

Maynard News Spring 2023

Maynard Cooperative Housing
Association members' newsletter

Tenant survey results

Family delight at new home

Advice on condensation and mould

Rent rise

Farewell to Jan



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Welcome to the spring edition of Maynard News, where you can find out about what's been going on at your housing co-op over the past few months and our plans for the future.

We are pleased to be able to report back on our recent resident satisfaction survey and explain what we plan to do to improve, in response to what you told us. You can also read about how we are working to support our tenant members and improve our neighbourhoods.

I appreciate how difficult things are for many of our tenant members during the current cost of living crisis, as we all tighten our belts to cope.

In light of this, we have sought to keep this year's rent rise to the absolute minimum. This, of course, limits our own plans but we feel that, along with our tenant members, it is important to target our resources to essentials until the economic climate brightens.

I do hope to see many of you at the various social events we have organised throughout the rest of the year. In the meantime, I hope you enjoyed a Blessed Ramadan and Eid – and a Happy Easter.

Alam Navsa

*Chair of Maynard
Cooperative Housing
Association*





Bank Holiday closing

The PA Housing office, at 3 Bede Island Road, will be closed on:

- **Thursday 29 May – Spring Bank Holiday**
- **Monday 28 August – Summer Bank Holiday**

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**

You can also book a repair at any time via the My PA app, which you can download by going to **www.pahousing.co.uk**

Mutual respect

We would like to remind our tenant members to always treat our team with respect and politeness.

Maynard housing co-op works hard for the benefit of our residents, so we will not tolerate any rude or abusive behaviour towards our staff or contractors.

Dates for your diary

Committee meetings 2023

Held from 7pm, face-to-face at 34 Cecil Road from May to September and online the rest of the year:

- **Monday 19 June – Development**
- **July – no meeting**
- **Monday 21 August – Strategy and Housing Services (including presentation of year-end accounts for AGM)**
- **Monday 18 September – Development and Finance**
- **October – no meeting**
- **Monday 13 November – Strategy and Housing Services**
- **Monday 11 December – Development and Finance (plus rent)**

Other key dates:

- **Wednesday 5 July – Tenant Members Conference**
- **Saturday 15 July – Summer trip to Gulliver's Kingdom, Matlock Bath**
- **Friday 15 September – Annual General Meeting (including nomination of management committee) at The Venue, 107-115 Gwendolen Road, Leicester, LE5 5FL**
- **Sunday 19 November – Autumn trip to London**



What you told us

Maynard Cooperative Housing Association recently carried out a resident satisfaction survey to see how happy you are with our services and how we may be able to improve.

We commissioned specialist consultancy firm Acuity to conduct the survey during January and February this year, resulting in 41 tenant members giving their views.

The results were generally positive, but mixed when compared with other social landlords – although this is in a climate of falling satisfaction across the social housing sector.

There were many excellent ratings, including:

- ✓ **88% are satisfied their communal areas are kept clean and well maintained**
- ✓ **85% are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live**
- ✓ **84% are satisfied that Maynard keeps them informed**
- ✓ **76% think Maynard treats them fairly and with respect**
- ✓ **71% are satisfied with Maynard's overall services**
- ✓ **67% are satisfied with the time taken to complete their last repair.**

However:

- ✗ **57% are satisfied with the repairs service**
- ✗ **40% are satisfied with the way complaints are handled.**

Resident comments included:

“Work at a better speed to complete repairs. Keep better communication if someone is to be delayed, explain why and reassure it will get done.”

“Thank you very much for everything you do for us, anytime and every time. My family is very happy with all your services.”

What we will do

In response to these survey results, we are now looking at how we can improve in the areas where there were lower satisfaction levels.

We will:

- 👍 **investigate how we can improve our repairs service**
- 👍 **review our complaints process to identify how we can deal with these better.**

If you would like to suggest how we can improve our services, please get in touch – we want to hear from you.



