

**Coronavirus information exchange for GWSF members**

Update 4, 23/3/20

Please feel free to get in touch on any of the issues raised below, and where appropriate we’ll share views and information with members, non-attributably.

**Office closures**

It’s clear from feedback from members that those associations which still have some or all staff coming in are looking at their options. Home access to housing management systems can be limited for obvious security reasons: this may restrict some home-based activities, although telephone contact with tenants and contractors can presumably be maintained to a reasonable degree.

Associations with in-house repairs teams also face the dilemma that whilst other staff may be at home, at least some repairs staff are still likely to be needed for urgent/emergency repairs.

**Staff salaries**

We’ve had a couple of queries about the UK announcement relating to some staff having up to 80% of their wages covered in certain circumstances, and we understand EVH will be putting out more advice about this to its members shortly (probably tomorrow).

**Food deliveries**

A couple of associations in Glasgow have said that one consequence of shutting the office completely would be staff no longer being able to help with local food/prescriptions deliveries to (mainly) older tenants stuck indoors (excepting any staff volunteering to continue).

One member (also in Glasgow) has asked whether anyone is aware of any other sources of food being set up, beyond the existing food banks?

As part of last week’s announcement of a £350m Scottish Government funding package, a £70m Scotland-wide Food Fund is being set up, to be channelled through councils, but we don’t yet know whether the scheme will still rely on local organisations being able to carry out deliveries. We will provide further information on this as soon as we have it.

**Evictions**

Members will be aware of various statements on evictions, with most – including those from the First Minister – talking about avoiding evictions of tenants whose arrears are a result of the current situation.

GWSF will be in touch separately with members about a letter we are sending to the Cabinet Secretary about the need for a compensation mechanism for associations’ lost rent during the crisis.