

General Information & Advice



Newington
Housing Association
(1975) Ltd.

for Newington Housing
Association **Tenants**

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Looking after the air quality in your home

As we move into Winter with outside air temperatures beginning to drop, we thought we would share information on how you can ensure your indoor air quality is as healthy as possible.

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, we are all now more aware of the importance of good ventilation within all properties and buildings, whether our own homes or public buildings such as shops, offices, restaurants, etc.

As the construction quality of homes has improved over the years, there is less opportunity for stale indoor air to escape through ill-fitting windows and doors, floorboards, poorly insulated roof spaces, etc.

Cavity wall insulation, double-glazing and draft proofing prevent 'natural ventilation', leaving stale humid air trapped in the dwelling.

If your home is not properly ventilated it will reduce the quality of the air you breathe and can result in an increase in the following:



MOISTURE

The typical house creates around 112 pints per week from showers, baths, cooking, etc. which can lead to condensation mould growth, streaming windows, etc.



FUMES

Tobacco, exhaust gases, etc.



CHEMICAL EMISSIONS

From everyday household furnishings, building products, aerosols, cleaning products, etc.



DUST PARTICLES

To **improve air quality** and **comfort** in your home, there needs to be a good **balance** between **Insulation, Ventilation** and **Heating**.

DOES YOUR HOUSE HAVE



Air valves in hallway or each room?



Trickle vents in windows?



Extractor fans in your kitchen, bathrooms, utility rooms, WC?

Please do not switch these off, close/block vents or adjust the air valves!!

These are in place to provide ventilation to improve your home's indoor air quality!!

They have been carefully designed and located to ensure the ventilation is correct for your home.

If a system has been fitted, it will use very little energy to run as powered by ultra-low watt motors, typically achieving an 'A' rating energy efficiency.

Depending on what is installed in your home, your system may be providing air from your roof space which has benefited from solar gain and may also be redistributing warm air at ceiling level.

By doing this you are improving the indoor air quality which has added health benefits:

- it will reduce mould spores, a trigger for respiratory problems and allergies
- it will reduce house dust mite populations by lowering humidity levels - a main trigger for asthma and allergies

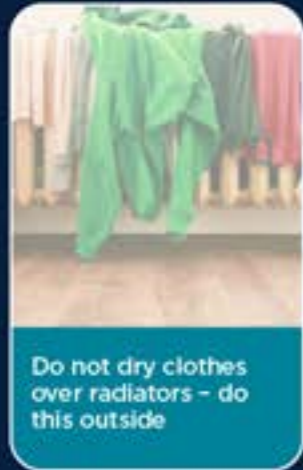
OTHER HELPFUL HINTS & TIPS

Keeping your home condensation free



Better images needed

Try to keep the home as warm as possible for as long as possible



Do not dry clothes over radiators - do this outside



Better images needed

Vent your tumble drier to outside



Do not use paraffin/Calor gas type heating

For further information and advice, please contact to one of our Property Services Officers directly on 028 9074 4055 and select Option 2.

Newington
Housing Association

HEATING AND INSULATION

You can make sure that you have adequate heating and insulation in your home to reduce moisture.



- When at home, the ideal temperature usually ranges between 19-22 degrees Celsius in the living rooms, including the kitchen and bathroom, and 16-20 degrees Celsius in the bedrooms.
- When away from home, the temperature in the rooms should not drop under 15 degrees Celsius to avoid condensation and increased humidity levels.
- Do not heat up cold bedrooms in the evening by opening the door to heated rooms. The warm and humid air will condensate on the cold walls of the bedroom.
- Good insulation of the building creates warmer walls and ceilings, and therefore inhibits mould growth by preventing condensation from forming on them. *Note: tight windows and buildings require more active ventilation.*
- Close the kitchen and bathroom doors when these rooms are in use, even if your kitchen and bathroom has an extractor fan. This will help prevent moisture reaching other rooms, especially bedrooms, which are often colder and more likely to get condensation.

MOISTURE

Some ordinary daily activities produce a lot of moisture quickly. There are steps which will help you reduce the condensation in your home by producing less moisture:

Tumble dryers must be vented to the outside.



Dry washing outdoors on a line, or put in the bathroom with the door closed and the window open or fan on.



Cover pans and do not leave kettles boiling.

