

# tenantsHandbook







# Welcome to your new home

Thank you for choosing Dundee City Council as your landlord. We hope you will be very happy in your new home.

We have produced this handbook to help you settle in quickly and give you practical information and advice about living in your new home. In it you'll find everything you need to know about your tenancy – from reporting a repair to paying your rent. There is also an important section that summarises your legal rights and responsibilities and those of the Council.

In Housing and Communities, we believe that the needs and wishes of our customers are at the heart of our service. We are very proud of our partnership working with tenants and tenants' groups in the development and delivery of our services. Recently tenants have been involved in service improvement teams looking at repairs, empty properties, arrears and antisocial. To find out more about how you can get involved see the Working Together – Tenant Participation section.



I am delighted to tell you that our Tenant Participation Team have a facebook page  
- Dundee City Council Tenant Participation.

I hope that you find this handbook useful and that it answers any questions you have about your tenancy, your home and your neighbourhood, now and in the future. If you need any more information or have any queries please contact your Housing Officer at the District Housing Office.

**Elaine Zwirlein**  
Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services



Sign up for your secure  
personal **MyDundee** account at

**[www.dundeecity.gov.uk](http://www.dundeecity.gov.uk)**

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# Useful Contacts

## West District Housing Office

3 Sinclair Street, Lochee, Dundee, DD2 3DA  
Tel: 01382 307301

### Opening Hours:

Monday, Tuesday 8.30am to 5.00pm  
Wednesday, 9.30am to 5.00pm  
Thursday, Friday, 8.30am to 5.00pm

West District  
Housing Office



## East District Housing Office

169 Pitkerro Road, Dundee, DD4 8ES  
Tel: 01382 307401

### Opening Hours:

Monday, Tuesday 8.30am to 5.00pm  
Wednesday, 9.30am to 5.00pm  
Thursday, Friday, 8.30am to 5.00pm

East District  
Housing Office



## Dundee House

50 North Lindsay Street, Dundee, DD1 1NB  
Tel: 01382 434000

### Opening Hours:

Monday, Tuesday 8.30am to 5.00pm  
Wednesday, 9.30am to 5.00pm  
Thursday, Friday, 8.30am to 5.00pm

Dundee  
House



Reporting a Housing Repair	01382 434343
Gas Servicing	01382 434343
Lettings Centre	0300 123 9023 or 01382 307400
Antisocial Behaviour Advice Line	0800 169 3845 or 01382 307342
Tenant Participation	01382 307330 / 307331
Rent Control	01382 434836/434302/307300
Energy Advice	01382 434840
Council House Sales	01382 434848
Homeless Advice Line	0800 633 5843 or 01382 432001

You can also get lots of information about housing from our website:  
[www.dundeecity.gov.uk/housing](http://www.dundeecity.gov.uk/housing)

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Housing Benefit enquiries	01382 431205
Council Tax enquiries	01382 431205
If you think you smell gas	0800 111 999
SSE Scottish Hydro Emergency Line	0800 300 999

**0800 numbers are normally free from landlines  
but charges may apply from mobile phones.**

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

# CUSTOMER CHARTER OUR PROMISE TO YOU

## WE WILL:-

- be open and **honest** and explain our decisions
- deal with your enquiry **promptly** and explain reasons for any delay
- provide **choices** around how you access our services
- give you the **information you need** about our services
- **listen** to what you have to say
- treat you with **respect** and courtesy
- aim to **get things right first time**
- apologise to you when we get things wrong and then put things right



# Values and Service Standards

We are committed to providing you with quality services, delivered fairly, courteously and responsively by well-informed employees who take pride in what they do.

When you use our services you have a right to be treated with respect and dignity and we will always do our best to meet your needs and expectations.

To do this well we have strong values that are shared across the department and are reflected in the everyday actions of employees at all levels, both individually and collectively.

We also have a range of standards that tell you the level and quality of services you can expect from us. The standards have recently been reviewed been in consultation with tenants' groups, Dundee Federation of Tenants' Associations and council staff.

## Our Values

We will:

- Be **Open** and **Honest** - with tenants, applicants and colleagues. We will demonstrate these Values by answering questions to the best of our ability, admit when we have made a mistake and communicating relevant information
- Show **Respect** - for service users and each other by being polite, helpful and professional; and **Recognition** - for a job well done or for significant achievement
- Demonstrate **Customer Focus** and **Reliability** - keeping the customer at the heart of everything we do and doing what we say we will do
- Welcome **Innovation** by continually trying to improve our services and the way we work and by learning from good practice

We are confident that by demonstrating behaviours consistent with these Values we will live up to your expectations in the services that we provide.

## **Our Service Standards**

There are Service Standards for:

- Antisocial Behaviour
- Appeals
- Complaints
- Customer Care
- Day to Day Repairs
- Energy Advice
- Estate Management
- Homeless Services
- Housing Support
- Lettings
- Major Improvements
- Private Sector Services
- Rents
- Sheltered Housing
- Tenant Participation

You can view our standards online at:

**[www.dundeeicity.gov.uk/housing](http://www.dundeeicity.gov.uk/housing)** or can ask for a copy from any Housing Office

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If you think we're not putting our values into practice or meeting our standards we would like to hear from you. Please contact us with feedback or send us more information about how you think we could do better.

Quality and Performance Unit

Dundee House

50 North Lindsay Street

Dundee DD1 1NB

Tel: 01382 437369

# Complaints

We are committed to providing a high quality service to all our customers. That means we do our best to get things right first time, and to act quickly and efficiently to solve the problem when we don't.

If you are unhappy with any part of our service you should tell us about it. We take all complaints seriously. Listening to complaints lets us put things right and also learn lessons to improve our service and make sure the same thing doesn't happen again.

## **What do I do if I have a complaint?**

The quickest way to solve most problems is to speak to the staff responsible for that service, who may be able to solve your problem "on the spot".

If your problem can't be resolved right away, we have a procedure to make sure that your complaint is dealt with effectively. You should make a complaint which will be logged on the Council's complaint system and passed to an appropriate officer for investigation. Very serious complaints will be drawn to the attention of senior officers straightaway.

You can make your complaint in any way that's convenient for you, for example:

- by telephone
- by letter
- by visiting in person
- by completing the online complaints form on our website at [www.dundeeicity.gov.uk/complaints](http://www.dundeeicity.gov.uk/complaints)

If you prefer, you can fill in a complaints form, which is available in any of our housing offices.

Whatever method you use it will be very helpful if you can give as much detail as possible about your complaint - dates, times, names and so on. It is a good idea to note down all the details and have them by you when you phone, or to take the information with you if you are visiting a housing office.

## **How will my complaint be dealt with?**

We will investigate and give you a reply to most complaints within 5 working days. Where your complaint requires an urgent response - for example, because someone's health and safety is at risk or because an important deadline has to be met - a response will normally be made within 48 hours.

Some complaints are more complicated and take longer to investigate. So at all stages in the complaints process, we will let you know if we can't respond fully within the target time and will let you know when you can expect a full response.

At all stages in the process, you can seek independent help and advice e.g. from your Councillor, MP, MSP, Citizens Advice Bureau or advice centre.

You can get full details of our complaints procedure:

- In the leaflet 'How to make a complaint to Dundee City Council', which is available from any council office
- On our website [www.dundee.city.gov.uk/complaints](http://www.dundee.city.gov.uk/complaints)

If you are still dissatisfied after going through our Complaints Procedure you can report this to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman and/or the Scottish Housing Regulator:

SPSO,  
Freepost EH641,  
Edinburgh,  
EH3 OBR  
Tel. 0800 377 7330

Scottish Housing Regulator,  
58 Waterloo Road,  
Glasgow,  
G2 7DA  
Tel: 0141 305 4199



# Working Together - Tenant Participation

For many years we have encouraged and supported tenants to get involved in housing issues and help us to plan and improve our services. We see tenant participation as a two way process where you can play a part in shaping the housing services you receive.

There are currently 18 Registered Tenant Organisations (RTOs) and action groups throughout Dundee. These groups are supported by the council financially and also by specialist Tenant Participation Officers who give them help and guidance. A list of Registered Tenant Organisations is displayed in the foyer area of your district housing office. You can also view the list online at [www.dundee.gov.uk/tenantparticipation](http://www.dundee.gov.uk/tenantparticipation).

We also work closely with Dundee Federation of Tenants' Associations which is the umbrella organisation for most groups in the city.

DFTA has its own offices at:

10 Constitution Road,

Dundee

DD1 1LL,

Tel: 01382 305718.

Normal office hours are Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm.

The building and offices have wheelchair access.

There is information on their website [www.dfta.co.uk](http://www.dfta.co.uk).



## There are lots of ways you can get involved

### Tenant Led Inspections

Tenant Led Inspections are carried out by a group of tenants who work together as a tenant inspection team. They look at an area of service in detail, how that service is run, whether policies and procedures are being followed and identify where improvements can be made.

Inspectors meet once a week for 6 to 8 weeks and travel expenses are paid where required.

Estate supervision, customer care and the repairs service are some of the housing services which have previously undergone an inspection.

## **Communications Group**

The group look at written information to ensure it is customer friendly. There are two ways of getting involved with this group:

Postal - where you are sent information and return your comments and suggestions to the Housing department.

Editorial - where a group of people get together to discuss a particular type of correspondence e.g. tenants handbook, information flyer.

## **Exit Surveys**

You would ask customers leaving a housing office to complete a survey to get feedback on their satisfaction with the service provided.

## **Mystery Shopping**

You would visit or telephone the housing department to assess the quality of the service given.

## **Forums**

Tenants attend quarterly meetings of our Improvements Client Cluster or our Tenant Participation Monitoring Group, which allows you to have an input into the way that we deliver our services.

If you would like further information, or are interested in getting involved, please contact the Tenant Participation Officers based in Dundee House, Tel: 01382 307330 or 307331.

## **How do I find out more?**

- Contact the Tenant Participation Officers, Tel: 01382 307331 / 307330.
- There is a list of Registered Tenant Organisations displayed in the foyer area of your District Housing Office. The list has contact details for each group
- Visit our website [www.dundee.gov.uk/housing/tenantparticipation](http://www.dundee.gov.uk/housing/tenantparticipation)

# Your Tenancy - A Summary

When you took on the tenancy of your home you signed a legal document called the Secure Tenancy Agreement. It is a fairly lengthy document so we have summarised it and have highlighted the most important parts.

