Information, advice & guidance
for RMCs and Property Managers

FlatLiving Magazine

May 2022

Feature: Customer Service

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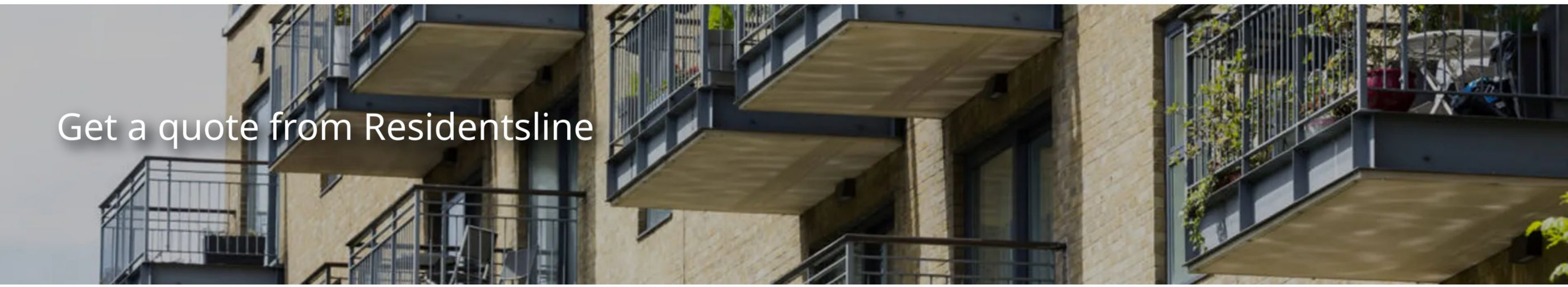

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Welcome

Welcome to our May 2022 issue of Flat Living Magazine

This month we're setting our sights firmly on customer service; why we should all be making it a priority, how to stand out from the crowd and where to begin when it comes to providing support over social media channels.

We have top tips, advice on how to turn complaints into compliments and updates about current customer expectations and behaviour.

We also have all the latest property news and updates you'd expect, along with job opportunities and dates for your diary.

We hope you enjoy!

Rebecca Kelly
Head of Partnerships, Flat Living

Start Reading

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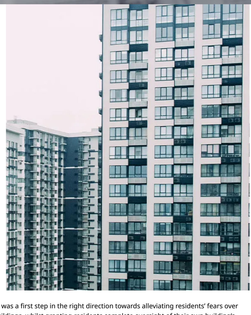
News

All the latest property management news:

Building Safety Bill Recieves Royal Assent •
Specialist Law Firm JB Leitch celebrates its 25th Anniversary •
Ex-ARMA Chief Joins Fixflo as Industry Advisor •
ALEP Warns Practitioners: The Clock is Ticking •
Merger Creates One of the UK's Largest Residential Service Charge Accountancy Teams •

Building Safety Bill Recieves Royal Assent



The Government's Building Safety Bill, introduced in draft form in July 2020, is the next 'key step in an extensive overhaul to building safety legislation'. The reforms laid out in the Bill are set to create 'lasting generational change and a clear pathway for the future on how residential buildings should be constructed and maintained.' With the completion of the parliamentary stages in the House of Commons and the House of Lords, the Building Safety Bill has now received Royal Assent, making the Bill an Act of Parliament.

In the wake of the Grenfell tragedy, the Bill has introduced clear accountabilities for all those involved in the construction, upkeep and repair of high-risk buildings in England. The Bill's comprehensive reform to building safety legislation will include the appointment of a Building Safety Regulator who will ensure those living in high rise buildings are being kept safe.

Having extensively engaged with Government and other stakeholders for several years, including the recent Building Safety Bill debates in Parliament at Committee Stages, ARMA and IRPM – now merged as The Property Institute (TPI) - secured a number of significant amendments of the Bill, including:

- scrapping of the Building Safety Charge
- removal of the duty to appoint a building safety manager
- additional powers for resident directors to appoint third-party professional directors

Andrew Bulmer, CEO of The Property Institute, commented: "The initial draft Bill was a first step in the right direction towards alleviating residents' fears over unsafe cladding by ensuring accountability for the safe upkeep of higher-risk buildings, whilst granting residents complete oversight of their own building's compliance. In its current form, as law, it is a clear call for those in the sector - including property managers, developers and landlords – to work together to identify, mitigate and manage risks to residents.

"We are pleased that policymakers have listened to key suggestions from ARMA, IRPM and other industry bodies to improve how the new regime will work in practice. We will continue to work collaboratively to ensure the new Act can become the robust safety net which the industry has been striving for following the Grenfell tragedy.

"However, despite the progress made there is still a mountain to climb, and we are several years away from remediating all unsafe buildings. We are waiting to see whether developers who have signed the Government's pledge will remain true to their word and pay to fix these buildings, whether they do so to the right standard, and we also need a solution from Government for those buildings with no existing developer.

"The daily strain on leaseholders, resident directors and property managers in affected buildings is extremely concerning. During the transition phase therefore, we will continue our efforts to ensure that the regulations and implementation of the Act is proportionate and practical, to avoid unnecessary delays."

Looking Back, Moving Forward... Specialist Law Firm JB Leitch celebrates its 25th Anniversary.

Established on 1 May 1997, JB Leitch has evolved into the market leader in leasehold and property management law. The success of the business reflects the vision and commitment of Principal Solicitor Jonathan Leitch, who has developed the firm to become a niche legal specialist in supporting property managers, institutional landlords and asset managers.

From a small office with a desk and a phone in Liverpool's Cotton Exchange, Jonathan started the firm with a little part time help from his wife, Michelle. From this humble beginning, the firm has continually expanded and relocated several times during its history. Since 2014 it has occupied modern and spacious offices in Duke Street in Liverpool City Centre. Today, the firm boasts a team of 126 full time specialist staff and is the largest team of property management and leasehold legal specialists in the country.

With an initial focus on residential landlord and tenant services and commercial debt collection, JB Leitch rapidly built its reputation before specialising as a practice focused on property legal services for large scale, institutional property and asset landlords and managers. It was this conscious move to provide a distinct specialism that continues to differentiate the firm from similar practices, evolving into what has become the legal partner of choice for some of the largest and well-regarded landlord and property management companies across the country.

Under Legal Director Phil Parkinson, who joined the firm in early 2009, the litigation and dispute resolution team has become increasingly renowned for its knowledge and success in highly technical property litigation and, more recently, has built an impressive reputation in handling fire and building safety matters.

In 2014, JB Leitch introduced JB Leitch Real Estate, led by Rob Denman, which has rapidly become established as a successful department offering non-contentious services and advice on lease transfers, extensions, variations and right to manage matters. In 2020, the Real Estate team launched an innovative remote ID verification service, and in 2021 built upon the success of the service with a new website and branding "Ownerify".

Crucial to the ongoing success of JB Leitch has been the ethos of continuing investment, development and innovation - in both people and resources. In the last 6 months alone, the firm has appointed a new People Experience & Development Manager alongside a new People Development Coordinator. Their brief is to provide an enhanced and comprehensive level of staff training, development and mentoring initiatives and to build on the established and successful solicitor training pathway and broad spectrum of apprenticeships. In addition, the recent appointment of the new IT Director Gareth Rowlands has triggered a major programme of development for the case management, reporting and technical infrastructure.

The firm prides itself on exceeding client expectations especially in terms of the added value provided to complement the quality of their legal expertise. Few other legal firms offer the breadth and detail of supporting resources that JB Leitch provides as the norm. From free CPD accredited online courses for clients to a host of bespoke analytical and forecasting reports, and guidance notes on the latest legal and legislative reforms, it is unsurprising that that the firm enjoys a high client acquisition and retention rate as illustrated in their many testimonials.

As much as the team at JB Leitch will be looking back and celebrating their considerable achievements, true to form, their focus will be on the future. Jonathan Leitch comments further:

"25 years marks a significant milestone in our journey. It has seen considerable change in both the property management industry and the wider world. For example, in 1997, the internet was still in its relative infancy, yet today plays a fundamental role in the way we all engage, operate, communicate and transact. We are also now in a period of significant change for the sector. Leasehold reform and new building safety legislation will bring significant impacts. However, our intention, as always, is to be ahead of the curve and to keep providing advice and resource that anticipates change and provides clear direction for our clients."

2022 has also seen the firm retain Investor in People Silver accreditation and Level 3 status in the prestigious Legal 500 rankings. With the recent introduction of a comprehensive new website and fresh branding, JB Leitch is undoubtedly building on the foundations of the last 25 years with a clear sense of purpose for the years to come. Happy birthday!

Ex-ARMA Chief Joins Fixflo as Industry Advisor

Industry-leading maintenance management software provider Fixflo has announced the appointment of Nigel Glen as its latest Industry Advisor. This appointment follows those of Nygel Scourfield and Kevin Watson. Scourfield is the Chief Executive Officer at My Future Living, a retirement rentals company and Watson is the Operations & Commercial Director at PLATFORM_, a build to rent operator.

Bringing a wealth of experience in the leasehold block management sector, Nigel will work closely with the Fixflo team to develop technologies that assist block management companies in their property management operations. His work will advise the Fixflo product development team on creating solutions that help block managers meet the changing and growing needs of leaseholders and occupiers, with a particular focus on compliance standards, customer experience and potential requirements from upcoming legislation.

Nigel now holds the position of Executive Chair at The Property Institute (TPI), the new body formed by the recent merger of member associations, The Association of Residential Managing Agents Limited (ARMA) and The Institute of Residential Property Management Limited (IRPM). Before the merger, Nigel acted as the CEO of ARMA for six years as well as founding and running his own property management business for seven years.

Commenting on his appointment, Nigel added, *"The work of block management companies has never been more challenging and I'm delighted to join Fixflo in an advisory role. I look forward to working closely with the Fixflo team to enhance their tech solutions in order to meet and exceed the evolving needs of the block management sector."*

Aleksandra Legosteva, Head of Product at Fixflo, added, *"Nigel's a longstanding contributor and presenter on Fixflo's popular webinar series and guides. With Nigel's change in role, the opportunity arose to work with him in a formal arrangement and we felt it was obvious that we should approach him. Fixflo is already well-adopted in the block management space, and the ever-changing regulatory environment will require us to review our system functionality continually. I am excited to work with Nigel and create tech solutions that truly focus on the needs of block managers."*

ALEP Warns Practitioners: The Clock is Ticking.

It's time to prepare for major changes under the Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Act 2022

The Association of Leasehold Enfranchisement Practitioners (ALEP) has welcomed confirmation that the Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Act 2022 will come into force on 30 June 2022, but has warned that it gives little time to prepare for the changes.

The Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Bill received Royal Assent in February and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has now announced that the Government is planning to bring the Act into force on 30 June 2022, except for retirement properties (where the Act's provisions will not apply before 1 April 2023).

This new Act applies to leasehold properties in England and Wales. It will restrict the ground rent on all completely new leases of residential property to a 'peppercorn' rent – i.e. zero.

Where an existing lease is extended as part of an agreed or voluntary renewal, the ground rent can continue during the remainder of the old lease, but the ground rent must be zero for any new period of time added to the lease.

This is all part of the Government's stated aims to make leasehold ownership "fairer and more affordable".

Mark Chick, ALEP Director, commented as follows: *"This Act will bring an end to ground rent for 'brand new' leases of flats and houses. The Act goes some way to addressing the issues arising out of the 'leasehold scandal', where doubling of ground rents on newly-created leases created an iniquitous situation for homeowners who had been sold leasehold houses with an escalating ground rent.*

"From 30 June 2022 freeholders will not be able to impose a ground rent in any brand new lease and where a lease is renewed voluntarily, the restrictions mean that the extended part of the lease term has to be at a zero ground rent. There are significant penalties for non-compliance with fines ranging from £500 to £30,000 and provisions relating to repayment with interest if ground rent is charged incorrectly.

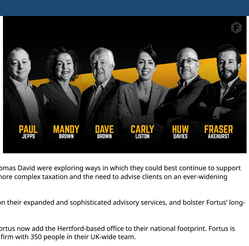
"The idea that freeholds will not now automatically come with a ground rent income may make freehold ownership less attractive to outside investors. In due course, this may help to pave the way for commonhold. Under commonhold, there will be no ground rent income from a building and investors and developers may feel less inclined to use leasehold structures if there is no ground rent income.

"Secondly, one of the longer-term effects of this change may well be that the value of freeholds with a ground rent may increase, on the basis that new ground rent income will be impossible to come by. This may have an impact on the price that leaseholders have to pay to buy their freeholds or extend their leases where ground rent is still a factor. We will have to see in due course whether the proposed wider reforms to the enfranchisement regime, including the law relating to valuation, will seek to address this.

"Although inevitable, this is a major change to the leasehold sector, and by giving just three months' notice of the commencement of the Act's provisions, the Government has started a countdown clock to the abolition of ground rent for new leases. Those advising freeholders will need to act quickly to ensure that they are fully prepared for 30 June of this year. Those advising leaseholders in a voluntary negotiation, in the same way, will no doubt be asking for a new lease without a ground rent.

"As ever, ALEP will be at the forefront in the leasehold sector by supporting its member firms and their clients to prepare for this change."

Merger Creates One of the UK's Largest Residential Service Charge Accountancy Teams



"As ARMA partners, Fortus are particularly strong in the specialist area of Service Charge, and our coming together means we'll be among the largest Residential Service Charge accountancy teams in the UK. It's partly their commitment to this specialism that led us to conclude they were the right fit." Director Dave Brown.

With nearly 200 years of legacy service and experience, the Executive team at Thomas David were exploring ways in which they could best continue to support Owner Managed Businesses (OMBs) long into the future. Increased regulation, more complex taxation and the need to advise clients on an ever-widening range of topics, were top of their concerns.

They have now merged with Fortus Business Advisors and Accountants to build on their expanded and sophisticated advisory services, and bolster Fortus' long-term growth plans.

Committed to the Hertford area and to accommodate the new, enlarged team, Fortus now add the Hertford-based office to their national footprint. Fortus is becoming fast-recognised as the 'challenger' business advisory and accountancy firm with 350 people in their UK-wide team.

Carly Liston, Executive Director at Fortus, said: *"Our merger with Thomas David represents another positive key milestone in our nationwide expansion strategy. We're pooling together our complementary strengths as 'one team many talents' to support the coordinated growth of our non-compliance related client services, as well as improving our national market recognition.*

The incredible level of expertise, experience and network the team bring with them to Fortus means we're able to deepen our bench strength even further. Together we'll continue to serve our valued, existing client base whilst also providing the much-needed resources to serve larger advisory clients. We very much look forward to developing many new business opportunities together."

Director Dave Brown, formerly of Thomas David, adds: *"We couldn't be more thrilled to join the Fortus team to support businesses achieve their future ambitions. We've known this was the right course of action for over 12 months but we wanted to take the time necessary to find a larger, national firm whose culture and client-first service aligned perfectly with ours.*

"As The Association of Residential Managing Agents (ARMA) partners, Fortus are particularly strong in the specialist area of Service Charge, and our coming together means we'll be among the largest Residential Service Charge accountancy teams in the UK. It's partly their commitment to this specialism that led us to conclude they were the right fit.

"This is a truly positive move for Thomas David with our entire Hertford team retaining their existing roles as we transition to Fortus. I'm more than confident our collective talent and harmonised cultures will bring tremendous benefits for our clients and team members alike."

Feature: Customer Service

Meet the FirstPort Employees Passionate About Putting Residents First

Written by the FirstPort team

FIRST PORT

From the back office to assisting residents on-site, FirstPort employees are dedicated to delivering the highest standards of customer support.

FirstPort is sharing stories from staff who are using their customer support background to offer the best level of service as they progress in their career.

Harry Thompson

Harry joined FirstPort in 2016 in a customer service role. He started by taking customer calls and assisting with queries, and later progressed into a social media support role where he would respond to customer feedback and liaise with the relevant teams to ensure questions were answered and issues were resolved.

Now he's a property manager in Essex and he's using the essential customer support skills gained in his previous roles to deliver first-class face-to-face service across his developments.

"I decided after about two-and-a-half years that I wanted to broaden my horizons and broaden the knowledge that I'd already developed within the social media role and try to put it into practice," explained Harry.

He now takes an active role in overseeing the management of various developments, adding: *"It's such a different role to anything that I've ever done before, but one of the things that it has been easier for me is the fact that my team around me has been very supportive, knowing that my knowledge of being an actual Property Manager is very limited, but I have knowledge from other areas of the business. I will continue to learn and grow, so having that support from the team has been fantastic."*

Aaron Dhanoa

Within a week of leaving college, Aaron Dhanoa secured his first job as a customer service advisor at FirstPort. Three years on and he's the Property Manager for nine developments in south London.

Aaron, who admits he *"never thought of property management as a career path until coming across FirstPort,"* has since become a passionate advocate of property services.

