

# Connect Housing

## Coronavirus and Rent Payments FAQ's

Updated: 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020

### I normally visit you for enquiries or to pay my rent. Can I still do this?

The Government advice is changing frequently and lockdown rules have been easing recently, though they vary regionally. As such we have taken the decision to keep our offices closed for now. Please check our website for any changes to this.

If you need to pay your rent you can telephone the office and pay over the phone easily, however we also have many other ways you can pay your rent.

Full details are on our website <https://www.connecthousing.org.uk/your-home/pay-rent/>

### I have lost my job or my hours have reduced and I am worried about paying the rent and other bills?

**Please contact us immediately if you are going to struggle to pay your rent.** We have always taken a flexible and supportive approach to working with tenants who face financial hardship. We aim to help you find solutions to be able to keep your tenancy secure.

Our **Money Matters Team** can help you (over the phone) by offering:

- help to apply for any benefits you may be entitled to
- help in managing changes in your income
- access to food bank voucher
- help link you to additional support
- access to a hardship payment in an emergency

Contact us by email on [moneymatters@connecthousing.ork.uk](mailto:moneymatters@connecthousing.ork.uk), via the website or on 0300 5000 600. **Don't delay – the sooner you face this the better we can help you.**

### Who and how do I contact you to speak about my rent?

You can contact us in a variety of ways. The best way is to call us on 0300 5000 600 and ask to speak to your Rent Accounting Officer or you may speak to one of the Housing Liaison Officers who take incoming calls.

You can also contact us in one of the following ways:

**Online** – this can be done anytime [here](#).

**Email** – to [RentAccounting@connecthousing.org.uk](mailto:RentAccounting@connecthousing.org.uk)

## Will I get evicted for rent arrears caused by the Coronavirus?

We will not evict anyone due to rent arrears caused by the Coronavirus. All we ask is that you work with Our Income Team on a plan to get your payments back on track eventually.

## I am worried about paying my gas and electricity bills and topping up my pre-payment.

The Government has launched an emergency package with energy suppliers to ensure no-one faces any additional hardships in heating or lighting their home during the coronavirus outbreak. This package covers both credit and prepayment meter customers – and it includes a range of options from debt repayment plans to hardship funds where necessary.

Importantly, the government has also asked energy suppliers not to disconnect anyone on a credit meter during the outbreak.

If you have a smart meter, you can often top up online or over the phone – check your supplier's website. If not, try to top up your meter more than you usually would in case you need to self-isolate.

You will find more details on the Ofgem website.

<https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-covid-19-and-your-energy-supply>

If you are struggling financially, our Money Matters team can help you to claim benefits and deal with utility suppliers so get in contact with us.