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31st March 2020

Dear Tenant

I hope that this email finds you and your family & friends well.

I last emailed you on 25 March following the Prime Minister's broadcast announcing Lockdown across the country. Since then The Coronavirus Act is now law.

The following is a list of the key points from the Act, how this affects your position as a tenant, the work we are able to undertake and the support we are aiming to provide.

#### **RENT**

1. We are pleased to see that the Government has put a raft of measures in place to try and give support to everyone. The very difficult times brought about by COVID 19 is and will affect ALL of us in some way or another. Where you are employed, provision has been made for financial supported through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. This allows 80% of employment costs to be paid up to £2,500 per month. Broadly equivalent support is available if you are self-employed. We are aware that any money due to you if you are self-employed is unlikely to reach you before June and it is necessary for HMRC to get in touch with you to get the process started. If your self-employment started in the last year and you have not submitted a tax return or accounts, we urge you to check the following link for guidance on claiming Universal Credit <https://www.gov.uk/how-to-claim-universal-credit>

2. In these very difficult times we appreciate that you will be anxious about many things, especially your health and your finances. However, for managed tenancies, we are still required to continue to collect and process rents on behalf of our landlords. It was the Government's decision to provide help, as above, to support everyone financially to ensure that they could continue to pay their bills. The Government did not create a Rent Holiday. A few tenants have contacted us to ask if their landlord has a mortgage and will be getting 3 month's free on their mortgage. Whilst we cannot discuss a landlord's personal situation, it is important to understand that there is no amount of mortgage repayment which will be free. All repayments will still need to be made. Please also appreciate that landlords rely on the rental income for their property for very many reasons. Some, but not all landlords will have a mortgage to pay, but others will need the income to support their own financial commitments. It is their source of income and there is currently no support available to them to replace any rent which is not paid.

We will be contacting both tenants and landlords to understand each party's situation. The Government expects the parties to work together to ensure that rent payments are fully maintained as far as possible.

#### **NOTICE TO VACATE**

3. It is still possible for your landlord to serve notice for possession. However, the standard 'no fault' section 21 notice and the section 8 notice (often used in cases where rent is more than 2 months in arrears) are now both three month notices. If you wish to give your landlord notice the notice period remains as before. Please email [tenancy@pcealettings.co.uk](mailto:tenancy@pcealettings.co.uk) with COVID 19 - URGENT in the subject line if you are looking to give notice.

4. As at the time of emailing, the courts have provisionally suspended possession cases for 3 months to ensure that no tenant can be without a roof over their head in this period.

### **REPAIRS AND GAS SAFETY ETC INSPECTIONS, as applicable for managed tenancies**

5. We will work with your landlord to support you by ensuring that all Section 11 repairing issues and the statutory Landlord Gas Safety Certificate (LGSC) are actioned as far as practically possible. Each case will be assessed individually and an appropriate course of action agreed subject to access and a contractor's ability to secure parts and materials (suppliers are also on lockdown).

### **END OF TENANCIES- INSPECTIONS AND DEPOSITS, as applicable for managed tenancies**

6. In normal times we carry out our final 'check out' inspection the working day immediately after the date the tenancy ends. During the current pandemic, our deposit scheme provider, the Tenancy Deposit Scheme, are relaxing their rules and giving up to 4 weeks for our inspection and deposit negotiations to be made. Wherever possible we will get our inspection done within 4 working days of the end of the tenancy and contact you with our report. We will generally request that you take photographic meter readings on the last day of your tenancy and email these to [tenancy@pcealettings.co.uk](mailto:tenancy@pcealettings.co.uk). Our Tenancy team will agree arrangements for returning keys with you in advance of moving out. Please do NOT post keys back through the letterbox of the property. In the event that we believe the landlord has a claim against the deposit, we will negotiate with the parties based on the work required and what costs are reasonable. We ask for your support and cooperation with this to allow us to deal with the deposit as quickly as possible.

### **TENANCY RENEWALS, as applicable for managed tenancies**

We are continuing our regime of contacting both tenants and landlords to establish intentions. To ensure that we can adhere to renewal dates and get the Agreement executed in good time, please reply to our 'Renewal Intentions' email as soon as possible after receipt.

Finally, if you have emailed us in the last few days and not yet had a response, we will come back to you as soon as possible. In the meantime, please check our website [www.paulcarrlettings.co.uk](http://www.paulcarrlettings.co.uk) regularly for updates and all Tenant letters. The full details of the Government's guidance for Landlords and Tenants is available by clicking this link:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/876500/Consolidated\\_Landlord\\_and\\_Tenant\\_Guidance\\_COVID\\_and\\_the\\_PRS\\_v4.2.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/876500/Consolidated_Landlord_and_Tenant_Guidance_COVID_and_the_PRS_v4.2.pdf)

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation

Kind regards

Fiona Barbour  
General Manager of Residential Lettings

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