



## COVID-19: how we will deliver our services

You and your loved ones

**We will do all we can to protect you, our employees and the NHS from the impact of the Coronavirus. This is our overriding concern.**

Everyone should follow the latest official [advice and guidance](#) on prevention, self-isolation and social-distancing. Every citizen is instructed to comply with these new measures.

### Keeping in touch

Email: [Information@shal.org](mailto:Information@shal.org)

Call: 01278 444344

Text: **ASB (plus a message)** to report anti-social behaviour;  
**BAL** to get your latest balance;  
**CARD** to order a new PayPoint card;  
**DD** to set up or amend a direct debit;  
**REF** to get your Payment Reference Number for allpay;  
**PAY** to find out how you can pay your rent;  
**RENTS (plus a message)** to talk to your Housing Officer;  
**REPAIR (plus a message)** to report a repair;  
**UC** to get all the info you need to apply for Universal Credit (UC)

to 07984 355553

### Paying your rent

If you are worried about how you can pay us let us know and we will discuss the options with you. You can also text PAY to 07984 355553. If you usually pay your rent at the office you must make different arrangements. To set up a direct debit just text DD to 07984 355553 and we will arrange this with you or give us a call on 01278 444344. You can also [pay online](#) and over the phone with your debit card. You can text REF to 07984 355553 to get your Payment Reference Number.

---

2 King Square, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA6 3DG

Online: [www.shal.org](http://www.shal.org) – Email: [information@shal.org](mailto:information@shal.org) – Tel: 01278 444344

SHAL is registered in England and Wales as a Community Benefit Society and an exempt charity (number 27772R).

You can call 01278 444344 and choose option 1 to pay over the phone.

**We're unable to offer rent breaks but we will do all we can to help you and work with you to agree a payment plan.** If you're off work and your income is affected let us know straight away. We will help you get the right information and advice to support you and your family.

A range of extra support and measures will be in place to help workers, benefit claimants and businesses affected by Coronavirus. You can find out more from the [Department for Work and Pensions](#) and information about [claiming benefits including Universal Credit](#) online.

Citizens Advice in Somerset have also closed to the public, but they are still operating the 'Help to Claim' service (for those needing to make a UC claim) over the phone or on line 0800 1448444. If you claim Universal Credit now contact DWP via your journal as the phone lines are very busy. Interviews are held over the phone.

## Your tenancy is safe

We appreciate these are incredibly anxious times for everyone and we want to reassure you we will not evict you and your family if you can't pay your rent because of Coronavirus. You need to contact your Housing Officer, Allie Mayor or Colette Ranson or our Housing Manager Lee Martin-Scull, and let them know what is happening.

You can text RENTS (plus your message) to 07984 355553 to contact them. **We will do our very best to help you.**

## Repairs and maintenance

We'll continue to provide a day-to-day repairs service and you should continue to report repairs to us. We'll discuss with you how we can do this safely.

**In all cases we will follow the latest [government guidelines](#) about working safely and maintaining social-distancing.**

## New kitchens and bathrooms

We've decided to suspend our bathroom replacement programme but we'll continue to replace kitchens if we can do so safely and with your agreement. We will review this as and when the government announces changes to the restrictions



## Signing up for a new property

If you have been offered a home we will not withdraw the offer but there may be a getting the property ready for you to move in. We're following government guidelines and allowing only 'essential moves' for the time being. We'll keep this under review.

## Mutual exchanges

Outstanding applications to exchange tenancies have been on hold since the beginning of the lockdown but we'll start accepting new applications from 1 September. We've had to make significant changes to the way we work and you can [find out more on our website](#).

## Visiting your home

We will not visit you at home unless absolutely necessary. If you report a repair that's risking your health and safety we will carry out a risk assessment and agree with you how we're able to respond safely. We will also wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as and when required. We will ask you the following questions before we arrange to visit your home **and** before we enter:

1. Do you, or anyone in your household, have Coronavirus symptoms?
2. Have you been in close contact with anyone from outside your household who either has symptoms or has tested positive for Coronavirus?
3. Have you, or anyone in your household, been advised to self-isolate?