Do not dry washing on radiators



VENTILATION

You can ventilate your home without making draughts to reduce moisture:



- Keep a small window ajar when someone is in the room.
- If your windows have trickle ventilators use them.
- Ventilate kitchens and bathrooms when in use by opening the windows wider, or better still, use a humidity-controlled electric fan if one is fitted.
- Do not block air-brick vents.
- Ventilate cupboards and wardrobes.
- Avoid putting too many things in cupboards and wardrobes as this stops the air circulating.
- Where possible, position wardrobes and furniture against internal walls.
- Do not block permanent ventilators.
- Do not draught-proof rooms where there is condensation or mould.
- Do not draught-proof windows in the bathroom and kitchen.
- Do not tamper with any ventilation or extract unit installed within your property.

What do I do about mould in my home?



The environment in the home can become damp. Too much moisture in your home can lead to damp and mould conditions and is often due to condensation.

WHAT IS CONDENSATION

Are your wall surfaces, windows, furniture or clothing damp? Can you see black mould growing on them? If so, it is likely that you have a condensation problem.

Condensation occurs mainly during cold weather, whether it is raining or dry. It appears on cold surfaces and in places where there is little movement of air. It forms when warm moist air and steam are produced and the warm air comes into contact with and condenses on a cold surface before it can leave the building.

Look for it in corners, on or near windows, in or behind wardrobes and cupboards. It often forms on north-facing walls.

HOW TO AVOID CONDENSATION

There is no immediate or easy solution but as a tenant you are responsible for balancing the three main factors, which are **Heating, Ventilation and Moisture**.



First steps against mould



First treat any mould you may already have in your home. If you then deal with the basic problem of condensation, mould should not reappear.

The long-term solution to avoiding severe mould is to eliminate dampness. If the above points are followed, condensation should not be a persistent problem in your home.

However, you must remember that a balance is needed between these factors and you may need to experiment and persevere until the problem is resolved.



HOW TO KILL AND REMOVE MOULD

Below are some general tips on how to kill and remove mould:

- Wipe down walls and window frames and sills with a fungicidal wash.
- Dry-clean mildewed clothes and shampoo carpets.
- After treatment, redecorate using a good quality fungicidal paint to prevent mould recurring. *Note: this paint is not effective if overlaid with ordinary paints or wallpaper.*

MOULD can appear at any time throughout the year, but winter is a prime time for unpleasant mould spores to thrive in our homes.

Below are some handy tips to help tackle mould within your home this winter:

- Opening windows whenever you can - especially after baths, showers, when cooking and drying clothes, to let the excess moisture escape.
- Keeping pan lids on when cooking to retain condensation.
- Using extractor fans in kitchens and bathrooms.
- Utilise trickle vents on your windows.
- Set radiators valves to allow a little heat, even in unused rooms - cold rooms encourage damp.
- Clean mould from tile grout with white vinegar or bleach spray to remove staining.
- Treat mould-prone areas with mould-resistant paint once removed.
- Keep gaps between furniture and walls.

How to save energy and reduce your bills

Want to save energy and money around the home but not sure where to start? There are plenty of lifestyle changes you can make that can have a massive effect on your consumption. Here are some energy-saving tips you can put into action right away to cut costs and help fight climate change.

Small changes can make a big difference

Want to save energy and money around the home but not sure where to start? There are plenty of lifestyle changes you can make that can have a massive effect on your consumption. Here are some energy-saving tips you can put into action right away to cut costs and help fight climate change.

What is energy efficiency?

In a nutshell, it's about cutting your energy use while still enjoying a good quality of life.



Try these ideas to get started:

Turn off the lights

Do it whenever you leave the room. And fit energy efficient bulbs. They're more expensive initially but they use much less energy and replacing all bulbs in your home with these could save about £40 a year on your electricity bills. So, they're well worth it.

Unplug your chargers

Leaving your phone, tablet or laptop charger plugged in when you're not using it drains money from your pocket. You're just paying for it to waste energy by getting warm.

Switch off your TV

Leaving your TV on standby means it's still using energy. And experts have calculated that UK households waste an average of £30 a year powering appliances they're not even using.

Move your sofa

Furniture pressed up against a radiator stops heat reaching the room. Move things an inch or two away and better air circulation will have your room getting warm and cosy much faster.

Close the curtains

When the sun goes down, heat starts to escape. Drawing the curtains or closing the blinds will help to keep the warmth in. Especially if you have draughty, old-fashioned sash windows.

Fit foil panels

It's surprisingly easy to add reflector panels behind your radiators to bounce more of the infra-red heat rays back into your room - so less warmth gets lost through the wall.

