

Your News

www.yourhousinggroup.co.uk

Summer 2023

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Your
HOUSING GROUP

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 0345 345 0272

Creating more places for people to thrive and be recognised as a sector leading landlord

The Chair of your Customer Services Committee bids us a fond farewell.

Derek Cash has been a member of Your Housing Group (YHG)'s Board for the last six years, however, it's in his additional role as Chair of our Customer Services Committee, something he took on in 2018, that he really made a difference for you.

Derek is passionate about making the customer voice heard and acting upon this feedback to improve what we do and how we do it.

When he first started with YHG, he was instrumental in ensuring all our homes meet the Decent Homes' Standard, and also played a large part in our ongoing £269 million home improvements programme.

Although he started working in social housing 32 years ago, his first foray into housing was as a teenager, when he led a campaign to get the leaks in his own family's social housing roof fixed.

In his roles for YHG, Derek worked with us to help build the foundations of a wider customer engagement framework, which resulted in the Customer Services Committee

and the Customer Connect Panel, as well as being the Board's complaints champion, to look at how we manage complaints and how we work with you to avoid things going wrong in the future.

We hope that whether you met Derek or not during his time here, that you can join us in saying thank you for all he has done and his genuine commitment to you, our residents.

We wish Derek the best of luck for the future!

“Derek is passionate about making the customer voice heard”



New Wigan foyer

Brand new foyer to support young adults in Wigan

Plans have been approved for a new foyer in Wigan.

To replace the existing Coops Foyer, the three-storey complex will have 38-rooms, teaching and studio facilities, a training kitchen to up skill and support young adults. It will also feature a meeting space, breakout space, laundry room, residents lounge, indoor and outdoor gym, and recreational space outside.

It'll be at the site of an old bakery in Wigan, and will provide a safe, caring, and respectful home, plus access to learning for young people aged 16-25 who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Chief Executive, Jacque Allen, said, "We're delighted by the support from Wigan Council to move forward with this new Foyer and we're all very proud of the work the teams do at the Foyer schemes."

Martin Wright, Head of Supported Housing, added,

"We've worked in partnership with Wigan Council for many years, providing support at Coops Foyer so having the opportunity to move this service to a brand new, state-of-the-art facility near Wigan town centre is really exciting!"

"The new development will let us build on everything that we have achieved at Coops Foyer and take our service to the next level, for the benefit of our younger residents in the borough."

The current Coops Foyer has helped more than 850 people. Current residents at Coops recently said how living there *'made me feel safe and able to grow into myself'*.



Antisocial behaviour

Antisocial behaviour (ASB) changes & improvements

We have made some significant changes to our ASB Team over the last 12 months which have already started to have a positive impact on you, our residents.



Team has grown to 13 Officers and 2 Team Leaders

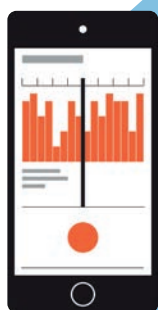


Mediation pilot to try to resolve disputes early

↑ 30%
ASB Handling Satisfaction

New ASB and Hate Crime Policy in place

yourhousinggroup.co.uk/policies



Noise App for smart phones to gather evidence



Quicker response time when you first get in touch
(within 2 working days)

This has resulted in your feedback about how we handle ASB improving massively during our last annual Survey for Tenants and Residents (STAR).

You can read more about the results on pages 8 and 9.

When you report ASB we want it to be a respectful and reliable service, and as easy as possible for you.

Contact us in confidence via our website www.yourhousinggroup.co.uk/reportasb or by phone on 0345 345 0272.

Always dial 999 if you, a neighbour, or anyone in your neighbourhood is in immediate danger.

For non-emergencies, you can also call the police on 101.



What you can expect

Once you've sent us your report, we will carry out an early assessment and ask you questions about the incident and the events leading up to it. This will help us to identify any urgent actions that need to be taken.