After leaving college in 2019, Aaron was quickly introduced to FirstPort and began a job in the customer services department. He says the role gave him many transferable skills, adding: *"There's so much you learn, and seeing the resolution and the customer happy is obviously the best thing."*

It wasn't long before Aaron took on a senior customer service role, which focused on dealing with urgent and specialist responses to customer enquiries. It was here that he gained the crucial experience needed to become a Property Manager.

Aaron said: "We would deal with all of the major issues such as leaks, any gates or lifts that are out of action, and we will have to take ownership of the problems and deal with them working with the Property Managers. I think that's where I got my insight as to what a Property Manager does, and I learnt lots about the job role.

"I was reporting to about seven Property Managers and that was a lot of sites and every day there will be another challenge coming through. But it allowed me to become who I am to enter my current role."

Sophie McEvoy

Service Excellence Manager Sophie McEvoy has seen rapid career progression since starting at FirstPort. She has excelled in providing a quality customer experience and through her hard work and dedication, she has gone from a support coordinator to Service Excellence Manager in just three years. Her current role offers support to on-site colleagues through various customer support queries.

Sophie said: *"My current focus is on complaints. Customers, quite rightly, have high expectations of the service they expect to receive, and our new IT systems have made us much more efficient.*

"We now have much better visibility of customer enquiries and so can deal with them much more quickly and effectively. We can identify any trends, interpret the root cause, and then put in place the necessary improvements."

Summary

Ultimately, customer service is a crucial function for any business. That's why we are proud that many of our colleagues have stayed with us and developed their careers in roles that help customers every day.

FirstPort is the UK's leading residential property services provider. With more than 40 years' experience, we work with over 1,000 resident managed developments, helping RTM and RMC Directors meet their management and legal obligations, all while delivering a great service for residents too.

firstport.co.uk | rmc@firstport.co.uk | 01582 393756

FIRST PORT

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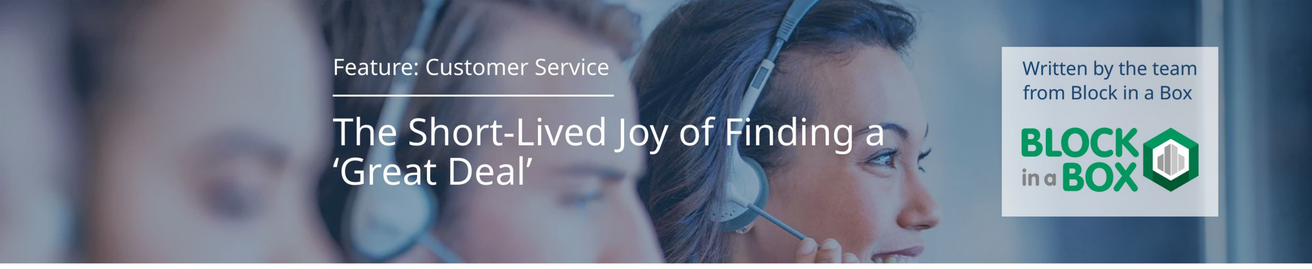


Feature: Customer Service

The Short-Lived Joy of Finding a ‘Great Deal’

Written by the team from Block in a Box

When it comes to insurance, it’s no secret that premiums have been creeping up in price. This comes down to multiple factors including the current hard market, higher costs for reinsurance and raw materials and soaring indexation.

All of the above can be attributed to the pandemic, the Ukraine war, Brexit etc. It’s a tough time for most businesses, and insurers are not immune.

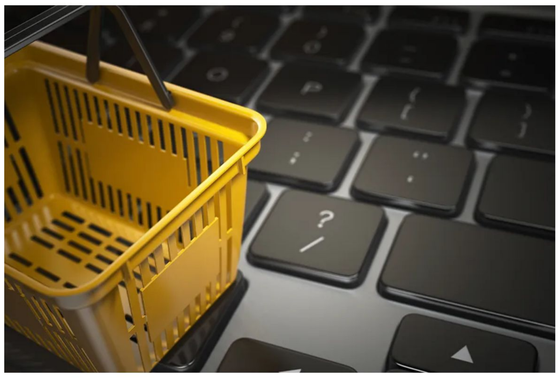
Insurers are certainly not benefitting from the price hikes- a tempting assumption made by some. Insurers are simply keeping their businesses afloat and rolling with the volatile times we’re in.

Many customers are receiving renewal emails at higher price points that they expected. This leads to individuals scouring the internet for the best deal possible- understandable but risky. Read on to find out why.

The Danger of Viewing Insurance as a Commodity

With renewals coming through at higher price points, many are hunting down cheaper alternatives. This is completely understandable, especially give the cost-of-living crisis, but it’s important to protect yourself and your assets appropriately and to avoid falling foul of a low premium with sub-par cover, or an inappropriate product for your circumstances.

When searching the market for great deals, it can be easy to start thinking of your insurance as another commodity- such as gas, electricity or petrol. When shopping around for these supplies, you get the same product for your money. Insurance doesn’t work in the same way.



Insurance products have to suit you, your property and your budget- a tough puzzle to crack on your own what with the intricacies of leases, different building types and the risks of estimated Declared Values.

If you’re shopping around and find what looks like a comparable product for a cheaper premium, tread very carefully. With insurance you really do get what you pay for. If the premium is significantly lower than your renewal quote, the chances are the cover will be lacking in one way or another. This could leave you high and dry in the event of a claim and risk your (and your fellow resident’s) investment.

A good broker can help you find the best deal that genuinely works for your property and your circumstances, as well as your budget.

Consider the Extras

If you’ve found the holy grail of truly comparable cover at a lower price point, check the additional extras and small print carefully.

Your current policy may come with a 24/7 helpline for making claims for example- does the potential new provider have this? Have you checked their online reviews to get a glimpse of their customer service offering?

In terms of deciding whether to go through a broker and swallow that additional cost, remember that they will...

- Assess your property and identify what your policy needs to include
- Search the market for the most suitable cover
- Compare prices from a range of insurers
- Negotiate the best policy terms with insurers on your behalf
- Arrange, renew or change your policy with your insurers
- Collect premiums and process accounts
- Help you through the claims process

If you’re acting alone, there are many points in this process where you may struggle. Using a broker gives you the peace of mind that you really will have the best deal for your property’s needs and with the added support of claims and renewal processes being taken care of. It could even avoid you being over insured and spending more than you need to.

The Risks of Underinsurance

In 2021, insurers paid out £8million per day in claims (Morgan Clark) and it’s estimated that 80% of UK properties are underinsured (RebuildCostAssessment.com), so this feeling of ‘it won’t happen to me’ can be heavily disputed!

Of the 80% that are underinsured, the average building is insured for just 68% of the real value. In a worst-case scenario, that leaves you with 32% of the rebuild cost to find.

Claims arise constantly- from minor wind damage to full rebuilds. Don’t let it be you that’s unknowingly underinsured your property, adding huge amounts of financial pressure and stress to an already very challenging situation.

Conclusion

Remember that with insurance you get what you pay for. Hidden value can be found in utilising brokers and finding providers that provide amazing customer service, 24/7 support and that genuinely care for you and your property. Protect what is probably your biggest financial asset appropriately- for peace of mind and for the protection of your finances.

Block in a Box was been created to assist self-managed Residents’ Management Companies, Right to Manage Companies and Residents’ Associations, their blocks of flats and the leaseholders that live in them by providing a mix-and-match toolbox supplying all the services you need.

We designed it with a steering committee of directors and association members to provide something that would truly help.

Blockinabox.co.uk | info@blockinabox.co.uk | 0333 015 4145

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PROPERTY MANAGEMENT 50

Nominations for the 2022 **Property Management 50** are now open!

Industry members who are actively raising standards and pushing for excellence need to be recognised.

We have amazing individuals working at all levels and across all facets of the Property Management industry. Here at PM50, we feel that it's important to recognise these individuals for their contributions and to celebrate their successes.

Now in its 4th year, Property Management 50 aims to do just that.

Nominations are now open, so it's over to you to nominate those you feel are deserving of recognition for their efforts and achievements over the last 12 months.

Make a Nomination

Key dates

Nominations close: Friday 3rd June 2022

Winners announced: Thursday 14th July 2022

Nominations

We are looking for people who have made a significant contribution to their clients, company or industry within the last 12 months.

Between our teams at **Property Management Recruitment** and **Flat Living**, we have identified a number of people who we believe should be recognised within the Property Management 50. Those names will be added to the nominations list and treated in exactly the same way as all our public nominations by our fantastic **judges**.

You can nominate people from your organisation or others from outside of your organisation who you think are deserving of recognition for the contributions they have made to their colleagues, clients or the industry as a whole during the last 12 months.

There are six categories that you nominate people for: Property Managers, Rising Stars, Influencers, Legends, Suppliers and Build to Rent.

Property Managers

Judges

Our judges have been selected as they are all previous winners of the Property Management 50 and are legends in their own right. We are delighted to have them involved in the process of choosing our 2022 winners.

Lewis Cassar

Founder & Director of Transparent Property Management

Jodie Fraser

Managing Director of Fraser Allen Estate Management

Dr Nigel Glen

Executive Chair, The Property Institute

Shelley Jacobs

Director of Michael Laurie Magar Ltd

Sowgol Zarinchang

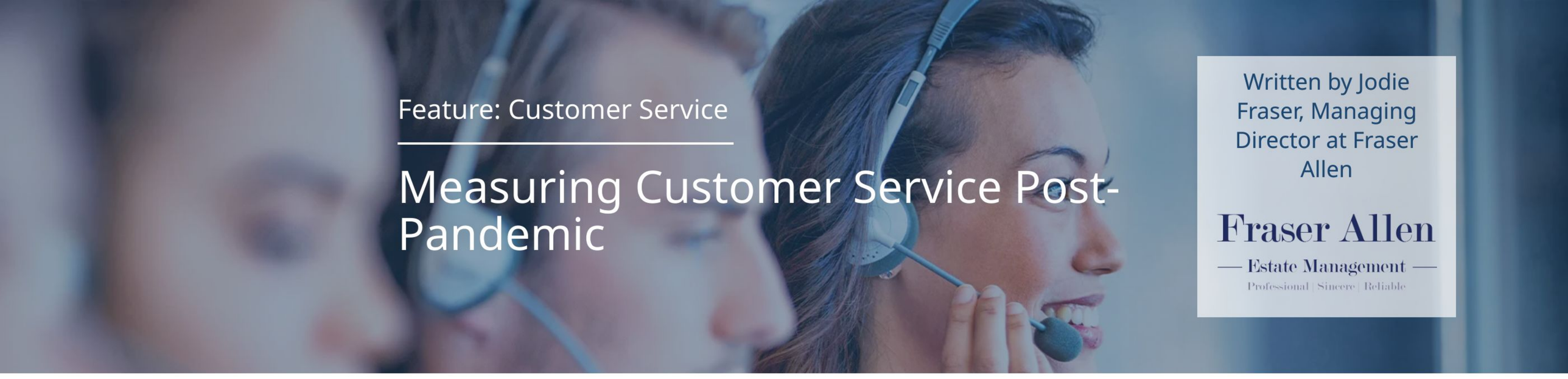
Managing Director of Way of Life

Make a Nomination

With thanks to our organisers:

FlatLiving®

PMR PROPERTY MANAGEMENT RECRUITMENT



Feature: Customer Service

Measuring Customer Service Post-Pandemic

Written by Jodie Fraser, Managing Director at Fraser Allen

Fraser Allen
Estate Management
Professional | Sincere | Reliable

During the pandemic, so many businesses were struggling to keep afloat. Staff shortages and working from home created a 'because of Covid' phrase that, 2 years later, is getting a bit old.

However, in block management, the 'because of Covid' term is more prevalent than ever. Throw in Brexit, the war in Ukraine and the cost-of-living crisis and we're all wondering how we will get through each day, especially as tempers fly and frustrations with the world are taken out on us.

The definition of customer service is about maximising your ability to make the bad things that happen to your customers go away really quickly.

We pride ourselves on looking after clients' homes like it were our own, but the cost increase of materials, fuel and labour seem to be one of the biggest issues we face at the moment. This means that work isn't always as prompt as it was pre pandemic.

I have often wondered how you can measure customer service accurately. One person could find your performance exceptional, give you a great google review and tell everyone how wonderful you were at dealing with their problem.

The same problem could happen to another person and whatever you do won't be good enough. No matter how much you communicate and explain the hold up, if they have it in their head that the way you have dealt with something is wrong, then there is no way forward.

Others define good customer service as when a company is willing to give their customers anything and everything that they want – the customer is always right approach – no matter how unreasonable some of the demands may be.

There is no right or wrong, because the factors of what makes customer service 'good' also depends heavily upon what specific things a particular customer may hold valuable or their expectations from what industry competitors do.

In the service sector, relationships really matter. Although processes matter and balance sheets matter – the key to having a thriving business with an excellent reputation lies in building relationships, having the right relationships, and offering great customer service.

When a business can demonstrate that kind of value, that kind of service and that kind of approach – difficult discussions become much easier.

For Fraser Allen Estate Management, great customer service comes down to caring. We don't always get it right. We have made mistakes over the past few years that we have learnt from, but at our core, we always care. We still come to work every day and do our best for every client, even if sometimes it doesn't seem that way.

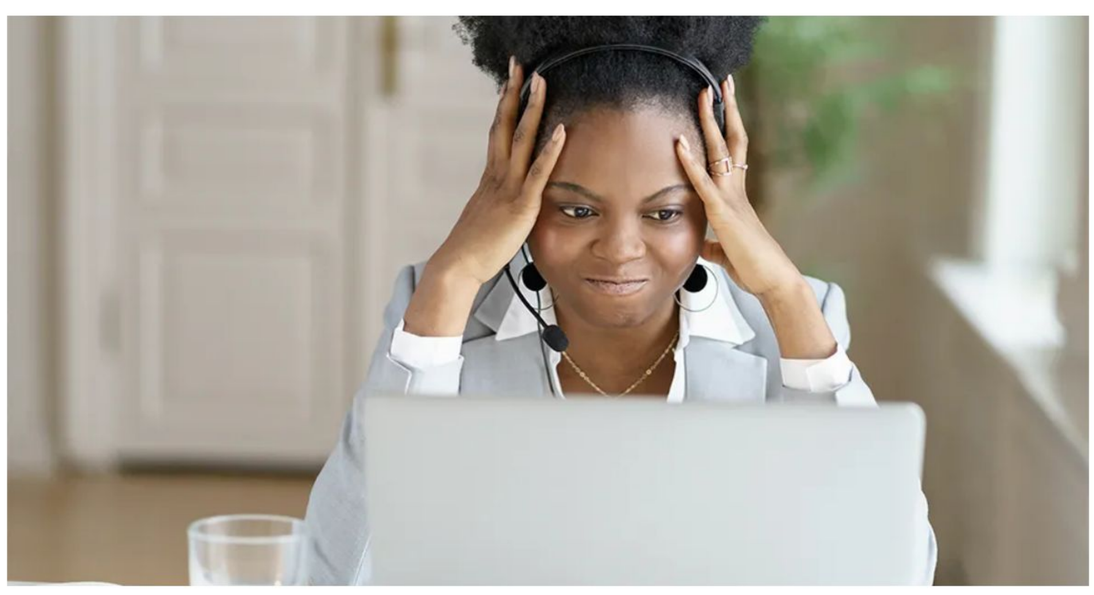
As a company, we care about the quality of the service our clients are receiving but we care even more about client satisfaction.

Taking the time to understand the issue, what needs to be done, can we find a quick solution or will it take time? If it takes time, ensure that information is communicated. The client should never feel dismissed or frustrated due to long wait times, no access to help or being transferred from one place to another.

Sometimes of course, a problem cannot be solved. That could be because it isn't a communal responsibility, or the terms of the lease may dictate how an issue should be resolved. It may be that there isn't enough money in the service charge account, or a Section 20 must be undertaken first.

This can create major problems for a property manager, especially those who always want to do their best and resolve issues quickly and efficiently.

It may be that a customer is calling twice a day, but nothing can be done until 3 quotes are received, and Director's approval has been obtained. It's not easy and it's not easy to stay calm and collected.



In conclusion, you can't please everyone, but in my opinion as long as you and your staff do your best, you're honest, and you communicate well, that's all you can do.

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Feature: Customer Service

Customer Service in 2022

Written by Belinda Bagnall, Managing Director of Residentsline

Customer Service expectations and approaches are rolling with the times, just like everything and everyone else in the current climate.

With Covid, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, cost of living hikes and Brexit to name just a few current stressors, consumers are in a heightened state of uncertainty, making for more explosive reactions to product issues and poor service.

Flexible hours and a lean towards working from home also bring new challenges for customer service teams to handle, and modern tech and social media bring their own pros and cons to the table.