## Joint Tenancies

### **What will having a joint tenancy mean to you?**

If you signed the agreement with someone else you have a joint tenancy.

You and your joint tenant/s have what is known as “joint and several” responsibility for your tenancy from the day it starts. This means that you will all have equal rights to the tenancy and security within the tenancy.

If you and any of your joint tenant/s are entitled to Housing Benefit, you will be asked to reapply for the new joint tenancy even if you are currently receiving Housing Benefit.

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Along with the equal rights comes equal responsibility. This means that each of you is fully responsible for making sure that you keep to all the conditions in your Tenancy Agreement including payment of rent and any other charges. If rent arrears are built up during the tenancy, all tenants are equally responsible for the total amount due, not just half of the debt if there are two joint tenants or a third of the debt if there are three joint tenants.

If, for example, one of the joint tenants abandons the tenancy, or chooses to leave the house at any time, and there are rent arrears on the account, the remaining tenant or tenants are entitled to retain the tenancy but all of them can be pursued by the Council for the total debt no matter which of the joint tenants has allowed the debt to build up.

It is important for you to contact us if you or any one of the joint tenants wishes to leave, or if any of your other circumstances change.

## **Changing from a sole tenancy to a joint tenancy**

As a secure tenant of Dundee City Council you have the right to ask us to convert your tenancy to a joint tenancy with another person as long as that person is at least sixteen years old and lives permanently with you.

To apply for a joint tenancy you must complete an application form. You can pick up a form from any Housing office or telephone to have one sent to you in the post. Contact details on page 3.

We will only refuse a joint tenancy if we have a good reason. Everyone who might become a joint tenant will get a pre-tenancy check in the same way as all of our applicants.

This means we will check whether:

- They have a tenancy anywhere
- They have any outstanding housing related debt
- They have any current antisocial behaviour action taken against them
- The house is suitable for their needs

If you are thinking of applying for a joint tenancy, you may find it useful to speak to a member of our staff or take advice from an independent organisation such as a Citizens' Advice Bureau or Housing Advice Centre. They will be able to discuss this with you, taking into account your own personal circumstances.

## **Summary of terms of Dundee City Council Secure Tenancy Agreement**

### **I. Introduction**

This document is a summary of the Secure Tenancy Agreement you have signed. It is not intended to change or add to the Secure Tenancy Agreement, which is the legal document that lays out all your legal rights and obligations.

This summary tells you the most important things about your tenancy with us. If you do not understand any part of this summary please refer to your Secure Tenancy Agreement.

You can also contact your District Housing Office, where staff will be happy to discuss any queries you may have. You can also ask for help from an independent source such as a Law Centre, Housing Advice Centre, Citizen's Advice Bureau, Registered Tenants Organisations, and the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

As the tenant/s:

- You must take all reasonable steps to make sure you and anyone living with you or visiting you keeps to the terms and conditions of the Secure Tenancy Agreement.
- If you break any term of the Secure Tenancy Agreement, we may take legal action against you.
- If you are joint tenants, all of you are responsible for paying rent and any other charges and keeping to the Secure Tenancy Agreement.

## **2. Use of the property and common parts**

- You must occupy the house and use it as your main home.
- You must take reasonable care to avoid damage to your house and your neighbours' houses. This is particularly important in freezing weather.
- You must get written permission to keep any pets. We have a Pets Policy, which applies to all Council tenants and those who occupy or visit their home.
- You are responsible for ensuring that pets are kept under control at all times and that you take reasonable steps to prevent pets causing nuisance and annoyance or danger to your neighbours. Full details of our policy are available from any District Housing Office.
- You must take your turn in cleaning the common parts and keeping any garden area tidy.
- You must park any kind of vehicle in the proper place.
- You must deal with your rubbish properly especially where bins have to be taken by you outside for collection and returned by you to the bin area.
- You must not use paraffin or liquid petroleum gas heaters (LPG) in your house. Paraffin or LPG or hazardous liquids or materials must not be stored in or around your home.
- You must tell us if you intend to go away for more than four weeks and your house will be unoccupied during that time.

### **3. Respect for others**

You, anyone living with you and your visitors must not harass or act in an antisocial way against any person in your neighbourhood. Such people include residents, visitors, Elected Members, employees, agents and contractors and guests of the Council.

Antisocial behaviour includes, but is not limited to:

- Racial harassment
- Sexual harassment
- Threats of violence
- Intimidation
- Causing damage to property
- Noise

If you, or anyone living with you, break any terms of the Secure Tenancy Agreement, we may take action against you, which may result in costs to yourself and/or the loss of your home.

- If you have a complaint about other people's antisocial behaviour, including their children, tell us. We will investigate and take action if appropriate.
- The Good Neighbour Charter is part of your Welcome Pack. We recommend that you read this carefully and if you are unsure of any part of it just ask us.

### **4. Sub-letting, assignation and exchange or changes to your tenancy**

If you want to sub-let or assign (transfer) or exchange your house or take in lodgers or add or change a joint tenant, you must first get our written permission.

Full details are available from any housing office.

### **5. Repairs, maintenance, improvements and alterations**

- Before the tenancy begins, we will inspect the house and carry out necessary repairs to put the house in a habitable condition. After you move in, we will carry out any outstanding repairs to the house.
- In particular, we will keep in repair the structure and exterior of the house and installations for water, gas, electricity, sanitation, heating and hot water.

- We will carry out work to deal with condensation and/or dampness if the dampness is being caused by some feature of the house.
- We are not responsible for repairing damage caused by you, anyone living with you or your visitors. If we do repair such damage, we will charge you. This does not apply to fair wear and tear.
- If we need access to your house to carry out repairs or to inspect it, we will give you at least 24 hours' notice. You must allow us access. We may have to decant you to another house to do repairs.
- We will not compensate you for damage to your personal property where we have not been at fault. Therefore, you are strongly advised to get insurance.
- Before carrying out improvements or alterations to your house, you must get our written permission. If you don't get our permission, we can charge you for restoring the house. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Fitted Kitchens
- Laminate or tiled flooring
- Driveways

- You, and the others living in the house, must take reasonable care of it. You are responsible for internal decoration of the house.

## 6. Ending the tenancy

The Secure Tenancy Agreement can be terminated in the following ways:

- By you giving us 28 days' written notice
- By written agreement between you and us
- By us getting a court order for eviction after having first given you a warning
- By you abandoning the property
- By your death if there is no-one to succeed to the tenancy
- By you buying the house
- By conversion to a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy

When you leave the house you must leave it in a clean and tidy condition, in good decorative order, remove all your belongings and ensure that your keys are handed in by noon of the tenancy termination date.

## **7. Succession to the tenancy**

If you die, the tenancy may be inherited by:

- Your husband or wife, OR
- The other joint tenant, OR
- Your partner, OR
- Another member of your family who was living with you, OR
- A live-in carer

The house can be inherited only twice except where the house has been built or adapted for special needs. In such cases different rules of succession apply. Ask at any housing office for details.

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## **8. Information and consultation**

We have policies dealing with many areas of housing management such as rent arrears, how we set our rents, repairs, allocations and transfers. Ask us for a copy.

- We will consult with you before making or changing housing management policies, which are likely to significantly affect you.

## **9. Complaints**

If you think we have broken your Secure Tenancy Agreement, you can complain using our Corporate Complaints Procedure. Details are available from any housing office.

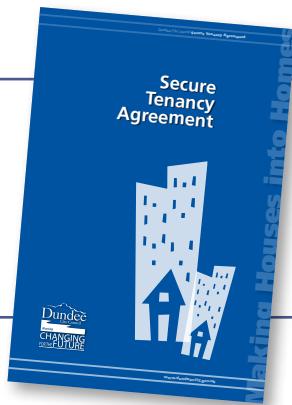
## **10. General provisions**

- You may have the right to buy the house under certain conditions
- If you need our permission to do anything, you must ask for it and get it in writing.  
We won't say no without a good reason.

- We will insure the building, fixtures and any furniture provided by us as part of this tenancy
- You will receive as part of your tenancy agreement, a copy of the Good Neighbour Charter, which you will be asked to sign
- **You are strongly recommended to insure the contents of the house, including decoration and damage/injury to others and/or their property (usually known as third party liability)**
- The Council makes it easy for you to insure your belongings under a special Household Contents Insurance Scheme. The insurance is arranged with an independent insurance company and is arranged especially for Council tenants. The cost of insurance is payable weekly and payments can be made with your rent. Details of this scheme are available at any of our housing offices

The full details of your tenancy are in the 'Secure Tenancy Agreement' booklet.

This booklet is in your Welcome Pack folder



# Moving into your Home

When you move into your new home there are a lot of things you must remember to do. We realise that organising things like furniture, sorting out rent and claiming benefits can be stressful. If you feel you are not coping well on your own, we may be able to offer you help with our Housing Support Service.

This is a free service and we can offer you support in a number of ways, for example:

- Setting up and running your home well
- Help and advice on money matters
- Getting in touch with extra help

If you think we can help, you can contact the Housing Support Team by phoning 01382 307357 or by calling in person to the West District Housing Office.

## Home Contents Insurance

The council covers building insurance but not house contents. You are strongly recommended to take out household contents insurance to protect your belongings from loss or damage.

The council makes it easy for you to insure your belongings under a Home Contents Insurance scheme and you can pay the premiums along with your rent. The insurance is arranged with an independent insurance company and is available only to council tenants. The insurance scheme is not just for new tenants, all tenants can join at any time during their tenancy.

If you would like more information about joining the scheme information leaflets and forms are available from any of our housing offices.



## **Electricity and/or gas supply**

Your electricity and/or gas are supplied by SSE Scottish Hydro. It is your responsibility to contact SSE Scottish Hydro, Tel: 0800 300 999, and arrange for the supply to be connected. You will be asked for a meter reading and your new postcode (this is on your tenancy agreement). It usually takes about 3 working days to connect the supply.

Although Hydro Electric is the council's preferred supplier you are under no obligation to stay with the company.

If you need more information or advice about fuel suppliers, meter readings and token prepayment meters you can contact the Dundee Energy Efficiency Advice Project, Tel: 01382 434840.

