

# Dovecotes TMO

Spring 2021 Newsletter



## A message from our Chair

I write to you this month with a little more hope, spring is finally here and like you, I'm enjoying seeing the sun after a long and cold winter.

The past few months have tested us all. I like many others have found the most recent lockdown more challenging, not only because we haven't been able to spend time with friends and family over Christmas but, it has also been a very cold and lonely winter. As the weeks pass and we edge ever closer to normality I feel a sense of optimism, that we will come out of this period with a new understanding of community and appreciation for those who have supported us in our hour of need.

It is with apprehension that I look into the next few months and consider how we reintroduce a frontline service back to our members. Over the past year the staff and board have overcome the hurdles that coronavirus has thrown at them, our meetings have all been held online and the staff, who fill me with pride have worked tirelessly to ensure that our tenants and residents still receive an excellent level of service from Dovecotes.

Stay safe and take care of each other.

*Joan*



**We're Back Soon!**

Find out about our new opening times



**Easter Goodies Up For Grabs**

Despite covid19 the easter bunny will be visiting Dovecotes



**Exclusive Offer for Dovecotes Tenants**

Dovecotes TMO have teamed up with One Broker to offer competitive contents insurance to tenants

## We're Back Soon

In November 2020 we closed our doors in response to UK Government guidelines. Since then, staff have been working at home with a small number of essential staff based at the housing office. To support our most vulnerable tenants, we have been making weekly welfare calls. Since March 2020 we have made over 3000 outgoing calls.

We have continued to operate a service via the telephone and received 7500 calls via our mainline.

Carrying out repairs and maintenance has always been a challenge throughout the pandemic. We haven't been able to deliver our internal property improvements to the scale we have in previous years. Every decision made has always been based on keeping our tenants, staff and contractors safe.

To reduce the risk of infection we introduced weekly lateral flow tests in February for all staff and contractors and have continued to provide an emergency repairs service. It is our hope that in April we will resume our standard repair service to tenants.

We would like to thank our tenants, members and residents for their understanding and patience throughout the last 12 months.

## Opening Hours From 12th April 2021

We plan to reopen our office on Monday 12th April 2021, this will be a reduced service and customers visiting will need to wear a face covering and follow social distancing rules.



**Monday 09:30 - 12:30**

**Tuesday 09:30 - 12:30**

**Wednesday 09:30 - 12:30**

**Thursday CLOSED**

**Friday 09:30 - 12:30**

### WHAT IS AN EMERGENCY REPAIR?

- Total loss of power, gas, water, heating and hot water
- Blocked flue, drain, sink, soil stack, toilet
- Toilet not flushing (where only 1 toilet exists)
- Leaking water pipe, roof, drain, soil stack and cistern
- Insecure external door, window or lock
- Smell of gas
- Dangerous /Rotten Timber flooring or stair tread

We understand that some repairs may be urgent but would not be classed as an emergency, if in doubt please call us.



# What happens when the unexpected happens?

Up to two thirds of tenants living in rented accommodation do not have contents insurance. For most people the risk of experiencing a flood in their home is pretty low but, what happens when the unexpected happens? Who replaces items that are lost or damaged?

Imagine if you turned your house upside down, all the 'contents' would fall out; carpets, the sofa, beds, basically everything that doesn't form part of the building i.e your belongings. A flood, fire or accidental damage would be devastating. Let's take a look at Mrs Dove's story.

Mrs Dove lives in a ground floor flat with her dog Sparky. On Monday evening, as she sat down to watch Eastenders she felt a drop of water fall on her head. Confused Mrs Dove looked up as a deluge of water began to fall through her ceiling. Immediately she called the landlord and within a few hours the leak from the upstairs flat was repaired but, Mrs Dove's living room was ruined.

The next day the landlord arrived with fans and machines to help suck away the water. Mrs Dove asked them 'Are you going to replace my carpets and furniture? I'm on state pension and I can't afford to buy them myself'. The landlord explained that they don't insure the contents, this is the responsibility of the tenant and, because the leak was caused by a pipe bursting unexpectedly they wouldn't cover the cost of replacing her belongings.

Mrs Dove was devastated, she immediately initiated a claim for compensation but, as the landlord had explained they were not at fault.

It took months for Mrs Dove to replace the items she had lost. Later, whilst she was sitting down to watch Eastenders with Sparky she asked herself 'Can I afford not to have insurance?'



