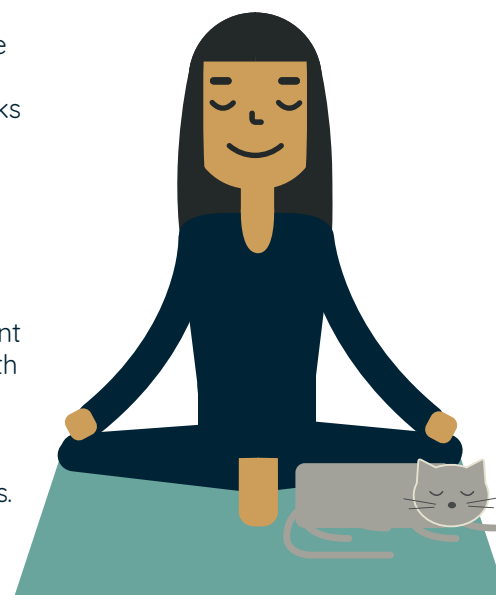
For example, sometimes we can be so tense that we do not even remember what being relaxed feels like. Progressive muscle relaxation teaches you to recognise when you are starting to get tense and how to relax.

A range of relaxation techniques, including progressive muscle relaxation are available from the NHS.

Connect with others

Staying at home, especially if you live on your own, can feel lonely. Find creative ways to keep in touch with co-workers, friends, family, and others to help you (and them) feel more connected and supported.

Explore ways of connecting that work for you, whether that's over the phone, social media, or video-chat. This could be anything, from sharing a cup of tea over a video call, playing an online game together, or simply sending a supportive text message.



Take time to reflect and practice self-compassion

Make time every day to reflect on what went well. It's important to recognise your successes and the things you are grateful for, no matter how small. Consider keeping a gratitude journal each day where you could write two or three of these things every night before you go to bed.

Mindfulness techniques may also help you focus on the present rather than dwelling on unhelpful thoughts. Headspace, found on your app store, have introduced a free collection, weathering the storm, of guided meditations and exercises specifically designed to help them manage stress, anxiety, and uncertainty through mindfulness.

Improve your sleep

Feelings of uncertainty and changes to daily life may mean you have more difficulty sleeping.

There is a lot you can do to improve your sleep. Aim to go to bed and get up at the same time each day, even at the weekend if you can, and try to get some natural sunlight (by opening your curtains and windows) where possible. This helps to regulate your body clock which can help you sleep better.

Wind down before bed by avoiding using your phone, tablet, computer or TV for an hour before bedtime.

Manage your mood with food and staying hydrated

Knowing what foods, we should and shouldn't be eating can be really

confusing, especially when it feels like the advice changes regularly. However, evidence suggests that as well as affecting our physical health, what we eat may also affect the way we feel. Improving your diet and drinking between 6–8 glasses of water a day may help to improve your mood, give you more energy and help you think more clearly.

Switch off

It's OK to turn off the news and social media for a bit. It's very tempting to watch and watch (and then watch some more) all the information that's coming in. But don't do that to yourself. Avoid news that could make you feel anxious and choose the stuff that's practical and helpful.

Mental Health Support

These organisations can offer support if you need to speak to someone urgently:

Breathing Space

breathingspace.scot
0800 83 85 87

Offers a free, confidential phone and web-based service for people in Scotland experiencing low mood, depression or anxiety.

Samaritans

samaritans.org
116 123 (Freephone)

24-hour emotional support for anyone struggling to cope.