## **Decoration Allowance**

You may be given a B&Q Decorating Card to help with decoration when you move in. The amount will depend on the decorative condition of the property. The decoration of your home is your responsibility, so the amount we give is only a contribution. It will not cover the full cost.

Your card will be activated within 24 hours of receiving it then you can use it in any B&Q store.

You can spend as much or as little as you want on the card. You will have 6 months to spend your allowance and cards cannot be exchanged for cash at any time.

You can only spend the card on decorating materials, for example;

- Interior paints, woodcare and varnishes
- Wallpaper and pastes
- Non-powered decorating utensils
- Sandpaper, fillers and sealants
- Lost/stolen cards

If your card is lost or stolen please contact your District Housing Office.

## **Keys**

When you signed for your house you were given two sets of keys, including house keys and keys to back doors/bin stores.



If your address has a controlled entry entrance you will have been given up to three fobs to allow you to get in and out of the building. Extra fobs can be purchased at £10 each. Please contact your District Housing Office to arrange this.

These keys/fobs are now your responsibility and if you lose them and have to have the locks changed or fobs replaced you will be charged for the costs.

## **Council Tax**

You will have to contact the Housing Benefit and Council Tax enquiry team, Tel: 01382 431205, to let them know that you are now the tenant of that address.

## **Electoral Register**

You need to be included in the Register to vote. To update your details you can contact the Electoral Registration Office, 18 City Square, Dundee DD1 9XE, Tel: 01382 434444. You can also download a form from our website, [www.dundee.gov.uk](http://www.dundee.gov.uk).

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## **TV Licence**

If you have a television set you will require a television licence. If you require a new licence or to change the address on your existing licence please telephone 0300 790 6071 or visit [www.tvlicensing.co.uk/moving](http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk/moving).



## **Redirecting your mail**

You can arrange to have your mail redirected by getting a form from any Post Office or online at [www.royalmail.com](http://www.royalmail.com). There is a charge for this service.



## **As well as all the other people you will have to contact**

If you have access to the internet there are lots of sites with tips on moving home. For a free change of address service look up [www.iammoving.com](http://www.iammoving.com). There are also handy 'who to notify' checklists on the websites [www.bbc.co.uk/homes/property](http://www.bbc.co.uk/homes/property) and [www.direct.gov.uk/homeandcommunity](http://www.direct.gov.uk/homeandcommunity)

# Living in your Home

## New tenant visit

About six weeks into your tenancy your Housing Officer will visit you in your home to make sure you have settled in. As well as getting to know you, your Housing Officer will check that:

- All repairs have been completed
- You have house insurance
- Your rental payments are up to date and/or housing benefit applications have been processed
- You are aware of your rights and responsibilities (e.g. cleaning duties, neighbours etc.)
- You are familiar with the heating system and smoke alarm/s are working
- You have used your decoration card (if given)

Please use this visit to ask questions about anything you are not sure about or tell your Housing Officer about any problems you are having.

## Keeping pets

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You must get our permission if you want to keep a pet. We will only withhold our permission if we think that the animal you want to keep is unsuitable for the type of home you live in.

If you keep a dog (or a dog owned by a visitor to your house), you must:

- Clean up any mess, including communal areas and public places. If you do not, you may be prosecuted under the Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003
- Ensure it does not present a danger to your neighbours
- Make sure it does not disturb your neighbours by barking or causing damage



If we get complaints about your pet, we will look into them. If we find that the complaints are reasonable, we may withdraw our permission and ask you to find another home for the animal. If you do not do this, we may take legal action against you.

If you want to make a complaint about dogs in your area please contact your Housing Officer. You can also contact The Animal Control Service, Tel: 01382 436285.

## **Carrying out your own alterations and improvements**

We are happy for you to improve your home but you must ask for our permission before you carry out any work. We will not refuse your request without good reason, and we will tell you why if we do. You will be responsible for the maintenance and repair of any work that you do.

Permission is needed for alterations and improvements, such as:

- Alterations to the interior or exterior of the property
- Adding/replacing fixtures and fittings e.g. fitting a new bathroom, central heating
- Erection of a fence, shed or garage
- Fitting laminate flooring

This is not a full list. If you are thinking about doing any work in your home you should contact your Housing Officer who will tell you if you need to apply for permission.

To make applying for permission easy, forms and guidelines are available from your District Housing Office. You can also telephone the District Housing Office and ask for them to be sent out to you. A member of staff will be happy to help you fill in the form if required. Once we have your form, we will assess it and reply to you within 28 days.

You may be entitled to compensation for any improvements you have carried out if you end your tenancy. To qualify for compensation, the improvement must be on the list of qualifying improvements and you must have permission for the improvement. The list includes improvements such as; a bath or shower, double glazing, loft insulation and central heating.

Claims must be made in writing during the period; 28 days before and 21 days after your tenancy comes to an end. If you are exercising the Right to Buy you would not be eligible for compensation for improvements.

Full details are available from your District Housing Office.

## **Home decorating safety tips**

Decorating can make your house into a home. If you are doing your own decorating you should follow basic safety rules to reduce the risk of an accident. If you need more information about home decorating please contact your Housing Officer

### **Asbestos**

- Do not drill, sand or scrape anything you think may contain asbestos
- If you think you have asbestos in your home call the Housing Repairs Centre, Tel: 434343, to arrange for an inspection
- For more information about asbestos see page 53 of this handbook

### **Stripping old wallpaper**

- If using chemical agents to strip wallpaper always read the instructions and follow any safety advice
- On rare occasions there may be mould or fungus underneath old wallpaper. You should wear a facemask and protective gloves/clothes to reduce the risk of skin irritation. If you have any concerns you should contact your Housing Officer who will call and inspect the wall/s
- Take care when using steam wallpaper strippers as they can easily burn you. Read the instructions carefully and wear any recommended protective clothing. When using water or steam switch off all electrical appliances in the room and be careful near sockets and switches

### **Using step-ladders**

- Clear the area you are working in of clutter, cables etc.
- Check the condition of the ladder before you start using it
- Make sure you place it on an even surface that is not wet or slippery
- Wear suitable shoes
- Don't overstretch

## Painting

- Before using paint and/or cleaning products always read the safety instructions on the label
- Care should be taken when preparing surfaces for painting. Sanding can produce a lot of dust and stripping/cleaning chemicals can irritate the skin
- Wear any recommended protective clothing e.g. mask, goggles
- Ensure rooms are well ventilated
- Keep paint and cleaning products out of reach of children and pets
- Clear up any spills immediately and keep cans closed when not in use
- Dispose of any left over products in a safe way

### **BE SAFE - Read instructions and safety advice**

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## Legionella

Legionnaires' disease is a form of pneumonia caused by the Legionella bacteria. Legionella bacteria can be found in hot and cold water systems, storage tanks, pipework, taps and showers. It is contracted through inhaling droplets of water containing the bacteria and can kill.

The risk of Legionella in individual houses or flats is very small. If your home is left unoccupied for more than 1 week, for example, you are on holiday or in hospital, you should:

- Run all showers, baths, wash basin or sinks continuously for a period of 5 minutes to flush through any form of bacteria
- Before running the shower, take the shower head from the holder and allow it to run into the drain. Unscrew the shower head if it comes apart and clean it as well (you should do this every 3 – 6 months)
- Showers or taps should be opened very slowly to avoid the production of a spray or splashing which could be breathed in
- Flush the toilet several times, with the lid closed

## Parking

If you have to park on the street please be considerate. Badly parked cars can be dangerous; they can limit visibility and cause accidents. They can also block access for the emergency services - causing delays in dealing with urgent problems.

You must not park on grassed verges, footpaths and open spaces. As well as blocking the way it causes serious environmental damage and looks unsightly.



Car repairs should be restricted to minor repairs to your own vehicle only. When working on your car always be considerate to your neighbours; any oil or debris must be cleared up and you should be aware of health and safety at all times.

We have a number of lock-ups, garages and parking bays throughout the city, although there is a long waiting list. For more information please contact your District Housing Office.

## Aerials and satellite dishes

You must seek permission from us before installing an aerial or satellite dish. You should put your request in writing and send it to your District Housing Office. Depending upon their size and location, satellite dishes may require planning permission. Please contact the Development Quality Team, Tel: 01382 433378.

## If you have a garden

### Private garden

If you have a private garden you are responsible for its upkeep. Your Housing Officer will carry out regular inspections of your garden and may take legal action if you are not maintaining it to an acceptable standard.

You must:

- Keep your garden tidy and free of rubbish
- Cut grassed areas regularly
- Trim back hedges regularly
- Make sure that trees and hedges do not hang over footpaths and roads

If you have green fingers, why not enter the council's annual garden competition with prizes for the winners. Look out for details in the local press and on our website, usually in April.

## **Shared garden areas**

If you have a fenced-in shared garden, you must take your turn with your neighbours to cut the grass, keep the garden tidy and free from rubbish. If you and your neighbours cannot agree on a rota for doing this you should contact your Housing Officer, who will set a rota.

If you have an open-plan shared garden the grass will be cut by the council's ground maintenance department.

Please be considerate when using your shared garden and remember it is there to be enjoyed by all the residents of the block.

- Have a BBQ, but make sure you tidy up afterwards
- Do not obstruct doorways or paths with children's play equipment
- Don't play loud music
- Children should be supervised at all times
- You must not use the garden to store any of your belongings
- Keep garden tools, weed killers etc out of reach of children
- Do not leave paddling pools unattended



## **Shared common areas**

If you live in a block of flats or a maisonette you are responsible for keeping the common areas around your home clean and tidy.

If your block does not have a Communal Cleaning Service you and your neighbours must take turns to sweep and wash the common stairs, landings, close and bin areas regularly. If you and your neighbours cannot agree on a rota for doing this you should contact your Housing Officer, who will set a rota.

The council runs a Communal Cleaning Service for tenement and multi-storey blocks.

The contractor works to an agreed schedule to sweep, dust and mop communal areas.

Before introducing a communal cleaning service to a block we will survey all the residents.

We will only proceed when we have at least 50% of tenants in favour and all owners in the block agree.

The cost of this service will be added to the weekly rent charge. All tenants who receive housing benefit will have their benefit increased so that they will have nothing to pay for the communal cleaning service.

If you or your neighbours are interested in this service please contact the Estate Services Co-ordinator, Tel: 01382 307320.

