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Domestic Abuse Services

For over 40 years, Housing for Women has been supporting women and children in London escaping domestic violence and abuse.

Your new tenant portal launched!

We're excited to announce the launch of our brand-new tenant portal on 30 June! Having listened closely to your feedback, we've worked hard to make it easier, faster, and more convenient to use.



With the new portal, you are now able to:

- + Update your personal details anytime
- + Report repairs quickly and track their progress
- + View your repair history and all your transactions with us
- + Check your rent statements whenever you like
- + Access important documents safely in one place

Before the launch, we shared everything you needed to get started, including clear guides to help you navigate the new system confidently. If you didn't receive these details, please contact our Customer Services Team as soon as possible on **020 7501 6120** or email us at **customerservice@h4w.co.uk**

Exciting changes to our repairs service

In May, Chigwell Group took over as our repairs service provider, replacing MCP.

We are confident that Chigwell Group will provide a high-quality service and work with us to ensure your home remains safe and comfortable. This transition is part of our commitment to delivering the best possible support to our residents.



If you had any questions or concerns, our Customer Service Team is happy to support you:

Call: 020 7501 6120

Email: customerservice@h4w.co.uk

Your rent and service charges

As summer unfolds, we're getting ready for our annual review of rent and service charges - a routine check to make sure everything stays fair and reflects the quality housing services we're committed to providing.

You'll soon receive a letter from us with all the details for 2025/26, including any changes and what they mean for you. Any updates will take effect from the start of October, giving you plenty of time to plan ahead.

We know that changes can sometimes feel worrying, but please be assured that transparency and fairness are at the heart of this process. Affordable housing is our priority, and we're balancing the needs of our community with the costs of maintaining the services you rely on.



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WE KNOW THAT CHANGES CAN SOMETIMES FEEL WORRYING, BUT PLEASE BE ASSURED THAT TRANSPARENCY AND FAIRNESS ARE AT THE HEART OF THIS PROCESS.

Keep an eye on our website and social media for updates.



Complaints data

Your feedback guides our efforts to provide homes that women can be proud of and services they can trust.

From April to June this year, we closely monitored and responded to our residents' feedback.

Here's a summary of our complaints performance:

32

Total complaints received

32

Complaints handled by our Customer Service Team

84%

Of our complaints were resolved within our 10 day target time.

27

Complaints related to repairs



Looking after your home, looking after you

We are committed to keeping your home safe, healthy, and comfortable for you and your family. The following details shares useful information about how we look after your home, along with simple steps you can take to keep yourself and your neighbours safe.



Understanding asbestos in your home

Some homes built before 2000 may contain asbestos. This material was widely used from the 1950s to the 1990s because it's strong, fire-resistant, and a good insulator. You might find asbestos in pipe insulation, floor tiles, ceiling panels, or textured wall coatings.

Is asbestos harmful?

Asbestos is only dangerous if damaged or disturbed. If it breaks apart, tiny fibres can enter the air. Breathing these fibres over time can cause serious health issues.

What should you do?

- ⊗ Don't drill, sand, or try to remove anything that might contain asbestos.
- ⊗ Avoid disturbing walls, ceilings, or floors with asbestos.
- ✓ Always contact us before doing any DIY or home improvements.
- ✓ Report any damage to walls, ceilings, or floors immediately so we can inspect and repair if needed.

How we keep you safe:

- ✓ We maintain an asbestos register for your home and communal areas.
- ✓ Our team carries out surveys to locate asbestos materials.
- ✓ We regularly check these materials remain safe and in good condition.
- ✓ We repair or remove anything risky.

Please don't attempt to fix asbestos issues yourself. We will manage this for you.



Fresh, clean water

We regularly check shared water systems to ensure your water stays safe and fresh. There are also easy steps you can take at home to keep your water clean.

Why is this important?

When water sits still, bacteria like Legionella can grow, which can make people ill. The risk is low if you follow a few simple precautions.

What you can do:

- ✓ Run all taps and showers regularly - especially those you don't use often. Run each for a few minutes once a week.
- ✓ If you've been away for a week or more, run all taps and showers for a few minutes when you return.
- ✓ Clean your showerhead regularly to remove dirt and limescale.
- ✓ Check hot water feels hot and cold water feels cold. Let us know if it doesn't.
- ✓ Report any problems such as discoloured water or strange smells to us.



Problems with damp and mould?

If you notice any damp or mould, please contact us immediately on **020 7501 6120** or email: **customerservice@h4w.co.uk**





Keeping your gas and electrical systems safe

We carry out regular checks on your gas and electrical systems to make sure everything is safe and working properly. Here's what you should know and how you can help.

Electrical Safety

We inspect your home's electrical wiring and fittings every five years to keep things safe. Please:

- ⊗ Don't use damaged plugs or appliances.
- ⊗ Avoid overloading sockets.
- ✓ Report flickering lights, sparks, burning smells, or frequent fuse trips.
- ⊗ Never try to fix electrical problems yourself.

