



Repairs and Maintenance Handbook

A guide to your repair service

Thank you for choosing North West Leicestershire District Council as your home provider.

This booklet provides useful information about maintaining your home and what information you will need to provide when reporting a repair. Please be ready to supply this information so that we can obtain an accurate repair description.

Covid 19

As a repairs department we have had to vary the services we have provided during the pandemic due to restrictions in place. We are trying our very best to deliver the usual standards you have come to expect from us but as you can appreciate, things are taking a little longer and we are grateful for your continued support during the pandemic.

We offer interpretation and translations of our documents, as well as making documents available in large print, Braille, on audio cassette or computer disk. We can also provide information in languages other than English. [More about interpretation and translation.](#)

A printed copy of this handbook is available upon request.

The contact details for our approved contractors may change, for up-to-date information see our website.

PART ONE

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Reporting a repair

When reporting your repair to us, please provide:

- ▶ Your name and address
- ▶ A contact telephone number
- ▶ As much information about the problem as possible, such as:
 - What needs repairing
 - Where it is
 - What is wrong with it
 - How it happened
- ▶ Photographs can be helpful, send them to repairs@nwleicestershire.gov.uk
- ▶ Your availability for us to make a repairs appointment for you

Reporting a repair during office hours

We offer a range of methods to report repairs:

- ▶ Call our dedicated repairs helpline

01530 454635

Monday – Wednesday, Friday

9am to 5pm

Thursday *

9am to 4pm

- ▶ Email

repairs@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

- ▶ Write to

**NWLDC
PO BOX 11051
Coalville
LE67 0FW**

For more information and to check the current office opening hours:

- ▶ Visit our website www.nwleics.gov.uk

*Thursdays close at 4pm due to training

Reporting a repair outside of normal office hours

NWLDC offers an out of hours service for repairs where there is a potential to cause significant risk to the tenant or property that cannot wait until the next working day. See the list below for repairs that can be reported outside normal working hours.

- ✓ Total loss of electric power not related to your service provider or insufficient credit
- ✓ Unsafe power, lighting socket, or electrical fitting
- ✓ Total loss of water supply not relating to the service provider
- ✓ Total or partial loss of gas supply not related to your service provider or insufficient credit
- ✓ Blocked flue to open fire or boiler
- ✓ Total or partial loss of space heating or hot water between 1 November and 30 April
- ✓ Blocked or leaking foul drain, soil and vent pipe, or toilet pan where there is no other working toilet in the home and that the tenant has been unable to remove the blockage themselves. This would be a rechargeable repair unless caused by a fault
- ✓ Toilet not flushing where there is no other working toilet and it cannot be flushed manually
- ✓ Leaking water or heating pipe, tank or cistern that cannot be contained
- ✓ Insecure windows or doors, including faulty locks
- ✓ All repairs which put person or property at significant risk

Out of hours helpline

- ▶ Call **01530 833373**
- ▶ Email **centralcontrol@nwleicestershire.gov.uk**

In the case of a serious emergency

Fire - Get out, stay out and call 999

- Keep calm and act quickly
- Using your pre-planned escape route, get everyone out of the building as quickly as possible
- Seconds count so don't waste time investigating or rescuing valuables
- Before opening a door, check it first by using the back of your hand. If it's warm, don't open it!
- When moving through the home, remember to shut doors behind you to help contain the fire, where safe to do so
- If there's smoke, keep low where the air is clearer
- Get out of the building, call 999 and stay out
- Find somewhere safe and wait for the fire and rescue service - don't be tempted to go back inside

Extract from www.leics-fire.gov.uk/in-an-emergency/on-discovering-a-fire/

If you smell gas call 0800 111 999

- Do not smoke or light matches
- Do not turn electrical switches on or off
- Open doors and windows
- Turn off the meter at the control handle unless the meter is in the cellar
- Call the National Gas Emergency number (0800 111 999)

Extract from www.nationalgrid.com/uk/gas-transmission/safety-and-emergencies/emergencies-and-safety-advice

Report an underground water burst 08007 834444

Call Severn Trent on 08007 834444 or visit their website where you can check your area and report a problem www.stwater.co.uk/in-my-area/check-my-area/

Our responsibilities

We will carry out most repairs to your home, but it is your responsibility to maintain some items yourself. You are also responsible for the cost of repairs caused by damage whether intentional or accidental or as a result of negligence, recklessness or neglect. These will be recharged to the tenant in accordance with the Rechargeable Works Policy. Charges are applied in line with the National Housing Federation's Schedule of Rates and are subject to an administration fee, plus any other charges incurred by the council as a result of completing the works. Out of hours call out fees will apply if attendance is required outside of working hours.