**You must not leave or store items such as furniture, bikes, prams and rubbish in any common shared areas, including internal and enclosed drying areas. This could make access difficult and is a potential fire hazard.**

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Some blocks of flats have a common attic area - you must not store anything in this area. The attic space is to be kept clear for tradespersons to attend to any emergencies. The attic area does not belong to any specific flat.

### **Household refuse**

Your household refuse is collected weekly. If you have an individual bin it should be put outside your home before 7.30 on the morning of the collection day.

You can get details of collection days by telephoning 01382 433710 or from our website [www.dundee.gov.uk/environment/refusecollection](http://www.dundee.gov.uk/environment/refusecollection).

All your refuse should be put in the wheelie bin or containers supplied by the council. Please do not leave refuse in the close or on landings, as it is a fire hazard and can also cause an unpleasant smell.

You should take your bin back in after it has been emptied. Bins left on the street can be a hazard for:

- The visually impaired
- Young mothers with prams
- The elderly and anyone with walking difficulties



You could be held liable for damage to property or injury to people caused by bins being left out in the street.

Please wrap up disposable nappies and sanitary towels, and put them out with the rubbish – do not flush them down the toilet as this can cause serious blockages.

Any loose rubbish or spillages around the bin area should be tidied up to prevent flies and other vermin.

If you live in a multi-storey you should dispose of your refuse in the rubbish chute. You should only put normal domestic household rubbish, bagged and tied, into the chute. Large bags should be deposited into a bin, in the bin room and not left at the bin recess door. Please do not disturb your neighbours by using the chute very early in the morning or late at night.

## **Special collections service**

Dumped furniture, mattresses etc. are unsightly and can be a fire hazard. Please do not cause unnecessary risk and inconvenience and dispose of unwanted items in a responsible manner. If you leave anything on the pavement or road that obstructs the way for people or vehicles, you may be committing an offence that could lead to a fine of as much as £500.

The council provides a Special Collection Service to allow you to have larger items uplifted. You can request a special uplift for up to 6 bulky items from outside your property at ground floor level. There is a charge for this service. For the current charge you can telephone 01382 436238 or look on our website [www.dundee.gov.uk/environment/specialcollections](http://www.dundee.gov.uk/environment/specialcollections).

Items that will be uplifted: Sofas, Beds, Household Furniture, Cookers, Washing Machines, Fridges, Carpets.

Items that will not be uplifted: Asbestos, Car Batteries, Gas Canisters, Paint Tins, Chemicals, Tyres.

To arrange uplift please contact Special Collections, Tel: 436238, between 9.00am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday to pay for this service by credit or debit card. Payment can also be made by Cash or Cheque at Environmental Protection Offices, Dundee House, Housing Offices and Community Libraries across the city.

## **Recycling**

The council is committed to encouraging recycling. Some areas in the city have a recycling collection service. For more information please visit the recycling section of our website [www.dundee.gov.uk/environment/recycling](http://www.dundee.gov.uk/environment/recycling) or you can call Environmental Protection, Tel: 01382 433710 or 433677.

## Lifts

All of our multi-storeys and some blocks of flats have lifts and are serviced regularly. In the event of a breakdown please contact the Customer Services Team on, Tel: 01382 434343, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

You can help keep lifts in working order by:

- Reporting any problems to the concierge, caretaker or Customer Services
- Making sure your children and their friends do not play in the lifts or with any part of the lift
- Making sure that lift doors are not blocked

All of our lifts have instructions inside to help you if it breaks down.

## Housing Adaptations

If you or a member of your family are having difficulty with, or are unable to carry out everyday activities due to physical disability, sensory impairment or illness we may be able to help by adapting your home.



After an assessment of your needs adaptations may be carried out to your home. Adaptations range from minor (e.g. grabrails, external handrails) to major structural alterations (e.g. walk-in shower installations, permanent ramps).

If you think that you or a member of your family would benefit from specially adapted housing please contact the Special Needs Team, Tel: 01382 434135.

## Smoke free in Multi Storeys

To encourage healthy living and ensure a safer living environment for our tenants smoking is not permitted in any of the common areas of multi storey blocks, including lifts, stairwells, foyers, drying areas, laundry rooms and bin recesses. This does not apply to individual flats within the block.

Failure to comply may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued or a report being made to the Procurator Fiscal. Please inform your guests that smoking is prohibited in the common areas.

This will ensure that the building is a healthier and cleaner place for all tenants, children and visitors.

# Your Rent

The rent you pay is our main source of income. This money is used to pay for housing services such as repairs, the cost of running housing offices, including staff costs, managing our housing stock and to pay off loans that we have taken out to improve our properties.

**So it is important that you pay your rent on time. If you do not it reduces the amount of money we have to spend on providing services to you and can also put you at risk of losing your home.**

There are lots of ways to pay and help is at hand if you have difficulty keeping up your payments.

The rent charge for your home is stated in your tenancy agreement. It will include any service charges e.g. sheltered housing charge, communal cleaning charge.

If you decide to join the council's home contents insurance scheme the weekly charge will be added to your rent account.

## **When is my rent due?**

Your rent is due on Monday each week for the coming week and you can arrange to pay weekly, fortnightly or monthly. If you choose to pay monthly, you will pay one month in advance.

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## **Rent increases**

Rent levels are reviewed every year. In November/December tenants are consulted on the proposed rent levels for the next year. Information on how you can be involved is published in the press, on our website and in Housing Offices.

You will be sent a letter each February telling you the rent charges payable from April.

## **Rent Account statement**

You will be sent a rent account statement four times a year. If you have any questions about your statement you can call the telephone number printed on the statement.

## **What if I lose my rent card?**

If you lose your rent card contact Rent Control, Tel: 01382 434836 / 434302 / 434535 / 434074.

A new rent card will be sent to you and you will be given advice on how to pay your rent until your new card arrives.

## **Ways to pay your rent**

We offer a range of easy ways for you to pay your rent. A 1.5% surcharge will be added to all credit card payments. There is no surcharge for debit card payments.



**Online payments:** You can pay your rent online at [www.dundeeicity.gov.uk](http://www.dundeeicity.gov.uk) using the following credit/debit cards: Visa, Mastercard, Delta, Maestro, Solo and Connect. Go to the online payments section and follow the instructions.



**By Direct Debit:** You can set up a Direct Debit to pay weekly, fortnightly or monthly. If you choose to pay monthly you must have a clear rent account and always pay in advance so you do not fall into arrears.

Choosing to pay by Direct Debit couldn't be easier - all you need to do is fill in an application form and return it to Rent Control, Corporate Debt and Welfare Reform Division, Dundee House, 50 North Lindsay Street, Dundee DD1 1NN. You can get a form by phoning Rent Control Division Tel: 01382 434836 to have one sent to you by post, from any Housing Office.

**At the Housing Office:** You can pay by cash, cheque, debit card and credit card at the East and West District Housing Offices - just hand over your card with your payment. Don't forget to keep your receipt. If you're paying by cheque, pay 'Dundee City Council'.

**At Dundee House, 50 North Lindsay Street:** Your payment will be taken and receipted in the same way as it is in the housing offices.

**By Debit or Credit Card:** Call our 24 hour payment line, 0845 602 6943 (call charged at local rate). You will need your rent account number and your debit/credit card details when calling the payment line. You can also call Rent Control on 01382 434836 / 434302 to make a payment.



**Paypoint:** You can pay by cash or cheque at any Paypoint outlet.

**At the Post Office:** You can use your rent card at any UK Post Office. There's no charge. Give your card and payment to the cashier. If you're paying by cheque, pay 'Post Office Ltd'. They will pass your card through a machine and the payment will be credited to your rent account. You'll get a receipt - please keep it.

**By Post:** You can send a cheque to any of the Housing Offices. Please write your name, address and housing reference on the back of the cheque. Your reference number is at the bottom right-hand corner of your rent card. Please write your cheque to 'Dundee City Council'. DO NOT SEND CASH THROUGH THE POST.

**By Standing Order:** This method of payment is arranged by you with your bank. Please contact Rent Control who will give you all the details you need.

**Outdoor Collection Service:** If you are elderly, disabled or housebound and find it difficult getting out to pay your rent, you may qualify to have your rent collected from your home. For further details, phone 01382 307300.

### **Can I get help with paying my rent?**

You may be able to claim housing benefit to help towards some or all of your rent. This will depend on your income, savings and family circumstances.

You can claim Council Tax Benefit/Housing Benefit if:

- You are on Income Support or Jobseeker's Allowance
- You are in receipt of Pension Credit
- You are on a low income

To find out if you are entitled to any Housing Benefit, you can call into the East or West District Housing Office and talk to a Housing Benefits officer.

You can also call the Housing Benefit helpline number 01382 431205 for advice and information.

If you are already receiving Housing Benefit and your circumstances have changed you should have your claim reassessed.

### **What to do if you can't pay your rent**

**Paying your rent is not a matter of choice. We realise that there are many reasons why you may fall behind with your rent. However, rent arrears are a serious problem and can lead to you losing the tenancy of your home.**

It is important that you don't ignore the problem and get in touch with us as soon as you realise you are having difficulties.

You should contact the Rent Control, Tel: 01382 307300, where staff will offer you help and advice.

Rent Control staff will:

- Ensure that you receive help in claiming your full housing benefit entitlement
- Agree with you repayment instalments to be made
- Advise you of alternative methods of payment of rent
- Advise you of other agencies to contact that can help you claim all benefits to which you may be entitled

## **What happens next?**

If you fail to clear your arrears, or consistently default on arrangements, action will be taken against you that can result in you losing your home. However, this is a last resort and we will make every effort to reach a suitable repayment solution with you before seeking an eviction order.

