

MACFIE & CO. NEWSLETTER – DECEMBER 2022

FESTIVE OFFICE HOURS

Our office will close at 1pm on Friday 23rd December 2022 and will re-open at 9am on Thursday 5th January 2023.

EMERGENCY OUT-OF-HOURS CONTRACTORS

In the event the services of an out-of-hours contractor were required, please telephone our office number, 0141-632-5588, and select the option for the trade required. Please note that contractors can only attend and access areas such as the roof if it is safe to do so. Additional call-out fees may apply during holidays and weekends.

HYBRID WORKING

Following on from the restrictions to which we all became accustomed during the height of the pandemic, we have continued with hybrid working. The office is generally closed to the public, except by prior appointment, but certain staff are present during normal office hours. Staff are still working from home on certain days. Property inspections/visits are being carried out as normal, as indeed are all other services.

While we have no dedicated reception staff at present, our automated phone system is fully operational. For non-emergency enquiries, email is the best way to contact us or alternatively, our website enquiry facility performs the same function.

WEBSITE PORTAL

Our website offers access to our client portal, which grants online access to client statements, accounts, development correspondence and a payment facility. The portal also enables owners to check their own contact details and make any necessary changes.

Registration is simple - all you require is your eight digit account number (found on your common charges invoice) to begin the process. For those clients who require an annual statement for tax purposes, the portal is the quickest way to access this information, as it is available 24/7.

CORRESPONDENCE VIA EMAIL

If you currently receive correspondence and accounts via post and would prefer to receive this via email, simply email manager@macfie.com, stating your property address, and we will add you to the email system. Registering with the portal performs the same function.

WINTER PREPARATIONS

During winter-time, plumbing can be susceptible to bursts, particularly where pipes are unprotected from the cold or where properties are left unheated for extended periods of time. In the event your property is to be left unoccupied over the winter period, you should ensure it is heated at a constant temperature.

If this cannot be implemented, we recommend where practicable having the plumbing completely drained-down. It is good practice to determine whether your flat has a stop valve, and where it is located. We would also recommend you leave emergency contact details with resident neighbours. A water key should also perhaps be obtained to enable the water for the building to be isolated from the street if necessary to mitigate damage so much as possible.

INSURANCE CLAIMS – ESCAPE OF WATER

Water damage claims are the most common claims made on buildings insurance policies and regular claims can significantly affect premium rates, excess sums and/or terms of cover.

Homeowners can reduce the chance of water escapes by regularly checking around shower and bath seals, identifying worn or displaced grouting, checking for leaks and drips at overflows, boilers and radiators, checking connections to dishwashers and washing machines. Where defects are identified, it is important to have these repaired as soon as possible to mitigate internal damage either to your own property or any situated below, by containing leaks so much as possible or at least isolating supply to pipes via stop valve/s until permanent repairs can be effected.

It is recommended that you employ a qualified plumber to check for leaks within your property after a report of an escape of water, rather than to attempt your own assessment or repair. It is also worth bearing in mind that pipes are often concealed under floors and within pipe chases – just because you cannot see a leak within your flat, does not mean there is not a problem and it therefore requires to be properly investigated by a professional.

MANAGEMENT FEES

We will be applying an sub-inflationary increase to our standard management fee of £2.00 plus VAT per unit per quarter, effective from the common charges account for the period to 31st May, 2023. As with all industries, the cost of running a compliant and regulated service-based business increases year-on-year, not only in terms of general overheads and compliance costs but also investment in staff pay, training, and technology etc. The cost of living crisis has provided additional challenges for everyone over the past year. While the firm continues to absorb these increasing costs so much as possible, it is necessary to apply a small increase.

**May we take the opportunity to wish you the compliments of the season.
We hope you and your loved ones keep safe and well.**