Stay warm, cut costs

Turning your thermostat down by just 1°C can save you as much as £80 per year!

Layer up

Wearing more jumpers, socks and slippers around the house and putting an extra blanket on the bed means you won't be tempted to turn the heating up.

Turn the pressure down

A high-pressure power shower is a luxury but you'd be surprised how much water they use - sometimes even more than a bath.

Don't leave the tap running

Turn the tap off when you're brushing your teeth or washing your face - it can waste more than six litres of water per minute while it's running.

Get a water-efficient shower head

This will cut down the amount of hot water you use but still feel like a strong shower.

Turn the lights off

When you leave a room, don't leave the lights on unless you're coming back.

Run cold washes in the washing machine

Washing your clothes at 30 degrees rather than 40 can save you a third on your washing bills - you'll have to do a hot wash sometimes but sticking to 30 whenever possible can make a world of difference.

Use halogen lightbulbs outside

These bulbs consume around a quarter less electricity than incandescent bulbs without losing any brightness, so they're a no-brainer for any exterior lighting.

Put exterior or security lights on timers

Your neighbours won't thank you for keeping your exterior lights on all night, and neither will your wallet. Make sure any exterior lights are on a timer or activated by motion so they only come on when needed.

Opt for an electric lawnmower

Electric mowers are much less hassle to use than petrol-powered mowers and are obviously more energy-efficient as well. Try and invest in one if you can.

Educate the household

Energy will only be saved if everyone in the house recognises the importance of saving it. If you've got kids, try and turn energy saving into a game to teach them why they should remember to switch things off.

Stop overpaying on energy

Compare gas and electricity prices to make sure there aren't any cheaper options you could switch to.

Current Tips & Savings from the Energy Saving Trust - July 2024

Switching off standby

You can save around **£70 annually** just by remembering to turn your appliances off standby mode.

Turning off the lights

Turning your lights off when you're not using them or when you leave a room. This will save you around **£30 on your annual energy bills**

Don't overfill the kettle

Avoid overfilling the kettle - you could save yourself **£14 a year** on your electricity bill.

Reduce your dishwasher use

Only run your dishwasher when it's full to reduce the amount of water you use. Reducing your dishwasher use by one run per week for a year, could save you **£18 per year**.

Being careful with your washing

By using your washing machine on a 30-degree cycle instead of higher temperatures and reduce your washing machine use by one run per week for a year, could save you around **£36 a year**.

Avoid using the tumble dryer

By drying clothes on racks inside (where possible) or outside in warmer weather can save you **£75 a year**.

Spend less time in the shower

Keeping your shower time to just 4 minutes could save a typical household **£70 a year**.



Help to save water within your home

97.5%



of the world's water is locked in seas and oceans, too salty for human use. And most of the remaining 2.5% is in the ice caps. So we humans depend on the tiny bit available as fresh water – **an essential natural resource for life.**

But we don't just use water for drinking. We wash in it, clean with it, and use it to produce everything from clothing to food. Crop production – including feed for livestock and biofuels – is putting a great strain on fresh water supplies.

Below are 12 of the best ways to save water according to Friends of the Earth:

Turn off the taps

Don't let your water consumption run out of control. Save 6 litres of water a minute by turning off your tap while you brush your teeth. Ensure leaky taps are fixed too – and stop what could be 60 litres of water going straight down the drain every week.

Shower with less

Every minute you spend in a power shower uses up to 17 litres of water. Set a timer on your phone to keep your showers short, sweet and water-saving. Switching to an efficient shower head will allow you to lather up in less water, which means you'll save water and cut your bills.

Save up your dirty clothes

Washing a full machine load of clothes uses less water and energy than 2 half loads. This means lower bills as well.

Reduce food waste

It takes a lot of water to produce our cereal, fruit and other food. More than half of the 7 million tonnes of food and drink UK households bin every year could be eaten. Wasting less food could save you £540 a year.

Time your gardening

Water outdoor plants in the early morning or at the end of the day to stop water immediately evaporating in sunlight and heat. Water the soil so that the liquid goes straight to the roots, where it's needed. In a heatwave, animals need water too. Instead of watering your lawn, leave out a water-filled container, like a casserole dish, for birds to drink from and wash. Thirsty bees and other insects will need a saucer or bowl with water and stones in it.

Catch rainwater

Installing water butts saves up to 5,000 litres of water a year and your plants will thank you for rainwater rather than treated tap water. You can also cut water use by 33% by watering plants manually instead of using automatic sprinklers.