An action plan will be agreed with you, setting out the following:

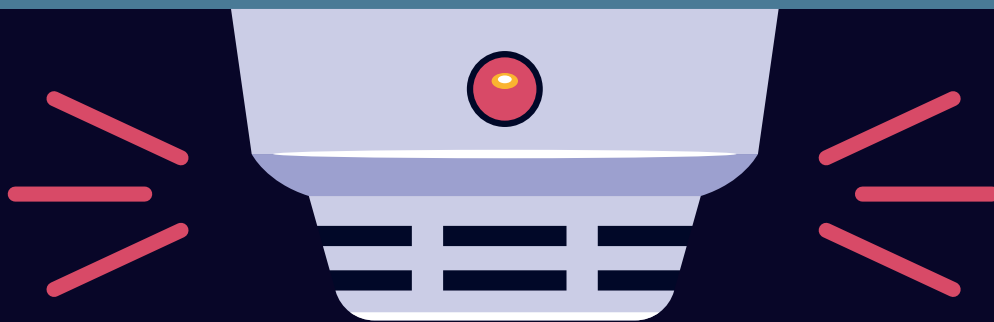
- How the initial investigation will be carried out
- How you can work with us to provide the necessary evidence
- The most appropriate way we can resolve things in a realistic way; and,
- How often you will be contacted by your preferred method of communication throughout.

We always aim to resolve cases quickly and efficiently, but antisocial behaviour can be a complex, lengthy process so it can sometimes be difficult to give accurate timescales.

We will work alongside agency partners, such as the police and local councils, to solve issues as quickly as possible.

Contact us in confidence

www.yourhousinggroup.co.uk/reportasb



Test your smoke alarm

Make sure you have at least **one** working smoke alarm fitted, **on every level** of your home

**Test your alarm(s)
every week**

**Know your Fire
Evacuation Plan**

During warmer weather, it's important to remember that balconies should not be used for BBQs or fire pits at any time.

Never store flammable items such as gas canisters on there and if you smoke, use a safe ashtray and never flick cigarettes off the side.



If there is a fire in your home or building call 999

We've been getting Out & About...



OUT AND ABOUT
Your

Part of our Customer Connect Promise

As part of our Customer Connect promise, we've been hitting the road and coming to see you.

We committed to being more visible and offering you a variety of ways to communicate with us – so we hope our Out & About days do just that!

Who'll be there?

Over the coming months, we'll be visiting different areas where you'll be able to drop in and talk to colleagues who work in areas covering:

- Housing
- Money advice
- Customer engagement
- Rent
- Your Home Hub
- Home improvements
- Repairs
- Building safety.

Ensuring that you can communicate and engage with us in a way that suits you is something we are working hard to improve as we want everyone to be treated with respect and fairness.

Dean Slavin, Head of Customer Voice & Insight says,

“As part of our Customer Connect promise, we want to be more visible to you and spend more time talking to you face to face.”

Liverpool, May



Dee

“It was easy to come along today and really helpful having you here to just quickly report any issues. Thank you.”



Ian

“I want some changes to make life easier for my partner. We want to do things right so we've come today to find out what the next steps are. It's been really useful.”

Warrington, June



Janet

“This drop in has been really useful! I've discussed two jobs with your team and I'm really pleased someone is coming out to help me!”

Staffordshire, July

Upcoming visits

Thursday 17 August
LANCASHIRE

Wednesday 13 September
MANCHESTER

Our next two dates are in Lancashire and Manchester with further details coming soon. To find out more, please visit

www.yourhousinggroup.co.uk/outandabout

Our latest STAR survey results

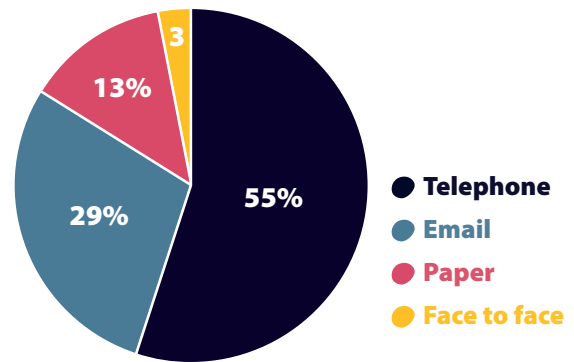


Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete our regular Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR).