All residents who completed the survey were entered into a prize draw, with £25 shopping vouchers going to Mr and Mrs Hasina Sidat (of Upper Charnwood Street) and Mr and Ms Patel (of Melbourne Street).

Pictured left, Mrs Sidat receives her voucher

Rent rise

Your rent will have increased by 5% from April. The government agreed that social landlords such as ourselves could raise their rents by up to 7% this year, but we were keen to keep our rents as low as possible.

Along with our tenant members, as the cost of living continues to rise, we are having to be very careful how we spend our money. It has not been easy, but we are pleased that the co-op's sound financial management has meant we can limit this year's rent increase.



- If you are struggling to pay your rent, don't let arrears mount up – please contact us as soon as possible so we can discuss how we can help you. Call us on **0116 257 6800**.

A helping hand

We always do our best to support tenant members who are experiencing financial difficulties.

Recently our Housing Management Officer, Shereen Sheikh, realised a new resident had limited funds during a discussion about moving into one of our homes.

So Shereen applied to Leicester-based Charity Link, which provided a new fridge-freezer and washing machine for the tenant.

Shereen also organised a 'Tea & Cake' morning at our Cecil Road office in March, in partnership with local charity Zinthyia Trust.

Tenant members joined us for a delicious brunch of samosas, cake and karak chai, chatted about issues they may be facing, and learned about the charity's various support services.

The Zinthyia Trust, based in Bishop Street, offers free advice in English, Gujarati, Urdu and Hindi

on a range of issues, including money and debt, employment, women's safeguarding and crisis support such as emergency food parcels.

- Find out more about the charity's work at <https://www.zinthyiastrust.org/>



Family delighted with new home

A Maynard family-of-five are over the moon after moving from a two-bedroom flat into a newly refurbished three-bedroom house.

Bilal and Jainab Patel had been living in one of our flats for nearly 10 years but were finding it increasingly difficult as their family grew.

The couple moved in January to their new Maynard Road home with their three young children – seven-year-old Zaiba, six-year-old Nazir and three-year-old Zoya.

Bilal said: *“We’ve been Maynard tenants since 2013, living in a flat with our three very young children. It was a struggle.*

“Our Housing Management Officer has now helped us move to a three-bedroom house and we’re so much happier. There’s space for the children to play and grow up. Thank you Maynard housing co-op!”

We recently re-let another of our homes, as part of our commitment to finding accommodation for people in housing need.



Working in your community

Maynard Cooperative Housing Association works together with community partners to ensure your neighbourhood is a pleasant place to live.

Our Housing Management Officer Shereen Sheikh recently attended a Belgrave Ward Community Meeting to raise various matters of concern with local councillors.

She discussed problems with anti-social behaviour in and around our communal gardens in Melbourne Street, including fly-tipping and trespassing.

As well as working with local police officers, Leicester City Council has agreed to crack down on fly-tipping in the area and re-invest in the ball park in Maynard Road to help address the issues.

Our team has also worked hard to resolve problems with trees by Melbourne Street park. Residents had complained of issues

such as blocked drains and gutters caused by excessive leaves but, following our efforts, the council has agreed to remove some of the trees.



Farewell to Jan

We are sad to be saying goodbye to Jan Wolloff, who has been Maynard housing co-op's full-time surveyor for over three years.

Jan previously worked for us in various roles – including property services manager, surveyor and contact centre repairs coordinator – between 2002 and 2017, before re-joining our team in winter 2019.

He has now joined the stock investment team which plans improvements to homes owned by our managing agent PA Housing.

MCHA Chair Alam Navsa said: *"We would like to thank Jan for his work for the co-op over the past few years. He has been a valued member of our team and will be missed by both colleagues and tenant members."*

- **We currently have temporary arrangements to cover the surveyor's role and hope to have a long-term option in place over the next few weeks.**



Looking to the future

Our co-op recently drew up a new business plan, outlining what we hope to achieve over the next two years.