It's the customer service wild west out there, so here are our predictions for customer service trends in 2022 as well as our tips for coming out on top.

Don't assume that post-pandemic consumers are more loyal and forgiving...

It can be tempting to hope that the flexibility enforced by the pandemic and the feeling of a shared experience may result in a more understanding and forgiving approach from customers, but they're actually proving to be more discerning.

Zendesk's 2022 Customer Experience Trends Report states that "More than 60% of customers will defect after one bad experience, up 22% from last year", showing that excellent customer service may actually be the key differentiator between you and your competitors in a flooded marketplace with only one chance to hold on to your customer (saving precious time and money in the process).

Think 'quality over quantity' when it comes to human interaction

Traditionally, customer service has meant target-driven call centres and a presumption that human contact either over the phone or in person will make for a great outcome when it comes to complaints. In 2022, this is not so.

The pandemic forced many of us to get to grips with technology and to utilise social media- in fact, *"a significant 64% of customers tried a new customer service channel in 2020"* according to Finances Online. Many are now used to this and prefer to fire off a quick message than to actually speak to their fellow man- and all the better for business! Answering queries and complaints over social media, live chat or messaging services can save so much time, energy and money- embrace it.

Is your customer experience flexible and mobile-friendly?

With many of us now working non-traditional hours and/or working from home, it's important that your avenues of contact work seamlessly and across the board.

Does your website function as beautifully on a phone or tablet as it does on desktop? Can customers contact you via Live Chat at all hours of the day if they need support while working outside of the 9-5? Have you embraced video-support with screen-sharing to resolve software issues?

Customers need to get hold of you with ease and at a time that suits them. They also need you to embrace the technology available to resolve their query quickly and with ease.

In terms of flexibility, just as your own staff may be requesting more modern schedules, your customers are adopting the same lifestyles. They want to be able to contact you in a way that suits them. Offer them clear, direct lines of communication and ensure your availability to respond is maximised and clearly stated.

Expect disruptions and support your staff

With the ongoing war in Ukraine, Brexit and the pandemic comes great disruption to supply chains and soaring costs for all. This will undoubtedly put a lot of strain on your customer service teams as they feel the impact in their personal lives and handle complaints from very stressed people. Make sure you're looking out for your staff; supporting them and actively avoiding burn out wherever possible.

Utilising tools like Live Chat and Messaging could ease their workloads and put a protective barrier between them and potentially abusive consumers. It's always easier to respond pleasantly in writing and handling aggressive behaviour is far easier when received on a screen rather than down the phone.

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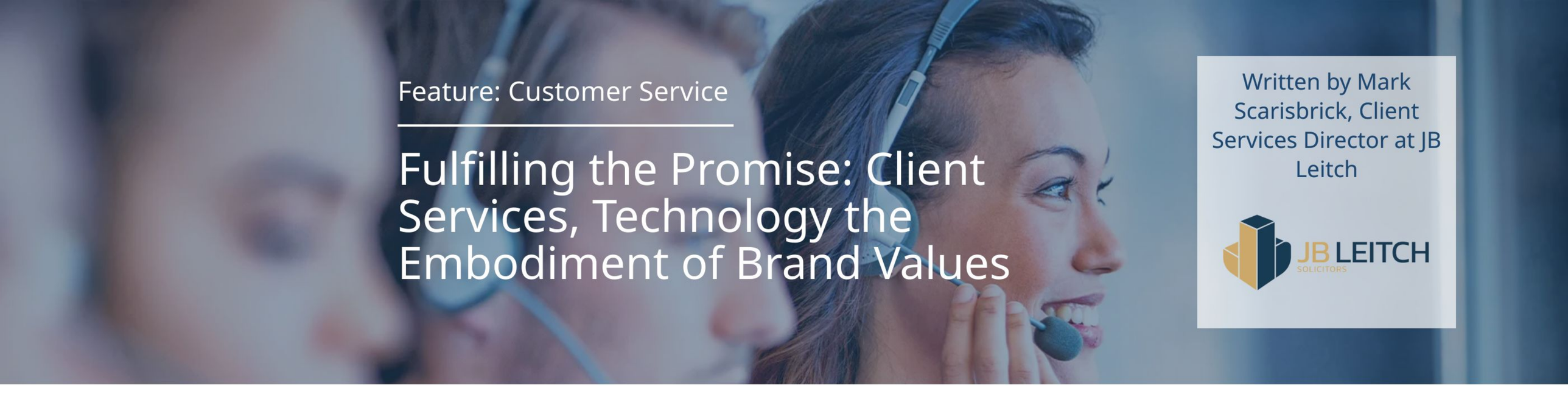


Feature: Customer Service

Fulfilling the Promise: Client Services, Technology the Embodiment of Brand Values

Written by Mark Scarisbrick, Client Services Director at JB Leitch

Mark Scarisbrick, Client Services Director at specialist property solicitors JB Leitch, returns with an article discussing the commercial importance of good client service as a true reflection of a business brand in the digital age...

We live in interesting times. The pandemic has arguably reshaped the way we work, interact and transact. The growth of service digitisation in recent years has only been accelerated further by our need to adapt to coronavirus. The introduction of ever more sophisticated technology, be it “prop-tech” and “law-tech” accompanied by the rise of Teams and Zoom, have arguably shifted the paradigm in terms of client expectation – and by default, the meaning of good client service - across the wide economy and including the property management sector.

But are we in danger of losing something along the way? Is the efficiency of full automation detrimental to client relations? Is our ability to engage enhanced or diminished? Are we losing the human touch in being the ambassadors of our brands?

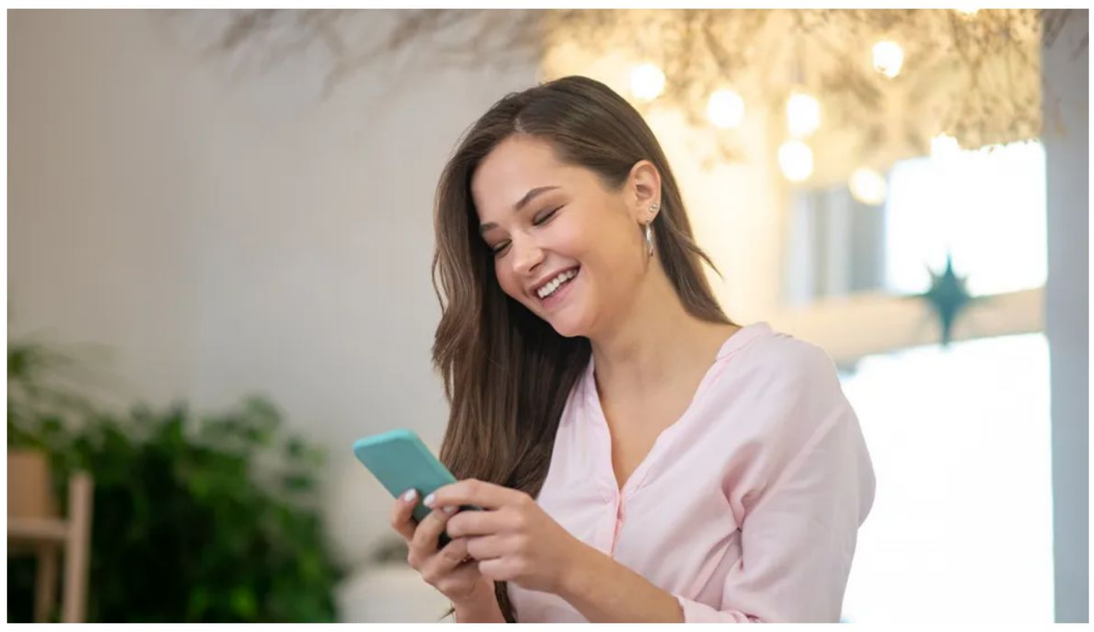
Firstly, there’s a lot said about what a brand value actually is. Many still assume it refers to a logo and a tagline. The simple truth is that it is the sum of many parts - values, personality, standards, popularity and perception - as well as the quality of our products and services of course.

Client experience is also a critical factor. The point of direct engagement with a client is often the most powerful moment in shaping brand perceptions. The way we communicate, empathise, reassure and resolve matters, are the realisation of a brand’s ethos, culture and values.

The commercial benefits are tangible – good service builds brand equity and consolidates client loyalty. A survey in Forbes indicated that 96% of respondents said good client service was important in their choice of loyalty to a brand and a separate statistic recently indicated that 33% of clients abandon a brand that lacks personalisation.

But does increasing automation and digitasation dilute our rapport with clients and risk diminishing client retention? Not necessarily.

The move toward technology-based solutions arguably provides greater autonomy and control for users, and is often referred to as client empowerment. How many of us use apps for online shopping, banking, utilities management, appointment booking or even checking our children’s homework? The creation of these solutions provides users with intuitive services – quite literally – at their fingertips. Convenience, mobility and instant access are the norm. At a strategic level, this degree of innovation shows that market need and expectation are high on your professional agenda and by association, can be a positive embodiment of your brand’s commitment to delivering a high level of client service.



A counterpoint to this, is the counter-intuitive notion that along with the more transactional nature of electronic engagement, personalisation of service suffers. Where matters are more complex, or require the application of emotional intelligence, the immediacy of a web application or app’s functions may be limited or even a potential source of frustration to clients.

Perhaps the answer is in recognising the value, benefit and balance of both technology and personal engagement in service delivery. Put into the simplest of terms, good service is good business. Loyalty and retention are key to long-term business success. Providing an integrated approach to client services across a range of channels - and by means of direct engagement - can provide choice as well as convenience.

In the context of our industry, we noted in a recent article that the role of technology is to produce information accurately, instantly and accessibly. The role of the property manager, executive or solicitor is arguably to interpret and provide this information in a meaningful way.

The Law Society’s recent “Images of the Future Worlds - Facing the Legal Profession 2020-2030” report, sparked considerable debate on the subject, and although describing an increasingly automated legal landscape in coming years, the report highlighted that client experience and trust are still prevailing factors in brand loyalty. The quality and significance of personal interaction can therefore not be undervalued in fostering and growing client relationships. If using technology further frees us to focus on delivering this in an increasingly effective and timely fashion, the client experience can surely be enhanced...

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Feature: Customer Service

How to Deliver Exceptional Customer Service

Written by Sinead Campbell of London Flats Insurance

We all value great customer service in our own dealings with organisations and service providers, but how much thought do most businesses put into the service they provide for their own customers?

Delivering exceptional customer service is supposedly at the top of many a list, but we'll be digging a little deeper into what it takes to provide the best service possible and why that's so vital in today's market.

Why Is Customer Experience So Important?

In a flooded marketplace with so many options available at similar price points, consumers often use customer service as a benchmark for narrowing down their options. They'll ask friends and family for recommendations, check reviews online and look at your website for an idea of how friendly, helpful and approachable your brand is.

If you make it clear that customer service is a priority for you then you may make the shortlist. In fact, Dimension Data report that *"84% of organisations working to improve customer service report an increase in revenue"*.

Fantastic service also helps you retain the customers you already have- and we all know it's far more expensive to onboard new customers than it is to hold on to the ones you have. It makes simple business sense.

In a world where word of mouth is king and your Google Reviews can make you sink or swim, it makes sense to put customer service at the very top of your list and to actually work by those values.

So, what makes for great customer service in this modern world?

Speed is of the Essence

Take this with a pinch of salt and remember the old adage; 'less haste, more speed'. When we say that speed is important, we mean in terms of your initial acknowledgement of the issue and then accurately managing your customers' expectations.

With emails, keep your initial response times low- even if that means replying to messages with a well-written, automated response that details an SLA. As long as your customer knows their correspondence has been received and they have a reasonable timeframe in which to expect a proper response, all should be well.

If your customers are coming to you via phone, keeping waiting times to a minimum is a must. Use a phone system that tells the caller where they are in the queue or how long to expect to wait- and choose the hold music wisely too!

According to Comm100, *"only 35% of customers are willing to wait 30-60 seconds for a response on live chat"*...we live in a fast-paced world and your customer service avenues should be designed with that in mind.

Promote Self-Help

This hits on the need for speed but also, many customers would prefer to head online or to an app to trouble-shoot an issue themselves without the need to speak to a soul.

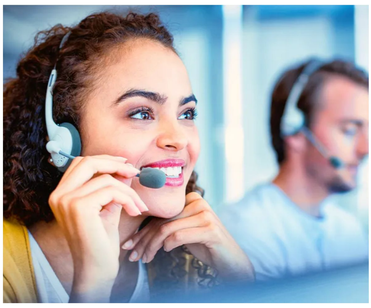
It's important that this is made possible wherever you can, for example, by creating in-depth FAQ sections, keeping sites updated about any current IT issues you're having and how long you expect them to take to be rectified or by providing a great live chat service.

If your customers can find the answer to their question online then they won't need to take up valuable resources (theirs and yours) by calling or emailing in.

Knowledge is Power

Knowing your industry and products back to front is paramount. Your customers don't want to go through the hoops of getting in touch, only to speak to someone who can't help them. They want to get through to the oracle that is going to solve their problems and then send them on their way- so you and your team better know your stuff.

Attitude is Everything



If you think back to any great customer service experiences you've had in the past, you probably can't remember the details of the issue you were having or how long you sat on hold waiting to speak to someone, but you can probably remember the likability of the person you spoke to.

Even if the problem is really tricky and possibly can't be solved there and then, a positive, friendly and helpful approach will soothe most people. If your customer service team is made up of positive problem-solvers, you're on to a winner. Your customers need to feel that you want to help- it's vital that that comes across in all communications, regardless of the eventual outcome.

According to Zendesk, friendliness is valued almost as highly as speed of service: *"Speed of response (89%), speed of resolution (89%), and friendliness of representative (82%) are seen as the most important aspects of the customer service experience, regardless of channel."*

Promises Should be Upheld

For the sake of not only the particular client relationship in question, but for all the damage they could do by word of mouth or reviews, always stick to your word.

If you say you're going to call back, call back. If you say the refund will be processed today, make sure it's processed today. You should never be in a situation where a customer is chasing you to do something that was promised in a previous conversation. If you are, the battle is already lost regardless of the eventual outcome.

Treat People as You'd Like to be Treated

Ultimately, customers want to be treated as people, not numbers on a screen or tickets in a queue. Without your customers, your business doesn't exist, so they should be put on a pedestal and treated with the same respect and care that you would like to be treated with in your own dealings with companies and service providers.

Allow your customer service reps to take their time in speaking to people and don't discourage 'small talk'. If it's appropriate, a bit of chit chat can humanise the process and provide clues as to the source of the issue and diffuse complaint situations- especially when it comes to very angry customers.

Our Top Tips and How We Put Our Customers First

Our top tips for providing genuinely outstanding customer service are:

- Accept and act of any constructive feedback you receive
- Go the extra mile wherever possible (including re-directing customers to another provider if you can't provide a solution- they may well come back to you in the future and recommend you to others)
- Utilise technology to provide fast, efficient customer service avenues
- Make your customers the priority in all decisions

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- Unsung Hero Award
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Industry Experts Weigh in on Building Safety Bill Amendments

Written by James Dilgul,
Head of Marketing at Fixflo

Fixflo

The end is in sight for the long-awaited Building Safety Bill as each House's amendments are considered prior to it being passed into law.

A number of proposed changes by Lord Greenhalgh, the Minister of State for Building Safety and Fire at the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and the Home Office, caused a particular stir in the industry in February 2022.

On 25 March 2022, we spoke to experts Nigel Glen, Executive Chair of The Property Institute and Bob Smytherman and Jonathan Gough, Directors of the Federation of Private Residents' Associations (FoPRA), to get their take on the revisions.

What did Lord Greenhalgh propose?

Lord Greenhalgh submitted an amendment introducing a waterfall system whereby, in the first instance, developers will be expected to pay for anything safety-related in all blocks above 11 metres. In cases where the developer cannot be found or is no longer in existence, the cost would then pass to third party freeholders/landlords, but with an affordability criterion, before finally being passed onto leaseholders. The bill for leaseholders will be capped at £10,000 for those outside London and £15,000 for those in the capital, with exemptions for landlords with three or more flats. Following this, it was announced that qualifying leaseholders with properties valued at less than £175,000 (or £325,000 in Greater London) will now be protected entirely from other costs relating to historic fire safety defects.

What issues does this raise?

On 13 April 2022, the Government secured an agreement from the country's 35 leading house builders to agree to pay for remediation of cladding on any building over 11 metres tall that they have developed over the past 30 years. But where does this leave other developers and manufacturers of cladding systems?