We carried out the survey in a variety of ways to try to reach as many people as possible.

The STAR survey is carried out periodically using the Housemark set questions, which is one of the UK housing sector's largest membership organisations, so that we can benchmark ourselves against previous years, and others.

We also included questions this time to support the new Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) that have been introduced, all of which will help us better understand how we can improve and identify what we are doing well.



We've got better!

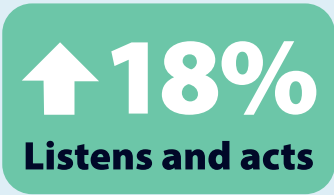
The good news for both you and us, is that we have made improvements for the third year in a row and we now have an

overall level of satisfaction

of **72%**.

On the up

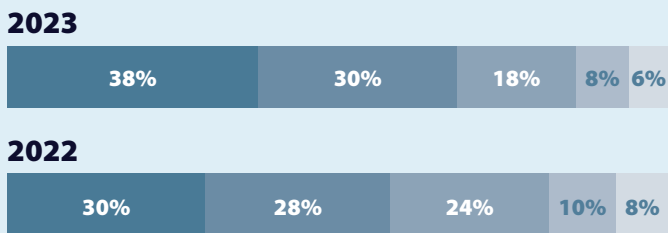
We've also seen that more of you feel we handle antisocial behaviour better, more of you think we listen to you and act on what we hear and more of you say we treat you fairly.



Antisocial behaviour

More of you also told us that antisocial behaviour is less of an issue than last year.

Do you worry about ASB in your area?



- Not at all
- A little
- A moderate amount
- A lot
- A great deal

And almost half you questioned said that you are **not worried at all** about being a victim of crime.

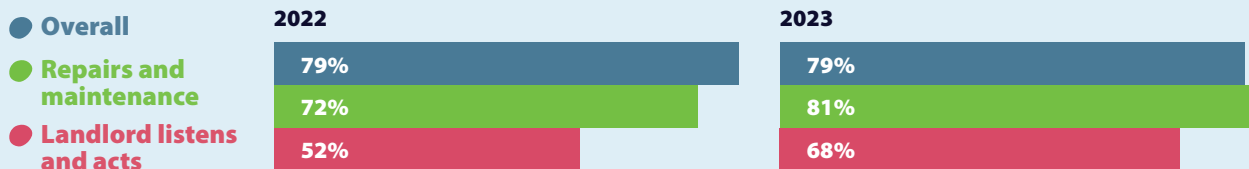


Not worried at all about being a victim of crime

Our latest STAR survey results continued...

What type of home you live in

Our later living (for those aged 55+) team saw their overall satisfaction stay solid at 79%, but both satisfaction with repairs, and feeling heard, went up!



Supported Housing – our homes for young people, those at risk of homelessness or fleeing domestic abuse – achieved 90% satisfaction for the second year in a row!

And last but not least, in our general homes, overall satisfaction went UP by 5% since last year.

Please be assured, however, that we know there is still plenty of work to do.

Our repairs service results remain in the high 60s%, which is not where we want to be. Plus, we still have work to do on how we handle complaints as less than a third of you who made a complaint were satisfied which is not good enough.



Congratulations to our prize draw winners!

Melanie G, Wigan
Christine M, Warrington
Jacob S, Chester
David C, Liverpool

Everyone who completes a STAR survey with us is in with a chance of winning a £50 Love 2 Shop voucher!