Before we enter your home please ensure:

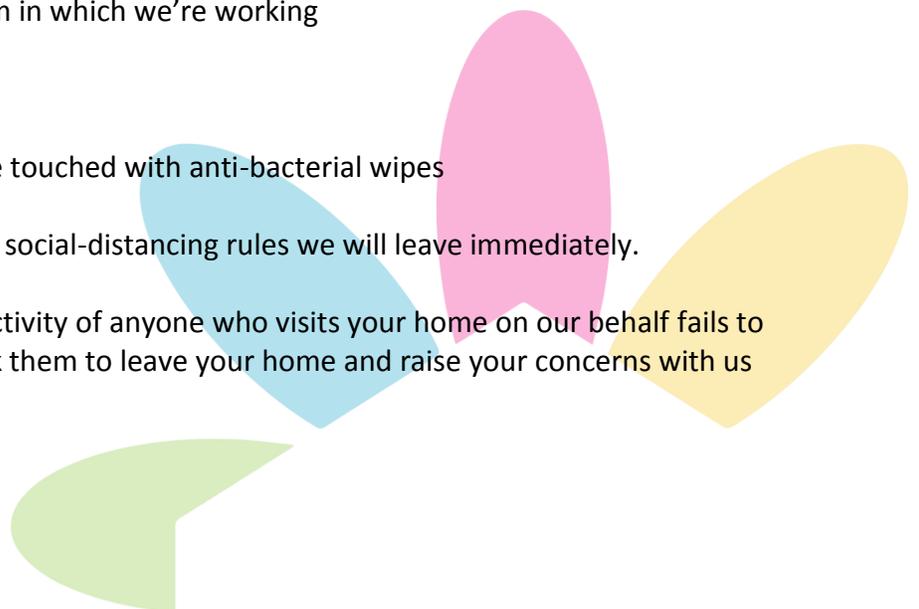
1. The area in which we need to work is clean and clear
2. Everyone in the household, including pets, maintain social-distancing and remain in a room separate from the room in which we're working

Before we leave we will ensure:

1. We wipe all surfaces we have touched with anti-bacterial wipes

If anyone in the household breaches social-distancing rules we will leave immediately.

Likewise, if you are concerned the activity of anyone who visits your home on our behalf fails to comply with these rules you may ask them to leave your home and raise your concerns with us immediately.



## Visiting our office

Our office is closed to visitors. Do not visit us until we can open again. You can contact us by phone, text and email. We will do our very best to support everyone who needs us. The service is not 'business as usual.' We will only be able to do what is absolutely essential to keep you, our employees and our contractors safe.

## Public events and travel

Until further notice we will cancel all meetings, events and unnecessary travel.

## Tenants' health and wellbeing

We will not knowingly put you at risk of exposure to Coronavirus because of our activities. If you're concerned our activities may expose you to Coronavirus or affect your health and wellbeing please contact your Housing Officer, Allie or Colette. Likewise, if you have been advised to self-isolate and we're due to visit/meet you please contact your Housing Officer.

## Employees' health and wellbeing

We will ensure none of our employees are knowingly put at risk or exposed to Coronavirus. We want to make sure everyone who works for SHAL either directly or indirectly feels safe and secure in their place of work.

We will ensure everyone who works for us minimises the risk of the virus spreading. This will impact our service to you.



## Communication

You can get more information by following the links below. Our team can stay in touch with you by text, phone and email. Information and services are available online and by text. [Visit us online](#) or send the word TEXT to 07984 355553 for more information.

## Further information

ACAS

[Coronavirus: advice for employers and employees](#)

BBC

[Coronavirus: how many cases are there in your area?](#)

DWP

[Coronavirus support for employees, benefit claimants and businesses](#)  
[Coronavirus and claiming benefits](#)

Government's response to coronavirus

[Action plan: what you can expect across the UK](#)

[Information for the public](#)

[Official response](#)

[Stay at home guidance](#)

Mind

[Coronavirus and your wellbeing](#)

National Health Service

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

[Every Mind Matters](#)

World Health organisation

[Advice for the public](#)

[Myth busters](#)

*Last up-date: Monday 2 November 2020.*