Use the low-flush button if your cistern is a dual flush toilet

The average UK household flushes the loo 5,000 times per year. Modern dual-flush systems save huge amounts of water. They use just 6 litres – or 4 with a reduced flush – much less than the 13 litres for each old-style single flush.

No more washing up

Got a dishwasher? Fill it up completely each time you run it and you'll use less water than you would doing the dishes by hand. Yes, even if you're using a washing-up bowl. What better excuse to go and have a nice sit down?

Quality and seasonal eating

Rearing animals for meat and dairy and harvesting crops like avocado at a large and unsustainable scale is incredibly water intensive. By cutting down on meat and dairy and eating seasonal vegetables you'll be helping to conserve water. You'll also be helping to protect the climate. The meat and dairy industries are big contributors to global warming.

Boil what you need

Save water, money and energy by only boiling as many cups of water as you need.

Steam your veggies

Steam your food to cut water usage and retain more of the natural nutrients. If you do boil, try using the leftover water as a tasty stock for soups. Or let it cool and use it to water plants.

Be plumbing prepared

Regularly check your kitchen pipes and the dishwasher hose for slow leaks. Find out where your household stop valve is and make sure that you can turn it on and off. If you ever have a burst pipe, because you'll be able to cut off the flow before it floods the house.

Keep a contact number for your water supplier handy so that if you find a leak you can let them know and stop water being wasted.

How do I report a leak or burst pipe to NI Water?

You can contact NI Water in several different ways:

By Phone: Call NI Waterline (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) on **0345 744 0088**. Customers with hearing difficulties can use 'Text Relay' through NI Waterline on **0345 744 0088**.

By Email: waterline@niwater.com

Via Webchat, Facebook, Twitter or Self-Service Portal: <https://www.niwater.com/contact-us/>

How to save electricity around the home with our money-saving tips

Similarly to gas, there are a few changes you can make around your home that could help cut down your average electricity usage and the amount of money you have to spend.

Use energy-saving lightbulbs

A lot of electricity is used in lighting your home, but you can use less energy by investing in specific energy-saving lightbulbs, which are readily available. You won't lose any light, and you'll save money too.

Install dimmer switches

This way you'll be able to light a room as much as you need, which means you can tailor the amount of electricity you'll be using to do so.

Use energy-efficient electric appliances

Some appliances, like dishwashers, run on electricity as opposed to gas, so it's worth seeking out the most energy-efficient models to ensure you're not spending more than you need to. Look for models rated A+++ by the EU as a general guide.

Don't leave anything plugged in that isn't being used

A lot of wasted electricity occurs through leaving appliances plugged in that aren't being used. Even charger cables that don't have anything plugged into them, but are still connected to the socket, can waste electricity, so it's often better to err on the side of caution by unplugging anything that isn't being actively used and switching the power off at the plug.

How does saving energy help the environment?

Cutting carbon emissions and saving natural resources are high on everyone's list. The UK Government has recently adopted the recommendations of the Committee on Climate Change's report and announced plans to reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.



How to save energy in your bathroom

Do you love a long soak in the **bath**?
Or are you in and out of the **shower** in minutes?

- Change your showerhead. A low-flow design still gives you a satisfying shower and uses much less hot water too.
- Shorten your shower time. A long shower – especially a power shower – can use enough hot water to fill a bath.
- Unplug your toothbrush charger. Most electric toothbrushes only need one charge a week to keep your smile sparkling.
- And your hair straighteners. Don't leave shavers or hair straighteners on standby charge either. Turn them off instead.
- Air-dry your hair. Why not try the natural look for a change? It'll save energy and maybe even a bit of time.
- Get an extractor with a timer. Running your bathroom fan for more than 20 minutes just wastes energy and money.

How to save gas around the home



There's a lot you can do to use less gas around your home - here are just a few of them.

Upgrade your gas appliances

With more energy-efficient appliances on the market than ever before, make sure you're investing in the models which use gas in the most efficient way.

Lower the thermostat

If your thermostat is set to a high temperature, your gas bill is bound to be expensive. Try lowering your thermostat a few degrees to reduce your bill by 5-10%. For instance, turn the temperature down from 22 °C to 20 °C

Turn off or turn down the heating when you're not home

Don't keep the heat on in your home when it's not necessary. Turn off the heat when you're out at work or if you do not intend to return home for several hours. You can also turn your thermostat down if you do not expect to be home for a few hours. The energy saved will reduce the cost of your gas bill.