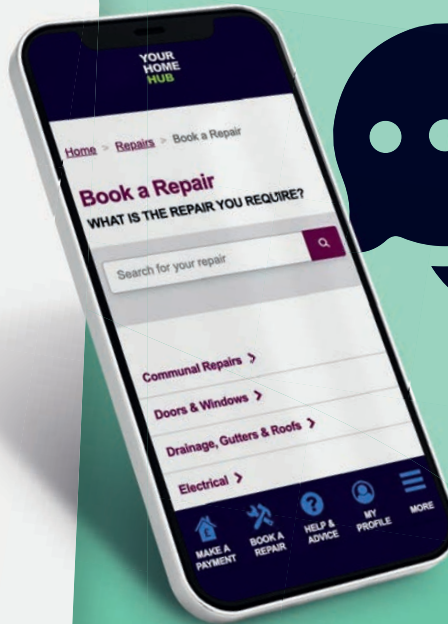
You said, we did ...

! Issue ✓ Solution

! You said you wanted more from Your Home Hub.

✓ We have now updated it to:

- Send a confirmation email once a repair booking is made
- Allow you to upload pictures of the issue you're reporting
- Allow you to be able to amend an appointment
- Offer more tick box options to try to avoid you having to write too much.



! You fed back that our complaints system wasn't quite working for you.

✓ Following a full review, a central complaints team will now handle all complaints and we are also growing this team.

Regular 'Lessons Learnt' sessions also take place to review how a complaint was handled and discuss ways to improve.

! You'd like it to be easier to arrange follow-up jobs for repairs.

✓ Using the latest technology, follow-on jobs are now arranged and booked in before the operative leaves your home.

Claiming Child or Working Tax Credits?

Living in Cheshire or Greater Manchester?

Universal Credit (UC) is now being rolled out across Cheshire and Greater Manchester, and will replace Child Tax Credits (CTC) and Working Tax Credits (WTC).

What will happen?

When you are due to be swapped over (migrated) you will receive a letter from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) explaining that you will have to move onto UC as your legacy benefits will soon stop within three months.

This is called 'managed migration'.

You will need to get any information and evidence, such as identity documents, so that you can make your claim. This is all detailed in the information you will receive from the DWP.

Will I receive the same amount of money on my Universal Credit claim as I did on my old Tax Credits claim?

On Universal Credit most Tax Credits claimants who have received a migration notice should expect to receive the same amount of money as they did on their old Tax Credits claim.

If the amount of Universal Credit you receive is less than your Tax Credits claim, then you may be eligible to receive a top up of your Universal Credit payment to the same amount you received on your Tax Credits award.

This top up amount is called **Transitional Protection**. You can only receive a Transitional Protection top up payment if you have received a Migration Notice and you make your new claim for Universal Credit by your deadline date.

Changes in your circumstances before you claim Universal Credit or after you have made your claim may affect the amount of money you receive.

The date you make a new claim for Universal Credit is very important to ensure you receive the right amount of money. You may lose out on money if you make your Universal Credit claim too early or late. Always seek expert advice before making your claim to ensure you claim at the right time and receive the right amount of benefit for your claim.