Gas Safety

We check your gas appliances, boiler, and pipes every year. Please:

- ⊗ Don't block or cover gas appliances or vents.
- ✓ Know the signs of a gas leak: rotten egg smell, hissing noises, or feeling dizzy or sick.

If you notice any of these signs, leave your home immediately and call the free gas emergency number **0800 111 999**.

- ⊗ Never attempt to fix gas problems yourself.
- ✓ Report any heating or hot water problems to us straight away.

How you can help:

- ✓ Let our engineers in when safety checks are due.
- ✓ Keep meters, cupboards, and access points clear.
- ✓ Report faults early - it helps keep you safe.



Fire doors - your first line of defence

Fire doors are designed to slow the spread of fire and smoke, giving everyone more time to leave safely. They keep corridors, stairwells, and escape routes protected.

As your landlord, we:

- ✓ Provide clear information about fire doors and fire safety.
- ✓ Regularly check fire doors to ensure they work properly.
- ✓ Carry out Fire Risk Assessments to meet legal safety requirements (Fire Safety Order 2005 and Fire Safety Act 2023).

How you can help:

- ✓ **Always** keep fire doors closed - never prop them open.
- ⊗ **Don't** tamper with the self-closing mechanism.
- ✓ **Report** any damage or if doors don't close properly as soon as you notice.

Fire door checks:

- + In buildings more than 11 metres high, flat doors are checked once a year and communal doors every three months. We will arrange visits with you.
- + In other buildings, fire doors are checked every two years during Fire Risk Assessments.

We're here to help you feel safe and comfortable in your home. If you have any questions, notice any issues, or want to talk to us about anything above, please get in touch with us. You can call or email on the below contact details. Phone: **020 7501 6120** Email: **customerservice@h4w.co.uk**

Help us keep bin stores clean

We're asking for your help with an ongoing challenge in our bin stores. Sometimes unbagged rubbish, furniture, and electrical items are left in the bin rooms - these can't be collected through regular waste services and lead to extra cleaning costs.

Here's how you can pitch in:

- + Always bag and securely tie your rubbish before putting it in the bins to keep things tidy and smell-free
- + Please don't leave furniture, mattresses, or electrical items in bin stores - these need to be disposed of through special collections
- + Remember to close bin room doors after use to help prevent fly-tipping and keep the area safe

Got large items to dispose of?

- + Many councils offer bulky waste collections for a small fee - check your local council website for details
- + Recycling centres often accept furniture and appliances for free



**BY WORKING TOGETHER, WE CAN
KEEP OUR SHARED SPACES CLEAN
AND WELCOMING FOR EVERYONE.
THANKS FOR HELPING US LOOK
AFTER OUR COMMUNITY!**

Keeping our online community safe and supportive

We want Housing for Women's social media to be a friendly, safe, and welcoming place for everyone. Your thoughts and feedback are important to us! However, we have a **zero-tolerance** approach to behaviour that makes others feel unsafe or unwelcome.

This includes:

- + Offensive language like racist, sexist, ableist, transphobic, or homophobic remarks
- + Rudeness, hurtful comments, or patronising language
- + False accusations without evidence
- + Threats or intimidation
- + Recording conversations without permission
- + Contacting staff on personal accounts or sharing private details

If anyone breaches these guidelines, we will remove them from our social spaces to protect the community.



If you have concerns or complaints, please contact our Customer Service **customerservice@h4w.co.uk**



No barbecues

BBQs are not allowed at your home, balconies, or communal areas - this is part of your tenancy agreement. BBQs near buildings or flammable materials can cause serious fire risks and create smoke that affects neighbours' health.

LET'S ALL WORK TOGETHER TO KEEP OUR HOMES SAFE AND ENJOYABLE FOR EVERYONE.

Thank you, Carolyn

Housing for Women is dedicated to supporting vulnerable women and families with compassion, respect, and unwavering commitment.

Recently, we received a touching letter from Megan* - one of our Domestic Violence and Abuse service users - that illustrates these values in action and highlights the incredible work of Carolyn McCarthy, our Ealing Domestic Violence Service Team Leader.



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Our client wrote:

DEAR CAROLYN

I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for everything you've done for me and my family. When I felt overwhelmed and lost, your kindness and support were a light in the darkness. You helped with practical things but also reminded me I'm not alone. Thanks to you, I could give my daughters a proper birthday celebration this year - something I thought was impossible. Your patience, guidance, and care have truly changed our lives, and I will always be grateful.

With all my heart,

Megan*

*Not real name.

This message is a powerful reminder of the vital work our domestic violence and abuse teams carry out every day. Their dedication and compassion continue to transform the lives of vulnerable women and children across London.