Reduce the use of personal heaters

Personal, or space, heaters use up a lot of energy. Plus, they are an inefficient way of warming up large areas. Avoid using them and instead look for more efficient ways to keep warm. If you want to warm a small space only, a personal heater may be more effective than heating the whole home. Choose a radiant heater, which are more energy-efficient than other models.

Save energy with radiator valves

Some areas in your home need to be warmer than others. For example, it may be important to you to keep the ground floor well heated during the day. You can control the heat by using radiator valves on radiators within your home. These self-regulating valves allow you to control the temperature of each room by adjusting the amount of hot water goes to the radiator.

Invest in a smart thermostat

Smart thermostats are devices that connects your heating system to the internet - letting you change the temperature or switch your heating off via your smartphone or other device when you're out and about. Remember, you need an internet connection to use them.

A smart thermostat is different to smart meters. Unlike GB, energy suppliers do not fit smart meters in households within NI. You install or arrange installation of smart thermostats yourself - so it doesn't matter which energy provider supplies your energy. Also, they don't affect you when switching suppliers.

A smart thermostat will enable you to track your gas usage and make adjustments when it comes to using less.

How much do smart thermostats cost?

Smart thermostats typically cost anywhere between £150 and £280, depending on make and model. Most makers also offer professional installation. This usually adds about £50 to £100, but some can be easy to install yourself and most brands have installation instructions.

Can smart thermostats help you save money?

There's no guarantee you'll save money - it all depends on your habits:

- Good for you if you come home at different times every day; if you're home a little later one day, you can delay the heating coming on remotely with smart thermostats.
- Not so good for you if your routine is set (you leave the house at the same time every day, returning at the same time). As you can programme most thermostats to come on at specific times, a traditional thermostat would do. Similarly, if you work from home, you can turn the heating up (or down/off) manually if it gets cold (or too warm) in the property.

Switch to another energy suppliers

Even though there are only two energy suppliers to choose from (i.e., firmus energy and sse Airtricity), it's well worth checking if you can save by switching. Based on typical use, some can save £100+/yr switching from the most expensive tariff to the cheapest.

Compare to find YOUR cheapest price

The Consumer Council is an independent organisation with a legal responsibility to protect consumers' interests.

To compare, you can visit: https://www.consumercouncil.org.uk/comparison_tool/begin

It's free and offers a full market comparison.

What to do if you smell Gas/In an Emergency

If you smell gas or you are worried about gas safety, phone the 24-hour Northern Ireland Gas Emergency Service on

0800 002 001

Saving energy in the kitchen

Your kitchen is where you use a lot of energy as you cook, wash up, make tea and put leftovers into the fridge or freezer. The kitchen is a key area of the home when it comes to energy wastage, with **a huge amount of energy to be saved** when cooking, if you know where energy is most likely to be wasted.



Boil water in the kettle for cooking

It's quicker and uses less energy than heating up a full pan on the stove - so you'll have dinner on the table sooner.

Cook with a moderate flame

You just need it to be big enough to heat the base of the pan. If it's licking up the sides, you're wasting gas and money.

Keep your oven closed

Opening the door when food's cooking lets heat out and uses more energy. It slows down cooking too - so use the window to see how your food is doing.

Switch your oven off early

Most dishes will keep cooking a little longer while the oven temperature slowly cools, thanks to good thermal insulation.

Defrost your fridge and freezer

We all know we should do it regularly to keep ice under control. That way everything stays efficient. But it's still easy to put it off.

Upgrade your old fridge-freezer

This tip's more expensive upfront. But an A+++ rated model can save around £190 in energy over its lifetime compared to an A+.

Use a microwave

Heat up food in the microwave as often as possible - it's generally the most efficient way to heat up and cook food because its relatively small size means that a stronger level of heat can be focused on whatever's being cooked.

Be water-conscious

When you're boiling food in a pan, make sure you only use the amount of water needed to cover the amount of food you're cooking, because boiling water you don't need can waste a lot of energy.

Take it slow

To save energy (and lessen the need to cook when you get home after work), try using a slow cooker to cook throughout the day - they only use about as much energy as a light bulb.

Leave enough defrosting time

Defrost frozen food in the fridge overnight or while you're at work. Defrosting food in advance typically halves the cooking time and also means that you don't need to use the energy of a microwave to defrost more quickly.

Don't go for metal trays in the oven

Use glass or ceramic dishes in the oven wherever possible because they retain heat better than their metal counterparts, making them the most energy-efficient option.