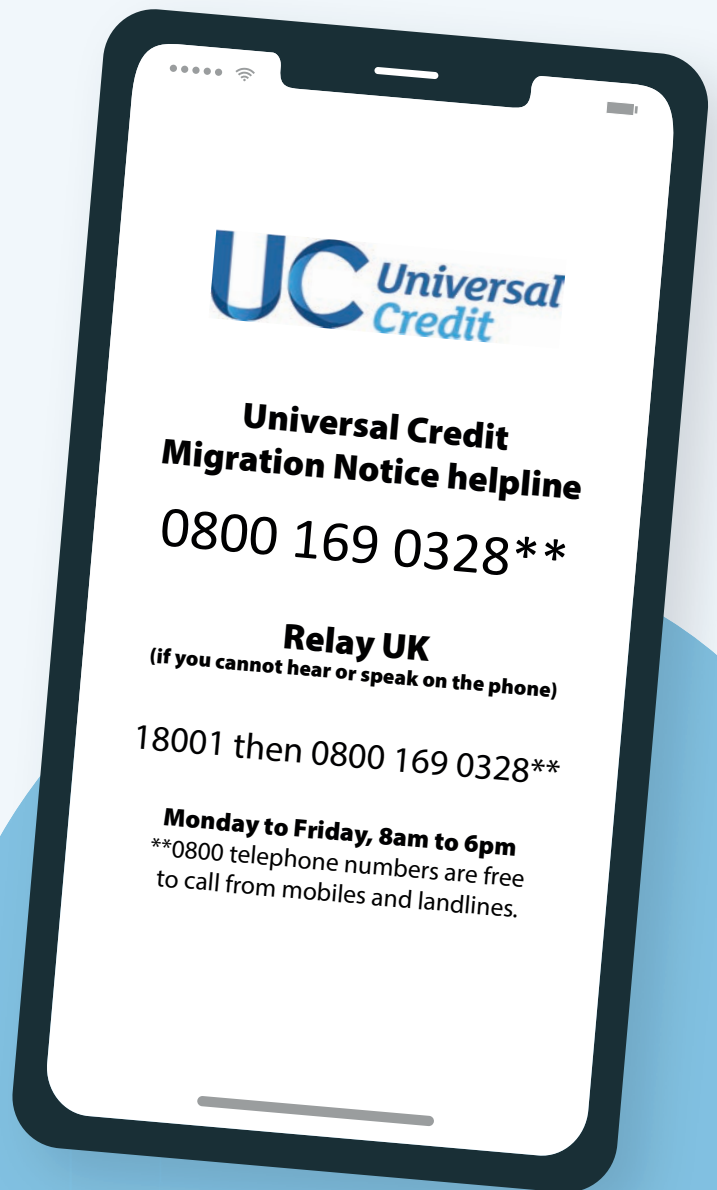


If you can't claim UC by the deadline date given on your letter, you should contact the Universal Credit Migration Notice helpline as soon as possible. You must request an extension before the deadline date on your letter.

What if I cannot make a Universal Credit Claim online?

Some claimants may be able to make a Universal Credit claim by telephone. You can find out further information and help about making a Universal Credit claim by telephone by contacting the Universal Credit Migration Notice helpline.

For more information on changes to Universal Credit please visit www.gov.uk/universal-credit



Our Money Advice Team is here to help!

For further support on making a claim for Universal Credit and understanding Universal Credit Managed Migration contact us on **0345 345 0272** or visit www.yourhousinggroup.co.uk/money-advice

our benefits calculator is also available here to check what benefits you may be entitled to including Universal Credit.

Your policies

We're committed to continuously reviewing and implementing our policies to ensure they are reliable and fair and always support and guide both you as our residents, and our colleagues.

Domestic Abuse Policy

Your safety is our number one priority, which is why earlier this year, we finalised our new Domestic Abuse Policy.

We know domestic violence or abuse can have a devastating impact on peoples' lives; men, women and children, and we want to make it clear how we will respond to anyone suffering from domestic abuse and how we will hold perpetrators to account.

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

It's important to us that we treat everyone fairly and with respect every time we talk, write, meet, or come into contact with you in any way.

Everyone should feel included which is why we recently updated our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Strategy which not only supports the nine protected characteristics, which is essential, but goes above and beyond to make sure no one feels marginalised for any reason, and everyone always feels empowered to use their voice.

We're also now building on our customer service offer to you that already includes offering an interpreter or printed communications in a range of ways, by starting to ask you for information that will ensure we're providing you with the right support at the right time in the right way for you.



You can read all our latest policies at www.yourhousinggroup.co.uk/policies

Disability Awareness Day

We were pleased to sponsor this year's Disability Awareness Day held at Warrington's Walton Hall and Gardens. Around 25,000 people visit each year as this is the only event of its kind in the whole country – and in fact it's the **'world's largest 'not for profit' voluntary-led disability exhibition'**.

The aim of the event is to promote what disabled people **can** do, rather than **can't** do, and showcase some of the amazing services and equipment and aids that can ensure people can maintain their independence for as long as possible.

We joined 200 exhibitors on the day with our two stalls for general information including our aids and adaptations service, repairs and queries – which we hope everyone who attended found useful. Others there offered equipment, transport, holidays, leisure and support with employment performing arts marquee, arts and crafts and family entertainment.