Who is responsible for...	Us	You
Aids and adaptations installed by NWLDC, including external ramps and hard-standings	✓	
Blockages - Cost of clearing blockages from toilets, wastes, wet room gullies, external gullies and drains that are not caused by wear and tear of the drainage system or the responsibility of the Water Authority		✓
Carpets and other flooring finishes excluding the bathroom and kitchen and those in communal areas		✓
Carbon Monoxide (CO) detector testing (on a monthly basis as a minimum)		✓
Damage to NWLDC fittings or appliances caused by frost, such as outside toilets and taps		✓
Domestic appliances (unless provided by NWLDC)		✓
Electrical - All elements that NWLDC provided to supply the property with electric such as wiring, consumer unit, sockets, switches, light pendants, cooker connection point and storage heaters. This does not include fittings that have been installed by the tenant with written permission from the council	✓	
Electric fires, surrounds, hearths and solid fuel appliances supplied by NWLDC	✓	
External meter cupboards	✓	
External render and major plaster replacement that has perished or affected by damp	✓	
Extractor fans, fire alarms and CO detectors supplied by NWLDC	✓	
Fences, gates and garden walls fitted by NWLDC	✓	
Floor boards / floor panels (excluding laminate flooring) including where they are affected by woodworm	✓	
Garage - owned and leased by NWLDC	✓	
Garage - plot owned by NWLDC with tenant's own garage on the site		✓
Garden maintenance		✓
Gas cooker connection point, where applicable	✓	
Infestations - Damage caused by infestations of pests that could have been prevented by the tenant		✓
Infestations - repair work required to stop vermin entry	✓	
Internal decoration (excluding communal areas)		✓

Who is responsible for...	Us	You
Internal doors and associated ironmongery		✓
Keysafes that have been provided by NWLDC	✓	
Kitchen base units and wall cupboard adjustments		✓
Kitchen cupboards and worktops for fair wear and tear	✓	
Locks - All work required to gain access when locked out of any lock (excluding faulty locks)		✓
Loft insulation	✓	
Minor repairs and maintenance appropriate of a person acting in a tenant like manner		✓
Mould and condensation that isn't caused by a defect that is NWLDC's responsibility		✓
Obtaining and maintaining gas and electricity supplies		✓
Outbuildings - Brick built	✓	
Paths, steps or other access routes that connect the front of the property to the front door, and the front door to the back door	✓	
Power failure due to tenant's faulty electrical items, including resetting or replacing fuses		✓
Replacement of additional keys or fobs for any lock or entry system		✓
Replacement of fluorescent tubes, starters and light bulbs of any type (excluding bulbs in sealed fittings)		✓
Replacement plug and chain to any sink, bath or basin		✓
Sanitary fittings in the property, such as baths and basins, taps and toilets	✓	
Sewers which are not the responsibility of another person or body such as Severn Trent	✓	
Sheds and non-permanent structures installed by the tenant		✓
Sheltered Schemes - Appliances supplied by NWLDC in communal areas	✓	
Sheltered Schemes - Communal areas including entrance halls and stairways	✓	
Sheltered Schemes - Communal TV systems up to the main TV aerial point within each property	✓	
Sheltered Schemes - Door entry systems, lifts, fire alarms and emergency lighting	✓	
Sheltered Schemes - External decoration and internal decoration of the communal areas	✓	
Sheltered Schemes - External drying areas and appliances provided by the NWLDC for washing and drying clothes	✓	
Shower curtain replacement		✓
Skirting boards, picture rails, architrave and battens		✓
Small cracks and holes in plasterwork		✓
Smoke alarm testing (this should be done on a monthly basis as a minimum)		✓
Solid fuel tools		✓
Stairs, banisters and handrails	✓	
Structure and exterior of the building including foundations, ventilation, roofs, chimneys, soffits, fascias, external doors, windows and associated fittings, and integral garages	✓	

Who is responsible for...	Us	You
Telephone line and points after the initial installation		✓
Toilet seat replacements		✓
TV aerials and TV provided by cable or satellite dishes (excluding communal systems in sheltered schemes)		✓
Wall tiling or aqua board installed by NWLDC	✓	
Washing line concrete posts in place before the start of the tenancy	✓	
Washing lines and rotary air dryers, except those provided by NWLDC in communal areas		✓
Water and heating - Maintaining installations and associated fittings provided by NWLDC for water, space heating, and for supplying water, gas and electricity serving the property (excluding the suppliers pipework, wiring, meters or stop taps)	✓	



Home insurance

You are responsible for the decoration and contents within your home. If as a result of a repair issue, such as a leak or flooding, your decoration and/or contents are damaged, NWLDC is not responsible. If you wish to protect your contents, we advise taking out adequate home contents insurance to cover your home and belongings against accidental damage. NWLDC works in partnership with Specialist Insurance Provider to offer a low cost insurance for our tenants, which can be added to your rent account. For further information contact our Customer Services or Rent Accounting Team on 01530 454545 or ask for a Simple Household Contents Insurance Booklet from the Council Offices. **Please note:** you may use any insurance provider of your choosing and pay them directly.

Some of our improvement work may damage your decoration. If that should happen you may be entitled to an allowance to help you put this right. This will be explained to you by a member of the Home Improvement Team before the work takes place.

Repair priorities and inspections



We group repairs into one of three priorities; High Priority, Tenants Choice and Scheduled Works. This allows us to provide an appropriate response time to higher priority repairs and the flexibility to offer tenants a choice of available dates for other repairs.