"Secretary of State, Rt. Hon. Michael Gove separately said that responsible manufacturers are all overseas, so we probably can't go very far on that," says Nigel. *"But if the manufacturers can be held accountable, how will they and the developers agree on a fair share between them?"* he asks. *"And what if a developer has gone bust? From what we understand, the Secretary of State is then asking other developers to chip in [to cover those costs] even though they didn't build it. And that's expanded to no-fault issues, so if you take the cladding down and the walls have got a bit old – in the past, leaseholders might have had to have pay for that, now will the developers have to pay for those works as well?"*

Jonathan and Bob concur: *"Clear guidance is needed, so everyone understands what is covered. Cladding is only one element of the external wall system, and we know that problems have been found with other parts of the cladding system. Internal compartmentation is another significant area of concern. For example, remediating the outer skin but leaving problems with the internal compartmentation does not improve the safety of residents. Holistically solving the issues is key."*

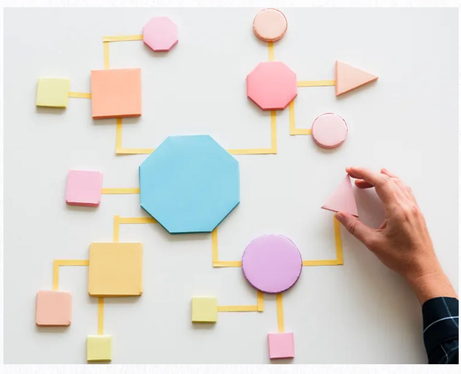
What about landlords and leaseholders?

Similar issues are raised at the landlord stage. *"Firstly, the landlords don't see why they are expected to pay for something that wasn't their fault – so they are reluctant to sign the Grant Funding Agreement (or allow their managing agents to sign on their behalf). Even if that were not the case, how the affordability issue is to be answered is unclear,"* observed Nigel. *"Can the landlord afford it? How would this work?"*

If the landlord cannot afford the entire costs, they will be able to pass some of them to leaseholders. *"It's a lot of money, and the more your flat is worth, the more it jumps,"* says Nigel.

"We don't see how that works—or who polices it. It's all very unclear. It would seem that what was once a clear route to remediating has now stopped dead, and we are right back to where we started: there's potentially lots of money around, but nobody knows when it's going to be available, from whom or how to access it. We are all rather standing like deer in the headlights at the moment trying to figure this out."

Jonathan and Bob observe other issues: *"The cost cap is not high enough. We are already seeing inflated construction costs, so what will happen once the cap is reached? Will the government fund the rest, and what mechanism will be in place to allow leaseholders to claim? Is the government proposing to extend the cladding fund and will help be available for the "layperson" to open a claim and manage large construction projects?"*



How can the Government solve this?

"We just want clarity" explains Nigel. *"Where's the money coming from, when do we get it, how do we get it, and who's going to put everything right? The problem is that it's been put out there without the vast raft of detail underneath it, and we need the detail."*

Jonathan and Bob advise that a clear process should be published by the Government for leaseholders, outlining, as a minimum:

- What parts of a cladding system are covered by funding?
- Their approach to internal compartmentation problems, including those not part of the original build
- Guidance on what to do if the cost cap is reached
- What proportional action leaseholders can take to manage the risk whilst the building is being remediated
- Access to FREE impartial advice services
- Support for leaseholders to work together to take control of their own buildings

Though its exact provisions await final confirmation, the Building Safety Bill is sure to shake up the role of block managers, requiring even greater diligence towards maintaining and tracking the safety of a block and its residents. Fixflo's block management solutions enable efficient management of assets and the automation of compliance, ensuring that important safety works never fall through the cracks.

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Feature: Customer Service

Transforming Complaints into Compliments

Written by Darren Bagnall of Flat Living Insurance

Nobody *wants* to handle complaints, but it's part of running a business and the important thing is *how* you handle them.

Complaints can actually provide you with opportunities to build relationships, showcase your customer service skills and improve processes moving forward- but that's only if your complaints procedure is approached in the right way.

Not Happy? Right This Way...

This is a no-brainer for anyone who's tried to raise a complaint with a company but spent 20 mins searching for the phone number or email address to no avail. You were already annoyed about the issue you want to raise but now you've wasted precious time and energy searching for the right way to make contact, which only adds to your frustration and ill-feeling towards the company.

Make it easy for customers to complain. Make contact details clear and provide social media support, live chat functions and other quick-fire routes wherever possible. If you can't keep your office phone or call centre queues to an absolute minimum then you may well need to look at modern alternatives.

Act Fast and Keep Track

The time taken to respond to a complaint has a huge effect on the demeanour of your riled customer. Respond as soon as possible and use auto-responses to set expectations.

Once the ball is rolling, keep track of communications and, if at all possible, ensure the complaint is dealt with by one representative from start to finish. If the complaint needs to be escalated or handled by another department, make sure the full detail of any progress thus far is well documented and handed over to avoid forcing the customer to repeat themselves as *"72% of consumers see having to explain their problem to multiple people as poor customer service."* Dimensional Research

Get to the Root of the Issue

Staff should be trained to gently and conversationally gain more detail from the customer by asking relevant questions. This does not mean reading from a script or interrogating them, it means using well placed and well-timed questioning to get to the heart of the issue.

Bookending questions with apologies and reasoning can smooth the transitions nicely e.g. *"I'm so sorry to hear our in-store representative let you down today- can I ask what it was about her behaviour that specifically upset you so we can speak with her about your experience?"*

Some customers may be enraged when they first contact you, but some normal human interaction and gentle prying can bring them down to earth and get you the detail you need to understand the situation in full.

Invite Them to Propose a Resolution

The aim with complaint handling is to send the customer away diffused and with a positive view of the company, so why not ask them what outcome they're looking for? The timing of this question is vital- it should only be asked once you've built rapport and the customer is calm. Ask it at the wrong time and you may get ridiculous requests for sackings and huge monetary compensation.

Asked at the right time, it can bring the customer round to your way of thinking and diffuse their anger. Some may want to ensure their issue doesn't arise for other people, in which case you can suggest that further staff training may be of use. Others may ask for compensation, refunds or discounts- consider these options and appease where possible if the complaint is valid as, according to Esteban Kolsky (CEO of thinkjar), *"attracting a new customer is 6-7 times more expensive than retaining a current one."* HuffPost

Accept Feedback and Make Changes

Taking constructive feedback on the chin and learning from mistakes is so important for the growth and success of any business. Repeating the same mistakes will only annoy and potentially lose you customers while bogging down your staff in complaints.

According to Harvard Business Review, *"increasing customer retention rates by 5% increases profits by 25% to 95%"* so address the issues as they arise and share any lessons learned with the appropriate teams, ensuring staff are trained in line with any changes that need to be made.

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- Max Braun

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Feature: Customer Service

Social Media & Modern Customer Service

Written by Rich Smeeton from Manage Your Block

ManageYourBlock™

The importance of social media in marketing is well known, but have you ever thought about utilising the same platforms to provide incredible customer service?

According to Social Media Today *"1 in 3 social media users prefer social media customer care services to telephone or email."* And *"67% of consumers now use social media networks like Twitter and Facebook to seek resolution for issues."*

Modern customer-bases expect 24/7 access to support with fast response times and a dash of personality to boot. They sound like tall orders but, if you embrace technology and train existing staff, you can join some of the biggest brands in the world and provide truly top-class customer service.

Why is Social Customer Service the Way Forward?

Two words: speed and availability. According to Smart Insights research from 2020, *"more than 30% said it is a convenient contact method."* and *"23% believe it is a good way to get 24-hour service."*

The main strength of providing customer service and support via social channels is speed of access. People don't like taking time out of their day to ring a call centre, sit on hold for an age and then speak to a human. Yes, for some people direct human contact is the holy grail, but for the majority, this just takes too much time.

The ideal for most is to be able to fire off a quick message on Twitter or Facebook and wait for the ding of a response soon after. Responses can either solve the query there and then or invite the customer to contact the company via a particular avenue if the issue needs more discussion.

Social media is a 24/7 communication highway. If your customer encounters an issue outside of office hours, they will head straight to your social media pages to raise their issue and await a response. They don't need to remember to message you the next day or to call when they have time in a lunch break.

The best of the best will even have teams available online as close to 24/7 as possible, so some may even respond in minutes. With our modern culture of high expectations and instant gratification, this is fast becoming the expected norm.

Using Social Customer Support to Boost Your Brand

Social support isn't only great for your customers- it's great for your brand too. Aside from the obvious that happy customers = great reviews and fantastic word of mouth marketing, solving your customer's queries via social media means that the world gets to see the way you respond.

Every time you respond to queries in good time with a genuinely helpful (and hopefully personality-packed) message, the rest of your followers see that. If your responses are then commented on or shared by your followers, their followers will see that too. The snowball effect can be huge.

Having a strong online presence that encompasses great customer service is also the perfect way to showcase your brand, push your services and put your personality out there. Your customers will soon feel like they know the 'person' they're talking to when they interact with your brand, making you their go-to in your market space and much more approachable for new customers too.

How to Get Started

Most companies already have an online presence to some degree- your first shift in approach should be to prioritise interaction and swift response times. Your existing marketing should be inviting conversation and engagement with your customers, so it's likely that some of them will use the opportunity to air a complaint or raise a query.

So...respond. Respond in line with your brand's personality and with a sense that the rest of your customer community is watching. Respond in a way that supports genuine relationships and reflects how you would like all staff to react face to face or over the phone.

You could even post messages that invite queries- a good one would be to ask which avenues of customer service your customers would find most useful for you to add to existing support.

Setting up support-based hashtags or separate customer service handles can be a great way to invite your followers to access customer service online. For example, if you have an existing Twitter profile with an @business_name handle, you could create a customer service-specific handle such as @business_name_support.

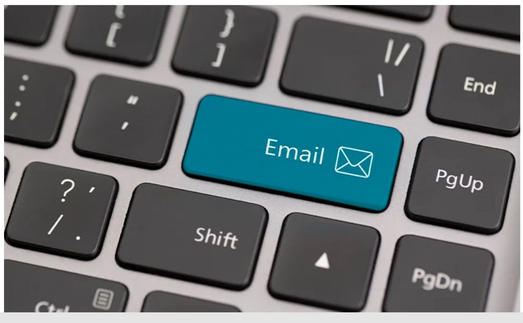
Make sure to shout about the new handle or hashtag across the rest of your marketing and to set out clear guidelines for expected response times and hours of availability.

Escalating Complaints

If you're faced with a very angry public message that can't be resolved simply, invite the customer to contact you via a direct route.

Don't be tempted to suggest they call your usual customer service phone number or email the usual address- provide them with a contact name and a direct means of contact so they and your followers can see that you take things seriously and genuinely want to help resolve the issue.

Never be pulled into a public back-and-forth with an irate customer- it will never reflect well on you, no matter how nicely you approach the situation.



Manage your Block has been created to assist Residents' Management Companies, Right to Manage Companies and Residents Associations to self-manage their block.

It's a secure, easy-to-use portal that offers access to your block's details at the touch of a button. Designed to make your life easier, it saves you time and offers a fast and efficient interface to connect you, your residents, and your block.

manageyourblock.co.uk | info@manageyourblock.co.uk | 0333 577 9070

ManageYourBlock™

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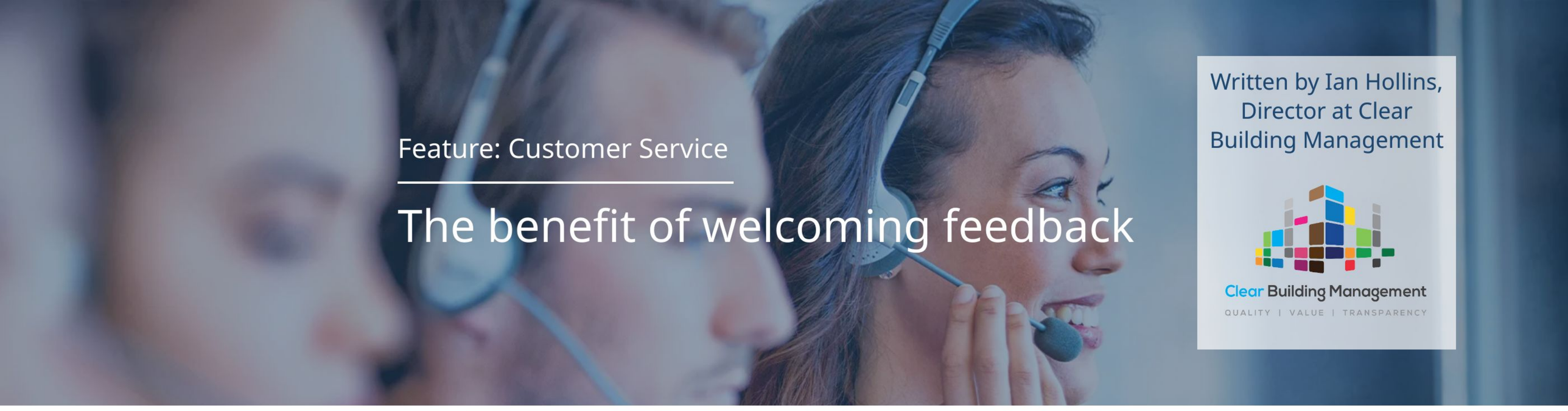

Feature: Customer Service

The benefit of welcoming feedback

Written by Ian Hollins, Director at Clear Building Management

Clear Building Management
QUALITY | VALUE | TRANSPARENCY

It's lovely when you get a five star google review, or a heartfelt thank you from a customer. It gives the team a boost and reminds us why we put our hearts and souls into delivering a better property management experience for our customers.

Getting negative or 'constructive' feedback is not quite so much fun, but it is arguably more important than the positive feedback and we believe it should be welcomed in the same way as compliments.

Effective and transparent communication has always been key to the way we do things at Clear Building Management. Indeed, transparency, quality and value are the three fundamental pillars that our company is built upon.

Building trust and developing honest relationships with our customers is our number one priority in delivering an outstanding property management service, and we believe this is best achieved through complete transparency of our property management operations.

But we are also firm believers that being open and honest with RMC directors and leaseholders shouldn't be a one-way street. Making it easy for people to provide feedback can be a great way to tackle budding issues early on, before they have chance to snowball.

With the rise of reviewing platforms like Google Reviews, Trip Advisor and Trust Pilot, there is a now a growing expectation that customers should have the right to provide feedback on services if they wish to.

At Clear, we feel strongly that our customers should be able to communicate in whatever way suits them best; this could be in person, over the phone, by email, by text, or through our online portal.

Remaining objective (and thick-skinned)

Ignoring feedback is a sure-fire way to needlessly escalate a situation and potentially damage relationships. But managing agents that turn complaints into opportunities for building closer relationships with customers are far more likely to prosper.

Of course, nobody relishes being criticised. When you're doing your very best to provide a top rate service, receiving a complaint can feel like a real kick in the teeth – particularly when it's something outside of your control that has gone wrong.

It's important to remain objective and not take things personally. Feedback often give you the opportunity to notice things you missed before and can motivate you to try a different approach. When you put emotions aside, it's far more productive to view criticism as a source of valuable feedback that can ultimately help drive better property management.

Take action quickly

We'd recommend aiming to resolve the issue by the next working day – this is much easier than it sounds for more straightforward complaints.

There will occasionally be complex disputes that arise, which may take a bit more time to rectify. In these circumstances, providing regular updates and progress reports as you investigate the problem will show the 'complainant' that you are being proactive. As always, transparency, honesty and empathy should remain at the heart of all communications.

Ultimately, most people who have made a complaint simply want to know they are being listened to and their problem acknowledged. Following up to let the complainant know that you have found a resolution is therefore also an important step, often overlooked, step to include in your complaints policy.

Though some problems may take days or even weeks to sort out, if you can demonstrate both empathy and urgency, you can quickly turn a negative into a positive and improve customer loyalty.

Clear Building Management offers a fresh approach to residential property management.