Community news



Tricycle fun for our Chinese residents!

The Wai Yin Society has helped and encouraged our Cantonese speaking residents, and many Chinese families who have lived in the city for over 25 years. We proudly work with them on many projects, and one of those is the **Manchester Dragon Cycling Club** at the **Shueng Lok centre**.

We recently relaunched the club and brought in the new tricycle which is great to help with balance and safety and after cutting the launch ribbon, the cycling group set off on a bike ride around **Gartside Gardens** in Manchester.

Mrs Sau Ling Wong, one of our residents was one of the first to try the new tricycle, said, *"I joined the cycling activities to exercise more and make new friends."*

Ms Kwan Leung, another resident, also has joined the cycling activities to *"enhance her physical and mental wellbeing."*



Alpaca Therapy

Teddy & Carlos made an appearance at Oak Priory in Staffordshire recently as these lovely animals are known for their calming nature, making them the perfect therapy animals to visit our residents!

Some residents are unable to leave our over 55s development so everyone was able to interact with the alpacas, pet and cuddle them, including those with dementia.

Scheme Manager, **Karen Shenton**, said *'I went home very happy that day knowing that all the team at Oak Priory had brought so many smiles to people's faces, by taking an hour or so out of our day made other people's day better. We made a difference and that's what matters.'*



Do you want to make your voice heard on behalf of all our customers?

We're currently looking for **Customer Connect Panel** and **Customer Scrutiny Panel** members so if you're interested in making a difference, we would love to hear from you.

Customer Connect Panel (CCP)

A role on the CCP means ensuring the customer voice is being heard loud and clear, both within our neighbourhoods and about the services we offer and how we offer them.

Customer Scrutiny Panel (CSP)

The CSP work with us to carry out reviews of different services we offer. This is an invaluable role that helps to ensure we continually improve.

An example of how the CSP has worked with us recently includes recommendations made to us for grounds maintenance, which we are now starting to build into our service.

Roles are available for both panels and open to all our tenants and leaseholders.

What's in it for me?

You will:

- Acquire new skills and experience
- Enjoy social interaction with other customers and become part of a team
- Be able to meet mainly online from the comfort of your home
- Get expenses and lunch if we meet in person.

To find out more, please get in touch with Chris Quigg, Customer Scrutiny Manager at yourvoice@yourhousinggroup.co.uk

Clair
Stockport



A special thanks to our amazing customers!

When we say we can't do it without you, this is one of those things! We recently asked all of our residents if you'd be open to letting us into your home to take photographs, so that we can use our real residents in their real homes to show what we're all about!

We care about representing you, hearing you and being honest about what we do. And this is all about you! [#YouMatter](#)

Thank you for welcoming us into your homes!



Michael
Liverpool



Esther
Bolton



Kevin
Runcorn

Tivoli buys Greenfingers



One of our gardening contractors Greenfingers, has been taken over by Tivoli. Greenfingers decided to sell to Tivoli as they believe being part of a larger national company can provide greater expertise, support, and investment opportunities.

Who does this affect?

Greenfingers looked after our residents whose grounds we managed in the **Manchester** and **Yorkshire** areas. However, if this is you, you shouldn't notice any changes day to day, other than seeing the Tivoli vans around instead of Greenfingers. If this does affect you, you will have received a letter from us directly.



Grass cutting and mulching

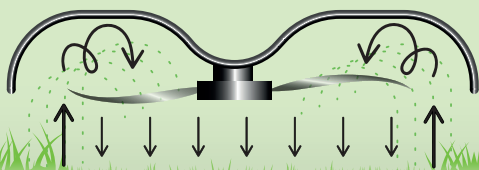
Reminder! If we cut your grass, we don't collect the cuttings, as this is not only unnecessary, but it may actually be counterproductive to growing a healthy lawn.

The clippings, when left in place, will provide a ready source of fertiliser, whilst also helping the soil retain water. This promotes root growth and a healthy lawn.

The mulching blade is totally different to a grass collection blade. The mulching blade cuts and re-cuts the grass clipping into tiny particles. These small particles are blown downwards, out of sight.