Remember... it is never too late to contact the Rent Control, Tel: 01382 307300

- As soon as three weeks rent (or £30) is due we will send you a letter explaining that you are behind with your rent
- A Rent Recovery Control Adviser will contact you by visiting or phoning you to discuss the arrears and make an agreement to clear them
- If you do not reduce your arrears, we will serve a Notice of Proceedings on you, which is the first stage in the court process. The notice explains that you will have four weeks to contact us and arrange to pay before the matter will be sent to court
- If you receive a Notice of Proceedings, it does not necessarily mean you will be going to court. If you make an arrangement to pay and keep to it, we will not go ahead with the legal action
- If you do not clear the outstanding arrears or make regular payments we will raise a court action against you
- If the matter is referred to court, we can ask for an order for you to pay the rent arrears, or in extreme cases gain possession of your home. We will also ask the judge to award us costs for taking this action which you will be expected to pay
- If you do not deal with the problem at this stage we will apply for an eviction decree
- Once a decree has been granted against you, you can be evicted

**Remember... it is never too late to contact the Rent Control, Corporate Debt and Welfare Reform Division, Tel: 01382 307300. We want to help you resolve any problems you may be experiencing paying your rent and will make every effort to ensure you keep your tenancy.**

**You can get free independent information and advice about your tenancy  
and rent payment difficulties from these organisations and at  
[www.dundeeadvice.org](http://www.dundeeadvice.org)**

**Dundee North Law Centre**

101 Whitfield Drive

Dundee

DD1 0DX

Tel: 01382 307230

**Dundee Shelter Advice Centre**

4 S Ward Road,

Dundee DD1 1PN

Tel: 0808 800 4444

**Brooksbank Money  
Advice Section**

Brooksbank Centre and Services

Pitarlie Road

Dundee DD4 8DG

Tel: 01382 432450

**Welfare Rights**

Jack Martin Way

Claverhouse East

Dundee DD4 9FF

Tel: 01382 431167

**Please get in touch - Don't Risk Losing Your Home**

# Repairs, Maintenance and Improvements

## Day to day repairs

### How do I report a housing repair?

You can report a repair 24 hours a day/7 days a week

- Online at [www.dundeeicity.gov.uk](http://www.dundeeicity.gov.uk), go to the Report it tab
- By calling our Customer Services Team on 01382 434343.



The Customer Services Team is also the contact point for our night-time and weekend emergency service. Non-emergency repairs reported at night and at the weekend will be processed the next working day.

### What information do I need to give?

You will have to give us the following details:

- Your postcode or your full address
- What the repair is – please give us as much information as possible
- When you will usually be available to provide access for the work to be done
- Contact details – as well as your home or work phone number, we can contact you on your mobile or by e-mail if you prefer
- Any special information that would be helpful to us to organise your repair, e.g. whether you are hard of hearing, have young children, you are an OAP or disabled
- If you are not sure of the nature of your repair, you can ask for it to be inspected by your Housing Officer

### What happens next?

Your repair will be ordered and you will be given a repair reference number to confirm this. You should keep a note of it in case you have any queries.

You will also be told the target time for the repair to be completed in and whether it is a 'qualifying repair' under the Right to Repair scheme.

*Under the Right to Repair scheme you have the right to have small urgent repairs carried out within a given timescale. These repairs are called ‘qualifying repairs’. If we do not start a ‘qualifying repair’ within the time limit you may be able to instruct another contractor to carry out the work and claim compensation. Details of this scheme are available from the Customer Services Team and any Housing Office.*

*Qualifying repairs are highlighted in yellow in the lists of repairs.*

The repair will then be allocated to a tradesperson. If you are out when the tradesperson calls, a calling card may be left. You should contact the Customer Services Team as soon as you can to make alternative arrangements. Please note that a minimum of 5 working days notice is required.

## **How long do repairs take?**

All the repairs that we do are grouped into priorities with their own target times. This means that the more urgent the repair, the quicker it gets done. Each repair has a timescale assigned to it by its priority. You will be advised of the priority of your repair when you report it.

Sometimes a job can be delayed because we need a specific part or materials have to be ordered. If this happens we will contact you and we will complete the work as soon as the parts/materials arrive.

All priorities of repair, including emergencies, are carried out during the day. At night and at the weekend only emergency repairs are undertaken.

### **Emergency repairs - Attended to within 6 hours of reporting**

Emergencies are repairs that need to be attended to quickly to prevent someone being injured, to prevent further damage occurring or for security. In some cases, only a temporary make safe repair will be carried out. Re-instatement work will be undertaken with the appropriate priority for the work.

### **Urgent repairs - Attended to within 24 hours of reporting**

Urgent repairs need to be attended to within 24 hours. These repairs can cause damage if left unattended for long and can be an inconvenience and frustrating for tenants if not dealt with soon. Examples are faulty toilets and small leaks. Like emergencies we may do a temporary repair and follow-up with a permanent repair after.

**Right to Repair qualifying repairs are highlighted in yellow (see page 37).**

## **Emergencies**

**Repair gas appliance** - Carbon Monoxide detection

**Renew Floourescent light fitting** - Sheltered property

**Repair Leak/Burst** - non containable leak

**Check electrics** - All electrics off/dangerous

**Make safe Fitting/Ironmongery** - Potential danger

These emergency repairs are undertaken during the following periods:

Monday to Sunday      24 Hours

## **Urgent Repairs**

These emergency repairs are undertaken during the following periods

Monday to Sunday      24 hours

Gain entry for tenant	Renew toilet pan – unusable
Roof leaking	No heat/hot water (Gas)
Repair flat roof - emergency	Lift off
Multi Storey - pump failure	Repair/renew smoke alarm
Clear blocked chute	Repair cistern
Clear choked drain	No heat/hot water (Gas)
Gain entry for Police/Tenant	Renew toilet pan - unusable
Repair ironmongery/fittings - emergency	No hot water - repair immersion/thermostat
Roof leaking - carry out repair	Repair/renew smoke alarm
Repair flat roof - emergency	Stair lighting faulty/off
Clear choke	Lift off

## Quick Fix repairs

Quick Fix repairs are small repairs that can be undertaken quickly.

Repair/renew drain cover	Renew energy efficient bulb (disabled/vulnerable tenants)
Repair/renew stairs/handrails	Renew pendant/s
Refix loose bathroom fitting	Renew pull cord and switch
Remove air lock/water hammer	Renew socket/s
Renew plug	Repair extractor fan
Renew toilet seat	Repair heater
Repair overflow	Repair/renew electric fire
Repair/renew taps	Reglaze with double glazed units (smashed)
Renew immersion heater	Reglaze with single panes (smashed)
Repair/renew radiator	Reglaze with toughened/safety glass (smashed)
Renew motorised valve	Replace Carbon Monoxide detector

**Right to Repair qualifying repairs are highlighted in yellow (see page 37).**

## Routine repairs - 15 working days

Routine repairs are repairs not regarded as an emergency and are not small enough to be a quick fix repair.

Renew floor tiles	Refit/renew/box in pipes
Renew wall tiles	Replace shelf/rails/hat & coat hooks
Fill/patch or brick up hole	Repair flat roof
Repair metal gate	Repair leak to garage
Service/ease windows	Drain down/refill system
Renew/repair window fitting	Clear gutters/downpipes/repair leak
Ease/repair door	Renew cold water storage tank
Renew/repair ironmongery & fittings	Renew cylinder jacket
Repair timber gate	Renew cylinder
Repair/renew unit door	Renew gas fire/cooker
Repair/renew unit drawer	Renew boiler
Repair/renew unit fittings	Repair roof fan
Renew upstand/mastic to bath	Repair/renew fluorescent light
Renew mastic	Renew extractor fan
Repair/renew timber windows	Repair/renew security light
Repair/renew pulley	Reglaze with double glazed units (cracked)
Refit/renew bath panel	Reglaze with single panes (cracked)
Repair controlled entry system	Reglaze with toughened/safety glass (cracked)
Cover graffiti	Replace putty/seals
Renew mastic	Build up fireplace
Renew slabs/steps/patching footpaths	Repair/renew timber fence
Repair tar footpath	Repair/renew railings
Paint general surfaces	Anti-fungicidal wash

Build up fireplace	Repair/renew timber fence
Renew slabs/steps/patching footpaths	Patch roughcast
Repair tar footpath	Renew cistern
Repair/renew railings	Renew toilet pan
Renew external door	Renew wash hand basin
Renew internal door	Repair/renew shower
Repair/renew plasterboard	Plaster complete surface
Repair/renew floorboards	Repair plaster in patches
Renew heater	Repair/renew garage door
Renew kitchen unit	Renew bath
Renew sink unit	Renew non-slip flooring
Renew worktop	

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We reserve the right to amend the priorities allocated to repairs and update our range of repairs at any time in the efficiency of the repairs service.

### **Inspections - 5 working days**

If you have dampness/condensation or a building defect, an inspection can be carried out. Your Housing Officer will visit you within 5 working days.

Please note that timescales are based on working days Monday to Friday.

## **Who does the repairs?**

Our maintenance contractor, Environment Department - Construction, undertakes all housing repairs on behalf of the Council.

## **How do I check on the progress of my repair?**

If you want to check on the progress of your repair you can contact Customer Services. Quoting your reference number will help us find it quickly. Don't worry if you can't remember it, we can still update you on the progress of your repair without it.

## **Will I have to pay for any repairs?**

If you or visitors to your home have caused damage (e.g. broken a window) or been negligent (e.g. locked out of your home) you should check to see if you can claim on your house insurance. If you report it to the Customer Services Team or any housing office, we will charge you the cost of the repair. You will be advised if you will have to pay for the repair when you report it. We will not charge for the work if the damage is caused by fair wear and tear or it is a result of a crime that has been reported to the police.

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## **Maintenance and Improvements**

As well as day to day repairs we carry out a wide range of improvements and maintenance to our properties to help ensure that they stay in good condition and that they are a comfortable place to live. We have a budget each year to carry out these works and it has to be divided between the various types of improvement and maintenance works. We are committed to improving the condition of our properties, but the money we have available means that we cannot do everything at once.

We carry out internal and external work, such as:

- New kitchens and bathrooms
- Electrical re-wiring
- Central heating
- Re-roofing
- Painting doors and common closes
- Controlled entry

We also carry out other essential work, such as: disabled adaptations, improvements to sheltered lounges and demolition of surplus properties



The Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) is the minimum quality standard for housing set by the Government. This standard says that all rented homes should meet this minimum quality standard by 2015.

As of March 2015 the majority of our housing stock meets the Scottish Housing Quality standard. Now that we have met SHQS we have a duty to keep our houses up to this standard. To help us to do this we will continue to invest in improvements such as: boiler and heating replacement, window replacement, roof upgrading, rewiring and kitchens and bathrooms where required.

The next major priority for Council Housing is Energy Efficiency and there is a new standard that has been introduced by the Scottish Government this is the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (ESSH). All of our houses have to meet this standard by 2020 and we have to report on progress to the government each year.

