



MANCHESTER
CITY COUNCIL

Housing Services

Resident's Handbook



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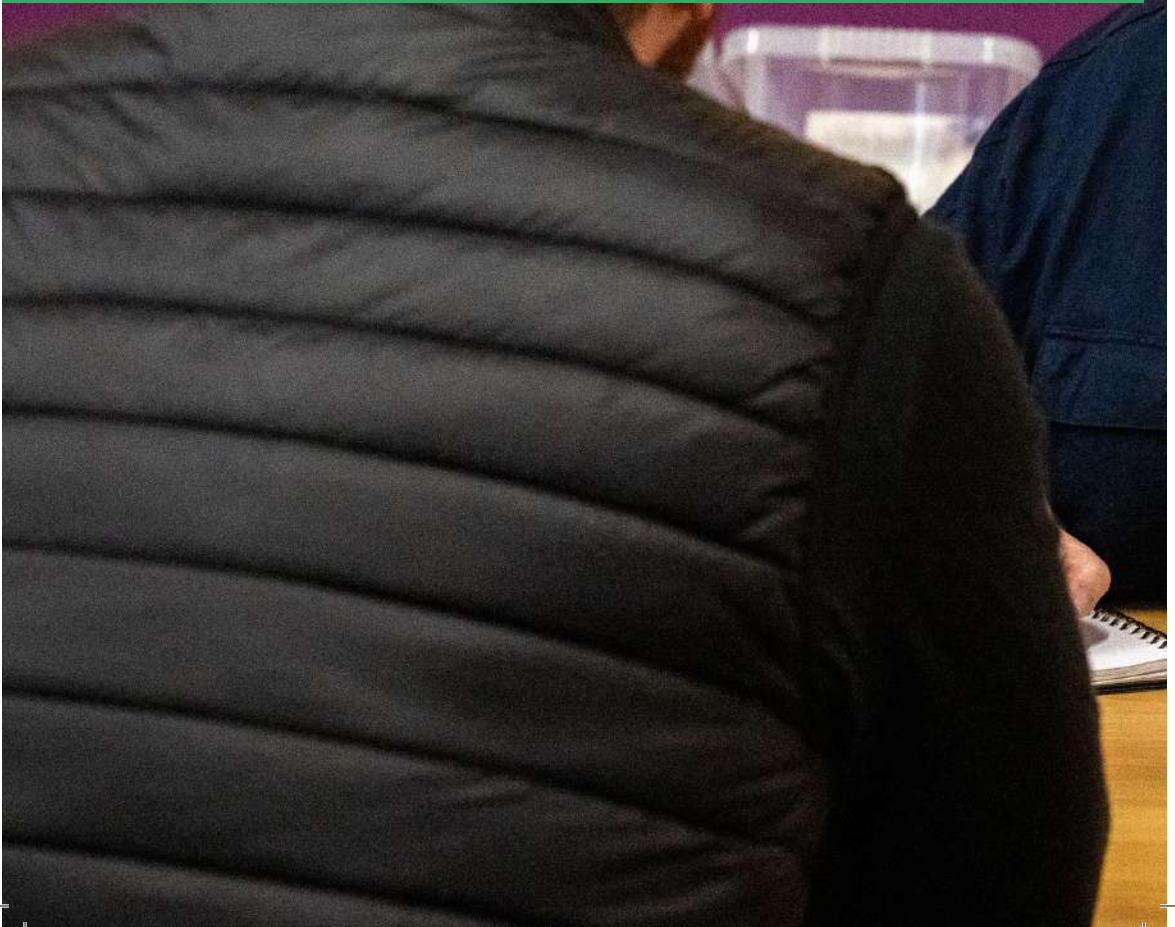
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You

Resident-led services, putting you
at the heart of everything we do







Welcome to your new home!

A bit about us...

We are the housing services department of Manchester City Council. We are responsible for the management of around 13,000 council homes, delivering resident-led housing services that are high on quality and value for Council tenants.

Our housing strategy "A Place Called Home" is built around our key priorities for housing services.

These are:

You

Resident-led services, putting you at the heart of everything we do

Your Home

High-quality housing services and home improvements for secure, warm, sustainable homes

Your Neighbourhood

Welcoming, safe and vibrant neighbourhoods



This handbook explains a bit more about what you can expect from us. Keep this together with your tenancy agreement in a safe place so you can refer to them when you need to.

If you want more information about anything in this handbook, visit: mcchousingservices.co.uk

Or contact us via:

Our Facebook page:

facebook.com/MCCHousingServices

Website:

mcchousingservices.co.uk



Enjoy your new home!