Get the fans out

Invest in a fan-assisted or convection oven, which circulates heat throughout the oven. This means the heat doesn't have to be as high as it would in a normal oven.

Use the right size pan

Always use a pan which is the right size for the amount of food you are cooking - this means you won't waste energy while heating a bigger surface area than you need.

Use the right size hob

When you've selected your pan, make sure you use the right size hob for it. A bigger burner will waste energy and a pan that's too big will take longer to get to the right temperature.

Keep heating rings clean

Similarly, make sure you keep your heating rings as clean as possible - any food that sticks to the ring will absorb heat, which will make it less efficient.

Use the right ring for the right thing

If you're going to use the oven, cook a few meals at a time to get the most out of having your oven on and hot, especially if lunch-prepping for the week ahead is your kind of thing.

Saving money doing the laundry



Because of the amount of water used in washing clothes and the amount of energy that goes into drying them, there's a few ways you can bring down your energy usage and financial spend when doing the laundry.

If you have a big family, it probably seems like the washing machine is on all the time.

So here are some tips to cut your energy use and shrink your bill – but not your clothes.

- Always put a full load in the machine, and try to do the week's laundry in one go
- Use the economy setting on your washing machine to save water and energy
- Air-dry your laundry outside instead of using an energy-hungry tumble dryer
- Don't dry clothes on radiators. It just makes your boiler work harder
- Keep your tumble dryer's fluff filter clean so heat can flow freely inside the drum
- Put eco-balls in your tumble dryer to spread your clothes so they dry more quickly
- Shrink your bills, not your clothes. 90% of a washing machine's energy expenditure is spent heating the water, so if you wash your clothes at 30-40°C you're saving a significant amount of money.
- Hang up your laundry. Air-dry your laundry rather than tumble-drying it, particularly if the weather is warm or windy.
- Save yourself ironing time. Take your clothes out of the dryer before they're completely dry - they'll iron much quicker and you'll use less energy on your drier.



FIRE SAFETY ADVICE FOR TENANTS

We all must work together to take the pressure off our emergency services by keeping our homes safe from fire and other risks. These simple checks and safety tips can help reduce the potential risk to you and other surrounding households. Please feel free to share them with your family, friends and neighbours:

- 🔥 Check your smoke detector alarms weekly – make sure you can do this safely. If they're not working, please contact us immediately.
- 🔥 Don't leave pans, grills or toasters unattended in the kitchen.
- 🔥 Working from home? Stay safe by not overloading electrical sockets. Use laptops on hard services so they don't overheat. Unplug devices after they've been charged. Don't forget your phone chargers – it's always safer to unplug these at night.
- 🔥 Don't be tempted to burn uncollected garden or household waste as fires can easily get out of control and cause unnecessary pressure on our emergency services.
- 🔥 Don't leave any items in communal areas or in areas where they can become a hazard to you or others.
- 🔥 Please allow us access to your home to carry out electrical and gas safety checks. As a landlord, we have a legal obligation to carry out these checks, and it's important that this still happens. We understand you may be worried about letting us into your home; but these checks are to keep you and your family safe.

Additional information relating to sheltered accommodation, high-rise apartment living and flats/maisonettes

It is important that we continue to ensure that you our tenants have essential information needed to raise any fire safety concerns you identify and that you are well informed about what to do if an incident should occur within their home.

Our sheltered schemes, larger buildings and apartment accommodation are designed to resist and help stop the spread of fire. Most fires are likely to be contained and not spread beyond the apartment they originated in; however, tenants should ensure:

- 🔥 Again, check your smoke detector alarms weekly – make sure you can do this safely. If they're not working, please contact us immediately.
- 🔥 If you cannot get out of your home safely, go into a room, phone 999 and say which room you are in. The NI Fire and Rescue Service will tell you what to do and they will get there as fast as they can.
- 🔥 As a tenant, formulate an escape plan in case you ever need to evacuate your home.
- 🔥 Keep all exits clear both in your home and in shared communal areas.
- 🔥 Communicate the escape plan to other occupants in your household and with neighbouring tenants.
- 🔥 Never leave flammable materials/unwanted household furniture in communal areas or bins stores.
- 🔥 If you reside high up, do not use the lift. If you can, go down the stairs.
- 🔥 All front doors to flats and doors on corridors and staircases are 'self-closing' fire doors, never wedge them open.
- 🔥 In the event of a fire, there will be a designated assembly point located outside your building. If you are unsure where this assemble point is, please contact the Association for clarity.