The timescale we carry out a repair depends on:

- What the fault is
- Your general health and safety
- The risk of further damage being caused to the property
- The amount of inconvenience it is causing you and others in your home, where the issue cannot be avoided

We offer three time slots to suit your day:

- ▶ All day (8am – 4pm)
- ▶ Morning (8am – 1pm)
- ▶ Afternoon (12pm – 4pm)

The all day time slot offers the greatest availability and is ideal for people who will be home throughout the day, the morning and afternoon slots may be more suitable for those who have other commitments arranged. You will be offered the next availability for the option you choose. **Please note:** NWLDC Repair operatives work from 8am – 4pm Monday to Friday

High Priority (HP)

Repairs with a potential to cause significant risk to you or the property are categorised as High Priority. These are repairs covered by the Right to Repair scheme, those that may be deemed life threatening, will cause injury or impedes the tenant's welfare, is a major threat to tenant security and/or will cause more than minor damage to the property. Depending on the type, work will be completed within one to three days from the date reported. See page 11 for specific types of high priority repairs and the timeframe they will be completed within.

Some high priority repairs may require remedial work to be carried out during a separate visit following the repair of the main issue. An example of this would be boxing in the pipework after a leak has been fixed. The emergency operative may not have the specific materials or allocated time to complete the boxing-in work during the same visit, however you will be made aware of this at the time and one of the team will be in contact to arrange for the follow up work to be completed.

There are occasions that require specialist work in order to complete a permanent repair. On such occasions a make-safe will be carried out and a temporary solution will be provided until the specialist work can be completed.

High priority - 1 working day

Total loss of electric power or lighting circuits (unless caused by a power cut, tenant owned appliances or insufficient credit)

Unsafe power, lighting or electrical fittings

Mains smoke alarms that are constantly sounding

Total or partial loss of gas supply, or boiler that is not working correctly

Any gas escape within the property

Blocked flue to open fire or boiler

Total loss of water supply (unless caused by the service provider)

Leaking water from a heating pipe, tank or cistern

Total loss of heating or hot water between 1 November – 30 April (unless caused by the service provider)

Blocked toilet, sink or drain (and there is no other working toilet in the home)

Toilet not flushing (and there is no other working toilet in the home)

Insecure window, door or lock, including key safes fitted by NWLDC

Lock change requests

High priority - 3 working days

Partial loss of electric power (unless caused by a power cut or tenant owned appliances)

Partial loss of water supply (unless caused by the service provider)

Loss of the ability to bathe or shower, where it's the only source of washing

Total or partial loss of space heating or hot water between 1 May - 31 October

Toilet not flushing (and there is no other working toilet which could be used)

Tap which cannot be turned on or off

Loose or detached banister or handrail

Rotten timber flooring or stair tread

Roof leak (as a minimum we will aim to contain or minimise a leak as far as we can)*

Door entry phone not working

Mechanical extractor fan in the kitchen or bathroom not working

Please note: On occasion, repairs which are not listed above may be treated as high priority due to the specific circumstances being a risk to person or property.

* This may be followed by a more complex repair after the leak has been contained or minimised under the Tenants Choice or Scheduled Works priority.

Tenants Choice

Where a repair is not high priority but needs to be completed relatively quickly, you may choose from a range of available dates to suit your own circumstances. The timeframe to complete this type of repair will be determined by the appointment date you have selected.

Tenants Choice repairs include follow-on works from an emergency, minor plumbing leaks, defects and roof leaks where they can be contained easily by the tenant.

Scheduled Works

Scheduled Works repairs are those which fall outside of the High Priority and Tenants Choice categories. Generally, these are larger scale repairs or replacements which are sometimes grouped together to create more economic programmes of work, and may require an inspection to scope up materials to order, arrange for scaffolding or skips, and possibly involve multiple operatives.

The starting date for the work will be agreed with you within 20 working days from receiving your repair request and should be completed within no more than 60 working days.

Inspections

The majority of repairs are logged based solely on the information you give us when you report the issue. It is not always possible to fully diagnose or determine the extent of work required without carrying out an inspection. When we need to measure, scope or inspect, an inspection appointment will be agreed and booked at your convenience from the appointment slots available within 10 working days of reporting the repair. Once the work has been fully diagnosed the priority for the work will be assigned.

Specialist contractor inspections

Sometimes it may be necessary for one of our specialist contractors to carry out an inspection or survey, usually for more complex issues such as structural repairs. It is usual for the contractor to contact you directly to arrange an appointment, however we will let you know to expect someone. They will have ID when attending the property, you should always ask to see identification. If you are not expecting someone to call or visit, please check with the repairs helpline before you allow them access to your home.

Repairs to empty homes (void properties)

When a property becomes empty, repairs are carried out to ensure the property meets the lettable standard. A copy of the lettable standard is available on our website.

