

Maynard News

Winter 2021

Maynard Cooperative Housing
Association members' newsletter

Landmark anniversary

Home upgrades

Rule change plans

Energy-saving tips

Dates for your diary



Contents

Holiday office closing	3
Dates for your diary	4
Celebrating 30-year partnership	5
Taking care of business	6
Moving with the times	7
Breathing new life into homes	8
Keeping up to date	9
How are we doing?	10
Here to help	11
Life-saving advice	12

Welcome to the winter edition of Maynard News.

We have recently resumed our work to upgrade Maynard homes, started assessing all of our stock to plan future work and celebrated our 30-year relationship with the co-op's managing agent PA Housing.

Read on to find out more about what your co-op has been doing and what's in store for 2022, plus some money-saving energy efficiency tips and information about how to make a complaint if you are not happy with our services.

We are also delighted to unveil our planned programme of social activities for the coming year, subject of course to lockdown restrictions.

I look forward to seeing you at these various events next year but, in the meantime, I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year – and I hope you enjoyed a good Eid and Diwali.

Alam Navsa
*Chairman of Maynard
Cooperative Housing
Association*





Holiday office closing

The PA Housing office, at 3 Bede Island Road, will close at 2pm on Friday 24 December and be closed on:

- **Monday 27 December**
- **Tuesday 28 December**
- **Monday 3 January.**

Maynard's housing surgery will also be closed on **Tuesday 28 December.**

- To get in touch with the co-op team, please call our Customer Contact Centre on **0116 257 6800** or e-mail us on **coops@pahousing.co.uk**

Report your repairs!

If you need to report a repair to us, please get in touch – don't wait until a member of our team visits you for some other reason.

Following the upheaval of lockdown, we are now carrying out repairs as normal so we want to hear about any jobs that need doing.

You can book repairs at any time to suit you by using the MyPA app. You can also check your rent account, make a payment, report pests and much more. Just go to **www.pahousing.co.uk** to download the app.

Alternatively, you can ring us on **0116 257 6800** and choose from three options – the repairs, housing or income hub. Our friendly team is here to help, so just give us a call.

Dates for your diary

We will be posting out our usual picturesque landscapes wall calendar to all our tenant members, so you can mark up important dates for next year.

Our recent meetings have been virtual due to lockdown restrictions, but we hope to be able to enjoy in-person activities again in 2022.

Committee meetings 2022

Held at 34 Cecil Road, from 7pm – subject to the latest lockdown restrictions:

- **Monday 10 January – Development, Finance and Rent**
- **Monday 21 February – Strategy and Housing Services**
- **Monday 21 March – Development and Finance**
- **April – no meeting**
- **Monday 16 May – Strategy and Housing Services**
- **Monday 20 June – Development**
- **July – no meeting**
- **Monday 22 August – Strategy and Housing Services (including presentation of year-end accounts for AGM)**
- **Monday 19 September – Development and Finance**
- **October – no meeting**
- **Monday 21 November – Strategy and Housing Services**
- **Monday 19 December – Development and Finance (plus rent)**

Other key dates:

- **Friday 18 March – Special General Meeting (rules change) – at The Venue**
- **Wednesday 6 July – Tenant Members Conference**
- **Saturday 16 July – Summer trip**
- **Friday 16 September – Annual General Meeting (including nomination of management committee) – at The Venue**
- **Sunday 20 November – Autumn trip**
- **Monday 5 December – End-of-year dinner**

Housing surgeries re-open

We are pleased to have re-opened our housing surgeries, so you can pop in to discuss any issues or concerns with your local Housing Management Officer.

Surgeries take place at 34 Cecil Road, Leicester, LE2 0AD, every Tuesday between 2pm and 4.30pm.

Social distancing guidelines must be observed and you will need to make an appointment to attend by emailing coops@pahousing.co.uk or calling **0116 257 6800**.

Celebrating 30-year partnership

Maynard residents have been celebrating a landmark anniversary this year – our co-op's 30-year partnership with PA Housing.

Since 1991 the locally based housing association has been MCHA's managing agent, helping us to look after our homes and communities.

Mr Mussa Dakri, a Maynard tenant member for 29 years, said: *"Once upon a time this wasn't a desirable place to live. But coming together as a community and having a united voice, to shape our environment around the people that live here and care about it, that has made this a real home.*

"You can tell in the way people take care of the neighbourhood and everybody wants to move in here now."