Rent

There are lots of ways to pay your rent:

Standing order

If you bank online, log onto your account and follow the instructions for setting up a standing order. You'll need our details:

sort code: 20-55-58

account number: 53348075

Online

Visit our website and register to use 'My Account'. Once you've registered, you can use your card to pay your rent online.

All you need is your tenancy reference and an email address. You can see your rent statement here too.

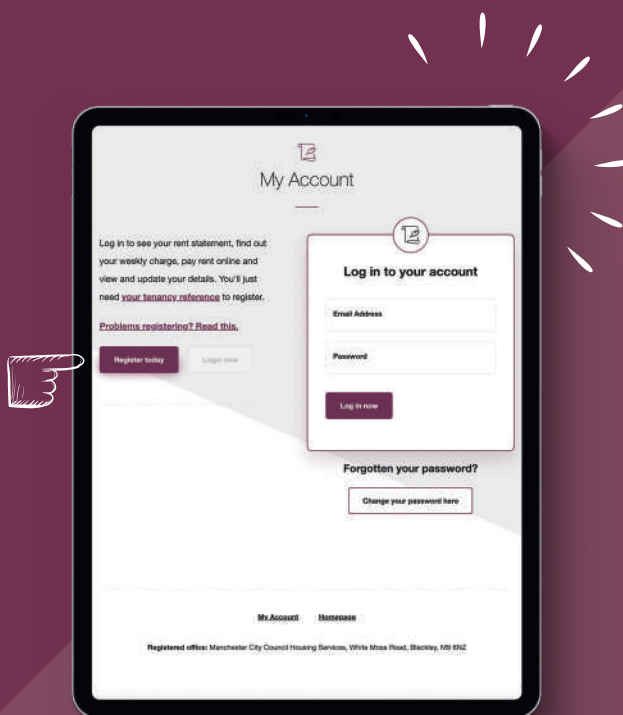
Post Office

Use your rent card to pay at any Post Office.

PayPoint

You can pay by PayPoint in lots of local shops.

Visit paypoint.com and enter your postcode to find your nearest one.



By phone

Call 0161 234 5006 to pay by debit card, using the automated service. It is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Have your tenancy reference number handy and follow the step-by-step instructions.

If you can't use an automated telephone service, call 03000 123 123, 8.45am - 4.30pm, Monday to Friday.

Telebanking

Ask your bank how to do this. You will need our details:

sort code: 20-55-58

account number: 53348075

We are rolling out the option to pay by Direct Debit. When you sign up you will be offered this as a payment method. If you became a tenant before this service was available, you can easily set up a Direct Debit instruction by calling us on 03000 123 123 or visiting our website.



Help with money

Our Money Matters team can help you to make the most of your money.

They can help with:

- Sorting out debt problems
- Checking benefits and making sure you're getting everything you're entitled to
- Budgeting – so you can keep on top of your bills
- Helping you to open a bank account

The team offer one to one support and advice. If you would like to talk to them you can contact them via our website:

mcchousingservices.co.uk/moneymatters

**If you prefer you can call Citizens Advice Manchester
on 0808 278 7800**

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Do it online

Our website can help you to manage your tenancy.

Here you can:

- view your rent statement online
- pay rent online
- update your details
- Order a repair

Join the conversation

Social media is a great way for us to keep in touch with you. You can tell us what you think, share interesting news and find out more about what we're up to by following us:

 facebook.com/MCCHousingServices

 youtube.com/@MCCHousingServices





Sara Auty, Saz Media for Manchester City Council



Get involved

Hearing your views and opinions helps us shape our services and make things better.

We know that involving people in managing their homes, estates and communities is vital for us to deliver better housing services and improve the quality of life for local people.



Getting involved gives you the chance to take part in local decisions about how we do things, and there are lots of ways you can have your say, you can even do this from the comfort of your own home.

Our engagement network gets involved at all levels, from completing surveys to help us improve processes and services, to taking part in our Readers Panel. This is a group of residents who are keen to make sure the information we share is accessible for all.

They look over letters and other forms of communication to make sure they are jargon-free and relevant to residents who receive them. You don't need to attend a meeting to join this group, we will send you things we feel need a closer look.



Your Voice Scrutiny Pool

Your Voice is our resident-led scrutiny group.

The group is made up of local residents with an interest in improving housing services, just like Kathryn, pictured, who is keen to make sure services are fair and equal for residents with disabilities.

They recommend areas for review and suggest service improvements. They examine our policies to make sure they have residents at the heart of everything we do. We offer a training program to all new members.

Our members are also invited to housing-related conferences and seminars. We offer reimbursement for travel and out of pocket expenses.

Membership is flexible, you can attend our regular monthly meetings to discuss specific issues or you can dive in to more in-depth projects if you have the time and commitment.

Interested?

If you're looking for a new challenge, to learn new skills, or be around like-minded people who want to make a difference, please visit our website to find out more.