**It is a common misconception that a landlord's policy will cover your possessions. Make sure you're appropriately covered with a policy specifically designed for tenants...**

At One Broker we can offer you:

- Contents, personal possession and bicycle cover under one tailored policy
- Tenants and occupiers liability cover as standard
- Optional pet damage cover
- Wide selection of cover and option to increase standard policy
- In-house claims service
- Ability to transfer to another let property if you move
- Deposit protection against accidental damage to a landlord's property (subject to terms and conditions)

#### STANDARD PACKAGE

- Accidental damage to a landlord's property, its contents, fixtures and fittings
- £100 excess
- £2 million occupiers and personal liability

#### SILVER PACKAGE

- All elements of the standard package, as well as:
  - Increased levels of personal possessions cover
  - New-for-old and accidental damage cover
  - High value items cover
  - Bicycle cover

#### GOLD PACKAGE

- All elements of the standard and silver package, as well as:
  - Increased levels of personal possessions cover
  - Food in freezer cover
  - Personal money cover

Contact us for full policy details or to discuss specific levels of cover and how we can tailor our packages to your individual needs.

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Promotion  
One Broker is a trading style of One Broker (Cambridge) Ltd. Independent Insurance Broker specialising in insurance policies specifically aimed at the Lettings Industry.





## Free Easter Eggs for Under 12's

To celebrate Easter this year we're giving away free Easter Eggs to children under 12 who live on the Dovecotes Estate. To claim your chocolate treat please call **01902 552780** to arrange an appointment for your child to collect their egg from the Dovecotes Easter Bunnies on **Friday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2021.**

*Happy Easter*





## Shoppers Rights

This month Suzanne & Heather from Public Protection have a few tips on your Consumer Rights.

Have you purchased an item from a trader which is faulty who then asks you to contact the Manufacturer for a refund? If so, it is useful to know who is responsible & what you are entitled to.

- It is the Retailers responsibility to provide you with a remedy. This is in addition to any rights or remedies you may have under a Manufacturers guarantee.
- If an item is faulty, mis-described or unfit for purpose within the first 28 days from the date of purchase you can obtain a refund. After this time, you can ask for a free replacement, repair or proportionate financial compensation.
- Always ask for a receipt and keep this safe but don't worry if you lose this because the law requires you to provide proof of purchase. This could be a bank statement, cheque stub or the box with the bar or stock code on it.
- If you are purchasing an item over £100 in value and you have a credit card, you could use this to purchase the item. If the retailer ceases trading or there is a fault with the product, you can contact your Card Provider for a remedy under Section 75 of The Consumer Credit Act 1974.
- Unfortunately, you have no legal entitlement to a remedy if you change your mind about a purchase or if the fault has occurred due to fair wear and tear or misuse and damage.



Further information on your Consumer Rights can be found on the Citizens Advice Consumer Service Website or via freephone 0808 223 1133.

## Household Waste and Recycling

Reminder on how to dispose of your waste responsibly:

To check what materials **can go** in your general waste bin, and to check what items can't be **recycled** please visit: [www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/recycling-and-waste](http://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/recycling-and-waste)

**Remember:** If you are in any doubt whether an item can be recycled **don't put it in the recycling bin**, and double check on the Councils website.

Excess waste can be disposed of at the councils Household Waste and Recycling Centres (tips).

To find details of the two sites at Shaw Road and Anchor Lane, along with the **Spring operating hours** and details of what materials can be taken to the Household Waste and Recycling Centre (tip) please visit: <https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/recycling-and-waste/tips>



**If it's too good to be true,  
they're lying to you.**

Do not engage with doorstep traders.  
Do your research and employ someone  
recommended by a friend or family member.

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## Dovecotes Board Approve £20,000 Fencing Programme

The Dovecotes Management Board has approved a £20k budget to replace, renew and install new fencing for Dovecotes tenants. Fencing provides privacy, is a secure area for pets and children, a barrier between properties, but also protects gardens against wind.

If your fencing is damaged or beyond repair and would like to request replacement or a new installation please contact the TMO office on 01902 552780.

If you own your home Dovecotes TMO can arrange for your fencing to be replaced at your own cost. Similarly, if you neighbour a council property and are jointly responsible for the fence an agreement of shared costs can be agreed.

## Planning for Christmas

Yes, we know that it's only been a few weeks since the decorations came down but, Christmas comes around faster than you think.

