

COVID-19 UPDATE

It goes without saying that we find ourselves in uncertain and unsettling times at the moment. More than anything we want to ensure that any impact the COVID-19 situation has on our tenants, staff and colleagues is minimal and their safety and the wider community is our number one priority. For this reason, we will be following Government (Public Health England) requirements to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

The Prime Minister's recent speech relaxed the measure slightly to reflect the status of the pandemic and this has enabled us to increase the provision of services to our customers. I must stress however that we are sensitive to the personal situation of our customers and will not complete any tasks without their full consent and that safe working practices will be observed all times.

To date the Coronavirus situation has impacted the level of services we have been able to provide to our customers and we may not always have met all our service standards. However, we are working hard to reinstate all our services and will, as part of this, put the needs of our most vulnerable customers first.

Following the most recent update from the government on Thursday 28th May, we are now able to plan for how we can start to increase the provision of services to our customers. Full details of our revised service arrangements are kept up to date on our website www.arawakwalton.com

Our staff are working tirelessly and incredibly hard to maintain services. We have received many messages thanking our staff for their support which is fantastic to hear. Our Housing Officers and Customer Service team have been making welfare calls to our most vulnerable tenants, providing advice and signposting to relevant services and offering additional support where necessary.

This is an incredibly difficult time however I believe that we must continue to stay strong, follow and keep up with safety measures in place and have hope that we will soon begin to see happier days. I would like to offer my deepest condolences to all those who have lost family and loved ones due to this virus and lastly, on behalf of everyone at Arawak Walton, thank you to all the key workers who continue to carry out their work day in, day out.

Stay safe,
Cym D'Souza
Chief Executive, Arawak Walton



POSITIVE NEWS FROM COVID-19

Throughout the Coronavirus Pandemic our team have still been working hard to ensure our services run smoothly and our tenants receive as much support as possible.

Below highlights some of the good news stories that have happened at Arawak Walton over the past 2 months

We recently fixed a broken gate for a tenant, which would not usually be treated as an urgent matter but because she is a front line worker we prioritised it so she felt happy the kids could play out safely while she got some rest.

During the lockdown we successfully completed a social distance letting. This applicant was severely overcrowded in her previous accommodation so this has really helped her out.

We had a tenant who was struggling financially, who we assisted in applying for a discretionary Housing Payment (DHP).

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The tenant was awarded DHP and received a backdated payment of over £600, this has considerably reduced his rent arrears and the tenant now has more income to help him with day to day living costs.

Arawak Walton have made donations to a number of charities and organisations including Ardwick and Longsight COVID19 Mutual Aid Group,

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The Health & Well Being of our tenants is always priority. Recently, a tenant of ours was in hospital who needed some adaptations to their property. We liaised with his social worker & had all the equipment fitted whilst he was in hospital so he could come home.

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Rainbow Surprise Food co-op which operates in Cheetham Hill, The Mustard Tree, and FC United which operates in Moston and Blackley.

A letter written sent to us by one of our tenants!
 "Dear Arawak Team.
 I just wanted to say thank you for the food and treats you have given us during this time.
 As you know one of our neighbours has passed away.

Your Scheme Manager has been so thoughtful sending us messages and also talking on board our worries and concerns and acting upon them with verbal and written

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...
 information around the scheme about social distancing and gatherings which relieves anxiety to allow us all to try and live safely.
 Once again thank you all.



Arawak Walton featured on All FM represented by our lovely Housing Officer Charmaine, who was called for an interview! Charmaine explained that although staff were working from home, they have been and will continue to keep our tenants' welfare a priority.

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 If you missed this, you can listen via

<https://www.mixcloud.com/ALLFMBulletin/>

and choose the show dated 6.5.2020

Ardwick and Longsight COVID19 Mutual Aid Group have continued to build a network of organisations to support local people. They have supported the community with cooked meals,

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 food parcels and toiletries as well as signposting to other agencies. If any tenant is struggling financially, please contact the COVID Mutual Aid Group on 07930 261 920.



SICKLE CELL AWARENESS DAY

June 19th, 2020 is World Sickle Cell Awareness Day and is a day to increase public knowledge and an understanding of sickle cell disease, and the challenges experienced by patients and their families and caregivers.

Normally Manchester Town Hall would be lit up with red light and the crowd would wear red in order to raise awareness, however due to social distancing this will not be taking place.