Your appointment

Before we arrive please:

- ▶ Ensure that the area you want us to work within is clear and accessible, in particular the moving of furniture, clutter, contents or units, and floor coverings
- ▶ Clean down the work area and any touch points

Before our visit we will:

- ▶ Keep you updated with any changes to your appointment, due to emergencies and unforeseen circumstances we may have to reschedule
- ▶ If requested, remind you nearer the time of your agreed appointment
- ▶ Text you to let you know that we are on our way, **so it's important we have your correct contact details**

During our visit we will:

- ▶ Introduce ourselves and always show identity cards. If an ID card isn't shown to you, please ask to see it. We won't be offended and you have the right to refuse access if ID is not shown
- ▶ Explain the purpose of the visit
- ▶ Undertake a dynamic risk assessment before we start work so we can account for any potential health and safety risks to you, your visitors and the public
- ▶ Tell you how long the job should take and how this might affect you and our staff
- ▶ Keep you informed of the work progress, especially if the job cannot be completed in one visit
- ▶ Clean up and remove rubbish produced by the repair (a separate waste collection may be required after the work has been completed)
- ▶ Tell you when the work is finished and explain what has been done

After the repair we may carry out one or more of the following to ensure we are delivering high quality repairs whilst ensuring value for money:

- ▶ Carry out a customer satisfaction survey
- ▶ Check the quality of the work by completing an inspection after the works have been completed (referred to as a Post Inspection)
- ▶ Act upon your feedback, so we can continually improve our service

To provide the best possible service to our tenants, it is important that our repairs service is clearly defined and understood. Our aim is to complete our responsive repairs right first time and keep you informed during the process.

Gaining access to the property

Under the terms of your Tenancy Agreement you are required to allow NWLDC access to the property to carry out our duties as your landlord. These include but are not limited to:

- Inspecting the condition of the property throughout your tenancy
- Carrying out a pre-termination visit following a tenancy termination notice
- Carrying out repairs
- Essential upgrades
- Servicing and/or maintaining equipment within the property
- Allowing access for specialist or third-party contractors
- Facilitating any of the above to any adjoining property

Whenever possible we will provide you with at least 24 hours' notice, however there may be situations where we need to gain immediate access to the property without prior notice. This includes but is not limited to:

- Fire, flood and gas leaks
- Threat or risk of personal injury
- Threat or risk to the structure of our property
- Unsafe heating appliances and electrics
- Suspicion of any of the above

Cancellations and missed appointments by the tenant

If your circumstances change and you are no longer available for your pre-arranged time slot, contact the repairs helpline as soon as possible.

Costs associated with missed appointments negatively impact on our ability to improve and maintain homes. Where appropriate, missed appointments may result in a recharge to recover any costs incurred by the missed appointment/late cancellation in line with the Rechargeable Works Policy.

No access

If you fail to provide access for a pre-arranged appointment, a missed appointment card will be left at the property requesting you contact the team to rearrange. If contact is not made you run the risk of your repair/inspection being cancelled.

Due to the nature of high priority repairs if we cannot get in contact with you we will arrange for another appointment no sooner than 24 hours' after the missed appointment and send a letter with the new appointment details. You must provide access so that we can complete the necessary repairs work; failure to do so may result in legal proceedings. If the second appointment is not suitable you must contact us immediately.

Rechargeable repairs

All repairs caused by damage whether intentional, accidental or as a result of negligence, will be recharged to you in accordance with the Rechargeable Works Policy.

Tenants can be recharged for the following:

- ▶ Repairing any damage caused to the property, garden or communal area
- ▶ Damaged fixtures and fittings
- ▶ All associated costs incurred as a breach of Tenancy Agreement conditions
- ▶ All associated costs incurred as a result of neglecting the upkeep of a garden
- ▶ Clearance and disposal of rubbish, goods and belongings left at the property at the end of the tenancy (the cost of storing belongings at the end of your tenancy will be charged in accordance with the Tenancy Agreement)

We will inform you if a repair is rechargeable either at the time you report it or when an operative has assessed the repair. We will advise you of the cost and may request that you pay in advance, if possible.

All costs associated with the repair will be recharged, this includes an administration fee and VAT if applicable. If an out of hours call out is found to be a rechargeable repair, a call out charge will be applied to the recharge total.

Examples of rechargeable repairs are when:

- ▶ We have to carry out work because of neglect or damage to your home
- ▶ You ask us to do certain repairs which are your responsibility. Subject to us having the resources available at a mutually agreed timescale. Payment will be requested in advance to complete this type of work
- ▶ You leave your home or garden in an unacceptable condition at the end of your tenancy
- ▶ You deliberately overstate the severity of your repair in order to secure a quicker response
- ▶ There is insufficient credit on your gas or electricity pre-payment meter when we attend your property to reconnect services

If there are outstanding charges or other breaches related to the Tenancy Agreement we reserve the right to not attend to further rechargeable repairs, unless from the high priority repairs list.

Repairs service standards

NWLDC recognises the importance of providing an efficient, effective and customer focused repairs and maintenance service. We work in partnership with our service providers to ensure tenants and leaseholders receive the highest possible level of service.