With just under 40 weeks left until the big day now is the time to begin planning. Did you know that by paying an extra £2 a week on your rent you could cover the cost of a weeks rent at Christmas? This could help towards paying for the turkey or maybe a few extra special treats.

If you would like to discuss your rent please contact our housing team by calling 01902 552780 or email [dovecotes.tmo@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:dovecotes.tmo@wolverhampton.gov.uk)



## Hardship Grant to Support Tenants

Nationally, we are facing unprecedented times as a result of the global pandemic of COVID-19 (coronavirus). Many of our tenants have found themselves on the frontline of the financial crisis, in precarious jobs in retail or hospitality industries experiencing a reduction or sudden loss of income.

A hardship fund is available to alleviate some of the problems associated with extreme indebtedness associated with the effects of COVID-19. Additionally, we can also provide support to those tenants transferring to or already claiming Universal Credit.

Access to the fund will be allocated on a need basis and until such time that the fund is exhausted.

The fund is available to all tenants of Dovecotes Tenant Management Organisation. If you would like to apply please contact the housing team by calling 01902 552780.



# Dovecotes TMO Plans to Expand Housing Stock

In February this year Dovecotes TMO approved plans to purchase properties on the open market and let them to prospective tenants wanting to live on the estate. The Board approved a budget of £800,000 funded through surpluses of the TMO to finance property acquisitions.

In the coming months properties for sale will be appraised and then let by the TMO on an assured shorthold tenancy agreement.

If you would like more information or are looking to sell your property please contact us.



## Vaccine Myths & Facts

Information on

### COVID-19 Vaccine



#### Should you have the vaccination?

You are strongly advised to have the vaccination, unless you experience severe allergic reactions, in which case, please speak to your GP.

The vaccine has been tested in **more than 20,000 people** in several different countries and **shown to be safe**.

The vaccine has been proved to be **highly effective**. Even if you are fit and healthy, you are still at risk of getting COVID-19.

**Get vaccinated to reduce your risk and to protect yourselves, your family and friends.**



#### \*Help getting to your appointment

If you **do not** have friends or family to take you to your vaccine appointment, **NHS responders** can help free of charge. Their number is **0808 196 3646**.

#### What does getting the COVID-19 vaccine mean?

Even though it is still possible to catch and spread Covid-19 after having a vaccine, the vaccination will **significantly reduce the chances of you getting severe symptoms or dying from the virus**.

## COVID-19 Vaccination Myths & Facts

MYTHS	FACTS
<i>The vaccine will give me COVID-19</i>	The vaccine <b>cannot</b> give you COVID-19
<i>The vaccine is not safe, it went through the approval process too quickly</i>	The vaccines have gone through <b>clinical trials</b> and <b>safety checks</b> like all other medicines and approved by <b>Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency</b> )
<i>The vaccine causes severe side effects</i>	Most side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine <b>are mild</b> and should not last longer than a week
<i>I've had COVID-19 so I'm immune and don't need it</i>	We don't know that you can't have COVID-19 twice, so you should still have your vaccine for <b>maximum protection</b>
<i>The vaccine contains ingredients that go against my beliefs</i>	There is <b>no foetal</b> or animal material, including eggs, in the vaccine
<i>The vaccine causes infertility</i>	There is no evidence that the vaccine impacts on fertility
<i>The vaccine will change my DNA</i>	The vaccine <b>will not change your DNA</b> . It instructs your body to develop an immune system response
<i>The vaccine contains microchips for tracking purposes</i>	The vaccines <b>do not contain any tracking technology</b>

**How does it work?** The vaccines simply act as a messenger, teaching your body **how to create antibodies** in case you encounter the COVID-19 infection at a later date.

To access information on the vaccine in BSL, Easy Read and other languages, please visit: [wolverhampton.gov.uk/vaccine](http://wolverhampton.gov.uk/vaccine)



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**TMO**

From the past, looking to the future

## **Dovecotes Tenant Management Organisation Contact Details**

General Enquiries and Repairs

Tel: 01902 552780

Email: [dovecotes.TMO@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:dovecotes.TMO@wolverhampton.gov.uk)

Facebook: @dovecotes

Website: [www.dovecotestmo.com](http://www.dovecotestmo.com)

Dovecotes TMO Board Email: [dovecotestmo1@gmail.com](mailto:dovecotestmo1@gmail.com)

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like this  
newsletter in  
any other  
format please  
contact us**



**HANDS**



**FACE**



**SPACE**