One of the main ways we can meet this standard is by providing external wall insulation to all our houses that need it. This programme has already started in areas such as Graham Street and Lawton Terrace and we plan to move through the city over the next five years. The work is being carried out in partnership with Scottish Southern Electric (SSE) and includes owner occupiers who live in council blocks where there are still Council tenants.

## Keeping you informed

We will advise all tenants well in advance of any planned works and will use a variety of communications to do this, for example where we are carrying out Heating replacement or fitting new windows all tenants will get a visit from a member of Housing staff to discuss the project and arrange any assistance tenants may require during the work. In addition to this there will be written communication and a frequently asked questions leaflet for easy reference at all stages of the work. Tenants in projects such as this will also receive a copy of the Contractors charter which details what the Contractor should and shouldn't do whilst working in occupied houses.

Where External Wall Insulation projects are planned there will be leaflets and letters before and during the work and we will be using an information bus to provide information to residents prior to the start date of the project. this bus will be situated in the area we are to work in and at convenient times to ensure the maximum number of people can visit. There will also be a member of Housing staff dedicated to each project to help residents and answer any queries.

# Looking After Your Home

## Home energy efficiency

Using electricity and heating in your home efficiently has many benefits including:

- helping to keep you warm
- improving your health
- saving money on the cost of your heating bills
- helping to save the planet by reducing the level of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emitted from your home

## Energy advice

To help tenants and owners save energy and make their homes warmer we have set up the Dundee Energy Efficiency Advice Project (DEEAP).

DEEAP provides FREE, impartial advice and information all aspects of energy use.

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To find out more about how we can help call or e-mail us at:

Dundee Energy Efficiency Advice Project (DEEAP)

Dundee House, 50 North Lindsay Street

Dundee DD1 1NB

Tel: 01382 434840

Email: [deeap@dundeeicity.gov.uk](mailto:deeap@dundeeicity.gov.uk)



## What can DEEAP do for you?

- Our energy advisors can give you advice that can help you to save money on your fuel bills and make your home easier to keep warm. When you contact us a home energy expert will ask you several questions about your home to assess its energy efficiency and suggest ways to make it more efficient.
- In some cases a home visit may be required where a DEEAP staff member can show you how to make the best use of your existing heating system. At this visit the advisor will also check that your hot water is being heated to the correct temperature and that you have the right amount of loft insulation.
- Our advisors can help you with meter readings, understanding fuel bills and making payment plans.

- DEEAP can also give advice on reducing condensation in your home and provide information about grants (available to tenants and owners) to improve the energy efficiency of your home.
- Grants are available to pay for part or all of the cost of works that improve the energy efficiency of the home, if you are on a qualifying benefit. Our advisors can tell you if you qualify for a grant and can help you with the application form.
- Our advisors can check that you are receiving all the benefits you are entitled to.

## How can I improve the energy efficiency of my home?

### Insulation

Insulation is one of the best ways to keep your home warm and reduce heating costs.

The effectiveness of loft insulation depends on the thickness of the insulating material. The ideal thickness is 250mm (10") if yours is less than this you can place more on top of your existing insulation.

### Hot water tanks and pipes

Your hot water tank will stay hot longer and you will save money on water heating if you insulate your hot water cylinder. Even if your tank has insulation, if it is less than 75mm (3") thick you could save money by replacing it or fitting a new jacket around the existing one. These jackets are available from DIY stores and are quite cheap to buy and easy to install. Hot water pipes also lose heat so insulate them wherever you can. This is particularly important for pipes in the loft to stop them freezing during the winter months. If you are having loft insulation fitted by an installer the pipes should be lagged at the same time.

### Central heating and hot water

All of our heating systems have controls that allow you to choose exactly what temperature you want and can be adjusted easily. It is not true that boilers work best when continuously running - whenever the boiler is fired it is using energy. So get to know your heating system:

- Set the timer clock to turn the heating/ hot water on/off at convenient times.
- Set individual thermostatic radiator valves to control the temperature in each room.
- Try to maintain a temperature of 21°C in the rooms you are using.
- Set the water thermostat at the right temperature 60°C or 140°F is hot enough. This can save between £10 and £20 each year.

If you are unsure how to do this safely contact DEEAP for advice.

### **Important – ventilation**

It is essential to ensure that your home is adequately ventilated so that:

- Gas and solid fuel appliances have plenty of fresh air
- There is good air quality, so that your home is not stale and stuffy
- Condensation is kept under control

Ventilation in kitchens and bathrooms is especially important:

- Do not draught proof kitchen and bathroom windows
- Use extractors fans, if fitted
- Open window trickle vents

### **No cost ways to save energy**

- Close your curtains at dusk to stop heat escaping through the windows.
- Ensure that furniture is not too near the heaters – furniture can absorb the heat and prevent it from circulating.
- Microwave ovens are faster and cheaper to run than traditional cookers.
- Only fill the kettle with as much water as you need but make sure you cover the element.
- Use energy saving light bulbs, they last much longer and use less electricity than ordinary light bulbs.
- Don't leave appliances on standby - some appliances use nearly as much electricity as they do when they are switched on!
- Turn off lights when you do not need them, but make sure stairs and hallways are adequately lit
- Use economy programmes on washing machines, dishwashers.
- If you are buying a new appliance check the energy efficiency label, 'A' is the most efficient.

# **Condensation**

## **What is condensation?**

Condensation occurs when warm, moist air meets a cold surface such as a window, mirror or wall and causes water droplets to form. The risk of condensation depends upon how moist the air is and how cold the surfaces of the rooms are. How you ventilate and heat your home will affect the level of condensation.

## **What does condensation do?**

Condensation can cause unsightly mould that can damage clothing, furniture and wallpaper. This mould can dry, sending spores into the air that can cause breathing problems for some people.

## **How to avoid condensation**

These four steps will help you reduce the condensation in your home.

### **Produce less moisture**

- Cooking: To reduce the amount of moisture, cover pots and do not leave kettles boiling.
- Washing clothes: Put washing outdoors to dry if you can. If you have to dry clothes inside keep the windows open and the door shut. When using a tumble dryer make sure you vent it to the outside (unless it is the self condensing type).
- Paraffin and portable gas heaters: These heaters put a lot of moisture into the air – one litre of gas or paraffin produces about a litre of water. Due to the amount of moisture produced and the potential for condensation problems, you are not permitted to use this type of heater in your home.

### **Ventilation to remove moisture**

- Some ventilation is needed to remove moisture as it is being produced. Keep a small window or vent open when there is moisture in the room.
- More ventilation is required in the kitchen and bathroom when cooking, washing up, bathing and drying clothes. This can be done by opening the windows wider. Better still use an extractor fan (these come on automatically when the air becomes humid and are cheap to run). Close the kitchen and bathroom doors when these rooms are in use even if your kitchen or bathroom has an extractor fan. Doing this will stop the moisture reaching other rooms especially bedrooms which are often colder and more likely to get condensation.

- Allow space for air to circulate in and around your furniture. Open doors to ventilate cupboards and wardrobes – filling them with too many things stops air circulating. Where possible position wardrobes and furniture against internal walls.

### **Heat your home a little more**

- When the whole house is warmer, condensation is less likely.
- During cold spells a low heat for a long time is better than switching heaters on high for a short period. Where possible try to heat the whole house. If you have central heating set it to provide background warmth in all rooms including unused rooms.

For more information contact the Dundee Energy Efficiency Advice Project (DEEAP), Tel: 01382 434840.

## **What is the difference between damp and condensation?**

Damp occurs when a fault in the building's basic structure lets in water from outside.

There are basically two types of damp: penetrating damp; and rising damp.

- Penetrating damp occurs if water is coming in through the walls or roof, (for example, under a loose roof tile) or through cracks.
- Rising damp occurs if there is a problem with the damp-proof course. This is a barrier built into floors and walls to stop moisture rising through the house from the ground. The usual evidence of rising damp is a 'tide mark' on the walls that shows how high it has risen. There can also be a musty smell.

If you think your home is suffering from either rising or penetrating damp, contact the Customer Services Team, Tel: 01382 434343.

## **Preparing your home for winter**

You might not think you need to do much, but your home is just as vulnerable to the cold as you are. So while you suffer from colds and flu your home could be suffering just as badly.

Every winter, thousands of properties suffer burst pipes and their occupiers suffer the misery and inconvenience that go with them.

Most of these bursts could easily have been avoided with just a few simple precautions. Many people think they won't be affected or don't know what they should do to protect their home.

Here are some of the things you can do before winter to make your home less vulnerable to the cold weather:

- Find out where the tap is that turns off the water supply to your house – Make sure the tap works because if a burst pipe bursts during the winter you will need to turn it off quickly to prevent water flooding out and causing damage. (It will usually be somewhere on the ground floor of your house maybe under the sink or stairs).
- Report any dripping taps or overflows – If you have a dripping tap or water from an overflow pipe is running down the outside of your building, please contact the Customer Services Team, Tel: 01382 434343. If the weather is cold enough drips can freeze up before they drain away, if left for long enough pipework can block and cause pipes to burst completely.
- Check you know how to use your heating system properly – So you can heat your home efficiently. For more information contact the Dundee Energy Efficiency Advice Project (DEEAP), Tel: 01382 434840.
- Keep the heat in – Ensure that pipes are properly insulated. You may be entitled to have your house insulated and draught-proofed free of charge if you are in receipt of a qualifying benefit. For more information contact the Dundee Energy Efficiency Advice Project (DEEAP), Tel: 01382 434840.
- If you intend to leave your house unoccupied (for more than a few days) – Turn off the water supply and drain the plumbing system. If this is not possible ensure there is a low background heating on in the house when you are away. You can also pour salt down sinks, baths, wash hand basin as this will help prevent freezing. Ask a friend or relative to visit your home every day while you are away to help prevent possible damage. Open your loft door to help keep the loft area, water tanks and pipes in it warm enough to prevent freezing. You should also notify your Housing Officer.
- If pipes freeze – You can try to thaw them out by using warm air or warm water – beware of using electrical appliances near water this can be dangerous. If the pipes are part of the hot water system turn off or extinguish the source of heat (immersion heater, gas boiler, coal fire etc).
- If a burst occurs – Turn off the main water supply tap for the house. Turn on the taps in your kitchen and bathroom. Switch off the boiler and the immersion water heating system or extinguish the fire. For assistance telephone the Customer Services Team on 01382 434343.