We aim to:

- ▶ Keep the appointments we make with you
- ▶ Complete repairs correctly first time within the agreed timeframe
- ▶ Ensure you are satisfied with the service you receive
- ▶ Ensure the quality of the repairs we carry out are to a high standard
- ▶ Ensure all health and safety checks are completed

Code of conduct

We aim to provide a high quality service to all customers. All our service providers will work to meet the following standards:

Customer Care - we will:

- ▶ Keep noise and disruption to a minimum
- ▶ Park vehicles appropriately and not run over grass verges
- ▶ Check for any specific requirements you may have before starting work
- ▶ Protect your home by using clean dust sheets to cover furniture and floor coverings, and wear protective shoe coverings, unless impacting upon the health and safety of the operative
- ▶ Ensure all materials and equipment are safely used and stored
- ▶ Always use materials that are competitively priced, of good quality and, where possible, from local sustainable sources
- ▶ Always attempt to reconnect essential services at the end of the day or when the repair is completed e.g. water, gas, electricity
- ▶ Clear away all rubbish created from the work. In some cases a separate waste collection may be required after the work has been completed
- ▶ Remove scaffolding within one week of the full completion of work

Communication - we will:

- ▶ Always inform you if we need to alter the time or date of an appointment
- ▶ Make arrangements for alternative methods of communication when requested e.g. large print, translations
- ▶ Explain and demonstrate the use of any newly fitted appliance or product

Care of your home - we will:

- ▶ Not use your facilities without permission
- ▶ Treat your home and belongings with respect
- ▶ Ensure your home is secure while we are working in it and when we leave

Presentation and behaviour - we will:

- ▶ Be tidy and appropriately dressed
- ▶ Introduce ourselves, show our identification (ID) card and explain why we are visiting
- ▶ Always inform you when we are leaving your home and be polite, courteous and professional at all times
- ▶ Not shout or use language or behaviour that discriminates or offends
- ▶ Not smoke or vape in or around your home
- ▶ Not play audio equipment in or around your home without your permission
- ▶ Avoid involvement in any confrontational situations

Our expectations

For the safety and wellbeing of our operatives we ask for their working area to be cleared of belongings and the area cleaned before they arrive. Operatives have the right to refuse to work if the conditions are unacceptable. If you ask an operative to help you move your personal belongings, NWLDC takes no liability for any damages that may occur.

To promote good customer relations, we request that you are polite and courteous to all of our staff visiting or carrying out work to your home. NWLDC takes a zero tolerance approach to violence, aggression and discrimination towards its staff. This is to protect everyone who works for our organisation from possible harm.

Animals and children need to be kept away from the work area and the areas leading to it.

We define violence, aggression and discrimination as:

- ▶ Verbal abuse, including shouting, swearing and gestures
- ▶ Threats against our staff which occur in the workplace, including tenanted properties
- ▶ Actual physical assaults on staff
- ▶ The use of language which could be perceived as derogatory to protected characteristics, such as gender, ethnicity, religion and disability

The workplace is defined as any of our offices and all other premises where work is undertaken as part of official duties; this includes your home.

We ask that you refrain from smoking or vaping whilst our staff are visiting your home and 30 minutes before the appointment time so that any residual smoke has subsided. For the safety of our employees we reserve the right to refuse to enter a property which has lingering smoke. Operatives have the right to refuse to carry out the works if this is not adhered to and you may be charged for the aborted visit under the Rechargeable Works Policy.

We expect that you would have nothing in your home that could be harmful or dangerous for our operatives during their visit.

Planned maintenance, testing and servicing

As a landlord, NWLDC is responsible for completing a number of mandatory checks to ensure the safety of our tenants. If you refuse to allow the required access for any NWLDC contractor undertaking these mandatory landlord checks, this may result in the disconnection of your supply and potential legal proceedings.

We have a planned programme of checks, works and servicing that is repeated at regular intervals to ensure we meet health and safety standards and maintain buildings, equipment and installations to keep them in good condition.

Examples of the type of work that is undertaken:

- ▶ Gas and air source heat pump annual servicing and safety checks
- ▶ Servicing and maintenance of communal boilers and systems
- ▶ Lift servicing
- ▶ Communal fire detection equipment servicing
- ▶ Fixed wire testing
- ▶ Water testing and treatment
- ▶ Checking specialised lifting equipment such as stair lifts
- ▶ External redecoration
- ▶ Internal redecoration of communal areas and sheltered housing complexes

Heating

Air source heating

If your home has air source heating it will be checked every year. If you experience any problems:

- Within the first year of installation contact Aaron Services and the number is 01205 319236
- After the first year of installation contact Sure Maintenance on 0800 8030041

The installation date is located on a sticker on the front of the pump. If you have any queries contact the repairs team on 01530 454635.

Gas heating

If your home has a gas supply it will be checked every year. This check is intended to protect you, your family and your neighbours from any potential hazards such as carbon monoxide gas, which doesn't smell and can't be seen, but can be fatal.

We do not maintain your own appliances such as gas fires / cookers but we do make sure they are safe to use. If they are not, we will turn them off and disconnect them for you to repair or replace at your own cost.

Please reply promptly when you receive your annual gas service and safety check appointment; this check is a legal requirement. If you receive an appointment that is not convenient, please contact our dedicated contractor Sure Maintenance on 0800 8030041 to rearrange.