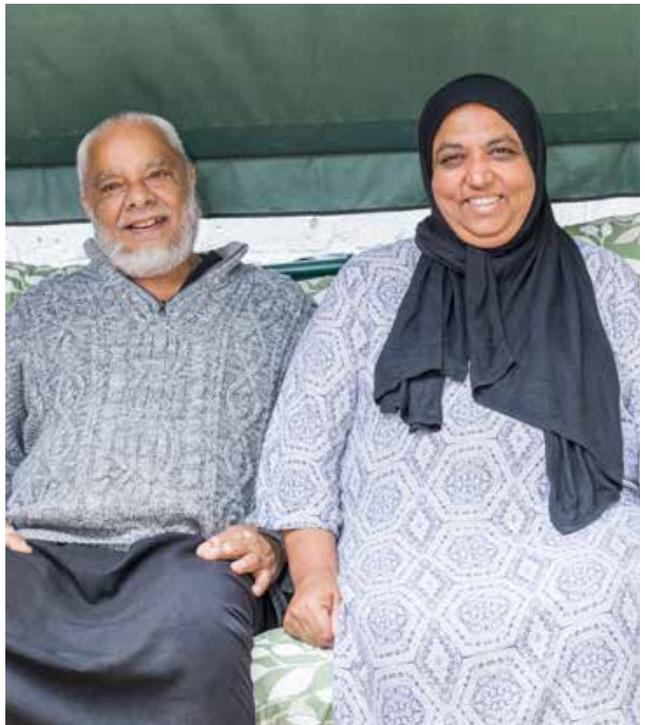
Mrs Fatima Dakri added: *"PA Housing makes the co-op's Annual General Meeting an event everyone wants to attend, and there is real transparency in where the money that goes into the co-op is spent. It is something you do not get when you live in a council flat as we did before – then it is just a house."*

Co-ops Service Manager Imtiaz Vohra said: *"Maynard co-op is important to PA Housing because it is an alternative way of living that is personal and tailored to the communities.*

"Also, the history of this particular co-op sees black and minority ethnic communities seeking safe spaces and finding empowerment to lead their own living arrangements, which chimes with the values of our organisation and colleagues."

Over the last three decades PA Housing has worked with Maynard co-op on financial management, home repairs and community safety. It is also continuing to adapt services to cater for changing needs, such as providing more support for older residents.

Although lockdown restrictions prevented us holding an event to mark the 30th anniversary this year, we hope to be able to organise a face-to-face celebration in 2022.



Taking care of business

This year's virtual annual general meeting went well, so a big thank-you to everyone who came online to join us.

During the event, we elected existing committee members Tim Clarke as the co-op's new treasurer and Mr Lorgat as the new secretary.

We also carried out our usual prize draw, with a number of tenant members winning high street shopping vouchers.

This year's winners were:

- 1st prize of £100 – Mr and Mrs Sadar
- 2nd prize of £75 – Mr and Mrs Kureshi
- 3rd prize of £50 – Mr Butt
- 4th prize of £25 – L Hubbard



Tim Clarke



Mr Lorgat



Our last in-person AGM, in 2019



Moving with the times

Tenant members are urged to come along to a special meeting next spring when we plan to update the rules that govern our housing co-op.

Our current rules, drawn up in 1981, are out of date so we want to replace them with new ones drafted by the Confederation of Co-operative Housing (the national representative body for housing co-ops).

As well as being clearer and more detailed, the rule changes cover:

- **electronic communication with committee and tenant members**
- **a commitment to diversity, equality and respect**
- **committee size, election and nominations**
- **disputes.**

At the meeting we will explain the changes, then tenant members will be able to vote on whether we should adopt them.

You can find out more about the proposed new rules by emailing us at

coops@pahousing.co.uk

Please join us for our Special General Meeting on Friday 18 March 2022, at The Venue from 7pm (subject to government guidance).



Spotlight on safety

Independent auditors recently completed an assessment of how well Maynard housing co-op is complying with national health and safety regulations.

TIAA carried out the audit which covered the management of gas safety, asbestos, Legionella testing, electrical checks and fire risk assessments on our homes.

We were assessed as having an adequate system of internal controls which operates effectively, but some improvements were recommended to ensure risks are managed more efficiently.

Assessors highlighted where we are performing particularly well:

- **Health and safety reports are regularly presented to our management**

committee meetings, relating to gas servicing, electrical testing, asbestos surveys and fire risk assessments.

- **Apart from some asbestos inspections, our compliance in these areas has been maintained throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.**

They recommended these improvements:

- **To review and update our policies covering such compliance processes.**
- **To ensure accurate recording of electrical testing dates.**

Breathing new life into homes

We are pleased to have resumed our rolling programme of work to constantly upgrade our homes.

This has included starting to fit new kitchens and bathrooms again, after lockdown restrictions temporarily suspended such non-emergency projects.

Our management committee budgeted £208,000 to carry out various upgrades in 2021/22, including installing four kitchens.

Over the past few years we have carried out improvements to better insulate our homes. We are now bidding for further government funding to complete this work across all of our housing stock.