# Keeping safe and secure in your home

## Gas safety

If you smell gas, think you have a gas leak, or are worried that fumes containing carbon monoxide are escaping from a gas appliance, please call the free Gas Emergency Services emergency line immediately on **0800 111 999**.

## Gas servicing

We have a statutory obligation to service all our gas appliances annually. If you have a gas appliance such as a gas boiler or fire supplied by the council, we will require access once a year to service it. You will receive a letter in advance of your due service. If you would like to make a specific appointment, please call the Customer Services Team on 01382 434343 to make the arrangement. We will organise this at your convenience. If you make an appointment with us and need to change it, just call 01382 434343 and we will change it for you.

If you are unsure of when your last gas service was done you can call the Housing Repairs Centre on 01382 434343. They will tell you the date when the last service was done and the date that the next service is due.

It is extremely important that you get your service done. Not only does it reduce the risk of a breakdown and the inconvenience that this can cause you, it also gives you peace of mind that your appliance has had an annual safety check. Unserviced appliances can generate carbon monoxide fumes that are dangerous to the occupants. We reserve the right to obtain access to your home if we are unable to undertake a gas safety check of your appliance after several attempts to arrange this with you.

If you have any concerns about your gas appliance/s at any time, please call the Customer Services Team, Tel: 01382 434343, who will arrange for an inspection.

## **Carbon Monoxide kills**

Carbon Monoxide (CO) has NO SMELL, NO TASTE and NO COLOUR and prolonged exposure can lead to brain damage and even death.

**If we provide any gas appliances in your home, a carbon monoxide alarm will be fitted.**

Carbon Monoxide alarms are the only way to alert you to increasingly dangerous levels of CO before tragedy strikes. The alarm will sound if harmful levels of carbon monoxide are detected in the air.

The CO alarm will normally be located in the same room as your gas boiler/ gas appliance and will be checked annually as part of the gas safety check.

Do not attempt to change the battery of your CO alarm. These are sealed units and the whole unit will be replaced when necessary.

If you think your CO alarm is not working properly please contact the Customer Services Team, Tel: 01382 434343 and they will have it checked for you. If you need a new one, we will replace it.

Protect yourself and your family:

- Check the flame colour of your appliances; If it's bright blue, it's healthy. If it's yellowy orange, this is evidence of a possible carbon monoxide presence. If you are concerned you should contact the Customer Services Team, Tel: 01382 434343
- If you have your own gas appliances they should be checked annually
- Make sure there is adequate ventilation in any room with a gas appliance
- Go to your doctor if you suffer from unexplained illnesses e.g. fatigue, dizziness, headaches

## **Fire safety**

### **Smoke Alarm**

The smoke alarm/s fitted in your home is vital protection from the danger of fire. It provides an early warning of danger, giving your family precious time to get out of your home quickly. If your home has recently been rewired you will have a mains powered smoke alarm/s. It has a battery back-up in case the electricity supply is cut off. Other smoke alarms will be battery operated.

A simple maintenance plan will ensure that your smoke alarm continues to protect your family.

#### *Mains powered alarms*

- *Test it every week by pressing the test button until the alarm sounds*
- *Keep it clean and dust free*
- *Don't paint it*

#### *Battery powered alarms*

- *Test it every week by pressing the test button until the alarm sounds*
- *Replace the battery annually, even if it is not emitting a low power warning. Always use a high quality battery.*
- *Keep it clean and dust free*
- *Don't paint it*

If you think your smoke alarm is not working properly please contact the Customer Services Team, Tel: 01382 434343 and they will have it checked for you. If you need a new one, we will replace it.

## **Fire safety advice**

- Never smoke in bed or in an armchair when you are feeling drowsy
- Keep matches and lighters away from children
- Never leave cooking oil to heat unattended and don't throw water on burning fat!
- Buy a thermostat controlled deep fat fryer
- Keep escape routes free from clutter
- Don't put furniture or dry clothing within 1 metre of a heating appliance
- Don't put mirrors above the fireplace in case someone stands too close and sets their clothes alight
- Don't leave lit candles unattended on mantelpieces or windowsills and make sure they are extinguished properly
- Use the correct fuse rating for your appliance
- Unplug items if you're not using them, to prevent them from overheating

## If fire breaks out

- Get out of the house and dial 999
- Don't waste time collecting valuables
- Don't go back in until the fire brigade say its safe

## Electrical safety

### The main electrical hazards are:

- Overloaded sockets
- Bare wires
- Loose wires
- Water near wires

### Electrical safety advice

- Unplug appliances not being used.
- Put correct fuses in plugs.
- Check flexes and plug tops regularly.
- Never touch exposed wires. Turn off the electricity at the mains before working on any electrical apparatus.
- Never touch electrical appliances with wet hands.
- Do not overload sockets. Only use one appliance at a time in a socket.
- Don't position appliances near furnishings and curtains
- Don't dry washing on top of heaters

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## Asbestos

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral that has been used in a range of building materials to make them more rigid and fire resistant.

Many people have worries about asbestos, but undisturbed asbestos usually poses no problems. However, care should be taken to prevent the release of fibres as they can cause serious damage to your health.

Areas in your home where you may find asbestos include:

- Linings for walls, ceilings and doors
- Insulation panels in some storage heaters
- Loose asbestos packing between floors and in partition walls

## **What to do if you think you have asbestos in your home**

It is very hard to identify asbestos, but if you suspect that you are living with asbestos:

- Don't panic and leave asbestos alone, it's safe unless it's damaged or disturbed
- Call the Customer Services Team, Tel: 01382 434343, to arrange for an inspection.
- Do not attempt to remove asbestos lagging, spray coatings or insulation board by yourself.  
These materials can only be safely removed by a licensed contractor

## **Keeping your home secure**

### **Your home**

Home security is the best way to reduce your chances of being burgled. A lot of burglaries are spur of the moment, as a burglar may see an open window or other easy point of entry and take their chance.

- Keep your doors locked when you are in the house or garden. Make sure everyone in the house knows where keys are kept – it's important door and window keys are kept in the same place in case of an emergency
- When you go out, always lock the door and close the windows - even if you are just going out for a short time.
- Use your window locks, a burglar is less likely to break in if they have to smash a window.
- Don't leave spare keys outside and put car keys out of sight in the house
- Use timers for lights and radios if you need to be away from home overnight. They will create the impression that someone is in
- Take photographs of your valuables

## **When someone calls at your door**

- Use your ‘spy hole’ to see who it is before opening the door
- If you have a door chain, keep it on when you open the door
- If you don’t know the caller, ask to see their identity card, and check it carefully. Do not be embarrassed to ask to see it. Genuine callers will not mind
- If you are unsure about the person, ask them to remain outside while you telephone the organisation they claim to represent to check who they are
- All Council staff and contractors working on behalf of the Council carry identity cards. Contact us if you are unsure about anyone claiming to be from the Council

## **Going away**

- Cancel the milk and paper deliveries
- Make use of timer switches to control lights, giving the impression that there is someone home
- Ask a trusted friend or relative to keep an eye on your home and to open and close curtains and remove post from the floor from time to time
- Leave a contact number with a friend or relative
- In winter months you should take precautions against bad weather e.g. leave the heating on low all the time (see the section on ‘Looking after your home’, page 44)
- If you plan to be away from your home for more than 28 days you must notify your District Housing Office

## **Controlled entry doors**

To increase security many of our blocks of flats have controlled entry front and back close doors.

To maintain security:

- Make sure the door is closed behind you
- Only allow access if you are certain the person is visiting you or another neighbour
- Never leave the door propped open
- Try not to allow non-residents to follow you into the block – they should press the button for the flat they are visiting
- Report any faults to the Customer Services Team, Tel: 01382 434343

# You and Your Neighbours

## Being a good neighbour

Everyone has the right to peace and quiet in their home. By signing your Tenancy Agreement and Good Neighbour Charter you have agreed to keep certain conditions. These are intended to make sure you and your neighbours can enjoy living in your homes, and that the area around your home is clean and tidy and looks reasonable.

You must consider how your lifestyle can impact on your neighbours - their lifestyle may be very different from your household's. You may not be aware of your neighbour's situation - for example some neighbours may have to work shifts.

Here are some tips to be a good neighbour

- Get to know your neighbours, even if it's just to say "hello"
- Keep the volume of televisions, music systems and radios at a reasonable level, especially late at night and early in the morning
- Position fridges, freezers and speakers away from shared walls
- Use washing machines, vacuum cleaners and other noisy equipment during the day
- Take your turn washing stairs, landings and hallways
- Try to ensure your dog does not bark or whine for long periods of time
- Do DIY jobs during the day and tell your neighbours in advance if there is going to be noise
- Keep your children under control when they are playing outside your home

## Antisocial Behaviour

Most people live happily along side their neighbours and do not experience any difficulties; however we can help you if you believe you are being disturbed or threatened in any way.

Also, if you cause or allow others, such as family members or visitors, to cause disturbance to neighbours, this is a breach of your tenancy agreement.

The council is determined to maintain a zero tolerance approach towards antisocial behaviour and will take action against those who cause a nuisance. In addition to the clauses in the tenancy agreement, there are laws about antisocial behaviour.

Examples of antisocial behaviour include:

- Loud music/noisy parties
- Shouting and swearing
- Vandalism
- Violence towards neighbours
- Drug dealing from a property
- Harassment
- Gangs hanging around

If you are having a problem with a neighbour, we would always encourage you to try to resolve it amicably at first, since your neighbour may not know that they are causing you problems.

Keep a written record if a nuisance continues, as this evidence will be needed to assist us in taking positive action.

If you cannot solve the problem peacefully yourself, or if the nuisance is of a serious nature you should contact the Antisocial Behaviour Team who will investigate. An Investigating Officer will investigate in a polite, professional manner and handle your complaint in complete confidence.

There are several ways you can make a complaint about antisocial behaviour:

- In person at any Housing Office or Dundee House
- Sending a written complaint to any Housing Office or Dundee House
- Online at [www.dundee.gov.uk/asb](http://www.dundee.gov.uk/asb)
- Calling the Antisocial Behaviour Advice Line on 0800 169 3845 or 01382 307342
- Calling the Antisocial Behaviour Team on 01382 307366

Advice and information is always available on the Antisocial Advice Line -

**0800 169 3845 or 01382 307342**

The Line is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

You can also get information from the Council website:

[www.dundee.gov.uk/asb](http://www.dundee.gov.uk/asb)



## Noise

Noise is a normal part of our daily lives and you have to expect some noise from time to time from the people who live around you. However, we do not expect you to tolerate a neighbour's noise, whether through thoughtlessness or malice.