Finally, if you see anything that concerns you, please contact the Association on **028 9074 4055** further additional advice and assistance.

Are YOU plumbing prepared?



Regularly check your kitchen pipes and appliances hoses for slow leaks.

Also, ensure you know where your household stop valve is and make sure that you can turn it on and off. If you ever have a burst pipe, you'll be able to cut off the water flow before it floods the house.

Always keep a contact number for your water supplier handy so that if you find a leak you can let them know and stop water being wasted.

How do I report a leak or burst pipe to NI Water?

You can contact NI Water in several different ways:

By Phone: Call NI Waterline (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) on 0345 744 0088. Customers with hearing difficulties can use 'Text Relay' through NI Waterline on 0345 744 0088.

By Email: waterline@niwater.com

Via Webchat, Facebook, Twitter or Self-Service Portal: <https://www.niwater.com/contact-us/>

USEFUL NUMBERS

NEWINGTON HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Main Office Number: **028 9074 4055**
Radius 24 Connect: **0800 731 3081**
(Out of Hours Emergency Number)
Camberwell Court Sheltered Scheme: **028 9096 0552**

BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Main Office Number: **028 9032 0202**
Pest Control Office Number: **028 9027 0431**
Noise Control Office Number: **028 9037 3006**
Waste Management Service: **0800 032 8100**
Bulky Waste Collection: **028 9032 0202**

NIHE

Main Office Number: **03448 920 900**

POWER NI

Main Office Number: **03457 455 455**

PHOENIX ENERGY

Main Office Number: **03454 55 55 55**

N. I GAS EMERGENCY SERVICE

Main Office Number: **0800 002 001**



Domestic Violence

Incidents of Domestic Violence tend to increase over the Christmas period, if you are a victim or know someone who is a victim DON'T tolerate it, DO report it.

Contact police on 999 in an emergency or 101 for non-emergency or Women's Aid on 02890 66 60 49

Help your neighbour

The cold weather can be a difficult time for people who are more vulnerable. If you know someone who is elderly, has a disability, or is housebound, check on them and make sure they are okay. During extreme weather conditions many older people will not be able to get out and it is at this time that a visit from a neighbour may be appreciated.

FIND YOUR STOPCOCK

The stopcock is used for turning off and on the cold-water supply in your home.

When you turn the stopcock in a clockwise direction the water supply will be shut off.

Stopcocks are usually found in your kitchen, below the sink unit.

However in some houses the stopcock is found in a front or back hall or in a larder unit.

It is important that you know where the stopcock is and that it is working.



(always know where your stopcock is located, prior to an emergency occurring)

Contents Insurance Are YOU Covered?



The Association would advise all tenants that it is their responsibility to take out Contents Insurance.

The Association is not liable for any loss or damage caused to Tenant's belongings.

Contents Insurance can be obtained from most Insurance Brokers.

Beware of BOGUS CALLERS

and if in doubt, always use the Quick Check Scheme

The Quick Check Scheme has been running for a number of years and exists to provide reassurance to members about callers to their door claiming to be from Utility Companies.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland in collaboration with the Utility Regulator and five energy network companies, Firmus energy distribution, Northern Ireland Electricity Networks, Northern Ireland Water, Phoenix Natural Gas Ltd and SGN Natural Gas, has recently relaunched the scheme.

The principal difference in the service is that callers to Quick Check will now speak directly to the police on the 101 number.

The majority of callers to your home will be there for genuine reasons. However, there are those who may pose as official callers from utility companies.

Working in partnership with the Utility Regulator and the companies listed above anyone who wishes to check the identity of someone who says they are calling on the pretext of inspecting gas, electricity or water supplies can now call the 101 number to verify their identity.

If you are concerned about the identity of someone at your door, call 101 and you will be given the option of going through to the Quick Check facility.

Your call will be answered by a trained police call handler who will take the details of the company which the caller claims to be working for. The call handler will then contact the organisation/utility supplier to determine whether the caller is genuine.



If they are not who they say they are or you think that there is something suspicious, the operator will be able to send the police directly to you.

