

Welcome to the latest newsletter from People First Housing Association. This newsletter can also be viewed online at [www.pfha.co.uk](http://www.pfha.co.uk).

### Privacy Notice

Enclosed with this newsletter is a copy of our privacy notice to tenants.

The notice explains how and when we collect personal data to enable us to meet our obligations under the terms of People First's tenancy agreement.

The notice also details what personal data we collect whilst protecting our tenant's rights of freedom and privacy and meeting the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018 and Data Protection Act 2018.

Please let us know if you have not received a copy of the notice and if you have any questions.

### Staff changes

We would like to welcome Janet Fallon to the Housing Team. Janet joins us as a Housing Officer having previously worked with People First managing housing related support and wellbeing services. Janet has replaced Caroline Roach who has left People First to take on a role with Manchester City Council.

We would like to thank Caroline for her hard work and enthusiasm over the past year with the Association and wish her all the best with her future career.

Lillian Shaw has also recently joined People First and will be working with us on a few projects. These will include consultation with tenants about planned maintenance programmes and developing tenant involvement activities. We offer Lillian a warm welcome to People First. She will be in touch with tenants in the next few weeks to hear your views.

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### Fire Doors and Fire Safety

This summer and autumn we have commissioned a specialist company called Total Fire to carry out Fire Risk Assessments in our blocks of flats. If you are a tenant living in one of our flats you will receive a letter in advance advising when the Assessor will be visiting your building.

They will be inspecting the communal areas including cupboards and where possible we will arrange access to many of our flats to check on flat entrance doors and kitchen doors to ensure that they meet fire safety standards. The Assessor will also need to look within loft spaces above both the flats and communal areas.

We will subsequently arrange for works in line with the required actions identified by Total Fire to be completed.

Des Macdonald as our Maintenance Officer will also be arranging a timetable of fire door inspections within tenants' homes across our housing stock as we are now required to do annually following the introduction of new fire safety regulations.

## Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs)



The Social Housing White Paper was published by the government in November 2020. It set an expectation that the Regulator of Social Housing (The Regulator) would bring in a set of Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) on issues that matter to tenants.

Many social landlords already produce and publish performance information to their tenants, but it is not always collected on the same basis, and this can make the results harder for tenants to interpret and to compare the performance of different landlords.

The Regulator has introduced a new standard that social landlords need to meet. It sets clearly defined, universal requirements on TSMs that will allow tenants to scrutinise their landlord's performance and provide insights on where they might look to improve their services.

The standard requires landlords to publish their TSM results every year in a way that tenants can easily access and understand. The Regulator has produced a guide to help you understand this and we will publish this on People First's website, and we can send you a hard copy if you would prefer.

You can also read more about the new Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's) at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).

What questions can we expect from the Tenant Satisfaction Measures?

The Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's) questions are structured around 12 points:

- > Overall satisfaction
- > Repairs to your home
- > How long it takes to repair your home
- > A well-maintained home
- > A safe home
- > Listening to tenants
- > Keeping tenants informed
- > Treating tenants fairly and with respect
- > How complaints are handled
- > Communal areas
- > Your local area
- > Anti-social behaviour

### What does this mean for me as a People First Association Tenant?

People First has conducted different tenant surveys in recent years, but the new requirements are more prescriptive around the frequency of surveys and the questions that are asked.

We will conduct surveys at least every 2 years but we will publish information regularly on each of the measures set.

Our first survey to include the TSM questions will begin before the end of 2023. You will receive further information in the next few weeks.



## Rent payments

We are aware that the overall increase in the cost of living is having a dramatic effect on all of us but particularly our tenants, many of whom are on limited income. We are experiencing large increases in the costs of delivering services to tenants and we have additional cost pressures in preparing to upgrade homes to improve conditions and fire safety.

People First recognises that some tenants will need support to manage this. We will work with you and can signpost you to local services that may offer practical help. Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any difficulties or concerns.

We offer several ways that you can make your rent payments. Our Housing Team can help if you need further advice.

## Repair categories

At PeopleFirst we aim to complete repairs as soon as is practicable.

Because some repairs are more critical to complete quickly than others, we do need to set target times to allow our contractors to focus on priority repairs.

Outlined below are our current deadlines for completing different types of repairs.

