



Millwood House reopens

When COVID-19 restrictions first came into force two years ago, we promised to always follow the latest Government guidance. Now the Government has moved into asking us all to 'live with COVID-19', we continue to adapt and open up services.

We are asking all staff to consider personal responsibility with their testing, and encourage residents to do the same to protect themselves and others.

We will continue to supply hand sanitiser and masks to staff and are insisting this is essential when visiting you in your home.

From April 1, we are re-opening our head office to visitors between the hours of 10am to 3pm. You will need to ring the doorbell and a member of staff will come and greet you at the front door. Whilst you're more than welcome to just drop in not all

staff will be working in the office every day, so if you want to see a particular member of staff it's best to make an appointment to save a wasted journey. You can call the team on **01626 322722, option 2.**

More new homes available



In 2021/2022 the development team built 43 new homes for rent and shared ownership in **Buckfastleigh, Holcombe, Dawlish, Ashburton, Exmouth, Honiton and Kingsteignton.**

The next properties available are in Kingkerswell where we have built two, one-bedroom flats for rent and a two-bedroom house for shared ownership. They are within an attractive development just above the Barn Owl pub in the village. The house has already been reserved but the flats will soon be advertised on Devon Home Choice.

www.devonhomechoice.com allows you to search available homes owned by Teign Housing but also other landlords in the region.

Caretaking and Grounds Maintenance update



The Caretaking & Grounds Maintenance teams have worked really hard over the last few months to maintain good standards, despite the recent strong storms.

This hard work is reflected in your feedback, with an average customer rating of 3.9 out of five across caretaking and grounds maintenance services.

Aside from those recent unusual storms, the weather during winter has been relatively mild so the team managed more grass cutting than normal and are about to start the more frequent summer cutting season in April.

All petrol hand-held machinery is being replaced with battery operated ones to reduce noise and the hand-held vibrations, which aren't good for the teams using them.

We are looking at areas to plant wildflowers to support pollinators such as bees and butterflies.

Rent increase April 2022

We recently wrote and told you about the increase to your rent payment. This new charge will apply from April 2022.

As well as this formal, legal notification, we wanted to ensure all residents had more information on the change. We also wanted to remind you about how we can support you with your finances and budgeting

This year your rent is likely to have increased.

If you pay by Direct Debit – You don't need to do anything; we will calculate your direct debit as required and advise you in writing before the change occurs.

If you don't yet pay by Direct Debit and would like to, you can call us on 01626 322722 to set it up on the phone. Setting up a Direct Debit is quick and easy, and we can arrange to take payment on the day that suits you best.

If you pay your rent by standing order, online banking, debit card or using the Allpay rent card or App – Please change your payments accordingly. If you would like help working out how much you should pay, please contact the Rents Team on 01626 322780.

If you receive partial Housing Benefit and currently pay towards your rent - We will contact your local council and inform them of your new rent. They will send you a notification of your new Housing Benefit entitlement. When you receive this notification, please change your payments to match.

If you receive full Housing Benefit and your circumstances have not changed - We will contact your local council and your Housing Benefit payments will automatically be changed.

If you are in receipt of Universal Credit: you must update the DWP on the 4 April 2022 (**DO NOT DO THIS BEFORE THIS DATE**). You must log into your claim, go to 'report a change of circumstances' then go to 'where you live and what it costs' to update your new rent and service charges. **If you do not do this, you will not receive the correct amount of Universal Credit housing costs.**

Our Tenancy Sustainment Team Head Start works with those in 'most need' and cover areas of support such as financial and digital inclusion, health and wellbeing

and positive participation. You can access this service via your Neighbourhood Advisor, Rents Advisor or Independence and Wellbeing Advisor.

Paying your rent must always be the priority, otherwise you risk losing your home. If you are having problems, we would like to work with you so please keep in touch. We'll help where we can.

You can also download our latest Money Directory [here](#). This has contact information for lots of local organisations, including the local credit union [Westcountry Savings and Loans](#).



Give us a chance to make things right

If things haven't gone as you expected or you're unhappy with something we did, please let us know.

We'll work with you to understand what happened and do our best to put it right. We know we don't always get it right, but if you talk to us about the issue you have, we will try to resolve it there and then for you.

You can call the team on **01626 322722, option 2** or email customerhub@teighousing.co.uk

If we are unable to offer a resolution or you are still unhappy you can raise a complaint. This can be done over the phone, by email, letter or via our online form ['Make Things Right'](#)



Keep your details up to date

Without up-to-date contact details, we can't let you know about work taking place in your area, safety checks and servicing in your home or repairs.

Please update us if your mobile number changes, to make it easier for our team to book in work or contact you if appointments change.

It's also vital you update us about any changes to your household, such as someone moving in or out or a new baby arrival, as we could be asked to share the number of occupants with the emergency services, if a fire occurred. Letting us know about other changes such as name change due to marriage or divorce is useful also.

You can use [this form](#) to provide your latest contacts. You can also email customerhub@teighousing.co.uk or call the team on **01626 322722, option 2**.



Post office account urgent reminder:

Benefit payments

HMRC will stop making payments to Post Office card accounts after 5 April 2022. About 7,500 customers still need to switch so they don't miss out on vital payments.

If you currently have Universal Credit paid into a Post Office card account, you need to switch to an alternative account with a bank, building society or credit union. If you already have an alternative account, you can contact HMRC now to update their details.

If you receive Child Benefit and Guardian's Allowance you can use your Personal Tax Account to provide revised account details, [change your bank account details via GOV.UK](#) or by contacting the Child Benefit helpline on 0300 200 3100. Tax credits customers can [change their bank account details](#) by contacting the tax credits helpline on 0345 300 3900. If you cannot open a bank account, you must contact HMRC.

If you miss the 5 April deadline, your payments will be paused until you notify HMRC of your new account details.

The Money Helper website, provided by the Money Advice and Pensions Service, offers information and advice about [how to choose the right current account](#) and [how to open an account](#).