



## TENANT ADVICE AND FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **1. How can I make a payment to my rent if your offices are closed?**

Our staff are still available over the phone. You should continue to pay your rent as normal and you can do this in a number of ways:

- Direct Debit – we can set this up over the phone for you
- By using your Allpay card at any Post Office.
- At any shop or garage which has a Pay Point terminal.
- By telephone on 0844 557 8320. Card payments only.
- Online at [www.allpayments.net](http://www.allpayments.net)

### **2. I have been impacted financially by the current situation, what should I do?**

We understand that the current situation may have an impact on the income of some of our tenants and customers.

**If you feel you will have difficulties paying your rent then please contact us as soon as you can so we can assist you.** The Housing team may be able to help you apply for any benefits you might now be entitled to.

If you are affected in any of the following ways please refer to this advice and also contact us for further support;

- **Unable to work due to illness or shielding.** Those who follow advice to stay at home and who cannot work as a result will be eligible for statutory sick pay (SSP), even if they are not themselves sick. Anyone not eligible to receive sick pay, including those earning less than an average of £118 per week, or self-employed people, is able to claim Universal Credit and/or contributory Employment and Support Allowance.
- **Loss of employment.** If you have lost your employment then you can claim for Universal Credit, which will include the Housing element to pay your rent - <https://www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit>
- **Self employed unable to work.** The Scottish Government has announced a rescue package for businesses and the cash is being made available to support business through the Covid-19 pandemic. It will include rates relief, grants for small businesses and a £50m Hardship Fund for the self employed or people who lose their jobs as a result of measures taken to limit the spread of the virus. If you are concerned about being able to pay your tax due to COVID-19, call HMRC's dedicated helpline on **0800 0159 559**. If you have no income as self employed you can claim for Universal Credit, which will include the Housing element to pay your rent - <https://www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit>

The UK Government have created guidance to direct those financially affected by Corona - <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/coronavirus-support-for-employees-benefit-claimants-and-businesses>

For any advice you can call the Citizen's advice helpline 0800 028 1456 or the Assistance Hub <https://www.gcah.org.uk/> 0808 196 3384 (8am-8pm 7 days a week).

If you have an immediate need you can also apply for a crisis grant which can be applied for from the Local Authority in your area;

- Aberdeen City Council – 0800 03 04 713
- Aberdeenshire Council – 01467 53 74 00
- Moray Council – 01343 563456

Osprey staff can make referrals for foodbanks and assist with food parcel deliveries, please contact us or the Local Authority if you need assistance.

### **3. My Annual Gas safety check is due, will this still go ahead?**

We are currently still maintaining the schedule to conduct safety checks for Gas and Oil boilers to meet legal obligations for health and safety. This is being carried out with enhanced safety measures in place to provide health barriers for our contractors and tenants alike. We will screen the households to assess the current situation before attending. If you are currently unwell, have suspected symptoms shielding or have other concerns re your safety checks being carried out please contact our Customer Service Team.

### **4. Are repairs still being carried out and should we still report repairs?**

At present we are mainly operating an emergency and urgent repairs service via our main contractors, to focus on the immediate repair needs and maintain health and safety of our properties. However if you have a repair, please still report this to our Customer Service Team on the repairs line 01224 548001. We will record this through our system and although timescales will be extended for non urgent items, it ensures our contractors and Asset team can plan in the work as necessary long term.

Our Asset team have the facility to do Video calls if you wish to discuss or show them any repairs related aspects you need advice with. Repairs can be reported online via our Osprey App or the following link

<https://form.jotformeu.com/Ospreyh/tenants-repair-form>

### **5. Will the open space maintenance and communal cleaning continue?**

There was understandably some initial disruption to this services, however our contractors are now back on site. They have had to remodel how these services are delivered to provide relevant safety to operatives, by reducing crew sizes travelling together for example. If you have an issue with open space maintenance being carried out in your area, please do not approach any operatives on site. Please contact us on **01224 548000** and speak with one of our Asset team.

## **6. Can we use the playparks in the schemes that we live in?**

At this time government guidance is that all playparks are not to be used and avoided. We are in process of adding signage to advise residents not to use the play park equipment. We ask that all tenants respect this request for their own health and safety.

## **7. What should I do if I have concerns that a neighbour or resident is not abiding by the COVID-19 recommendations?**

Police Scotland have the powers to enforce the Corona Virus Act and its subsequent legislation. Osprey cannot enforce or intervene unless there is a direct breach of tenancy linked to the actions of your neighbours. We ask that you report directly to Police Scotland on 101. It is worth bearing in mind that the Police service is under pressure. We understand this is a stressful time for many and ask that you apply reasonability when making reports against neighbours, at this time the more serious issues will take precedent.

## **8. I am experiencing difficulties within my home and feel at risk from domestic violence.**

Osprey are committed to supporting anyone living in fearful or abusive situations, please know there is help out there for you. Contact your Housing Officer for signposting or housing options advice. Please be assured we will deal with your queries confidentially – you are not alone.

Scotland's National Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage Helpline

<https://sdafmh.org.uk/> continues to provide support 24/7 through phone, webchat and email. The Helpline is available 24/7 via phone on **0800 027 1234**, email [helpline@sdafmh.org.uk](mailto:helpline@sdafmh.org.uk) or live web chat may be a safer way for individuals to make contact during this time [www.sdafmh.org.uk](http://www.sdafmh.org.uk)

Other resources for support and advice can be accessed by contacting Scottish Women's Aid who provide a range of information and resources and videos <https://womensaid.scot/>

Rape Crisis Scotland [www.rapecrisisScotland.org.uk/](http://www.rapecrisisScotland.org.uk/) provides advice, information and support to anyone who is a victim of sexual violence.

## **9. What should I do if I think I may have the virus?**

You should follow government guidance on self-isolation, which you can find here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

You should tell anyone you share the property with immediately, so that they can take appropriate action and make informed decisions regarding shared areas and access to the property. If Osprey needs to arrange a visit to the property for urgent health and safety reasons, you should also inform them and agree to take sensible precautions.