A man with glasses and a red polo shirt is standing outdoors, smiling. He is wearing black trousers and white sneakers. The background shows green foliage.

Your Voice Monthly Forums

You can also take part in the Your Voice monthly forums. These give you the chance to tell us what you think about a particular policy or issue.

You can attend as many meetings as you like and you will receive feedback after each one explaining how your views have been implemented.

Your feedback and opinions play a crucial role in the work we do. By sharing your thoughts, ideas, and suggestions with us, you help us improve our services and contribute to shaping the future of MCC Housing Services.

Hobin's Community Fund

We are also keen to support ideas residents have about improving their communities. We have a dedicated fund to provide the help and tools needed to bring dreams to reality.

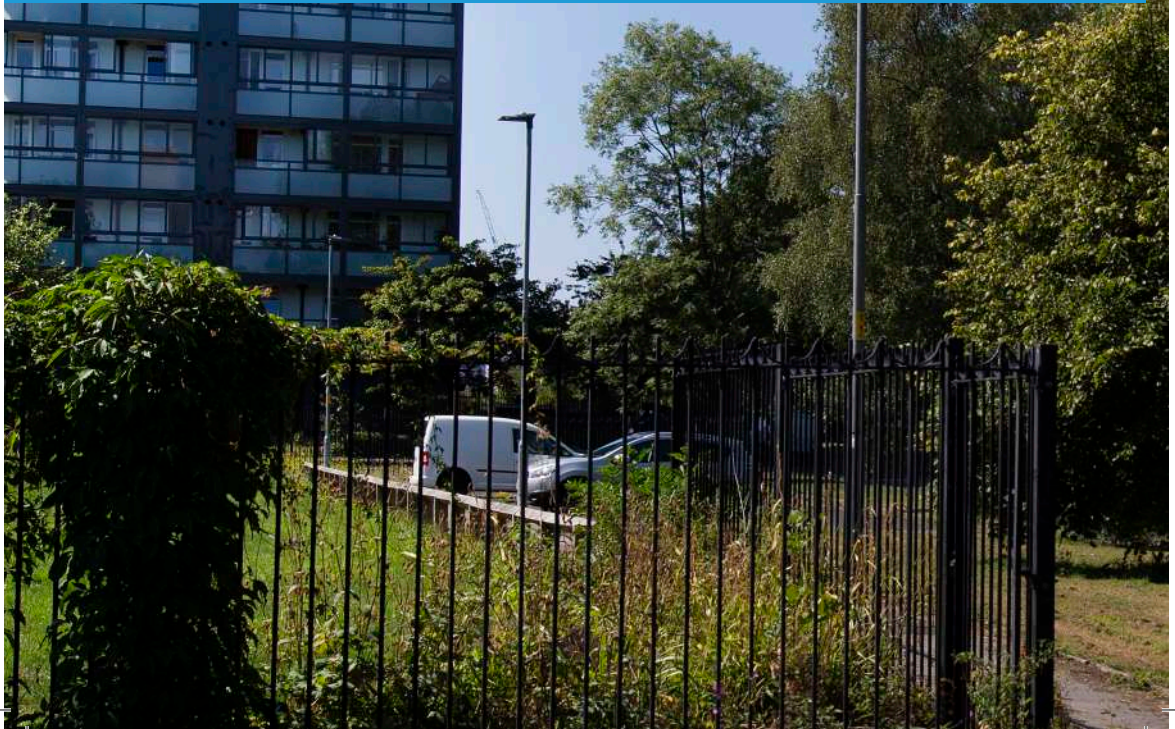
Our Hobin's Community Fund gives people the chance to put ideas into action, whilst giving residents the opportunity to vote for what's important to them. We also work closely with Tenants and Residents Groups to ensure any funding available is used effectively to support our communities.