Formed by qualified and experienced professionals from the UK residential block management agent industry who recognised that there is a better and more inclusive way to manage residential buildings and apartment blocks, a way that embodies our core values of quality, value and transparency.

clearbuildingmanagement.com | info@clearbm.com | 0333 344 4996

Clear Building Management
QUALITY | VALUE | TRANSPARENCY

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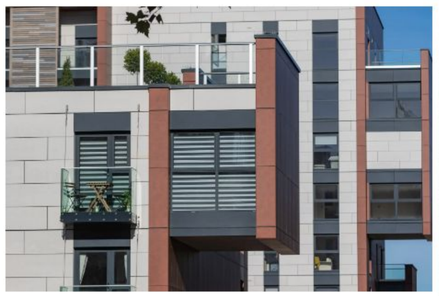

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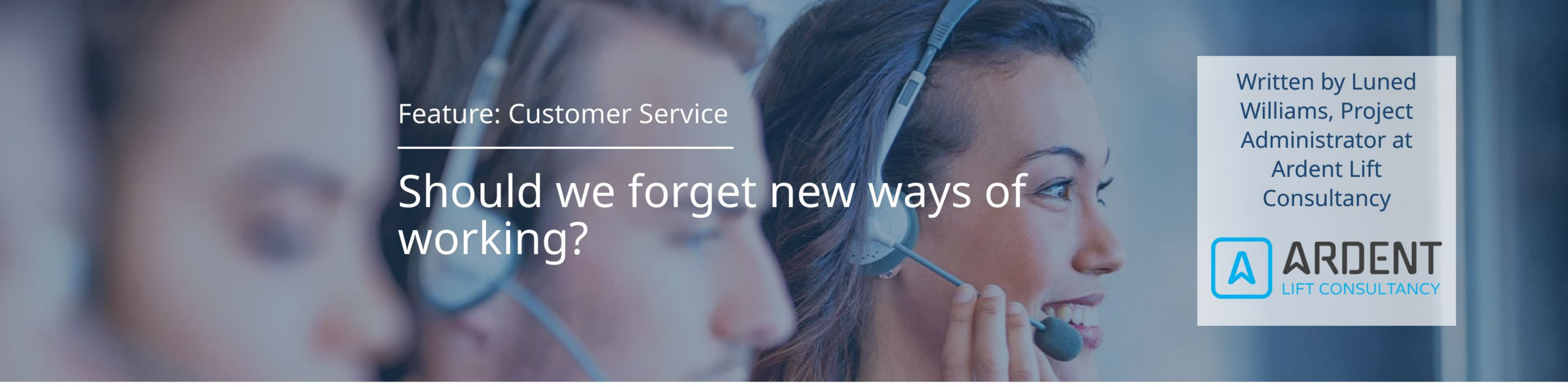


Feature: Customer Service

Should we forget new ways of working?

Written by Luned Williams, Project Administrator at Ardent Lift Consultancy

We write this month's Flat Living article at a time of relief, relief that we are finally seeing the end of the Covid restrictions and that we can go back to a state of "normality" again.

But should we forget our new ways of working? Particularly considering this month's edition on Customer Service.

There have been many challenges we have all had to overcome over the past two years and retaining a high level of customer service for our clients has been at the forefront of our services at ARDENT.

However, as with most businesses, we had to review and adapt the way we worked.

When Ardent Lift Consultancy was formed in 2012, customer service was identified as a key consideration for the business. The thrill of getting a new client is always rewarding and building on the initial introduction to our business is a priority for the team. By working on these relationships, we find that our client retention rate is excellent.

One of the original initiatives we introduced back then was a 'hot line' for Property Managers to contact us to discuss their lift issues and obtain free, impartial advice from our team. This approach worked for an emerging business and the mindset has remained with us to this day.

Though most of our day-to-day communications are conducted over email, there is no real substitute for a conversation, whether it is someone you have known for years, or someone new.

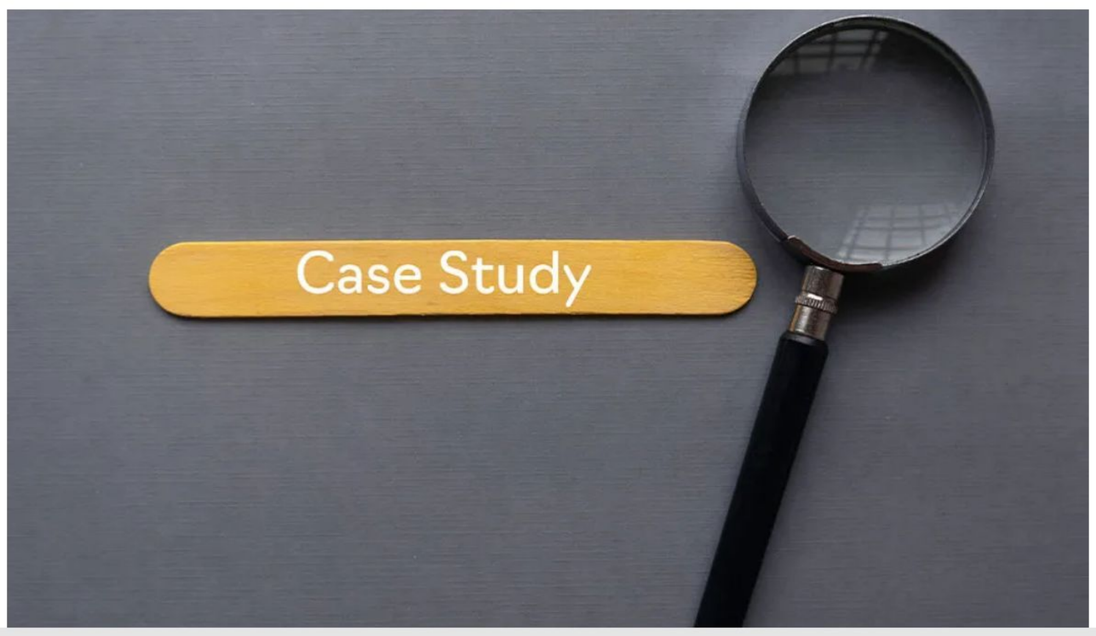
Before the pandemic, this conversation, more than likely occurred by phone, however, a phone call does not substitute for face-to-face meetings.

And whilst there is much that can be discussed over the phone, a face-to-face connection improves transparency, promotes buy-in, and instils confidence; facial expression can help us decide if we trust or believe what is being said.

We have found that face-to-face consultation with stakeholders works extremely well for our projects and customers; providing the opportunity for a group to come together to share relevant information on the upcoming project, gain clarity, and resolve any highlighted issues.
Without these consultations, risks and issues could escalate and stakeholders lose faith.

This was never more important than during the lockdown periods brought on by Covid, with travel restricted and teams fragmented and working from home.

As with most businesses, we needed a new approach and we found ourselves slightly ahead of the game; having introduced Microsoft Teams into our way of working several years prior. So with experience, we were able to assist our colleagues and clients in hosting and attending virtual consultations and work meetings, as well as touching base with colleagues, family, and friends (far and wide).



Although the past two years have been challenging in many respects for us all, it has introduced a new approach to many of our working practices. We reduced our carbon footprint and made sustainable decisions, all while still being able to meet face-to-face.

Our team remains at full strength, and we are here to support customers (existing or new) with lift condition surveys, expert advice, and our trademark proactive approach.

But don't just take our word for it, take a look at our Case Studies and Client testimonials here.

As independent lift consultants, ARDENT Lift Consultancy recognise the importance of offering unbiased and accurate advice to our clients. This has developed mutual respect between our team of lift consultants and those we work with.

Whether working with architects looking to build practicality into their vision, or a property manager with time constraints seeking immediate solutions, we totally understand individual client requirements and provide timely, well considered and accurate advice.

Ardentlc.co.uk | info@ardentlc.co.uk | 01394 200328

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I've inherited an EV Charge Point – Now What?

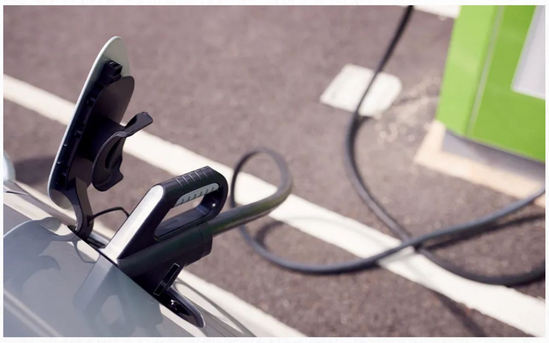
Written by Jamie Willsdon, Director of Future Fuel

If you're managing a block with developer-fitted EV chargepoints, you may be congratulating yourself for having side-stepped the well-documented problems around installing chargers in residential blocks. In fact, you may not have got off as lightly as you thought says Jamie Willsdon.

The market for electric vehicles has really taken off in the last few years, bolstered by government grants and the drive towards net zero. And it is likely to be given even more of a boost by recent hikes in petrol and diesel prices. Identifying the opportunities presented by the expansion of this sector, EV consultant Future Fuel - part of maintenance and facilities specialist Future Group - launched in 2019 to provide charge point maintenance services and installation advice for residential block managers.

Developers are now expected to install EV chargers in new blocks as standard, with building regulations updated for 2022 setting out guidelines around the number of active chargers that must be provided for residents. This can mean as few as 10% or as many as 80% of parking spaces being given access to a live charge point. However, despite specifying that charge points must be made available to residents, the guidelines fall short when it comes to detailing how those chargers should be maintained or how the cost of the electricity supplied to them should be dealt with.

As a result, Future Fuel is now seeing problems with the charging infrastructure at the sites it visits. Issues that originate from the development stage are becoming more common in leasehold blocks and it is apparent that more work needs to be done to help both developers, and further down the line property managers, to understand the issues surrounding the provision of EV charge points.



These are some of the problems that are now coming to light:

Design/ Location of Chargers

Charge points are often installed in the parking spaces that are located nearest to the electrical supply. This seems logical – but no attention is being paid to the fact that parking bays are generally demised to residents under their lease and they may not be the leaseholders who own an electric vehicle. Those without EVs have chargers in their assigned bay and vice versa.

Parking is already a hugely emotive topic for leaseholders – it shouldn't be exacerbated by residents having to negotiate with their neighbours in order to charge their car.

Chargers Are Left Open to Use

Developers frequently install the type of charge point that a homeowner would have in their driveway – directly connected to their electricity supply and open to anyone to use. This is not normally a problem in a domestic situation because you would be likely to notice a strange car parked in your driveway, connected to your charge point. Someone would need a lot of front to abuse a home-installed charger in this way. Not so in a block of flats.

If chargers are left open, without a smart billing system in place, the electricity is effectively free at the point of use. This means that all residents, regardless of whether or not they have an EV themselves, are unknowingly paying an additional charge for someone else's electricity usage. With the cost of energy surging, this situation is unlikely to make the property manager in charge of the block very popular. It needs immediate investigation so that a solution to ensure correct billing can be put in place at the earliest opportunity.

Lack of Maintenance

EV charge points are high-powered electrical installations and need regular maintenance. Like any communal electricity supply, systems must be tested and confirmed safe for continued use. There is a general lack of knowledge among block managers around this issue, and there is frequently no cleaning or regular planned maintenance schedule in place. This is crucial if residents are to be kept safe and charger performance maximised.

Finding Solutions

It is absolutely clear that money is being wasted and compliance with health & safety - although not specifically regulated for the use of charge points – is not being properly considered. So what's the solution?

Future Group hopes that the Government will recognise the problem and make changes to the building regulations, providing clear specifications around charger installations for block managers. In the meantime, property managers are encouraged to review and evaluate their charge point infrastructure, and to invest in a survey to detail their existing chargers and to make recommendations around system security and maintenance.

There is funding available this year that property managers may be considering taking advantage of if they are operating blocks without chargers already in place. Should they do so, it is vital that they install and maintain their EVC infrastructure correctly, minimising wasted energy, cutting any additional cost to residents - and keeping the hassle factor to a minimum.

Jamie Willsdon is director of Future Fuel.

He can be contacted via:

info@future-group.uk | 0203 826 9999 Option 4

www.future-group.uk/ev

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ManageYourBlock™

Manage Your Block is a property portal designed to help **you** manage your block of flats.

Call for a free demo on 0333 577 9070

Who can use Manage Your Block?

We've designed Manage Your Block portal for:

- Residents' Management Companies
- Right to Manage Companies
- Residents Associations

We know that handover periods between new directors can be a challenging time. Managing a block comes with an enormous amount of information, from insurance documents to residents' contact information as well as the entire documented history of the block.

With our Manage Your Block portal, you'll never have to worry about finding information again. We'll provide you with a safe, reliable place for you to store and amend your documentation, contact your residents and manage your service charges...plus much more!

What can I do on the Manage Your Block portal?

The Manage Your Block portal has a massive range of functions, all created to make your processes as streamlined and simple as possible.

Share account information with other directors

You'll be provided with a username and password for your account which you can share with other directors, so that you're all always on the same page. This is especially handy during handover periods, as new directors will have all the information they need available to them at the touch of a button.

Have access to a contact list

Store, view and easily change your contacts list, making sure your residents' information is always up to date

Use the calendar

Our easy-to-use calendar function will help you to keep your block as organised as possible.

Send alerts

If your block suffers a power shortage, a broken lift or even crime-related incidents in the local area, you'll be able to send an alert out to your residents through your Manage Your Block account. Not only does this make it simpler for you, it makes communication a lot quicker and easier between your residents

Keep contact info for your contractors

Maintain all your contractors' details in one place so you never lose a name or number. This is especially handy in case of an emergency.

Quotes

You'll be able to obtain quotes for maintenance around your block from your preferred contractors or one of ours. You'll be able to choose from a range of discounted specialist services such as legal assistance, accounts and buildings insurance valuations, and manage all quote requests from your Manage Your Block account.

Manage your documentation

On Manage Your Block, you'll be able to store all the documentation relating to your block in one easy-to-reach place. This may include copy leases, financial records, fire evacuation procedures, along with other day-to-day procedure documents. You will have instant access no matter where you are; it's everything you need at the click of a button.

Keep a diary

Receive diary reminders to ensure you don't forget anything, such as health and safety risk assessments, gate inspections, fire drills and much more.

Notes

To make sure you don't forget anything, you can now keep important notes which will be saved securely on your account.

And now also collect service charges

This year, we've upgraded our property portal to include a function which will help you manage your service charges. You'll now be able to prepare, process and print out service charge demands for your block, meaning your in-house processes can be far more streamlined and efficient. Likewise, all the documents you produce will be collated with the required Summary of Tenants' Rights and Obligations.

ManageYourBlock™

For more information, or for a free, no-obligation demonstration of the Manage Your Block Portal, please contact a member of the team on 0333 577 9070 or visit manageyourblock.co.uk

Featured Job Vacancies

Are you looking for a new role, maybe a step up the career ladder? Take a look at a range vacancies in the block management sector from Block Recruit.

Accounts Manager

Location: Essex

Salary: £40,000 - £45,000

Tell me more

Senior Block Manager

Location: South West London

Salary: £40,000 - £45,000

Tell me more

Senior Property Manager

Location: Central London

Salary: £45,000 - £55,000

Tell me more

Property Manager

Location: West Midlands

Salary: £37,600

Tell me more

Property Manager

Location: Wiltshire

Salary: £30,000 - £35,000

Tell me more

Property Manager (P/T)

Location: Home-based Hampshire

Salary: £25,000 - £30,000

Tell me more

Block Recruit

Block Recruit speicalise in providing property professionals to all areas of the block management industry in the UK.

Visit the Block Recruit website to find out about other vacancies they have and how they can support you in finding the perfect new role.

BLOCK RECRUIT

ARHM
Raising standards in retirement housing

Annual Conference
Thursday 26th May 2022 | Sheffield

ARHM's Annual Conference is back for 2022!

Returning after a two-year break, ARHM are delighted to announce that their annual conference will be back, in person, on the 26th May 2022. Key details are below and, for a limited time, ARHM members can book two tickets for the price of one!

Book Your Tickets Now

Content will include:

Key Topics:
The Future of Retirement Living
Leasehold Reform
The Very Latest Case Law
Wellbeing For All

Management:
Developing the Workforce of Tomorrow
Right to Manage
Resales Challenges
Managing Complaints

Training:
Understanding Leases
Affordable Retirement Options
Service Charges Explained
Introduction to Health & Safety

Leading sector experts will deliver a packed programme on all the key issues affecting the Retirement Leasehold Sector.

Confirmed speakers include:

Justin Bates
Landmark Chambers

Find out more

Sarah Chatfield
Anchor Hanover

Find out more

Jeff Platt
Section20 Ltd

Find out more

Debbie Matusevicius
ARHM Chair

Find out more

Alan Wake
NLG

Find out more

Chris Baker
McDowalls

Find out more

Will Burns
Unlock Your You

Find out more

Venue

Novotel, Sheffield Centre

Located in Sheffield city centre, the Novotel is a two-minute walk away from the nearest car park, or if you are arriving by train, it is just five minutes walk from the railway station.

Find out more

Sponsors

The ARHM Conference is sponsored and supported by:

CLAWS Consultants
Boodle Hatfield
Earl Kendrick Building Surveyors
Fortus Business Advisors & Accountants
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Liquid Recruitment Solutions
McDowalls
Tetra Consulting
TriPartum

Find out more

Book your tickets for the 2022 ARHM Annual Conference

£150 (+VAT) for ARHM Members
£199 (+VAT) for Non-Members

For a limited time, members can benefit from two places for the price of one!

Book Your Tickets Now

Property Management Events

All the latest conferences, seminars, webinars and events taking place in the industry.

12th May 2022

IRPM Annual Seminar

Thrilled to back in-person for 2022's IRPM Annual Seminar, delegates will be welcomed back to the QEII Centre, London on the 12th of May 2022.