The resulting action plan includes these key goals:

- **Visit each of our tenant members every year, to check on any issues or changing needs.**
- **Make better use of technology to continue reducing our carbon footprint.**
- **Ensure our committee is balanced, in terms of gender and race.**
- **Inspect all work to our homes which costs more than £1,000.**
- **Consider joint procurement of planned works contractors with Ross Walk Housing Cooperative to secure better value.**
- **Explore options for altering homes to create more bedroom space, such as converting lofts or second bathrooms.**
- **Closely monitor our performance, comparing ourselves to other social landlords to highlight where we do well and where we need to improve.**





Combating condensation and mould

What is condensation?

When air cools, it holds less moisture so water droplets appear as condensation on cold surfaces. This is different from damp, which is when moisture gets into a building's structure due to (for example) rising damp from the ground or water from a leaking pipe or roof.

Condensation can cause mould which, if left untreated, can be bad for your health as spores can cause coughs, skin irritations and eye problems, as well as worsening asthma symptoms.

Dealing with condensation and mould

- Wipe down windows and sills when condensation appears on them.
- Wash down mould-affected walls, ceilings and paintwork with a fungicidal wash.

Tips to reduce condensation

- 1) Cover pans when cooking and do not leave kettles boiling.
- 2) Do not use paraffin or bottled gas heaters, as they produce a lot of moisture (as well as posing a fire risk).
- 3) Dry washing outside, if possible. If not, dry it in a heated, well-ventilated room with the door closed. Use an extractor fan, if fitted.
- 4) Keep a small window ajar or trickle vent open in occupied rooms. Open windows wider and use extractor fans, if fitted, in kitchens and bathrooms when you cook, wash up, bathe or dry clothes.
- 5) Close kitchen and bathroom doors when in use, to prevent moisture circulating to other rooms.
- 6) Do not over-fill wardrobes, and leave sufficient space to allow air circulation between the backs of large furniture and walls. Avoid putting them against external walls.
- 7) Do not cover airbricks or other permanent forms of ventilation.
- 8) Keep low background heat on all day, even if you are out. This allows the structure of the building to warm up as well as the air.



You can find more advice on reducing condensation in your home at <https://www.pahousing.co.uk/customers/reporting-a-repair/condensation-damp-and-mould/>

If you are worried about condensation, damp or mould, please contact us straightaway so we can work with you to resolve the problem. Call us on **0116 257 6800** (select the repairs option) or report it via the My PA app (which you can download at www.pahousing.co.uk)



How are we doing?

Here are our performance figures for April-December 2022.

Emergency Repairs



Target

99%

(within 24 hours)



Achieved

100%

(44 jobs)

Routine Repairs



Target

95%

(within 21
calendar days)



Achieved

97.13%

(244 jobs)

Arrears



Target

3%



Achieved

1.03%

Rent collection



Target

100%



Achieved

99.61%

Support when you need it most

If you or someone you know is experiencing mental health issues, a Leicester-based charity can help get the support you need.

Lamp (Leicestershire Action for Mental Health Project) provides free, confidential, independent advice on mental health services, including support for families and carers.

The community charity was formed in 1989 to help individuals struggling to find and access such services, supporting those feeling vulnerable, confused and unsure where to turn.

Based at Meridian Business Park, Lamp's mission is to navigate people through the complexities of mental health support and empower them to rebuild their lives.

Its dedicated team of advocacy specialists provides services including:

- exploring a person's concerns and scoping out what options are available to them
- supporting them to attend an appointment with a GP or psychiatrist
- phoning professionals on their behalf to seek answers or updates about their care
- researching their experiences and symptoms to understand side-effects of medication.

You can find out more about Lamp and its services at <https://www.lampadvocacy.co.uk/>

Bank scams – don't be taken in

Fraudsters may try to trick you into transferring money to them by pretending to be representatives from your bank.

If you receive unsolicited phone calls, texts or emails from numbers or addresses you don't recognise which say they are from your bank:

- **DON'T** respond to them
- **DON'T** open any links or attachments in them
- **DO** contact your bank on its usual phone number, if you want to check if the message is genuine.



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