We have, for a number of years worked in Partnership with Sickle Cell Care Manchester. The Sickle Cell charity is still encouraging individuals to wear red on the 19th June and to post pictures online and look out on social



BURNING WORK: IN THE WAKE OF WINDRUSH - ANTHONY BROWN

To help those affected by the Windrush scandal, an online conference will take place on Windrush day; Monday 22nd June 2020 addressed by Home Office officials on the Windrush compensation scheme.

With Covid-19 disproportionately impacting the black community with four times as many deaths as the wider population, panel discussions will take place on race disparities in Health, Work, Education, Criminal Justice, and how the community and strategic partners can tackle the disparities to build Community Cohesion. The event will introduce WD Legal and the 'burning work' while engaging in a more detailed look at the proposed themes. Windrush Defenders, a new Digital forum will be launched in association with West Indian Sports & Social Club, Louise DaCocodia Educational Trust - Future leaders, Arawak Walton Housing Association, and Channels Research Group.

On June 22nd, the Digital Forum aims to host a conversation on how institutional forgetting of

constructions of race have constituted inequities in community cohesion within the African Caribbean diaspora, with the aim of cultivating a conversation between these lines of inquiry, along with strategic partners, to construct a design brief on the social and legal infrastructure required to respond to inequities that continue to blight our communities.

For more information about the digital conference please visit
www.wdlegal.co.uk



BOARD MEETINGS



MARCH AND MAY BOARD MEETINGS

The March and May Board Meetings were carried out via video conferencing, due to the current situation of COVID-19. We found that we were still able to hold productive meetings, despite all being located remotely.

During the course of the March Board meeting, members approved:



The Board also approved the options around the Asset Management Strategy, Board Conference outcomes, Tenant and Community Engagement Strategy, the Risk changes report and the Health and Safety policy.

The External audit plan for 2020/21 and the Insurance renewal for 2020/21 was also reported to the meeting for information.

At the May Board meeting members considered and approved reports on:



Members also received reports on the Risk changes report, Governance and Financial Viability Standard compliance review, Annual Report production plan, Sheltered Housing Policy and Equality and Diversity Monitoring – Board & Staff.

The Operations Director updated members on the outcome of the analysis of complaints and compliments, Maintenance Contractor's performance and the Community sponsorships and donations position.

DEVELOPMENT NEWS

MORE HOMES FOR ARAWAK WALTON

We are pleased to announce that earlier this year, we purchased this 4-bed property in February which is situated in Moston.

This is the 4th of the 5 properties we have agreed to deliver through our collaboration project with Manchester' City Council on the larger families' homelessness project

The project aims to tackle their long waiting list of larger families.

It was let within a few weeks of purchase, as it needed minimal works.

June started off with more great news, as we purchased 6 additional properties from Jigsaw Homes. These 2 and 3 bedroom properties are based in Higher Openshaw, Rusholme, Longsight, Blackley, Gorton and Moss Side. These properties will need a full refurbishment, but we hope they will be ready to let really soon



INTERESTED IN JOINING OUR BOARD?

First you have to become a shareholder. If you are interested in working more closely with the association to make a difference to peoples' lives, please contact Bindu Pandya on

0161 272 5248

for a Shareholder/Board member pack.

This will give you all the information you need on the requirements for becoming a Board member

Remember if you have any comments or would like to contribute an article to our newsletter, please contact Bindu Pandya

0161 272 5248

STAFF NEWS

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN ARAWAK WALTON HOUSING OFFICER

Arawak Walton's Housing Officers are still very much here for tenants during these strange times. Although we are all working remotely, we're still delivering all the same services, and we've been focussing on helping tenants to navigate the pandemic in whatever ways they need. For example, we're undertaking welfare calls to every tenant, asking how they are, how they've been affected by the current situation and how we can help.

This has involved advising tenants on what financial government support is available to them and helping them to access this, signposting people to support services to protect their mental health, and recommending ways to keep the kids busy, amongst other things. Sometimes tenants just want to have a natter, which is fine too!

However, we are still looking forward to the day when we can meet our customers face to face again to deliver our locally based services.