Make sure air vents are not blocked up if you have a gas appliance.

If anyone is regularly sleeping in a room with a gas fire please let us know so that we can review your smoke and carbon monoxide detector requirements.

Solid fuel heating

If you have solid fuel heating in your home it will be checked every year. The annual service includes a chimney sweep and safety check. We also complete another sweep 6 months later. If you receive an appointment that is not convenient, please contact our dedicated contractor Sure Maintenance on 0800 8030041 to rearrange.

Please reply promptly when you receive your annual service and safety check, and sweeping appointment; these checks are a legal requirement.

If you have any queries, contact the repairs team on 01530 454635 who will be able to advise you.

Storage heaters

If you have storage heaters in your home these are checked as part of our fixed wiring testing which is carried out every five years.

Contact the repairs team to report any issues with your storage heaters 01530 454635.

Planned improvements

Improvements are delivered through planned programmes of work set out in the annual capital upgrade programme. These programmes are based on the information collated by the stock condition survey for each property. We will inform you in writing at the start of each financial year if you are included in that year's programme.

Improvement programme examples:

- ▶ Kitchen replacement
- ▶ Bathroom / shower room replacement
- ▶ Window replacement
- ▶ External door replacement
- ▶ Roof covering, soffit and fascia and guttering replacement
- ▶ Heating and boiler replacement / installation
- ▶ Loft insulation during roof replacement works
- ▶ Fixed wiring
- ▶ Rebuilding chimneys
- ▶ Estate improvements for paving, fencing and car parking

When your home is included in a planned home improvement programme, we will:

- ▶ Contact you in advance of the work to arrange a visit for one of our home improvement team to discuss upgrading your home
- ▶ Provide you with contact details in case you have an enquiry about the work or you want to arrange a more convenient appointment
- ▶ Discuss with you what work we will be doing
- ▶ Let you know the length of time we require access to your home

When your home is included in a planned home improvement programme, you need to:

- ▶ Allow us access to your home for the agreed appointment time to ensure that you remain in the programme
- ▶ Contact us as soon as possible if the appointment is no longer suitable

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Carrying out your own improvements or alterations

If you wish to improve or alter your home, you must request permission to do so. Apart from general redecorating and repairs listed as tenant responsibility, all changes require written permission from NWLDC before work starts. Refer to the Tenants Guide to Permissions and Property Alterations for more information; this is available along with the request forms on our website www.nwleics.gov.uk/repairs or contact the repairs helpline if you would prefer a copy sent out to you. Our tenant portal is currently being developed which will also provide the option of requesting permission online.

Please note: if planning permission or building control permission is required it is your responsibility to acquire this.

We will:

- ▶ Check that the proposed work meets the required standard
- ▶ Provide details of the correct department(s) for you to explore whether you need planning permission and / or building control permission
- ▶ Aim to respond to your request within 10 working days

Depending on the type of work there may be a requirement to carry out inspections at various stages; you will be notified if this is required.

After the work is completed, we may visit to check everything has been completed to a satisfactory standard. If it hasn't we will ask you to put the work right, or in some cases return the property to how it was before.

All costs associated with repairing or making good any tenant alterations that have not been completed to an acceptable standard will be recharged to the tenant.

If installed correctly and to an acceptable standard, we may agree to take on the responsibility of future repairs and maintenance for some tenant own improvements, such as installing an outside tap. For most tenant own improvements however, the responsibility for future repairs and maintenance will be the tenant's.

Please remember - with any gas or electrical installation, you MUST provide valid certification to show the works comply with current regulations.

Asbestos

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral that was extensively used in a range of building materials before 1999. Asbestos that is in good condition does not pose a problem to people's health. Damaging materials which contain asbestos by sanding, drilling, sawing or scrubbing them can release asbestos fibres into the air which could be harmful to yours and others health.

The use of Asbestos was banned in 1999 but may still have been used on unknown occasions. If your home was built or refurbished before this period the chances are it may contain asbestos in the following materials, but is not limited to:

- Airbricks and flue pipes
- Decorative textured coating (such as Artex)
- Bath panels and bathroom boxing
- Black toilet cisterns
- Corrugated cement sheeting on sheds and garages
- Ceiling tiles
- Fuse boards and storage heaters
- Fire door panels and panels behind fires or heaters and fire surrounds
- Floor tiles
- Guttering, downpipes and soil pipes
- Insulating materials on boilers, pipes, and water tanks
- Internal partitions and airing cupboard linings
- Linings for airing cupboards and stairways
- Partition walls
- Sealants and putty
- Soffit and fascia boards and roof sheets and tiles
- Water tanks

How we manage asbestos in our properties

We have previously undertaken surveys to identify and inspect places where asbestos may have been used in our properties. If these materials are found to be in good condition, we may have left them in place. Therefore, it is essential to ask for permission to complete any property alterations so we can check if asbestos is a consideration to your improvement and advise you accordingly. By not doing so it is a breach of your tenancy agreement.