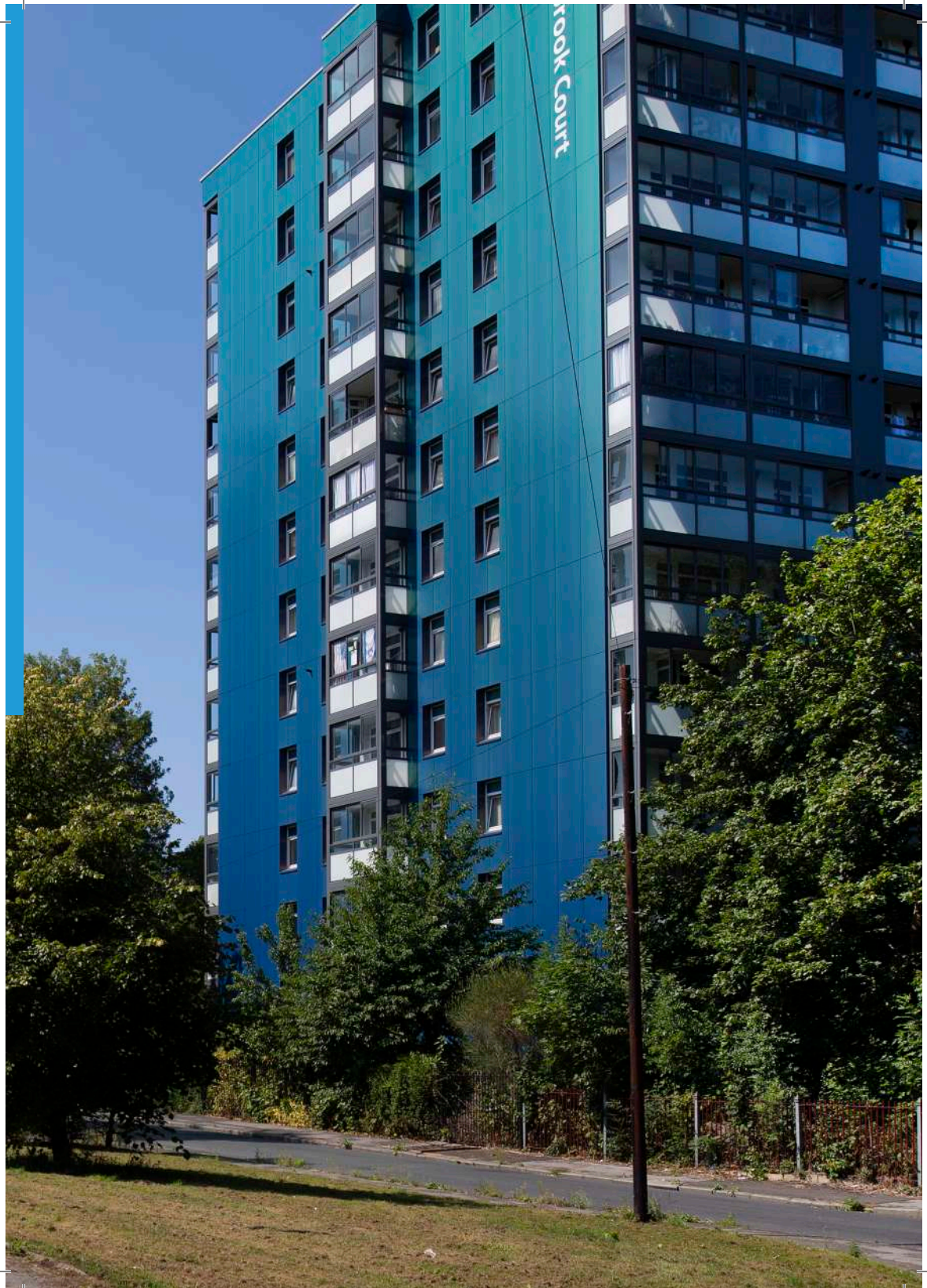
Visit our website to find out how to apply.



Your Home

High-quality housing services and home improvements for secure, warm, sustainable homes.







Repairs



For general repairs, there are lots of appointment times to choose from.

Monday to Friday

8am-11am, 10am-1pm,
12pm-3pm, 2pm-5pm

Here's what to do:

Click

You can order repairs on our website.
Visit mcchousingservices.co.uk/repairs

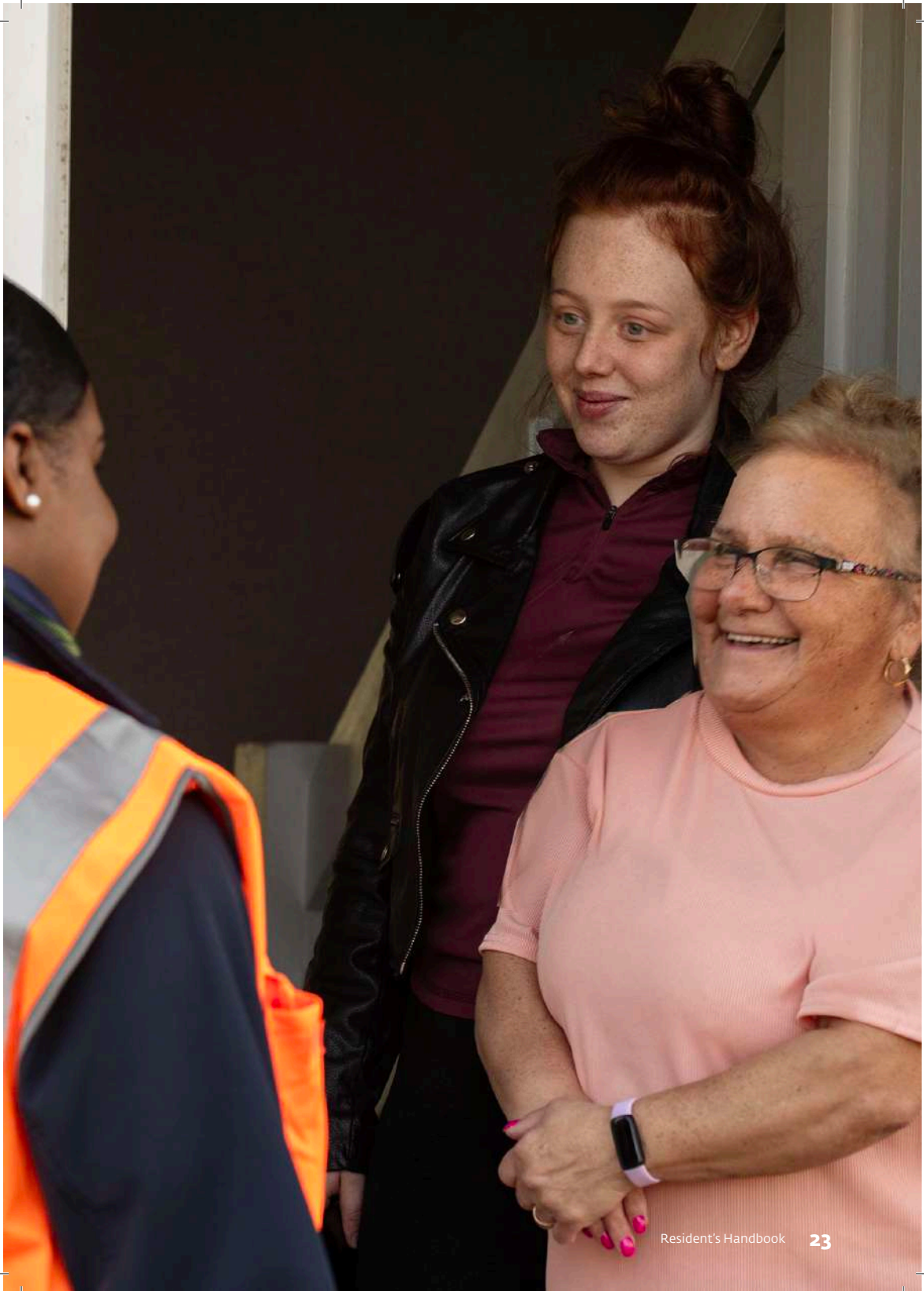
Call

You can also call us on 03000 123 123 Monday-Friday,
8.45am-4.30pm.

(You can also phone this number outside of these hours if it's an emergency i.e. where there is a danger to health or safety)

For emergency repairs, we will be there within three hours if you report it between 8am and 5pm. Otherwise we will be there the next day, unless waiting this long would cause severe hardship or damage.





Our repairs service standard sets out what you can expect from our repairs service.

We worked with our repairs contractor, Equans and Your Voice (our resident scrutiny group) to develop a repairs and maintenance service standard residents can rely on.

We are committed to listening to you, to understand what you need from your services and how those services need to be delivered.

We will also:

- Treat you fairly, according to your needs, whatever your age, nationality, ethnic origin, disability, gender or sexual orientation
- Keep you informed
- Take a right-first-time approach
- Provide you with a good-quality, consistent service

Our contractors will:

- Introduce themselves, tell you what they have come to work on and how long it should take
- Wear a uniform and photo ID
- Provide dust sheets, wear-over shoes and clean up properly after they have finished the job
- Check you have no other repair issues
- Keep disruption to an absolute minimum
- Take pictures before and after their work to show it was completed correctly and that they have cleaned up properly.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US

Before you move in

We will inspect your home and carry out any work to ensure it is safe, secure and ready for you to move in.

After you've moved in

We will continue to carry out repairs and maintenance in line with this service standard, to keep your home in good condition.

What we expect from you

- To keep your home and garden in good condition
- To always report any repairs or damage to your home, including external and shared areas as soon as you notice them
- To let us in to your home to carry out repairs, inspections, maintenance and annual servicing
- To treat our staff and contractors with respect
- You can find the full service standard on our website.





Safety checks

To keep you warm and safe, we check your gas appliances every year.

We need to do this by law. It's FREE and we check your smoke alarm at the same time.

Before we come, we'll write to you with an appointment. If it's not convenient, just get in touch and we can arrange a better time.

We also check the electrics in your home every five years. This is to make sure your home meets the current electrical safety regulations.

If you keep missing the appointment, we will force our way into your home to do the check. This is expensive and causes damage which we will charge you for.