OUR HOUSING OFFICERS



Charmaine Hylton

07801047786



Sandra McKenzie

07734792245



Stephen Birss

07734792247



Ebi Wellington

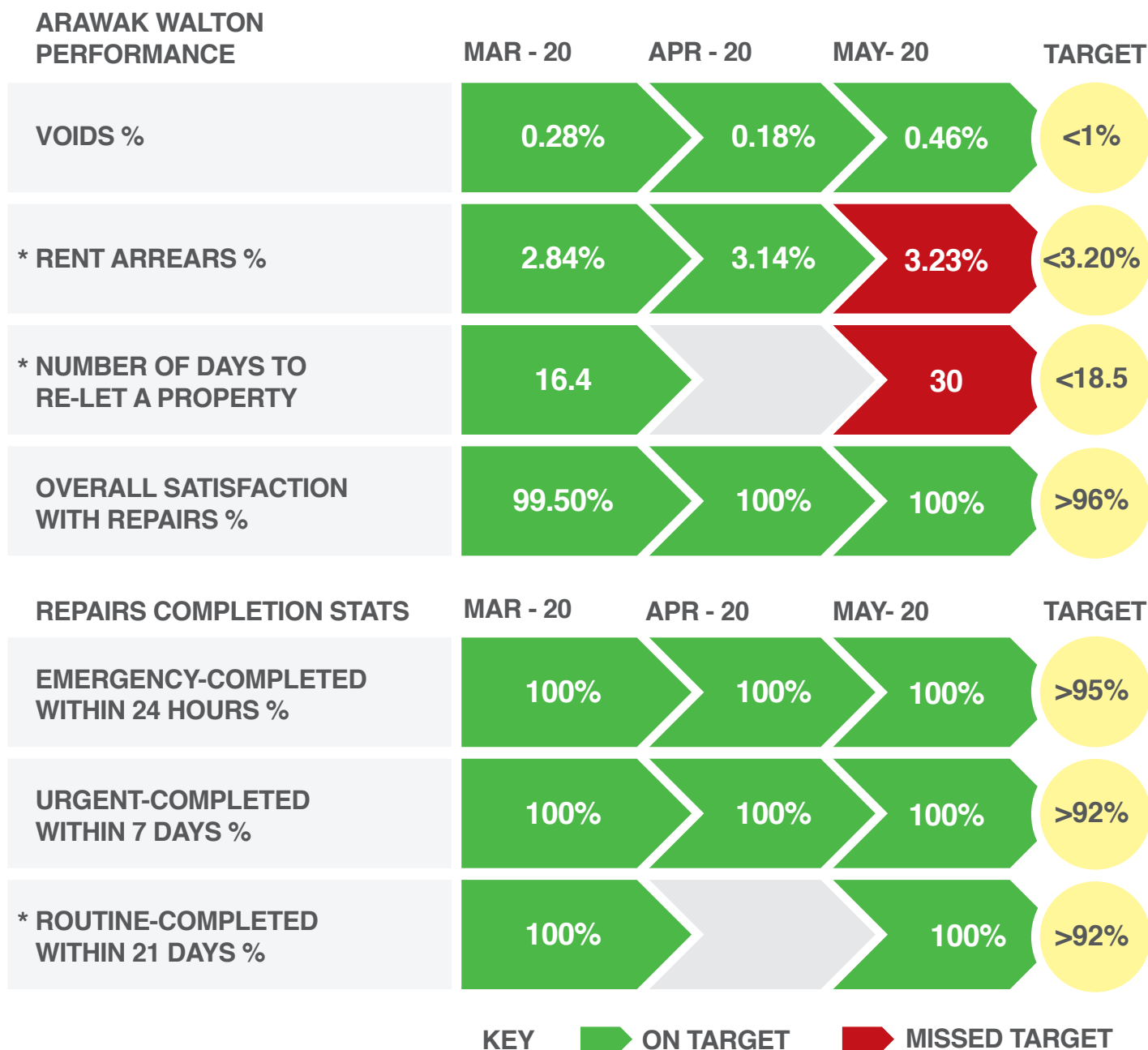
07837278261



Monika Rahman

07770017624

PERFORMANCE STATISTICS



*Rent arrears are being affected by the impact of Covid 19 situation.

*In line with Government guidelines no lettings or routine repairs were carried out during April.

Please put this newsletter up on your reception notice board or circulate it to others who you think may find it of interest. Alternatively, if you feel your organisation would benefit from having more copies available, please contact Bindu on 0161 272 5248