Book your place

NOVEMBER 2022

NLG Annual Conference

Date and details to be released soon.

Find out more

26th May 2022

ARHM
Raising standards in retirement housing

ARHM Annual Conference

After a two year break, the ARHM is delighted to return to an in-person Annual Conference at a new venue in Sheffield.

Leading sector experts will deliver a packed programme on all the key issues affecting the Retirement Leasehold Sector and, for a limited time, members can benefit from two places for the price of one!

Book your place

28th June 2022

Action for A-T Golf Day 2022

Join us at Moor Park, Rickmansworth for our 2022 Charity golf day. With numerous prizes to be won, start the day with breakfast, tee off for 18 holes of golf on the impressive high course before joining your celebrity host and fellow players for a sit down meal, entertainment and a prize giving ceremony.

May ARMA Training Courses

ARMA's May training courses cover a range of topics which can help keep staff prepared for the modern world of property management. Courses and webinars will focus on communal heating, service charge accounting, Section 20 notices and more.

Online Training Course Costs

(Please note: IRPM members are eligible to receive our discounted member rate)

Full-day Course
Members: £100 + VAT
Non-Members: £175 + VAT

Half-day Course
Members: £60 + VAT
Non-Members: £100 + VAT

Information on Block Booking discounts can be found after the listings below.

Upcoming Training Courses

TC27: The Procedural and Technical Issues of Section 20

Dates: 16.05.22-18.05.22

3 day course

A 6-hour course being run over 3 consecutive days (2-hours per day) covering the requirements and procedures of Section 20 (qualifying works and qualifying long term agreements), exemptions, OJEU Public Notices and the growing body of Case Law.

Book your place

TC1: Introduction to Residential Property Management

Dates: 23.05.22-25.05.22

3 day course

A six-hour course being run over three days (two-hours per day) by ARMA's Technical Officer, for those new to residential leasehold property management. It will provide an overview of the controls and processes required to effectively manage a leasehold block.

Book your place

TC66: Introduction to Fire Safety for Property Managers

Dates: 07.06.22 – 08.06.22

3 day course

A 6-hour course being run over 2 consecutive days (3-hours per day). This course is provided for block managers looking to learn the basics of fire safety for residential buildings. It gives basic information for managing the fire risks of common parts of blocks of flats and delves into the essential grounding of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

Book your place

TC44: Introduction to Accounting for Service Charges

Dates: 20.06.22-21.06.22

2 day course

A 6-hour course being run over 2 consecutive days (3-hours per day) walking through the financial year of a property. This course is aimed at individuals with less than 18 months experience in the industry.

Book your place

TC86: Concierge Training Course

Dates: 17.05.22

3 day course

A comprehensive three-day programme to train new and existing site-based staff in the three key areas they need: Fire Awareness; Health & Safety; and Customer Service training. The role of the concierge is a safety critical one and it should also be remembered that they are the most frequent point of contact with your company that most residents have. The course can be taken as a whole, or as individual days.

Book your place

TC68: Communal Heating for Apartment Blocks

Dates: 31.05.22

1 day course

This 2-and-a-half-hour course is essential for any PM managing a block with communal heating, hot water and /or CHP installed. Looking closely at the evolving energy landscape and new challenges affecting Managing Agents' responsibilities, this bespoke and practical course will provide members with specific knowledge to ensure compliance under the Heat Network (Metering and Billing) Regulations.

Book your place

TC62: Fire Safety Management (Senior-Level) For Residential Managing Agents

Dates: 14.06.22-16.06.22

3 day course

This course is for directors and senior managers responsible for fire safety management in residential blocks of flats. The course explains the guidance given in ARMA's Fire Safety Management in Flats publication and provides leasehold and legal tools that can be used to enforce leaseholder fire safety compliance.

Book your place

W2: Dealing with Problems of Short-Term (And Nightly) Letting of Flats

Dates: 23.06.22

Webinar

Even the briefest of visits to websites, such as Airbnb, reveal the common problem of residential flats being let out on a short-term (and often nightly) basis. Many managing agents are facing these problems across their portfolio. In this webinar, we'll explore some of the issues and challenges faced by this kind of short- term letting. The focus of this webinar is on the potential clauses of leases that might be breached by this behaviour, and the potential recourse a management company or landlord may have.

Book your place

To view ARMA's full list of training courses, **click here**.

Get in touch

Website: www.arma.org.uk
Phone: 0207 978 2607
Twitter: @ARMAleasehold

Setting Standards in Residential Property Management

The Institute of Residential Property Management (IRPM) is the professional body for residential property management specialists and provides nationally accredited qualifications, guidance on career pathways and resources, to assist property managers within their roles. IRPM is dedicated to supporting, building, and setting the standards of the profession.

IRPM Key Objectives

Setting & Raising Standards across the residential property management sector

To be the **trusted** source of **expertise**, **knowledge**, & **qualifications**

Providing individuals with an independent **professional accreditation**

Provide **knowledge**, **leadership**, and **proficiency** in the property management sector

Join the IRPM

BLOCK in a BOX

Block in a Box is a tool-kit of services and solutions to help you Manage Your Block

3D Surveys

Accounting Solutions

Company Secretarial

Contractor Accreditation

Cyber Security Training

Drone Surveys

Electrical Charging Points

Emergency Assistance

Flat Living

FPRA
FEDERATION OF PRIVATE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS

Health & Safety

Insurance Solutions

Legal Support & Assistance

Out of Hours

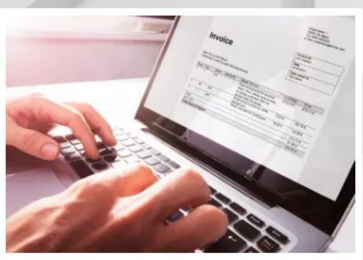
Reinstatement Cost Assessments

Repair & Maintenance

RMC Director Training

Rooftop Extensions

Service Charge Arrears



Service Charge Collections

SmarkLink45 Prepay Meter

Utilities

Water Leak Detection

Get in touch for a quote on anything you need for your block

call us on 0333 015 4145

email info@blockinabox.co.uk

or visit our website blockinabox.co.uk

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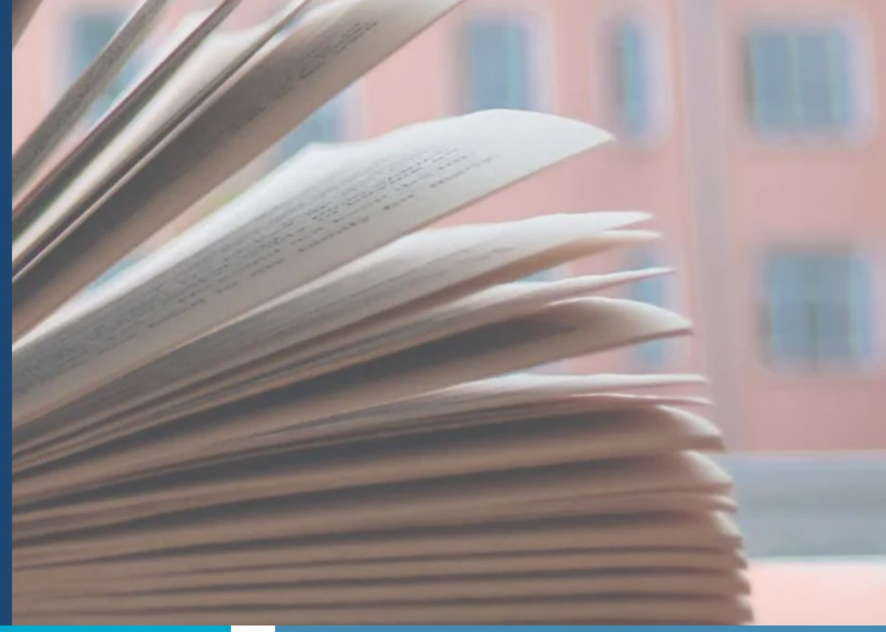

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Managing Agents

02
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ARMA Agents

04
ALEP Members

Find an Agent

Featured Managing Agents are listed alphabetically.

Nationwide

Clear Building Management

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Nationwide

FirstPort

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Hillcrest Estate Management

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Hobdens Property Management Ltd

Specialising in Block & Estate Management since 1946

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Find a Supplier

Featured suppliers are listed by category and then alphabetically.

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CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

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LIFT CONSULTANCY

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Lifts

Hemsworth
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Lifts

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ARHM

Raising standards in retirement housing

RAISING STANDARDS FOR OVER 25 YEARS

The ARHM are the largest trade association body for the retirement sector, with 55 members representing more than 100,000 homes across the UK.

Our mission is to continually raise standards within the sector by promoting best practice and ethics amongst those managing retirement housing.

About Us

Discover more about the ARHM and our mission

Code of Practice

Our Government approved Code goes above and beyond statutory legislation, providing good practice for managers of leasehold retirement developments.

Events & Training

Regional training, events and conferences

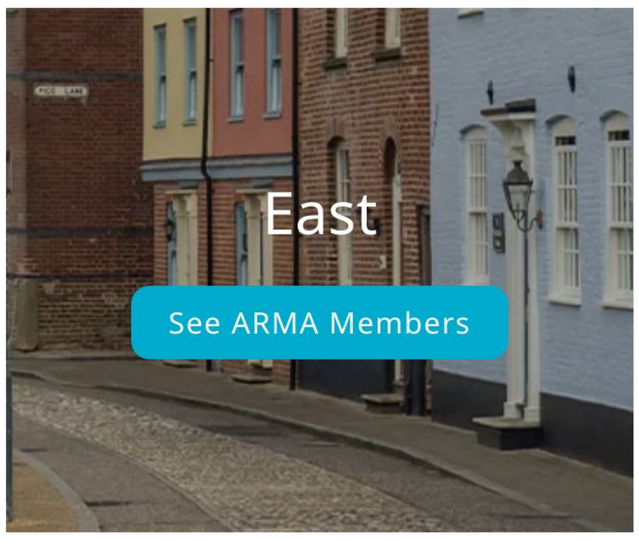
arhm.org | enquries@arhm.org | 07974 311 421

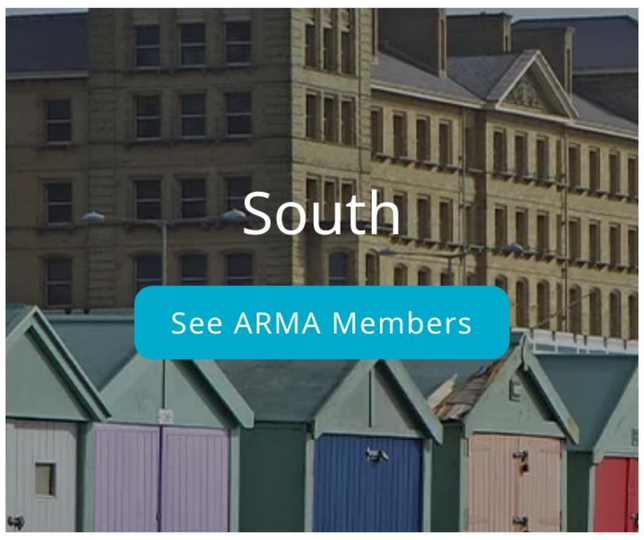
Find an ARMA Member

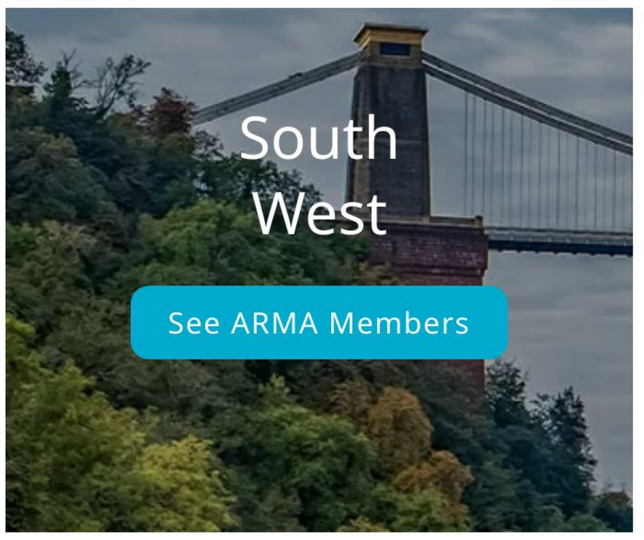
Are you considering a new managing agent?

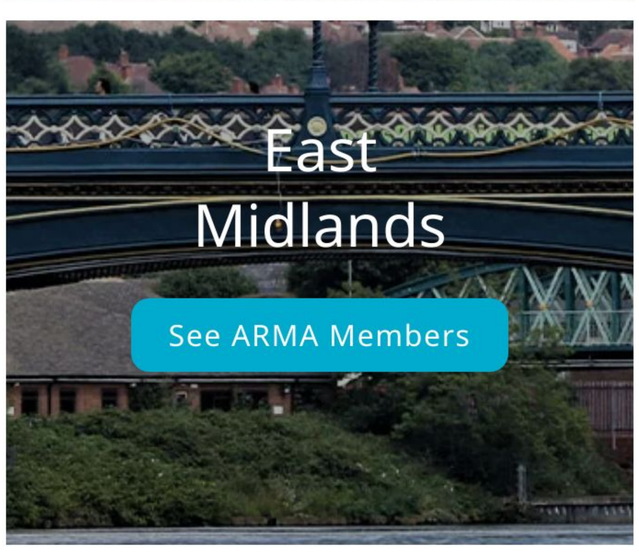
Below are a list of ARMA (Association of Residential Managing Agents) members by region.

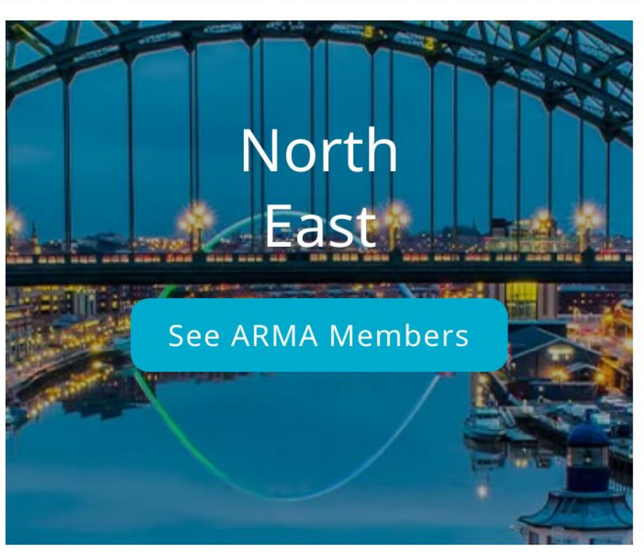
A managing agent that is a 'member' of ARMA will have successfully achieved ARMA Accreditation and is required to comply with the ARMA Bye-Laws, RICS Code, relevant legislation and ARMA Consumer Charter & Standards.











Setting the Standards in Property Management

Whether you are a leaseholder, residents' management company, developer, landlord or freeholder - you need a managing agent you can rely on to professionally manage your apartment block.

So look for the ARMA logo for accredited managing agents who are compliant, audited, independently regulated, transparent and will hold your service charge in TRUST.

For information on the advantages of appointing an ARMA member contact:

020 7978 2607 | www.arma.org.uk

Find an ALEP Member

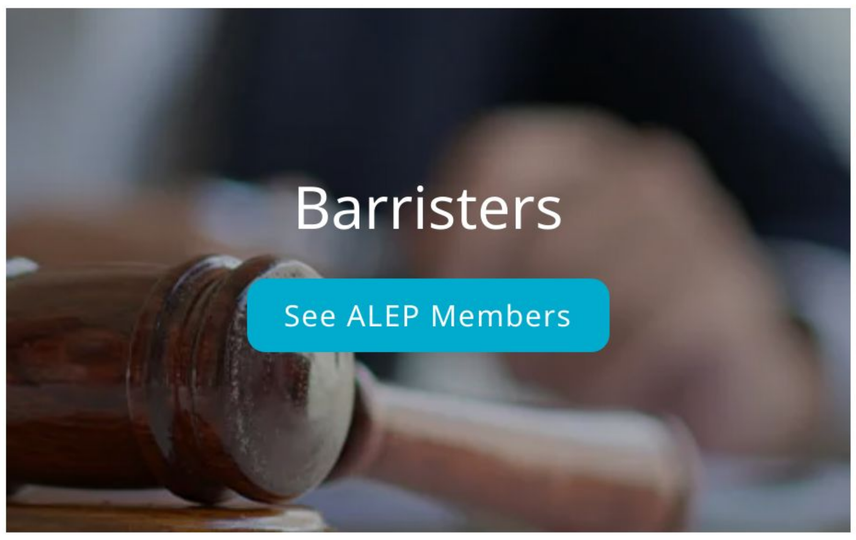
ALEP (Association of Leasehold Enfranchisement Practitioners) member firms are rigorously vetted so you can be confident that they have a proven track record in leasehold enfranchisement.