To say thanks to all those tenants who keep their first appointment with us, we enter their name into a prize draw. Every month, three households win £300 in shopping vouchers.

Always ask to see ID before you let an engineer in.





Fire Safety



If you have a gas supply, we'll check your smoke alarm during your gas safety check, but you should also get into the habit of checking it weekly yourself. If you suspect it's not working, contact us.

Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service can also carry out free Safe and Well visits to homes. They will:



Identify potential fire risks



Advise you on how to reduce or prevent the risks



Help you to work out an escape plan in case a fire breaks out



Fit extra smoke alarms if you need them



Also help with crime prevention and health advice

Call the fire service on 0800 555 815 to book an appointment.

In the event of a fire

If you live in a block of flats and you discover a fire in a flat or common area, you should:



Alert all occupants of the flat



Do not use the lift



Leave the building by the nearest exit



Call 999 and ask for the fire service

Other occupants not directly affected by the fire should:



Stay put in their flat unless directed to leave by the fire service



Do not return to the building until instructed to do so by the fire service

If your home is a single dwelling, you should take the following action:



Leave the building by the nearest exit



Call 999 and ask for the fire service



Do not return to the building until instructed to do so by the fire service



Live in a multi-storey block?

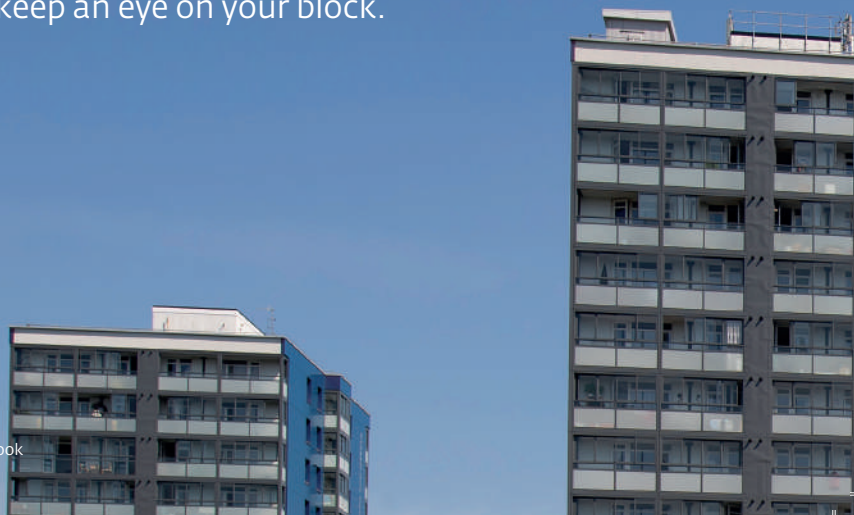
Here's what you can expect from your caretaker...

Our caretakers make sure your block is clean and safe. As well as cleaning all your communal areas and checking lifts and lights are in good working order, they also ensure the block is safe and free from hazards. They also manage waste disposal and promote recycling.

They welcome new residents to the block and help vulnerable residents who may need a bit of extra help.

They make sure the information boards are up to date and keep the communal gardens free of litter.

If your caretaker is on holiday or unwell, we'll send another caretaker to keep an eye on your block.





Residents Building Safety Forum

The Residents Building Safety Forum focuses on issues that relate to spread of fire, smoke and structural safety. You can attend one meeting or every meeting and you will receive feedback after each one on the changes that have been made because of your feedback. By sharing your thoughts, ideas, and suggestions with us, you help us improve our services and contribute to shaping the future of MCC High Rise Building Safety.

Forums take place every 6-8 weeks, each Building Safety Forum is open to residents living in high rise blocks. We explore one policy area or issue per meeting. Outcomes from these groups are published online and on communal noticeboards.

Building and Fire Safety Drop-ins

For specific block or area issues, fire and building safety drop-ins give you the chance to meet professionals on-site and receive additional safety information.

These take place at each block group twice a year, you will be notified that they are taking place beforehand by letter and poster on communal noticeboards. Outcomes from these sessions will be posted on the noticeboard at each block.



Clifford Lamb Court



Independent Living

Live in an Independent Living Scheme? Your Independent Living Officer is there to help you live a full and independent life.

There are lots of ways they can help, from getting to you quickly if there is an emergency to setting up social activities – anything from theatre trips to fit clubs.

They can also help set up a support plan for you to make sure you get all the help you need if there's a problem.

Your Independent Living Officer will also support another property, they will be on site daily and can offer advice and information on a range of matters. Don't hesitate to contact yours.





Insured?



It is your responsibility to insure the contents of your home. What would you do if there was a fire, flood, or theft in your home? If your clothes, furniture, and gadgets were damaged or destroyed, could you afford to replace them?