Members of the public should follow this advice when dealing with unexpected visitors:

- Callers should always be asked for proof of identity. Genuine callers will be only too happy to provide this information and to wait outside the property until it is verified. No caller should be given access to the property until the householder is sure they are genuine
- Never leave doors unlocked and do not to leave keys in an unsafe place (such as under doormats or flowerpots)
- Follow this advice when answering the door:
 - Before answering the front door, make sure the back door is locked.
 - If there is a door chain, remember to use it before opening the door.
 - Ask the caller for their identification and check it carefully.
 - Ask them to wait outside and close the door - genuine callers will not mind.
 - Ring Quick Check on 101. The call will be answered personally and promptly by a trained police call handler. They will check with the company that the person at the door is genuine. If they are not or they think that there is something suspicious, the operator will be able send the police to you.
 - Do not let anyone into the property until you are satisfied as to who they are

Calls to the Quick Check 101 number from landlines or mobile phones* cost 15 pence, regardless of the length of time you are on the phone or the time of the day you call.

* Members of the public should dial 028 9065 0222 if they are unable to dial 101.

** Some mobile providers or contracts do not permit you to dial 101 - please check with your provider.

Advice about Scams

TV LICENSING

'Phishing', 'smishing' and 'vishing' are the three main types of scams criminals will use to try to gain access to your personal details. They can then use these details to sign in to your online accounts, steal information and potentially take your money.

'Phishing' is any activity designed to trick you into giving out your personal details such as usernames, passwords and bank details - this is normally done by email.

'Smishing' is any activity designed to trick you into giving out your personal details such as usernames, passwords and bank details - this is normally done by text message.

'Vishing' is done over the phone when criminals impersonate a person or business and try to get you to provide your personal details.

Anyone can be the target of a scam. Sometimes, it can be hard to tell the difference between a con and a genuine offer. To help stop the scammers, if you receive any suspicious communications, you should:

- STOP** Scammers will attempt to trick you into giving away your personal information or bank details. Always be wary of letters, emails, texts or phone calls that promise you money or a refund.
- CHECK** Has the sender spelled your name correctly and are there any grammatical mistakes?
- ASK** If you're ever unsure about a communication you've received, it's always best to ask someone, perhaps a friend or trusted advisor.

If you suspect you have received a phone call - Hang Up - you can always contact the company directly to check if anything is wrong or speak with someone who can help. If you suspect it's a scam, do anything to get away from the scammers, such as:

- Hang Up and block the number
- Delete and block emails
- Stop all texting
- Block their number
- Tell someone you trust

Remember - You can Report a Scam - For further information about scams and how to report them, please visit: <https://www.fca.org.uk/consumers/report-scam>

Scam



Stop.

Check.

Ask.

Home Adaptations

Do you have a current impairment which restricts you from easily accessing your property or which prevents you from managing sufficiently within your home?

Association staff are available to carryout a quick assessment with you to identify if minor adaptations can be incorporated into your property, to make life easier for you.

We can also assist in referring you for an Occupational Therapist assessment, if major works to your home are required.

For further advice and information, please contact a member of staff on 02890 744055.



Need a Repair?

Contact details

If you require a repair, when contacting the Association, please provide us with your correct contact details. Also when our contractors are due to call with you, please ensure you have made adequate arrangement for them to gain access. If you request a repair and you then fail to provide access, you will be requested to repay the Association the associated callout charge.

Boiler Service

The Association is still conducting our annual programme of cyclical gas servicing to all our properties. We appreciate all your assistance in facilitating access to our contractors. If anyone has not had their gas boiler serviced within the last 12 months or is aware that an engineer has recently called with them and failed to gain access (i.e. they have left a calling card with you), can they please contact the Association immediately?



How to make a Complaint?

Are you dissatisfied with the service we provide?

If so, please contact us immediately. Information on how to make a complaint is provided within your Tenants Handbook. Complaint Forms can be provided to you, by contacting or calling into our office.

We welcome your feedback and views, and strive to put things right when they go wrong. Staff are available to assist you with this simple process and to ensure a satisfactory resolution is found. **Just call us on 028 90 744055.**

If we cannot resolve your complaint immediately, we will forward you a complaints form or take your complaint over the phone.

Your complaint will be acknowledged and investigated. Our team aim is to treat all complaints as opportunities to improve our services to tenants, so please contact us when you need to.



Tenancy Fraud and Subletting of NHA properties

Newington H.A. is committed to tackling tenancy fraud to ensure our properties are used to their full potential by those designated to reside within them.

Addressing tenancy fraud can only be achieved with the support of our tenants and the information we receive. If you suspect that someone is committing tenancy fraud or subletting their home to someone else, please contact us immediately.

Tenancy Fraud has a major impact on all those currently awaiting a new home. To report any suspected Tenancy Fraud, please contact our Housing Team on **028 90 744055.**