If you are experiencing abuse and live in Greenwich, we can support you. Call our confidential Domestic Abuse Referral and Advice Line on **020 8317 8273**. If you live in Ealing, call our helpline on **020 4513 9678**.

If someone's life is in immediate danger, always call 999.



Celebrating our amazing volunteers

June is a special time at Housing for Women as we mark National Volunteers Week - a chance to recognise and celebrate the incredible individuals who give their time and energy to support our work.

Our volunteers come from all ages, backgrounds, and walks of life. They get involved for many reasons: to gain experience, share their skills, or simply to give back and support vulnerable women. Whatever their motivation, the difference they make is huge.

To mark the end of the week, we held our first Celebration Event in over three years. We invited everyone who had taken part in placements or supported our services during the past year, along with their supervisors and colleagues. It was a chance to come together, show our appreciation, and highlight the impact they've made.

At the event, our Volunteer Co-ordinator, Chryssy Hunter, introduced the group. Our Deputy Chief Executive, Sue Croft, then spoke about how much we value their time, commitment, and compassion. Each volunteer received a certificate and a thank you card with a token of our gratitude.

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Chryssy said:

OUR VOLUNTEERS COME FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE AND CONTRIBUTE IN SO MANY WAYS - FROM HELPING IN REFUGES AND ANSWERING REFERRAL LINES, TO ASSISTING TEAMS LIKE FUNDRAISING, COMMUNICATIONS, FINANCE, AND HOUSING. THEIR ENERGY AND KINDNESS BRING SO MUCH TO OUR COMMUNITY. SEEING EVERYONE TOGETHER WAS INSPIRING. WE HOPE TO GROW OUR TEAM EVEN MORE OVER THE COMING YEAR."



Interested in getting involved?

We'd love to hear from you! To find out more about supporting Housing for Women, please contact Chryssy Hunter at volunteer4us@h4w.co.uk

Honouring 40 years of FORWARD

In May, our Refuge Workers Ruksana Miah and Nuriyah Khan represented Housing for Women at FORWARD's (Foundation for Women's Health Research and Development) 40th anniversary conference.

FORWARD is the leading African women-led organisation working to end violence against women and girls. The event was an inspiring celebration of grassroots leadership and community action against Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).

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Nuriyah said:

THE DAY WAS FILLED WITH STRENGTH AND SOLIDARITY, FEATURING HEARTFELT SURVIVOR STORIES, POWERFUL POETRY, AND RICH DISCUSSIONS ON FAITH, POLICY, AND HEALING. IT WAS A VIVID REMINDER THAT REAL CHANGE GROWS FROM COMMUNITY, CULTURE, AND COLLECTIVE POWER."

If you, or someone you know, is at risk of or has been affected by FGM or VAWG, you can contact **FORWARD** on **020 8960 4000 (ext. 1)** or email support@forwarduk.org.uk.



Ealing One Stop Shop

Our Ealing DVLA team hosted another wonderful One Stop Shop event as we prepared to celebrate Housing for Women's 90th birthday.

Refuge residents, outreach clients, and professionals came together in a warm, safe space to get creative - painting canvases and rocks, making jewellery, and crafting beautiful handmade pieces.



We're excited to share that some of these artworks will be displayed at the London Mayor's office this summer. Keep an eye out for more updates - it's inspiring to see our community's creativity shine!



KEEPING YOU INFORMED

We always want to ensure we deliver great homes and services for you; in fact, it is one of our key goals. An important way we do this is how we communicate with you. This includes giving you essential information and keeping you up to date.

Newsletter

Each quarter, we publish our Residents Newsletter, 'Connect'. A link to the digital newsletter will be posted on social media. It will also be emailed to you. We no longer print the newsletter because we want to be more environmentally friendly. If you want a printed copy, please get in touch with our Communications Team at communications@h4w.co.uk or call our Customer Services Team on 0207 501 6120.

Annual Review

We publish our Annual Review every year, setting out what we have achieved in the previous twelve months.

We'll look at some of the highlights from the year, share experiences from some of our tenants and service users, and publish figures showing our impact while delivering value for money for our customers. The next edition is due next March. We will let you know when it's published.



Our website

Our website has a lot of helpful information about what it is like to live with us. It's also a great resource, from getting involved with your housing association and neighbourhoods to accessing your housing services on our Customer Portal to the latest news.

Social media

You can stay updated with community information, Housing for Women updates, and news from the housing sector on our social media pages. We're on Instagram and Facebook. To better understand how you use social media and how we can reach you, we will be conducting a survey in 2026. Stay tuned for more information.

What is 'Connect'?

'Connect' is designed for you, and so if you have anything you would like us to cover in future issues or you have a comment to make, please do let us know by writing to: Connect Editor, Housing for Women, Sixth Floor, Blue Star House, 234 Stockwell Road, London SW9 9SP or emailing customerservice@h4w.co.uk.

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Housing4Women

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