Having adequate home contents insurance in place ensures your belongings are protected and you can get back on your feet more quickly if something happened.

We've agreed a special insurance rate for tenants with Aviva.

You can choose what cover you need depending on your circumstances. Options include:

- Full Accidental Damage
- Personal Belongings Cover
- Pedal cycles
- Wheelchairs/Mobility Scooters
- Hearing Aids

Hire purchase items are covered too.

**To find out more,
visit mcchousingservices.co.uk/insurance**





Energy Efficiency

We are working hard to make sure properties in north Manchester are energy efficient.

We know that one in five of our residents is living in fuel poverty.

We can work with you to make sure the inside of your home is warm and your bills are affordable.

Our energy advice expert has loads of tips. They help residents find better energy deals and can also show you how making quick and easy changes around the home can save you a lot of money.

Smart Meters

We support the smart meter roll-out and can tell you more about smart meters which show how much energy you're using and what it's costing.

To find out more visit our website or call 03000 123 123 to book an appointment.





The world is going digital

You can claim benefits and pay your rent online. If you need to claim Universal Credit, this must be done online.

We can help residents get online. We can show you how to use computers, find the best deals and if you're looking for cheap broadband, we can help you find it.

Call 03000 123 123 to make an appointment.

You can also find help and support at your local library.







Your Neighbourhood

Welcoming, safe and
vibrant neighbourhoods







Your neighbourhood

You can do your bit to help us keep your area clean and well-managed:

- Keep your garden tidy and dispose of rubbish properly
- Put your bin out on the morning of the collection day and bring it in on the same day
- Report dumped rubbish at manchester.gov.uk
- Report abandoned vehicles to the police on 101

Meet your Housing Officer...

Our Housing Officers are part of your community. They have a strong presence in your neighbourhood and spend their time getting to know residents and finding out what's important to them.

They carry out regular estate walkabouts, addressing environmental issues and support local councillor surgeries. They also visit every resident at home every two years to conduct a more in-depth review of their needs.

These visits offer us a chance to meet residents who might otherwise go unsupported so we can look at the ways we can meet their needs better.

You can find out who your housing officer is and when they will be carrying out an estate walkabout in your area by visiting mcchousingservices.co.uk





Waste and recycling

There are measures in place to help us reduce the amount of rubbish we throw away.

Every household is provided with bins to help sort rubbish correctly.

The following items will not be collected or emptied:

- Rubbish left on the street
- Overflowing bins
- Recycling bins with the wrong things in

You will be fined if you don't dispose of your rubbish properly.

To report fly-tipping visit manchester.gov.uk

Here you can also order replacement bins, and find out your collection day.

Which bin for which waste?

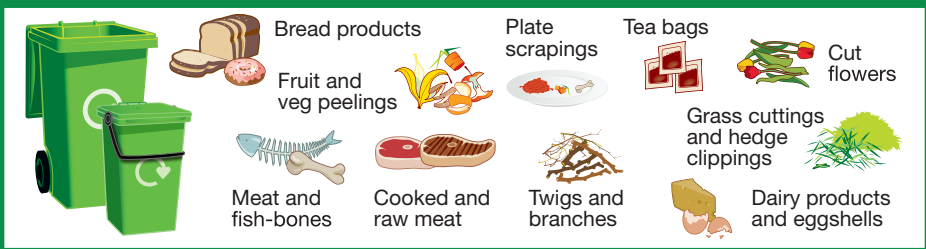
What goes in your BLUE bin:



What goes in your BROWN bin:



What goes in your GREEN bin:



Some things we can't recycle:





Anti-social behaviour

We believe everybody has the right to live in a happy and healthy environment.

But sometimes there are people who cause problems for their neighbours and spoil things for others. We will act quickly to stop anti-social behaviour (ASB).



If you feel you are in immediate danger, you must call the police on 999. And for urgent help you can use the live chat facility on their website.

If there is no immediate danger, the easiest way to report ASB is by visiting mcchousingservices.co.uk or calling us on 03000 123 123.

ASB comes in many different forms – from serious acts of violence and harassment, to more everyday incidents like noisy dogs and overgrown gardens. Whatever the problem, we take all complaints seriously.

Hate crime

ASB can come in the form of hate crime. This is when the ASB has happened because of your race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, gender identity, disability or alternative subculture. We do not tolerate hate crime in any form.

Tackling ASB

Your tenancy agreement states that you are responsible for your own behaviour and the behaviour of anyone living with you or visiting your home. This means we will take action against not only residents acting anti-socially but also their children or visitors.



Safeguarding

If you're worried about a neighbour or someone else, we can help.

We work in partnership with other agencies to protect children and adults from abuse, harm and neglect. The work we do around this is called 'safeguarding'.