We will be reviewing these timescales with tenants in the next few months due to the complexity of some repairs.

Emergency repairs (within 24 hours)	Urgent repairs (within seven days)	Routine repairs (within 28 days)
<p>Repairs, which pose an immediate health and safety risk.</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>gas leak or supply failure</li> <li>dangerous electrical fault or supply failure</li> <li>flooding or burst pipes</li> <li>blocked WC or drains</li> <li>loss of heating</li> <li>insecure property (e.g., door will not lock properly)</li> <li>dangerous structural faults</li> <li>fire damage</li> </ul>	<p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>no hot water</li> <li>missing roof tiles</li> <li>slow water leaks</li> <li>faulty appliances</li> <li>cracked windows (if no risk to health and safety)</li> <li>minor electrical faults</li> </ul>	<p>Whenever possible, we will carry out routine repairs much quicker than this, provided it does not jeopardise performance on emergency and urgent repairs.</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>leaking overflow</li> <li>blocked gutters</li> <li>loose floorboards</li> <li>damaged fencing</li> <li>broken bath panel</li> <li>minor joinery repairs</li> <li>plaster defects</li> <li>decorative work</li> <li>replacement bathroom fixtures</li> <li>paths and drives</li> </ul>



## Bin collections and fly tipping

Manchester City Council are responsible for resident's bin collections, Biffa undertake this task on their behalf.

If you have any issue with your bins not being collected or you require a replacement bin you should contact Manchester City Council. They can be contacted by calling 0161 234 500. You can also report fly tipping and issues with street cleaning.

You can register for an account by visiting <https://www.manchester.gov.uk/youraccount> This will enable you to access a number of the Council's services. You can get a quicker response to your requests, track the progress of your requests, and get local services and information based on your address.

## Childcare update



Universal Credit's maximum childcare payments went up from 28 June 2023.

Parents are now able to claim back monthly for their childcare costs on Universal Credit up to £951 for one child and £1,630 for two or more children. Parents, who enter work or significantly increase their work hours, will also be able to get help with upfront payment for their first childcare bill instead of having to pay the costs then claim them back from Universal Credit.

You can use the Benefits Calculator at [www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk) to find out if you're eligible for childcare payments.

## Cost of living payment 2023/24



The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) have announced approximate dates for the Cost of Living payment 2023/2024. Individuals will receive the £900 payment in three instalments across the year.

- First instalment of £301 was paid during Spring 2023
- Second instalment of £300 will be paid during Autumn 2023
- Third instalment of £299 will be paid during Spring 2024

The government is helping with the cost of living for 2023/24 for people on certain benefits. The first payment was made between 25 April 2023 and 17 May 2023. If you meet eligibility and haven't received a payment, you can report a missing Cost of Living payment on the DWP website:

[www.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.dwp.gov.uk)

## PIP 'light touch' review forms



The Department for Work and Pensions have announced that simplified forms to be used for 'light touch' reviews of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and this will be introduced from August 2023.

If you've an ongoing claim reaching to the ten-year point, it means you're now due a review. You're likely to get a 'light touch' review if you have:

- very stable needs which are unlikely to change over time
- high level needs which will either stay the same or get worse
- a planned award review date due on or at State Pension age
- a special rules for end of life claim due when of State Pension age

If you've one of the above, you may not be expected to have a face-to-face assessment at review.

If you want assistance in filling out this form, you can speak to a member of the Housing Team or use the find a local advisor tool at [www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk).



**Difficulty paying your water bill?** Please check on the People First website – [www.pfha.co.uk](http://www.pfha.co.uk) for details about United Utilities' offer to Manchester residents through their Affordability Scheme.

## Are you experiencing financial difficulties?

If you are worried about debt and rent arrears, please call us and we can talk about your options. Or, if you prefer you can speak to an independent advice service.

- **Citizens Advice** - 0344 411 1444 - [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)
- **National Debtline** - 0808 808 4000 - [www.nationaldebtline.org](http://www.nationaldebtline.org)
- **Step Change** - 0800 138 111 - [www.stepchange.org](http://www.stepchange.org)
- **Money Advice Service** - 0800 138 777 - [www.moneyhelper.org.uk](http://www.moneyhelper.org.uk)