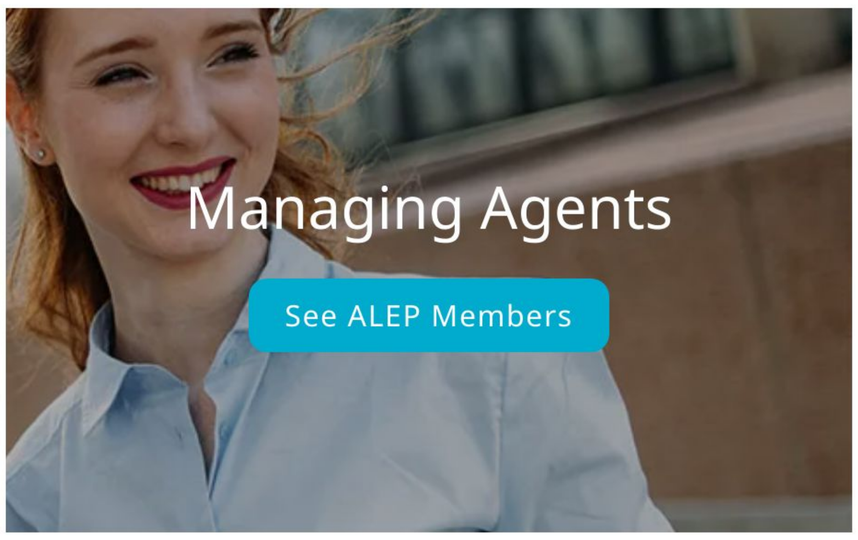
ALEP members can advise or assist with:

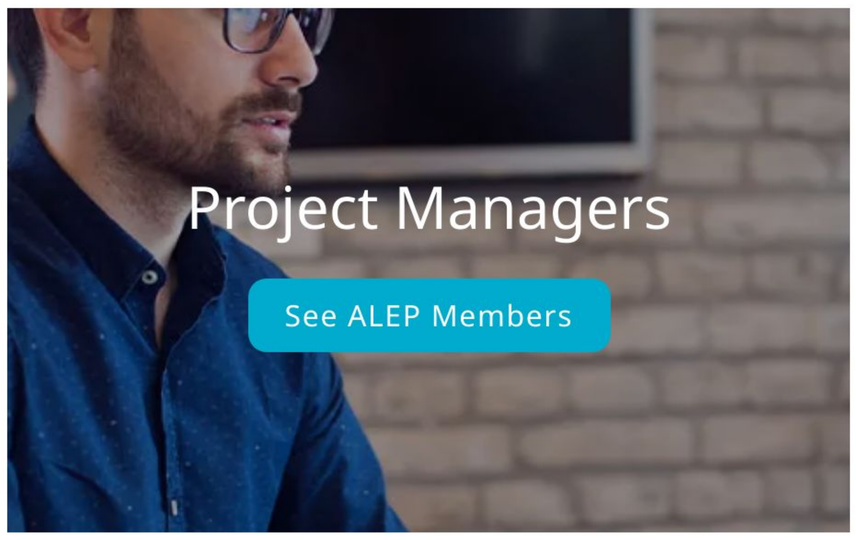
- Extending a lease;
- Buying a share or freehold of a building;
- Exercising the Right to Manage;
- Section 5 Notice;
- Dealing with freeholder or leaseholder disputes

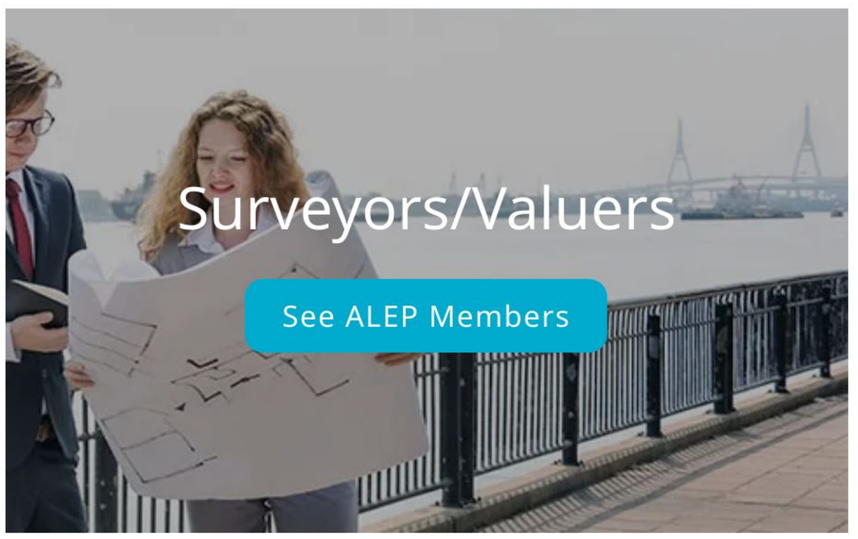
Below are details of ALEP Professionals (alphabetically) in the following areas:

- Barristers
- Managing Agents
- Project Managers
- Solicitors/Legal
- Surveyors/Valuers









ALEP
ASSOCIATION OF LEASEHOLD ENFRANCHISEMENT PRACTITIONERS

ALEP - the voice of the enfranchisement sector promoting best practice

Leasehold enfranchisement includes the processes of lease extension, freehold acquisition and correction of management problems within leasehold properties.

The Association of Leasehold Enfranchisement Practitioners (ALEP) serves as the leading organisation representing professionals working in this sector.

Established in 2007, ALEP was formed to bring together firms working within leasehold enfranchisement under one, all-encompassing membership organisation. Barristers, managing agents, project managers, solicitors and valuers all form part of the ALEP community.

Our Work

One of ALEP's key aims is to work with member firms within this sector to raise and maintain standards across the board. The Association holds regular seminars and networking sessions, as well as its popular annual Conference and Lecture events, all with the objective of bringing the sector together to share ideas, discuss key issues and encourage best practice.

ALEP also acts as the 'voice of the sector' and represents its members' views to the wider industry, the media and to the general public. More recently, ALEP is proud to have been invited by the government to contribute to several consultations concerning the future of leasehold enfranchisement.

Our Members

ALEP has 260 highly respected member companies and individual barristers – this equates to just under a total of 1,000 professionals – all of whom operate within the enfranchisement sector and who regularly come together to network, compare notes and agree best practice.

ALEP accreditation acts as a badge of assurance for leaseholders and freeholders alike when looking for professionals to handle their enfranchisement transactions. All members are vetted to ensure they are experienced in dealing with the various and complicated issues surrounding leasehold enfranchisement.

Areas ALEP members can help with include:

- Extending a lease
- Leaseholder vs. freeholder disputes and resolutions
- Informal lease extension implications
- Marriage value
- Collective enfranchisement
- First-tier Tribunals
- Leasehold Valuation Tribunals
- Over-inflated ground rent, service charges and insurance

For more information and to find an ALEP member in your area please visit: www.alep.org.uk

LEASE

THE LEASEHOLD ADVISORY SERVICE

Government funded, independent advice for residential leaseholders and park home residents

www.lease-advice.org

We hope you enjoyed this issue of Flat Living Magazine

You can read more on the Flat Living website which has over 1,000 articles for Residents Management Companies, Directors and Managing Agents.

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Make sure you receive a copy of Flat Living direct to your mailbox every month.

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Contact Us
We would love to hear from you if you have a question or would like to find out about working with us.

Contact Us

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- Absolute Property Management Solutions Ltd Penarth 02920 707590 Full Member
- Birt & Co Tenby 01834 842 204 Full Member
- Compton Property Management Ltd Swansea 01792 315 488 Full Member
- RH Seel & Co Ltd Cardiff 02920 370 100 Full Member
- Western Permanent Property Cardiff 02920 235 151 Full Member
- Westquay Property Management Ltd Barry 01446 506 079 Full Member
- Number One Property Management Newport 01633 492777 Associate

ARMA Members
London

- 2 Manage Property Ltd Sunbury on Thames 01932 765 493 Full Member
- Acorn Estate Management Bromley 02083 156 980 Full Member
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- Andrew Purnell & Co London 02088 797 888 Full Member
- Blenheims Estate and Asset Management Limited London 02073 684 150 Full Member
- Bowood (London) Limited London 02072 236 940 Full Member
- Brackenbury Property Management Ltd London 02030 023 600 Full Member
- Centro Plc Sutton 02084 011 000 Full Member
- Cluttons LLP London 02074 081 010 Full Member
- Colin Bibra Estate Agents Limited London 02085 670 077 Full Member
- Crabtree PM Limited London 02083 717 070 Full Member
- Craig Sheehan Chartered Surveyors London 03452 077 400 Full Member
- D&G Block Management London 02079 328 500 Full Member
- Dauntons Soar Management Limited London 02078 341 032 Full Member
- Esskay Management Services LLP London 02073 318 888 Full Member
- Fairoak Estate Management London 02030 789 824 Full Member
- Fifield Glyn London 02076 296 457 Full Member
- Fry & Company London 02078 210 099 Full Member
- Grace Miller & Co. New Malden 02086 051 200 Full Member
- Hammond Properties Sidcup 02083 004 811 Full Member
- HML Croydon 02086 628 800 Full Member
- Houston Lawrence Management Ltd London 02078 013 201 Full Member
- JCF Property Management Limited London 02087 889 700 Full Member
- JFM Block And Estate Management Harrow 02038 657 789 Full Member
- Kensington Flats London 02075 896 699 Full Member
- Kinleigh Folkard & Hayward London 02035 420 147 Full Member
- KMP Solutions Limited London 02083 719 171 Full Member
- London Wharf Property Management Co Ltd Erith 07543 247 144 Full Member
- May & Co Management Ltd London 02073 763 726 Full Member
- Michael Laurie Magar Ltd Borehamwood 02084 929 850 Full Member
- Moonstone Management London 02083 009 281 Full Member
- Pinnacle Housing Limited London 02074 275 182 Full Member
- Prime Management (PS) Limited Bromley 02037 008 733 Full Member
- Prime Portfolio Ltd London 020 7409 0209 Full Member
- Property Hub Wembley 0208 459 3333 Full Member
- Urang Property Management Limited London 02077 518 355 Full Member
- Aston Square Ltd London 020 3982 8282 Associate
- Barosa Property Limited Stanmore 02030 867 130 Associate
- Blue Crystal Residential Ltd London 020 8994 7327 Associate
- Charles David James Ltd London 020 7704 0660 Associate
- Davies Daniel Ltd London 02034 170 425 Associate
- Eight Asset Management London 07951 622 643 Associate
- JSG Block Management Ltd Ruislip Manor 01895 604 446 Associate
- Navana Asset Management Limited London 0203 9979 918 Associate
- Nicolas Van Patrick Ltd London 02075 901 200 Associate

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• Anstey Property Management	Southampton	02380 730 111	Full Member
• Asset Property Management	Bournemouth	01202 532 898	Full Member
• Burns Hamilton	Bournemouth	01202 391663	Full Member
• Freemont Property Managers Limited	Lymington	01590 610 555	Full Member
• GH Property Management Services Limited	Southampton	03453 080 988	Full Member
• Hobdens Property Management Ltd	Littlehampton	01903 724 040	Full Member
• Hunters Estate & Property Management Ltd	Burgess Hill	01444 254 400	Full Member
• Itsyourplace Limited	Fleet	0330 660 0699	Full Member
• Kites Property Services Limited	Camberley	01252 837514	Full Member
• KTS Estate Management Limited	Arundel	01903 889 799	Full Member
• MJ Staples t/a Deacon Crickmay Asset Mgmt	Horsham	01403 218 975	Full Member
• Millstream Management Services Limited	Ringwood	01425 888 912	Full Member
• Minster Property Management Limited	Wimborne	01202 883 360	Full Member
• McCarthy & Stone Management Services	Bournemouth	01202 508 190	Full Member
• Napier Management Services Limited	Fordingbridge	01425 650 656	Full Member
• Rebbeck Brothers Ltd	Bournemouth	01202 438 908	Full Member
• Retirement Lease Housing Association (RLHA)	Aldershot	01252 356 000	Full Member
• SPL Property Management LLP	Poole	01202 555 560	Full Member
• Stride & Son	Chichester	01243 813 760	Full Member
• Weldon & King Estate Agents	New Milton	01425 623 423	Full Member
• Cloud Student Homes	Salisbury	01722 580263	Associate
• HC Block & Estate Management Ltd	Camberley	0118 338 8794	Associate
• PS&B - Estate Management Limited	Portsmouth	01273 326 171	Associate

ARMA Members South West

• Alpha Housing Services Limited	Taunton	01823 270 661	Full Member
• Andrews Letting & Management	Bristol	01179 294 400	Full Member
• Apex Property Management	Plymouth	01752 210 970	Full Member
• Belmont Property Management	Truro	01872 260606	Full Member
• Blenheims Estate & Asset Management Limited	Paignton	01803 668 730	Full Member
• Bloq Management Services Limited	Bristol	0117 942 3112	Full Member
• BNS Management Services	Bristol	0117 9570 809	Full Member
• DNA Property Management	Bristol	0117 9200 141	Full Member
• Easton Bevins	Bristol	0117 944 3000	Full Member
• Freehold Management Services Ltd	Plymouth	01752 603 900	Full Member
• Hillcrest Estate Management Limited	Somerset	0117 973 0600	Full Member
• Hillsdon Management Ltd	Sidmouth	01395 517950	Full Member
• Koti Property Management Ltd	Bodmin	01208 510050	Full Member
• Peninsula Management SW Limited	Barnstaple	01271 386306	Full Member
• Plymouth Block Management	Plymouth	01752 717311	Full Member
• Saturley Garner & Co Ltd	Somerset	01934 628174	Full Member
• Stephen & Co Block Management Ltd	Weston super Mare	01934 621101	Full Member
• Tuffin & Co Property Management Ltd	Plymouth	01752 254 222	Full Member
• West of England Estate Mgmt Co Ltd	Bath	01225 485910	Full Member
• Bath Leasehold Management	Bath	07775 444432	Associate
• JW Block Management Limited	Compton Dundon	07762 857617	Associate
• Smeaton Block Ltd	Plymouth	01752 938208	Associate
• Southernhay Estates Limited	Exeter	07788 437522	Associate

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- Defries & Associates Ltd Edgware 02082 020 759 Full Member
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- James Andrew Residential Ltd London 02083 497 171 Full Member
- K&M Property Management Limited Barnet 02084 401 034 Full Member
- Lamberts Chartered Surveyors London 02071 486 797 Full Member
- London Block Management Ltd London 02078 704 000 Full Member
- Parkgate-Aspen Property Management London 02087 328 888 Full Member
- Parkwood Management Company (London) Ltd London 02083 688 111 Full Member
- Sterling Property Management (UK) Limited London 02030 310 850 Full Member
- Trust Property Management Ltd London 08452 601 515 Full Member
- Y & Y Management Ltd London 02082 111 550 Full Member
- A Dandy Wren London 0345 034 0683 Associate