If part of the work requires asbestos removal, we will arrange for this to be completed by our approved asbestos contractor. Depending on the improvement you are wanting to make the cost of the removal may be covered by the council. If the cost is not going to be covered, you will be informed as part of the property alterations and permissions process. If you carry out any work or permit others to carry out work without our prior written approval, you will be liable for any costs of dealing with any asbestos incidents.

If you have any concerns, please contact the repairs helpline.

Compliments, comments and complaints

We welcome your feedback - it is your opportunity to say what was good and what could be improved upon following a service you receive.

The complaints, comments and compliments we receive help us to:

- ▶ Develop and improve our services
- ▶ Put things right when they have gone wrong
- ▶ Identify trends to improve our service

We are committed to providing high quality services and, although we do our best to make sure that these are delivered to a high standard, occasionally things can go wrong.

By giving feedback, whether good or bad, you help shape our services for now and in the future.

For more information visit the council website:

www.nwleics.gov.uk/feedback

or write to us:

**NWLDC,
PO BOX 11051,
Coalville,
LE67 0FW**

or call:

Repairs helpline **01530 454635**

We offer interpretation and translations of our documents, as well as making documents available in large print, Braille, on audio cassette or computer disk. We can also provide information in languages other than English.

For more help and advice in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion please contact us:

equality@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

Or call us on **01530 454545**

Compensation

You may be eligible for compensation if there has been a failure in the delivery of housing services which has resulted in inconvenience to you. Compensation is considered to be a remedy for inconvenience or distress caused by a service failure; claims are considered on a case-by-case basis.

Compensation payments will be considered where:

- There has been a failure in standards of service delivery
- NWLDC has failed in its repairing obligations as a landlord or has failed to meet a repairs deadline - see the repairs priorities section page 10
- There has been a loss or damage to persons, or personal property where liability is not in dispute
- A complaint has been investigated under the full complaints procedure and there has been a compensation ruling

Compensation relating to the repairs service that may become due includes:

- A missed appointment, without prior notice, by council staff or one of its contractors
- Use of electricity required to dry out a property where there has been water damage, where the tenant is not responsible
- Not completing a repair within the specified timescale
- Loss of heating or hot water not rectified within the specified timescale

Compensation will only be paid if requested by the tenant and the failure is the fault of the repairs service e.g. something the council has or has not done with regards to its obligations as a landlord. NWLDC will not pay compensation if we are unable to achieve our standards due to circumstances beyond our control.

For more information visit the council website:

www.nwleics.gov.uk/housing_compensation

Customer Services: 01530 454545

PART TWO

Looking after your home

Click on the title to jump to the information you're looking for

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Useful information

As part of your tenancy agreement you are responsible for minor repairs and maintenance of your home. This guide provides you with some helpful information on what you can do to maintain your home and prevent future repairs or possible recharges.

Getting to know your home - use this page to record helpful information about your home

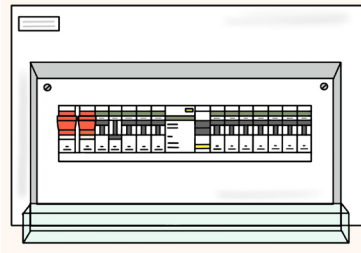


Stop taps / Surestops should be accessible, usually in one of the kitchen cupboards. If yours is not accessible, report this to the helpline.

Test it periodically.

Where is your Surestop / stoptap:

Surestops look like big light switches and work in the same way, they will be ON or OFF. Surestops are replacing older styles of stop taps.



Need to turn off your electricity supply, or reset your circuit breakers?

Where is your consumer unit:



If you have gas, do you know how to turn your gas off?

Where to turn off your gas:



Test your smoke alarm regularly and think about what your emergency plan would be if you needed to evacuate your home

Where are your smoke alarms:

It's important to know this information so you can protect yourself and the property in the event of an emergency. If you are unsure about any of these please ring our repairs helpline who will be happy to assist.