Shout

giveusashout.org
text 85258

Shout is volunteer-run and is the UK's first 24/7 crisis text service, free on all major mobile networks, for anyone in crisis anytime, anywhere.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

Older people, and those caring for the over 70s

Age UK
ageuk.org.uk
0800 12 44 222

Those with a disability

Disability Information Scotland
disabilityscot.org.uk
phone 0300 323 9961 or text 0778 620 0707

Those who are worried about losing their job, or seeking advice regarding employment rights, careers, or redundancy

- citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland/
- skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk
- acas.org.uk

For debt advice

- StepChange
stepchange.org
0800 138 1111
- National Debtline
nationaldebtline.org
0808 808 4000

For parents

- Parentline
children1st.org.uk
08000 28 22 33
- Parent Club
parentclub.scot
- One Parent Families Scotland
opfs.org.uk
0808 801 0323

Those with dementia or their carers

- Alzheimers Scotland
alzscot.org
0808 808 3000

For households looking for advice on reducing energy bills and staying warm

- Energy Saving Trust
energysavingtrust.co.uk
0808 808 2282

Those with learning disabilities or their carers

- Enable Scotland
enable.org.uk
0300 0200 101
- Scottish Commission for People with Learning Disabilities
sclld.org.uk
0141 248 3733

Those with autism or their carers

- Scottish Autism
scottishautism.org
01259 222022
- National Autistic Society
autism.org.uk

For anyone in Scotland experiencing domestic abuse or forced marriage, and for others supporting them

- Scotland's Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage Helpline
sdfmh.org.uk
0800 027 1234
- Scottish Women's Aid
womensaid.scot
0800 027 1234

For anyone affected by sexual violence

- Rape Crisis Scotland
rapecrisis.scotland.org.uk
08088 01 03 02

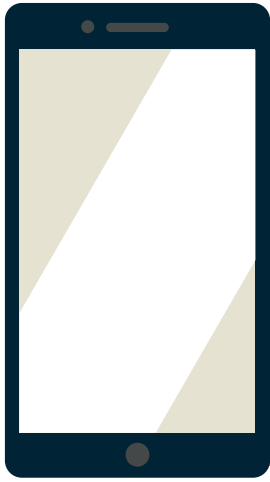
NEWS FROM THE HOUSING SECTOR

We are in regular contact with local councils, other housing providers, the Scottish Housing Regulator and the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations.

Regular updates can be found at
www.housingregulator.gov.scot
www.sfha.co.uk
www.gov.scot/coronavirus

DID YOU KNOW...

If you have children at school who qualify for free school meals, your local authority are now providing an alternative arrangement? Check with your local authority to find out the details as eligibility and schemes vary across the country.



OUR HEAD OFFICE:

Bellevue House,
 22 Hopetoun Street,
 Edinburgh, EH7 4GH

OUR WEBSITE:

www.cairnha.com

OUR PHONE NUMBER:

0800 990 3405

OUR EMAIL:

enquiries@cairnha.com

cairn

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 Great services.
 Great people.

A registered Scottish Charity No
 SCO16647. The Scottish Housing
 Regulator Registration No 218.
 Property Factor Reg No PF000292

本文件提供 CD、布萊叶盲文、大字体印刷和社区语言版本，可从以下地址 Cairn, Bellevue House, 22 Hopetoun Street, Edinburgh EH7 4GH、通过电子邮件 enquiries@cairnha.com 或致电 0800 990 3405 获取。

یہ دستاویز سی ڈی، بریل، بڑے حروف کی چھپائی اور کمیونٹی کی دیگر زبانوں میں 'کیرن' Cairn سے اس پتے
 Bellevue House, 22 Hopetoun Street, Edinburgh EH7 4GH کی میل پر دستیاب ہے: enquiries@cairnha.com یا اس نمبر پر فون کریں: 0800 990 3405

هذا المستند متوفر على أسطوانة مضغوطة، بلغة برايل وطباعة كبيرة ولغات الأقليات من Cairn, Bellevue House, 22 Hopetoun Street, Edinburgh EH7 4GH. بريد إلكتروني enquiries@cairnha.com أو اتصل بالرقم

Niniejszy dokument dostępny jest na płycie CD, w formie dużym drukiem, oraz w językach ojczystych członków lokalnej społeczności. Aby uzyskać ten dokument należy odwiedzić Cairn pod adresem: Bellevue House, 22 Hopetoun Street, Edinburgh EH7 4GH, wysłać e-mail na adres: enquiries@cairnha.com lub zadzwonić pod numer 0800 990 3405.

This newsletter is available on CD, in braille, in large print and in community languages.