ARMA Members
South East

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- Allsop Letting and Management Limited — Brighton — 01273 322000 — Full Member
- AM Surveying & Block Management — Aylesford — 01732 220 598 — Full Member
- Amber Management — Ware — 0800 567 7567 — Full Member
- Appre Management Services Ltd — Leatherhead — 01372 376 536 — Full Member
- Arko Property Management Limited — Hastings — 01424 439786 — Full Member
- Atlantis Estates Ltd — Reading — 0118 903 5902 — Full Member
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- Banner Property Services Limited — High Wycombe — 01628 522888 — Full Member
- Bartley Management Limited — Winchester — 0345 017 9969 — Full Member
- BBM - Burkinshaw Block Management — Tunbridge Wells — 0207 978 2607 — Full Member
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- Housemartins Property Management — Seaford — 01323 896418 — Full Member
- HPS — Wokingham — 0118 962 7493 — Full Member
- Hunt Property Management — Eastbourne — 01323 644288 — Full Member
- Hurford Salvi Carr Property Management Ltd — Hertford — 01992 500 040 — Full Member
- Hydehead Ltd — Peacehaven — 01273 579796 — Full Member
- Jacksons — Hove — 01273 328 556 — Full Member
- Jennings & Barrett — Erith — 0203 598 9665 — Full Member
- JH Property Management Limited — Sittingbourne — 01795 476 249 — Full Member
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- Kent Gateway Block Management — Rochester — 01634 814867 — Full Member
- Kent Property Management — Canterbury — 01227 678016 — Full Member
- Let Solutions — Canterbury — 01227 456466 — Full Member
- MCS — Hertford — 01920 466500 — Full Member
- Metta Property Management Limited — Westcliff-On-Sea — 0330 133 0242 — Full Member
- Oakfield PM Ltd — St Leonards on Sea — 01424 854 814 — Full Member
- PACE Property Lettings & Management Ltd — Southend on Sea — 07810 801485 — Full Member
- Park Lane Block Management Ltd — Southampton — 02380 330706 — Full Member
- Peerless Properties (Oxford) Limited — Oxon — 01869 331198 — Full Member
- Pembroke Property Management Ltd — Tumbridge Wells — 0333 3442 100 — Full Member
- Pinnacle Property Management Ltd — Hurst — 01189 320180 — Full Member
- PJJS Management Services Limited — Maidstone — 01622 861 533 — Full Member
- PMS Managing Estates Limited — Essex — 01206 835350 — Full Member
- Premier Block Management — Borehamwood — 020 8236 1270 — Full Member
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- Residential Management Group Ltd — Hoddesdon — 0345 002 4444 — Full Member
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- Rushbrook & Rathbone Ltd — Hitchin — 01462 420201 — Full Member
- Scott Estates Management Ltd — Hastings — 01424 722 586 — Full Member
- Sebright Property Management Limited — Harrow — 020 8863 2767 — Full Member
- Sensible Property Management (Eastbourne) Ltd — Eastbourne — 01323 738886 — Full Member
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- Trent Park Properties LLP — Borehamwood — 020 3384 0583 — Full Member
- Trinity Estates — Hemel Hempstead — 01442 437 656 — Full Member
- Virtus Property Management — Bishops Stortford — 01279 461281 — Full Member
- Warwick Estates Property Management Ltd — Harlow — 01279 626 616 — Full Member
- Acquis Management Limited — Dorking — 01306 881884 — Associate
- Eaves Property Management Services Limited — Maidenhead — 01628 947908 — Associate
- LevelUP Property Management — Northfleet — 07920 000144 — Associate
- Orchard PM Limited — Worthing — 01273 030 271 — Associate
- Reed Block Management — Essex — 01702 606888 — Associate
- Sennen Property Management Ltd — Camberley — 01276 804 781 — Associate
- Vertical Village — Esher — 020 8399 0170 — Associate
- Warmans 1859 Limited — Royston — 08000 383858 — Associate
- Zone Property Management — Sawbridgeworth — 07983 447522 — Associate

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- ERA Property Services Ltd London 02078 376 186 Full Member
- Fortune Block Management Ltd Potters Bar 02089 051 621 Full Member
- Galleons Point Management Ltd London 02075 118 585 Full Member
- Ian Gibbs Middlesex 02083 704 810 Full Member
- Maunder Taylor Potters Bar 01707 665 666 Full Member
- Montalt Management Ltd London 02082 239 820 Full Member
- Omnicroft Ltd Rainham 01634 362 097 Full Member
- Parc Properties Management Ltd London 02075 153 553 Full Member
- POD Management London 03335 776 656 Full Member
- Stock Page Stock London 020 7251 4171 Full Member
- Strangford Management Ltd London 02039 462 650 Full Member
- Strettons Limited London 02085 094 435 Full Member
- Vision PEM & Vision RTM London 08454 568 775 Full Member
- Charlesons Ilford 02085502221 Associate
- Hawk Block Management London 02080 161 178 Associate
- Letting International Limited Ilford 02085 549 999 Associate
- Managed Partnerships Limited Romford 0203 475 9067 Associate

ARMA Members
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- Aspect Property Management Limited London 020 7828 1664 Full Member
- Berkshire Hathaway Home Services Kay & Co London 020 7467 2027 Full Member
- Bold and Reeves Limited London 020 7408 7590 Full Member
- Brunsfield Ltd London 020 3601 7676 Full Member
- Burlington Estates (London) Limited London 020 7499 3207 Full Member
- Castlereagh Management Limited London 020 7258 9670 Full Member
- Homes Property Management Limited London 020 8960 7730 Full Member
- KDG Property Ltd London 020 7887 6413 Full Member
- Knight Frank LLP London 020 7861 1242 Full Member
- Lanigan Estates Ltd London 020 7223 0851 Full Member
- Lee Baron London 020 7758 5600 Full Member
- Lewis & Tucker London 020 7323 2321 Full Member
- London Residential Management Ltd London 020 7438 1080 Full Member
- Lornham London 020 7724 4777 Full Member
- Mayfair Property Management Limited London 020 7576 9435 Full Member
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- SAFE Property Management London 020 8762 0167 Full Member
- SBA Property Management London 020 7629 4949 Full Member
- Sears Morgan Property Management Limited London 0844 257 2222 Full Member
- SHW London 020 7389 1500 Full Member
- Sloan Block Management London 020 7221 4935 Full Member
- Smith Waters LLP London 020 7839 3950 Full Member
- Susan Metcalfe Residential Property Management Ltd England 020 7591 0931 Full Member
- Tideway Property Managers London 020 7409 0609 Full Member
- Parallel Property Management London 020 3828 0180 Associate

ARMA Members East

- Alexander Faulkner Partnership Fareham 01489 296 000 Full Member
- APT Property Management Fenstanton 01480 192 065 Full Member
- Belgravia Block Management Ltd Peterborough 01733 345 278 Full Member
- Block Management Uk Limited Sudbury 01787 211 801 Full Member
- Carringtons Residential Management Ltd Harlow 01279 408 740 Full Member
- Encore Estate Management Cambs 01223 866 980 Full Member
- Flaxfields Limited Linton 01223 941380 Full Member
- Hegarty Property Management Market Harborough 07890 064 232 Associate
- Hill & Clark Boston 01205 352019 Full Member
- Home From Home Ipswitch 01473 858690 Full Member
- Janeteva Estate Management Melbourn 01223 655734 Full Member
- Letters Block Management Peterborough 01733 898 589 Full Member
- Norwich Residential Management Ltd Norwich 01603 670 050 Full Member
- PREIM Ltd Peterborough 01778 382 210 Full Member
- Redwood Estate Management Ltd London 02083 168 990 Full Member
- Rounce & Evans Property Management Ltd King's Lynn 01485 544 740 Full Member
- St Andrews Bureau Ltd Cambridge 01223 352 170 Full Member
- TLC Estate Agents London 0207 370 4000 Full Member
- TW Property Block Management Tunbridge Wells 01892 530 109 Full Member

ARMA Members
North East

- Clear Building Management Limited Manchester 03333 444 996 Full Member
- Kingston Property Services Limited Newcastle upon Tyne 03301 231 133 Full Member
- Potts Gray Management Company Ltd South Shields 03300 104 188 Full Member
- Town & City Management Limited Darlington 01325 389 689 Full Member

ARMA Members
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- M H Associates London 020 7737 2552 Full Member
- Moss And Co London 020 8946 7661 Full Member
- Prior Estates Limited Bromley 020 8460 9690 Full Member
- Rendall & Rittner Ltd London 020 7702 0701 Full Member
- SL Property Consultants Ltd London 020 7622 9259 Full Member
- VFM Property Management Beckenham 020 8658 6824 Full Member
- Connect UK (Nationwide) Limited London 01293 529 993 Associate
- Denar Property Management Kingston upon Thames 020 8117 9930 Associate
- Mellio London Unknown Associate

ARMA Members
West Midlands

- Blocsphere Property Management Ludlow 03333 601 601 Full Member
- Centrick Limited Birmingham 0333 012 4125 Full Member
- Compass Block Management Birmingham 0121 236 5757 Full Member
- Cottons Birmingham 0121 247 2030 Full Member
- Exclusive Property Management Ltd Solihull 0121 707 7727 Full Member
- Hadrian Property Management Company Limited Lichfield 01543 410922 Full Member
- KT Management Co (UK) Ltd Merry Hill 01384 573 637 Full Member
- KWB Property Management Limited Birmingham 0121 233 2330 Full Member
- Longlease Property Management Stratford upon Avon 01789 333 464 Full Member
- Mainstay Residential Ltd Worcester 01905 357777 Full Member
- Metro PM Birmingham 0121 428 4747 Full Member
- Pennycuick Collins Birmingham 01214 561 700 Full Member
- Philip Laney & Jolly Great Malvern 01684 580974 Full Member
- Principle Estate Management Birmingham 0121 289 4315 Full Member
- Proxim Property Management Ltd Alcester 01789 713112 Full Member
- Regalty Estates Congleton 0845 456 4980 Full Member
- Specialist Property Asset Management Ltd West Midlands 0121 725 3620 Full Member

ARMA Members North West

• Anthony James Consultancy Ltd	Merseyside	01704 545 800	Full Member
• Casserly Property Management	Manchester	01617 876 197	Full Member
• Haymarket Block Management	Salford	01615 490 909	Full Member
• Homestead Consultancy Services Ltd	Lytham St Annes	01253 640 040	Full Member
• Livingcity Asset Management Ltd	Manchester	01612 741 400	Full Member
• Manchester Residential Management Ltd	Manchester	01617 074 873	Full Member
• Matthew's Of Chester Limited	Chester	01244 346 226	Full Member
• Oakland Residential Management Limited	Hale	0161 929 6151	Full Member
• Premier Estates Limited	Cheshire	03454 918 899	Full Member
• Realty Management Limited	Stockport	01614 747 677	Full Member
• Red Rock Estate & Property Management Ltd	Beaumont	03331 235 670	Full Member
• Regency Estates	Bolton	01204 695 919	Full Member
• Revolution Property Management Ltd	Salford	01618 500 022	Full Member
• Scanlans Property Management LLP	Manchester	01612 368 888	Full Member
• Stevenson Whyte	Manchester	0161 832 5060	Full Member
• Urbanbubble Limited	Manchester	01612 363 336	Full Member
• Zenith Management Limited	Manchester	01612 451 166	Full Member
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- Butlin Property Services Leicester 0116 2703705 Full Member
- Kingston Real Estate (Property Management) Ltd Northampton 01604 631 551 Full Member
- Orchard Block Management Services Ltd Northampton 01604 620 422 Full Member
- PMD Block Management Ltd Kettering 01536 513 978 Full Member
- Blue Property Management UK Limited Nottingham 0330 053 8770 Associate
- SDL Property Management Nottingham 07920 542 665 Associate
- Stoneyard Nottingham 01159 243 304 Associate

ARMA Members
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- Horizon Management — Sheffield — 0300 030 1035 — Full Member
- Hunters RBM — Elland — 01422 893 726 — Full Member
- Inspired Property Management Limited — Doncaster — 01302 729 500 — Full Member
- LIV Group Limited — Leeds — 0113 244 2444 — Full Member
- Mulberry PM — York — 01904 655200 — Full Member
- Omnia Estates Ltd — Sheffield — 0114 2792840 — Full Member
- Premier Property Management & Maintenance — Barnsley — 01226 770088 — Full Member
- Spencers Estate Agents — Sheffield — 0114 268 3682 — Full Member
- Venture Block Management Ltd — Leeds — 01138 313 235 — Full Member
- Watson Property Management — Leeds — 0113 273 8788 — Full Member
- Elmfield Real Estate — Bedale — 01677 450300 — Associate

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Nick Kephalas	YVA Solicitors LLP	020 8445 9898
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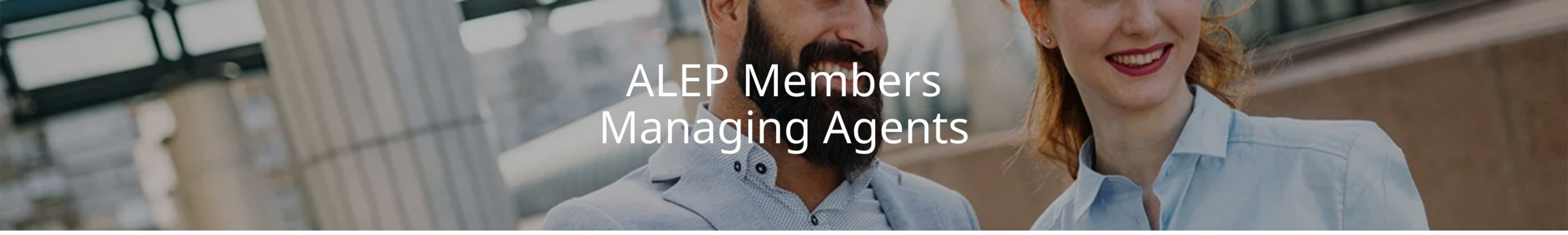

ALEP Members Managing Agents

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• Fiona Docherty	James Andrew Residential	020 8349 7171
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• Michael Jacobs	Michael Laurie Magar Ltd	020 8492 9850

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• Andrew Lester	AML Surveys & Valuation Ltd	020 8960 7573
• Andy Christou	Andrew Creighton Chartered Surveyors	020 3696 1090
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• Grace Clarke	Arnold & Baldwin	020 8642 2999
• Patrick Oliver	Aston James Associates	020 8771 5035
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• Henrietta Hammonds	Beckett & Kay LLP	020 7439 6667
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• Keith Chapman-Burnett	Chroma Surveyors Ltd	01202 871116
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• David Coleman	David Coleman & Company	0121 655 0998
• David Graham	David Graham (Chartered Surveyors)	0845 812 1954
• Adrian Hau	Douglas and Gordon	020 7591 8746
• Wilson Dunsin	Dunsin Surveyors	020 7233 6762
• Jackie Collis	Each Side Leasehold	01737 237811
• Emma Biddle	Egerton Ltd	020 7664 6648
• Chris Clark	Ely Langley Greig	023 8027 4211
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• Angus Fanshawe	Fanshawe White	020 7099 8465
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• Andrew Perrin	Fraser Wood (Midlands) Ltd	01922 627 686
• David Toogood	Harding Chartered Surveyors	020 7736 2383
• Harriet Fleming	Harriet Fleming Surveyors Ltd	07855 454707
• Colin Horton	Hortons Valuers Ltd	020 3058 3200
• Kevin Broadhurst	Jackson Green & Preston	01472 311113
• Joe Fraser	Joe Fraser Chartered Surveyors	01642 262728
• Andrew Tucker	Johnson Tucker LLP	0191 269 7890
• Simon Coates	Jones Lang LaSalle Limited	020 7087 5911
• Julian Wilkins	Julian Wilkins Chartered Surveyors	01903 872211
• Nathan Hall	Kempton Carr Croft	01628 771221
• Gavin Lewis	Kingston Morehen Chartered Surveyors	01323 411088
• Steven Harding	Kinleigh Folkard & Hayward	020 8739 2040
• Jean Howe	Kirkby Diamond	01582 738866
• Jeremy Dharmasena	Knight Frank	020 7861 1587
• David Parkin	Lamberts Chartered Surveyors	020 7520 2317
• Keith Chew	Lawrence & Wightman	0121 779 0999
• Justin Bennett	LBB Chartered Surveyors	020 7822 8850
• Kevin Broadhurst	Leasegevity Ltd	0300 400 3279
• Robert Kaye	Leasehold Assist Ltd	07714 570858
• Ryan Bridges	MAP Chartered Surveyors	020 8300 1144
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• Ross Maunder Taylor	Maunder Taylor	020 8492 5526
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• Tim Palmer	McNeill Lowe & Palmer	01582 469946
• Michael Lee	Michael R Lee Chartered Surveyors	020 3376 3032
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• Paul Holford	Morgan Sloane Chartered Surveyors	0800 161 5767
• Chris Glew	myLeasehold Ltd	020 7034 3435
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• Michael Aldous	Perry Hill Chartered Surveyors	01483 237333
• June Dunne	Prickett and Ellis Surveyors Ltd	020 8442 2491
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• David Nesbit	RES Property Surveyors Limited	0207 9711 240
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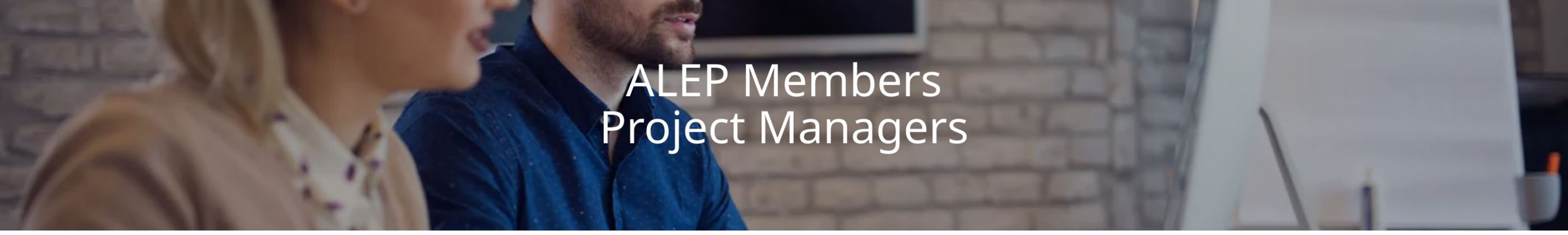

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