Planning ahead

Our Area Surveyor Jan Wolloff has been visiting Maynard homes in recent months to conduct our stock condition survey, which was also suspended during lockdown.

This will help us see what work needs doing in our properties and plan future modernisation and improvement work.



Keeping up to date

All our tenant members are being asked to fill in our **Housing Details Form**, to ensure we are providing you with the best service we can.

By completing this form you will be helping us to keep our records up to date and make sure we have the right information about you, your household and any specific needs or requirements you may have.

You can fill in the form online at

<https://www.cognitoforms.com/PAHousing1/HousingDetailsForm>



Learning lessons

When we get things wrong, we want to hear about it and make sure we put things right as soon as possible.

So, if you have a problem, get in touch and we will do our best to resolve it.

How to complain

Call us on **0116 257 6800** and talk to the relevant team – the repairs, housing or income hub. Or you can make a complaint in person, by letter, email (to info@maynardcoop.org.uk), via our website (www.maynardcoop.org.uk) or by filling in a customer feedback form (available from our office).

What happens next?

- 1) Stage 1 – our managing agent, PA Housing, will look into the complaint and respond within 10 working days.
- 2) Stage 2 – if you are not happy with our response, MCHA's management committee will investigate further and work with you to resolve the matter within 10 working days.
- 3) If you are still not satisfied with how we have dealt with the issue, you can contact the Housing Ombudsman by calling **0300 111 3000**, filling in the online complaint form at www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk, emailing info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk or writing to Housing Ombudsman Service, PO Box 152, Liverpool, L33 7WQ.



For full details of our complaints policy, go to the home page of our website at www.maynardcoop.org.uk



How are we doing?

Here are our performance figures for April-September this year.

Emergency Repairs



Target
99%
(within 24 hours)



Achieved
100%
(32 jobs)

Arrears



Target
3%



Achieved
0.64%

Routine Repairs



Target
95%
(within 21
calendar days)



Achieved
94.35%
(124 jobs)

Rent collection



Target
100%



Achieved
100.76%

Here to help

With energy prices on the rise and the £20-a-week Universal Credit uplift coming to an end, many people may struggle to make ends meet this winter.

If you are facing financial difficulties, please call us on **0116 257 6800** to see what we can do to help.

Our Housing Management Officer, Shereen Sheikh (pictured right), or Tenancy Sustainment Team can support you with benefits advice. You can also see what you are entitled to by using the free benefits calculator on the MyPA app.



Energy-saving tips

Here are a few top tips to help you save energy, water and money this winter.

- 1) *Switch off lights in rooms that are not being used. This easy step could save up to £15 a year on your energy bills.*
- 2) *Set your heating thermostat to the lowest comfortable temperature (usually between 18 and 21 degrees Celsius), to keep a constant warmth in your home. Turning down your thermostat by just one degree could save you £60 a year.*
- 3) *Turn off electrical appliances (apart from any 'smart' technology you may have) at the socket, to avoid their standby mode and save around £35 a year.*
- 4) *Switch to energy efficient lightbulbs, saving up to £40 a year.*



- 5) *Take short showers instead of baths.*
- 6) *Only use your washing machine when fully loaded.*
- 7) *Turn off the tap when brushing your teeth.*
- 8) *Use a washing up bowl to reduce the water needed to clean your dishes.*



Job-seeking support

The pandemic has created challenges for many of you, with lots of people losing their jobs or having difficulty finding work.

We want to support you where we can – whether you have recently lost your job, been out of work for some time or are looking to change your job or career.

There is lots of help available depending on what works best for you, including face-to-face or group training, advice to start your own business and on-demand online support.

One resident who attended a course to help her start her own business said: *"I really*



don't know how I can ever thank the trainers enough for their advice, help and kind words. It has boosted my confidence so much, that I know I can do this."

- If you are looking for help getting job ready, please email your details to PA Housing's Community Investment Team at interested@pahousing.co.uk

Life-saving advice

Legionnaires' Disease is a rare but severe form of pneumonia caused by breathing in water droplets containing Legionella bacteria.

This bacteria naturally occurs at low, comparatively harmless levels but it can grow to riskier levels in warm, stagnant water.

The risk of the bacteria building up is greater in properties where larger volumes of water are stored and water is used over a longer period of time, such as in blocks of flats.

As your landlord we do all we can to limit such risk, but tenant members can also do

their bit by taking these simple steps.

- 1) Do not change the temperature on your hot water boiler, as it is set above 45 degrees Celsius to reduce the risk of bacterial build-up.
- 2) Showers, taps or toilets that have not been used for a week or more should be turned on for a minute or two, to flush out the system.

Maynard Cooperative Housing Association

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