If you are being disturbed by unreasonable and/or persistent levels of noise often the quickest and simplest way to resolve the problem is to speak directly to your neighbour. They may be unaware that a problem exists or to what extent it is disturbing you. We do understand that you may be reluctant to approach their neighbour, particularly late at night. If this is the case you can contact the Antisocial Behaviour Team, who will investigate your complaint.

If you are being disturbed by noise at night time you can contact Police Scotland on 101. They will either deal with your complaint or, depending when you call, forward your details on to the Night Time Noise Team. Enforcement Officers will investigate your complaint and have powers to issue warning notices, fixed penalty notices and can also seize the equipment that is making the noise.

### Laminate flooring

*Over the past few years fitting laminate flooring instead of carpeting has become more popular, but it can cause problems for us, as your landlord, and for your neighbours. Laminate flooring can make normal household noise sound louder and this is the cause of one of the most common complaints we receive from tenants about their neighbours. There are also occasions when we have to lift the floor boards to carry out emergency repairs or to complete major improvements, such as an electrical re-wiring or new central heating. This type of work would require the laminate flooring to be lifted.*

*We consider the fitting of laminate flooring to be an alteration to the property and you must ask our permission, in writing, before carrying out the work.*

*If granted, specific conditions will form part of the permission:*

- You will be responsible for ensuring that suitable sound insulation is laid under the flooring
- You will be responsible for lifting and relaying the flooring when access to the floor or sub floor is required
- When you leave the property the flooring must be uplifted and removed at your own expense

To avoid disturbing your neighbours you should:

- Fit the recommended underlay beneath your laminate floor
- Use rugs in areas of high foot traffic
- Fit felt pads under chair and table legs
- Wear soft-soled shoes, such as slippers

## Racial Harassment

Dundee City Council will not tolerate racial harassment in any form.

Examples of what a racist incident might be are:

- Racist comments, Verbal abuse and threats
- Racist graffiti
- Derogatory name calling, insults and racist “jokes”
- Racially provocative behaviour
- Physical assault which is racially motivated
- Damage to a person’s property which is racially motivated

If you are the victim of racially motivated harassment or antisocial behaviour you should report it to the Antisocial Behaviour Team or the Police straight away. We will take firm action against neighbours who harass you and we will offer you as much support and protection as we can.

**If the incident is an emergency call 999**

# Moving on and Moving Out of your Home

For many reasons you may find your existing home no longer meets your housing needs e.g. your home is too big or too small, you have a medical need for moving, you may want to move to another area.

Whatever the reason there are several options that you can consider:

## **Transfer from your current home to another council property**

You can apply for a transfer from your current home at any time during your tenancy. You will need to complete a housing application form. You can get one from the Lettings Centre or from any of our housing offices or you can phone to have one sent to you. The addresses and telephone numbers are on page 3 of this booklet.

Please make sure you complete all the questions on the form that are relevant to you. If there is missing information it will take longer to register your application and place you on the waiting list. We will be happy to help you complete your application form.

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We will register your form and send you an acknowledgement of the details you have given us. If we have all the information we need to assess your form, we will send you this acknowledgement within 15 days of registration.

Your application will be assessed and you will be awarded points and/or a category according to your need.

You can download a housing application form from our website: [www.dundeecity.gov.uk/housingoptions](http://www.dundeecity.gov.uk/housingoptions)

## **Sheltered Housing**

If you are getting older and think you need some extra support or have a special medical need, then sheltered housing may be an option for you. We have more than 30 Sheltered Housing Complexes in the city. All of the complexes are served by Warden Staff and have a range of facilities including, laundries, lounges and kitchens.

Each sheltered home has an intercom system and a Community Alarm Service and the Warden's keep in daily touch to make sure you are well.

There will be plenty of opportunities for you to socialise with other residents but you do not have to join in activities or events if you do not wish to.

To cover the cost of running the sheltered housing scheme a service charge is added to the weekly rent. If you are in receipt of full Housing Benefit you will not have to pay the service charge.

### **Medical Points for Housing**

If your present home is unsuitable for your needs because you or a member of your household have a health problem or if you need to be housed near a relative to give or receive support for health reasons, you may qualify for medical points.

You will have to complete a Housing Application form and a Medical Assessment form. Your application will be assessed and you will be notified in writing of any points and what type of housing you require under the medical award.

For more information about Sheltered Housing contact the Lettings Centre, Tel: 0300 123 9023 or 01382 307400.

An information leaflet is available from our housing offices;

*Housing Options for Older People*



### **Mutual Exchange**

You can use our FREE online Dundee House Exchange service as a simple, safe and effective way to exchange homes. You can swap with any tenant who has a Scottish Secure Tenancy, including tenants of Dundee City Council, housing associations and of other councils.

To use the online service visit [www.houseexchange.org.uk](http://www.houseexchange.org.uk) and select Dundee City Council in the 'choose your landlord' menu.

For more information about Dundee House Exchange or any enquiry about mutual exchanges please contact the Lettings Centre, Tel: 0300 123 9023 or 01382 307400.

Before agreeing to an exchange we will carry out a number of checks e.g. that the houses will not cause overcrowding, that the rent account is up to date, that there are no antisocial behaviour complaints.

We will give you a written decision within 28 days of receiving your application.  
For more information contact the Lettings Centre, Tel: 0300 123 9023 or 01382 307400.

## Housing Incentive Scheme

You may qualify for assistance if you move to a smaller home suitable for your housing need. You can do this by applying to Dundee City Council or Housing Associations for a transfer to a smaller home. You can also seek a suitable mutual exchange.

If you meet the qualifying criteria we will discuss the level of assistance that can be made available to you under the Scheme.

To find out more information or discuss the scheme in more detail contact the Lettings Centre or any Housing District Office for further information.

## Ending your tenancy

Before you give up your secure tenancy you should be sure that you have suitable accommodation to move on to. If you are leaving because of rent arrears, harassment or fleeing domestic abuse, try to seek advice. There may be options open to you so that you can stay in your home. There are contact details on page 35 of people who may be able to help you.

If you have any queries about ending your tenancy, please contact your district Housing Office.

## How do I end my tenancy?

You must give us at least four weeks notice to end your tenancy. You can notify us by letter or you can call into your District Housing Office or Dundee House. We will take some the details and you will be asked to sign a termination receipt. If you have a joint tenancy, then both tenants should sign the letter/receipt. The tenancy must finish on a Monday.

If you do not give us enough notice or leave without telling us we will charge rent until the end of the tenancy.

## Before you move out

There are a number of things you will need to do before you leave your home. To help you there is a Moving out checklist on page 64.

### Rent

Please ensure that your rent account is clear before you leave. We will pursue you for any outstanding debt even if you have moved out of a council property.

## **Keys**

At least 2 keys should be returned for each door lock. Please return the keys to any housing office by 12 noon on, or before, the date of termination. If you do not hand in the keys on that day you will be charged additional rent for the period between the date of termination and the date you hand in the keys. Any damage that may occur while the house stands empty, for example burst pipes, vandalism, etc will be your full responsibility as long as you have the keys.

## **Condition of house and garden**

You should remove all of your furniture, personal property and personal papers and make sure that all fixtures and fittings are left intact and that the decoration is not damaged. It is the City Council's policy to charge the outgoing tenant for any damage to fittings or fixtures and for removing any items left in the house or garden. **You should ensure that the property is completely cleaned and swept out before you leave.**

The Council provides a Special Collections Service to allow you to have larger items uplifted. You can request a special uplift for up to 6 bulky items from outside your property at ground floor level for a small charge. Your District Housing Office will be happy to arrange this service for you. If you wish to make your own arrangements please phone 01382 436238.

## **Alterations/improvements**

If you want to remove any fixtures or fittings, such as light fittings, handles, doors, that you have fitted yourself you must put the originals back or provide a replacement. If you do not do this we will charge you for getting it done on your behalf. If you are not sure about what you can remove please contact your Housing Officer.

You may be entitled to compensation for certain improvements you have made to your home, providing that you had written permission at the time you did them. To find out if you can apply for compensation contact your Housing Officer.

## **Gas/Electricity**

It is your responsibility to take final electricity and gas meter readings, the telephone disconnected, and your mail redirected.

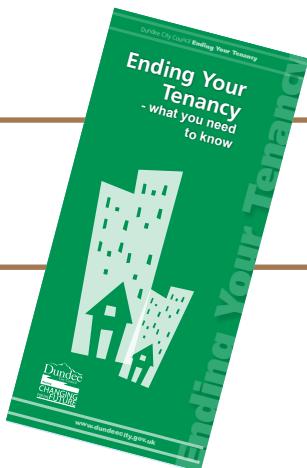
## **Other things to remember**

Arrange with the Post Office to have your mail re-directed. We will not forward any letters to you at your new address and we will not tell the new tenant your forwarding address.

Make a list of all the people you need to contact to tell them you are moving e.g. Council Tax, telephone company, doctor, dentist and so on.

Moving out checklist	
All rent/charges are paid	✓
Repairs/decoration that are your responsibility have been carried out	
2 sets of house keys	
Controlled entry key fobs	
Any other keys e.g. bin store, cellar, window locks – leave in house	
Remove all possessions from home and garden	
Clean/sweep out home	
Tidy garden area	
Dispose of any unwanted items	
Take gas/electric meter readings	
Notify Council Tax/Housing Benefits	
Arrange for mail to be redirected	

An information leaflet **Ending your Tenancy** is available from our housing offices.



# Important Equipment Locations

Sometimes we will ask you where things like stopcocks and circuit breakers are in your home. It will be useful for you to list the location of the items you have in this list, so if a problem arises you will know where to find them.

ITEM	LOCATION IN HOME
Stopcock	
Circuit breakers/Fuse box	
Gas tap	
Boiler	
Water tank	
Electricity meter	
Gas meter	
Smoke detector	
Carbon Monoxide detector	
Warden call equipment	
Intercom	
Community alarm	

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## Notes

## Notes



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