

SPOTLIGHT

NEWS FOR MAGENTA LIVING LEASEHOLDERS



Whose loft is it anyway?

If you live on the top floor in one of our blocks, it is possible that you have access to the loft space from your flat via a hatch. It is unlikely that the loft belongs to you therefore if you intend to use the loft for any reason, please check your lease first to establish ownership. If you do not have a copy of your lease, please contact the Home Ownership Team and they can send one to you. However, please note there is a charge for this service.

If the loft space does belong to you then Magenta Living or our contractors may require access to the loft to carry out maintenance works or inspections. Three days notice will be given unless it's an emergency. If you decide to convert your loft then you will require planning permission and building control consent from Wirral Council.

Please remember to be very careful what you store in your loft as loft spaces can get very hot in the summer and melt certain plastics. Rapid temperature changes can also make wood swell and crack. Loft spaces also suffer with humidity, moisture, mould, damp, leaks, vermin and silverfish bugs making them very unsuitable for storage. If you do decide to store items in your loft, please contact Magenta Living first and we will carry out a fire safety assessment totally free of charge.

If the loft space doesn't belong to you then you are not allowed to access it or use it for storage. All flats have internal and/or external storage space, therefore it is not necessary to use our loft space for storage. Access will only be allowed if you or your qualified contractor needs to carry out essential repair work which affects your flat, such as to your water tank or your electrical cables etc.



What are our Environmental Service Standards?

In June 2017, we updated our service standards for Environmental Services. They are as follows:

Block communal cleaning to low rise flats - on every fortnightly visit, we will:

- Brush, mop or vacuum floors and stairs

- Remove cobwebs from light fittings and doorways, walls and ceilings

- Dust or wash down banisters, handrails and skirting

- Clean and disinfect bin areas/chute rooms

- Inspect your block for repairs or vandalism and report to the Contact Centre

- Clean the accessible internal communal glass and windows

- Litter pick inside and outside the block

- Recharge any person(s) who is responsible and can be identified for causing damage to our property or dumping rubbish

- Carry out spot inspections on the cleaning standard of your block and involve you in this process to ensure standards are being met

- Carry out annual sample surveys to help identify how we can improve our services.

If you feel that we are not meeting any of the above standards, then please contact our Environmental Services Team on **0808 100 9596** or email contactus@magentaliving.org.uk

Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard

The HCA (Homes and Communities Agency) has concluded its consultation on an amendment to the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard on whether or not to require a greater level of consultation when landlords transfer stock or change management arrangements.

The consultation considered necessary changes in response to “asset freedoms” which came into force from 6 April 2017, which means that housing associations no longer need permission from the HCA to sell or charge their assets, make certain constitutional changes or restructure. The HCA confirmed:

‘Where registered providers are proposing a change in landlord for one or more of their tenants or a significant change in their management arrangements, they shall consult with affected tenants in a fair, timely, appropriate and effective manner. Registered providers shall set out the proposals clearly and in an appropriate amount of detail and shall set out any actual or potential advantages and disadvantages (including costs) to tenants in the immediate and longer term. Registered providers must be able to demonstrate to affected tenants how they have taken the outcome of the consultation into account when reaching a decision.’

What does this mean for you?



There is no immediate impact arising from this change as there are currently no plans to change your landlord arrangements. However, if that were to change at some point in the future, then this change should re-assure you that appropriate consultation would be required to have taken place.

Contact **Jamie Martin** on **0808 100 9596** if you have any questions.

Thinking of Owning a Pet?

Your lease states that if you wish to keep a bird, dog or other animal in your property, you first require written consent from your landlord. Please contact your Neighbourhood Housing Officer on **0808 100 9596** who will decide if permission can be granted. This will depend on what type of animal you intend to keep, number and your floor level. We do not grant permission to keep dogs and cats in low or high rise flats with communal entrances with the exception of guide or assistance dogs. Some existing customers, who live in properties with a communal entrance, may have previously been given permission to have a cats or dogs. In this situation Magenta Living will allow the pets to remain for the duration of the pet's life.

Please contact us for a full copy of the pet policy or visit www.magentaliving.org.uk/pets



Lease Extensions



Over the last few months, Magenta Living has received a small number of enquiries from leaseholders wishing to extend their lease. You do have the right in legislation to extend your lease for 90 years. To qualify, you must have owned your flat for the preceding two years. To exercise this right you must serve a notice under the Leasehold Reform Housing and Urban Development Act 1993.

If your lease has less than 85 years left to run then you may wish to consider extending it. Once it falls below 80 years it becomes more expensive as you have to pay a 'marriage value'. Also it may be more difficult for a potential purchaser to obtain a mortgage. There's no need to take any action just yet as all of our leases have at least 89 years left to run on them although it is something you may wish to consider in the near future.

Check your lease to find out how many years it has to run or contact the Home Ownership Team and we will be able to tell you.

For further information see page 46 in your Leaseholder Handbook or check out the lease advice website: www.lease-advice.org