These tiny slivers of grass will breakdown within hours, depositing key nutrients (i.e., nitrogen, potash, and phosphate) back into the lawn allowing micro-organisms and worms to carry these nutrients back into the soil.

For more information about looking after your gardens, outdoor spaces, and nature, please visit www.yourhousinggroup.co.uk/grounds-maintenance



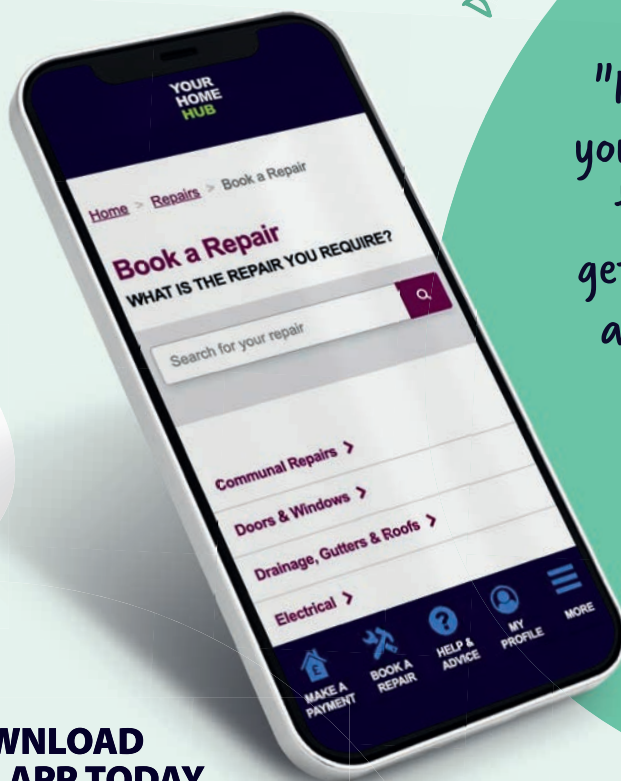
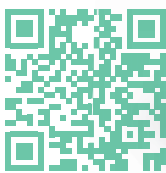
**YOUR
HOME
HUB**

Book & change a repair, without being on hold.

Anytime, anywhere.

Don't just take our word for it ...

Scan me



"It's so much easier than you think! It's much faster than phoning and you get your appointment day and time slot confirmed straight away. "

- Debbie, Customer

**YOUR
HOME
HUB**

**DOWNLOAD
THE APP TODAY**
It's convenient!



Contents insurance

Your Housing Group only insures your building and not your belongings inside.

This is standard with most rental properties, so don't forget to insure all your possessions, otherwise you may not be covered for things such as:

- Damage caused by flood
- Damage caused by fire
- Stolen items (burglary)
- Accidental damaged

There are lots of insurance companies, so always shop around.



My Home
Contents Insurance

www.thistlemyhome.co.uk

We've teamed up with **Thistle My Home** too, who offer insurance designed for tenants.

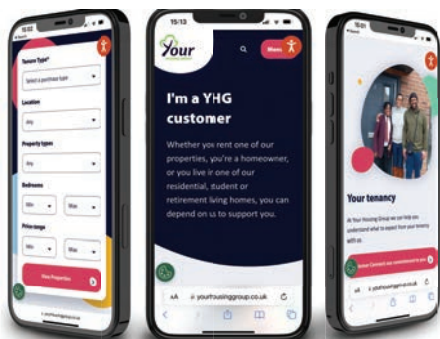
Visit www.yourhousinggroup.co.uk/movingin or call 0345 450 7288

NATIONAL
HOUSING
FEDERATION

Preferred
Supplier

New website.

We hope you like the new look and feel, but mainly that you can find what you're looking for!



www.yourhousinggroup.co.uk



If you have any feedback or suggestions, we'd love to hear from you.

Email us at engage@yourhousinggroup.co.uk

Thank you to our customers who helped feedback, test and shape your new website. Built with purpose to help us help you.