If you have concerns about the welfare of a child or adult then there are a number of things you can do:

- If you suspect that the child or adult is in immediate danger then phone the police on 999
- If you believe that the child or adult needs emergency medical treatment, phone an ambulance on 999
- If there is no immediate risk, contact Manchester City Council on 0161 234 5001 (24 hour service) or email mcsreply@manchester.gov.uk

If you prefer you can speak to your housing officer. They can talk to you about your concerns and share information with other agencies if needed. Not every report turns out to be serious, but we treat each one with the utmost care and respect.

No concern is too small - please get in touch.



Domestic abuse

If you are experiencing domestic abuse from your partner or family member, we can help.

We have a zero tolerance approach to domestic abuse.

You can contact us privately. We will listen to you and there are a number of ways we can help and we will discuss these with you.

In an emergency always call 999

You can also contact the Greater Manchester Domestic Abuse Helpline on 0161 636 7525.



Talk to us...

Customer service is really important to us.

We have set various standards across our business to provide you with the best service possible. You can find out more about these on our website.

We monitor customer satisfaction levels and listen to customer feedback so we can improve our services.

We want to know if we have made a mistake, learn from it and avoid it happening again in the future.

If you are unhappy with our service, you should talk to the office that dealt with you originally. Tell us why you're unhappy and what you want us to do. Usually this will sort the problem out on the spot without you needing to put your complaint in writing.

However, if you're still not happy, fill in a complaints form online or call 03000 123 123 and we will help you. You will get a full response within 10 working days.

We also like to hear from you if we have done something good. If someone has gone the extra mile for you, then please tell us about it.



Tenant Satisfaction Measures

All social housing landlords must carry out an annual satisfaction survey to comply with regulatory requirements. We regularly contact residents to find out how satisfied they are with their home, and the range of services we provide to them as their landlord. This provides us with lots of information about what residents really value, and where we need to do better.



We conduct these surveys through a range of collection methods, which includes telephone, face-to-face, postal, SMS and Internet.

Please give us your views when we get in touch. Your opinions help us to understand where we need to improve services for everyone.

You can see the latest results on our website.



We understand that some people find it difficult to access our services – so we offer various ways to contact us and provide information in different formats.



Reduced or no vision

We can supply magnifiers and use large print for statements and letters.

Reduced or no hearing

We provide hearing loops and type talk phone aids. We can also provide signers.

Difficulties with walking or movement

We fit access ramps to our buildings where possible, as well as wide doorways and accessible toilets for disabled customers.

We are happy to visit you at home to deal with your housing query.

Difficulty understanding English

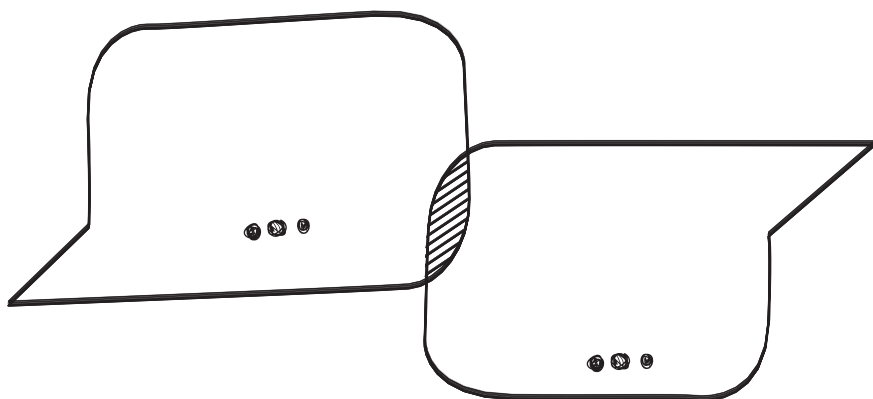
If needed, we can translate important information. We can also provide interpreters to help you speak to us in your own language.

Difficulties communicating

We use plain language to make information easy to read.

We use pictures and symbols to help deaf customers, people with learning disabilities and speakers of other languages.

We can help you fill out forms and read out written information and we treat these requests sensitively.





Got a question?

You can find lots more information about all our services on our website, mcchousingservices.co.uk

You can also:



Call us on 03000 123 123

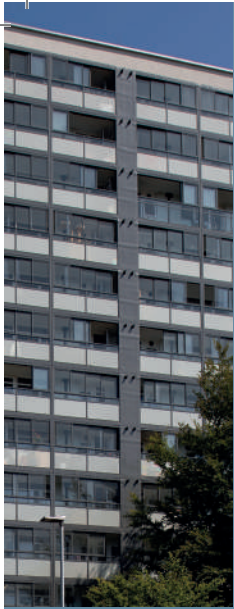


Text 0785 218 2224



Facebook facebook.com/MCCHousingServices





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