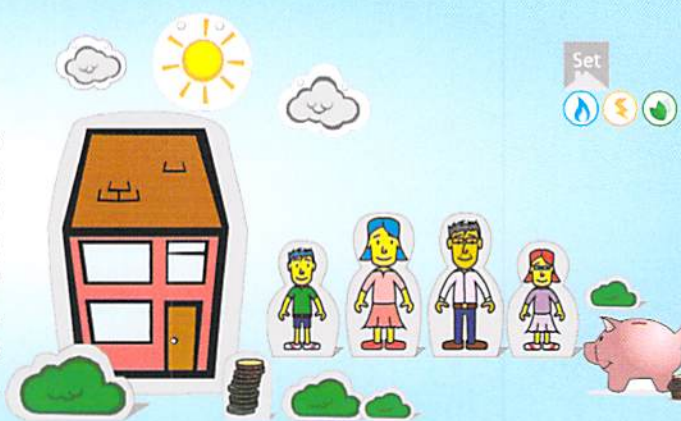


hot air

Did you know that sixty per cent of our average energy use in the home is on heat and hot water? This means the effective use of your heating systems can mean big savings for you. MHP have produced an online resource that helps you see where you could save by learning about the best way to control your heating, whether you use gas, electricity or green power. To use the tool and find out how you could save money, visit www.mhp-online.co.uk/setitright



Community Credits

Residents are continuing to earn Community Credits via attending estate inspections and residents meetings. The items that groups are looking to spend or have spent money on are seats and replanting of shrubs and trees. This has been an ideal fund to help improve the areas where residents live.

RSA Funds Vertical Allotments for Granta



The Royal Society for Art (RSA) has awarded funding to create vertical allotments for residents in Kay Hitch Way and Lammas Court. This pilot project is being run by a social enterprise (CoST) which is providing frames onto which the vertical allotments can be built. Residents are now selecting their choice of plants and vegetables (kindly supplied

by Mr. Fothergills Seeds) and are looking forward to working together to grow their own produce throughout the year. The vertical allotments are ideal for growing plants and vegetables in small spaces and for those with mobility problems. The frames can be used with a myriad of plant containers including gutters, hence it's nickname 'Guttergrow'. www.guttergrow.com



Looking for a local tradesperson?

From time to time, you may need to call a tradesperson to have work done on your property. For some people, and especially for elderly residents, the prospect of an unknown visitor doing work in your home can be quite daunting. Here are our tips to keep safe:

- ➔ Say 'no' to unexpected/uninvited doorstep callers
- ➔ Get recommendations from family or friends, or contact Trustmark (see below)
- ➔ Get several quotes to make sure you're getting value for money
- ➔ Always ask for proof of identity and check carefully
- ➔ If you're not sure they are genuine, don't let them in
- ➔ Don't be pressured into buying products or services you don't want.

TrustMark is a government-backed initiative that helps residents find local, trustworthy and reliable tradespeople who work to Government endorsed standards. To find tradespeople in your area, visit www.trustmark.org.uk or call 01344 630 804.

If you suspect rogue traders or bogus callers are in your area, call Consumer Direct and Trading Standards on 08454 04 05 06.



Join our Communications Panel

Before each issue of our Newsletter is published, we meet with a group of residents to review the articles we propose to include to get their feedback.

We are looking for residents who would be interested in joining the panel to review the information we send out. If you are interested in joining, please get in touch on 0845 601 5042 or email

kate.blatherwick@mht.co.uk

National Residents' Group update

The National Residents' Group (NRG) are a diverse group of MHP customers who meet quarterly to look at what the Board are doing, monitor performance across the business and ensure that policies are shaped around your needs.

The NRG met in November in Cambridge. They said that they want us to ensure that the changes we are making to customer services at MHP will result in positive outcomes for all customers; for example, they asked for reassurance that the new structure will continue to assist vulnerable tenants who get into debt. Head of Income Robert Jarvie, attended the January meeting to talk about how the new Income Service will work.

The Head of Performance and Research led a discussion at the November meeting to address NRG's concerns about the implications of the Government's 'affordable rents' policy. They also looked at MHP's new approach to developing policies to ensure that it is shaped around customer needs.

In September and November, the NRG considered customer feedback including the results of our most recent

customer satisfaction survey and said that they would like us next year to improve:

- ➔ Allocation of empty homes
- ➔ Income and service charges
- ➔ Complaints and compensation
- ➔ External repairs / planned maintenance



This recommendation will influence service audits, where we carry out inspections, mystery shops and customer access audits.

For more details about the NRG and its activities, minutes and reports, visit the website www.mhp-nrg.org.

We currently have a vacancy on the NRG. If you would like to find out more please contact residents@mht.co.uk or call 020 7501 2386 for more information.



Services to Suit You

Over the last few months we have been giving you details about changes we are planning to improve our services and asking for your opinion on specific changes, or 'hot topics'.

Responsive Repairs

A responsive repair is when we react to a request for help from one of our residents, for example by repairing a broken kitchen unit, or fixing a plumbing or electrical fault.

- ➔ Our customers have told us that this is the most important service which we provide to them, so improving it is a key priority.
- ➔ Our goal is to increase the satisfaction of our residents by providing a consistently good repairs service, whilst reducing the amount of money it costs to provide it. We will understand and respond to the diverse needs of customers, working closely with our contractors so we get the majority of repairs right first time.

We would like to know:

- ➔ If you think the priorities we have outline above are the right ones?
- ➔ What else do you think we could do improve the repairs service you receive?
- ➔ In what way would you like to be involved in helping to shape our services?

To give us your feedback, please email suityou@mhp-online.co.uk or call customer services on 0845 601 5042.