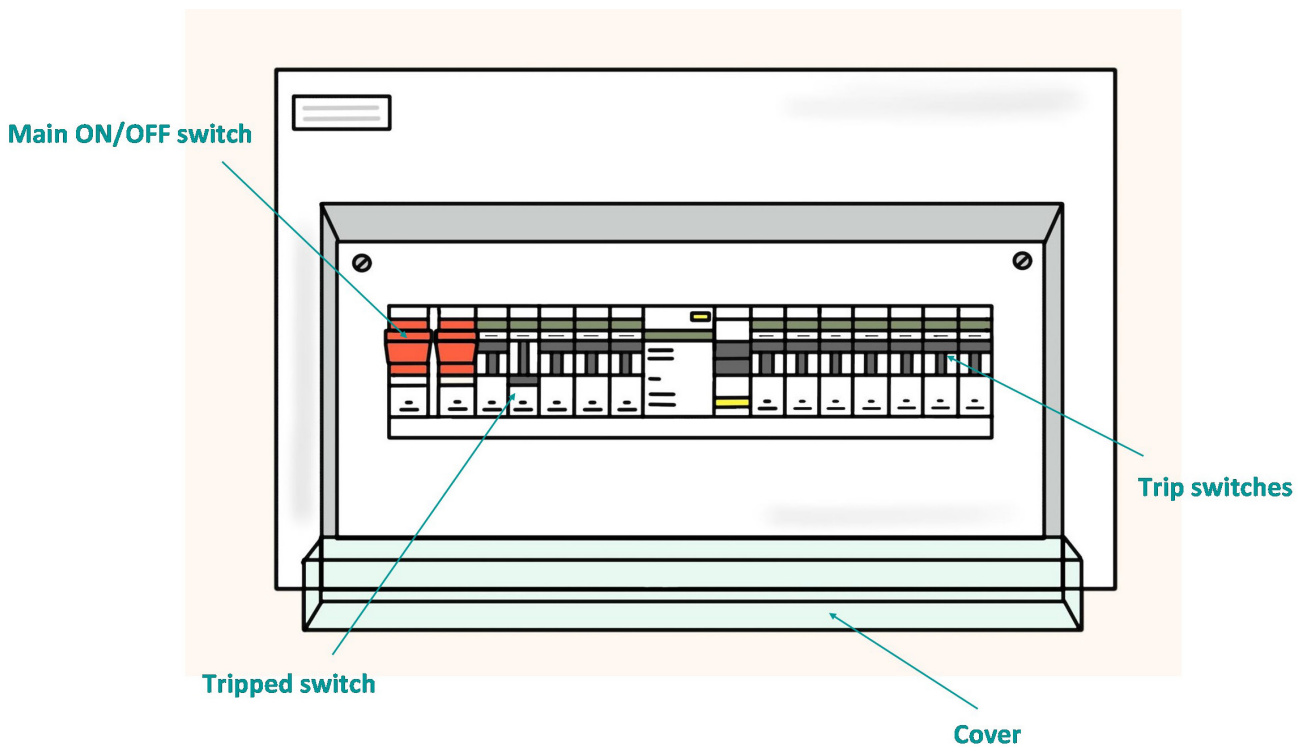
Electrical

Loss of electric light or power

- ▶ Have you checked your consumer unit?

Modern electric circuits are fitted with a circuit breaker fuse system; if a fault develops, a switch is tripped and the circuit is broken. This means either it has tripped just one circuit to the off position or it has tripped the main switch for all the electrics.

What happened just before the switch tripped? Had you plugged something in? Did you turn anything on such as a light? Often things trip at the point they are being used; typically appliances with high loads such as kettles and straightening irons. Appliances and extension leads should not be plugged back in if they are tripping the circuit.



When a switch has tripped

Open the flap on the consumer unit to reveal the trip switches. Check which switches have tripped to the OFF position. Leave the appliance, light or extension lead that caused the trip off. Turn the switch back on unless there is evidence of burning or scorching.

What happens if it trips again?

Most callouts we receive are because of faulty appliances and extension leads. These are your responsibility, so it's important to check all the appliances or extension leads that are causing the problem before calling the repairs helpline.*

Depending on which switch has tripped (e.g. ground floor power) turn off all appliances that are linked to that circuit, turn the breaker back on, then turn the appliances on one by one until you know which one is causing the issue.

If it is a case of overloading you may not know this until you try to use more than one appliance at the same time. Understanding which sockets and appliances are linked to which circuit should help you work out what the problem might be.

Things that might cause a switch to trip...

- ▶ Light bulbs blowing
- ▶ Overloaded circuit – too many things plugged in on one circuit.
- ▶ Faulty extension leads or appliances
- ▶ Too many appliances being used at the same time
- ▶ A fault on the circuit

If you are still unable to restore your electrics or have any concerns, contact the helpline. Please note you may use the out of hours service to report your electrical fault. However, an operative will only be sent during this time for unsafe electrics where it is not appropriate to leave the breaker off and is unsafe such as evidence of burning, exposed wiring etc.

If it is a total loss of power check if your neighbours also affected; could it be a power cut?

*The tenant is responsible for all costs associated with resetting trip switches, where a faulty appliance not owned by the council is cause.

There are many switches and sockets in your home; this section covers the most typical items.

Electrical fitting is smoking or you can smell burning from your sockets or switches

If safe to do so, turn off the socket or switch and turn off the trip switch for that socket or switch.

Tell us:

- ▶ Where is it?
- ▶ Is it lighting, power sockets and/or fuse spur?
- ▶ Is more than one fitting affected?
- ▶ If it's lighting, what type fitting of is it? E.g. a light pendant with a standard bulb, a sealed bathroom light, a fluorescent kitchen tube light or LED (fluorescent light fittings will be replaced with LED)

If you keep having to reset a trip switch, contact the office for advice.

Light circuit has failed

- ▶ How many lights are affected?
- ▶ Location of the effected lights?
- ▶ If it's only one or two, have you checked / changed the bulb or fluorescent starter?
- ▶ Are your power sockets working?
- ▶ Have you checked that a breaker has not tripped?

Power sockets not working

- ▶ How many sockets are affected?
- ▶ Location of the effected sockets?
- ▶ If it is only one, have you tried plugging in another working appliance to check it's not the appliance?
- ▶ Have you checked that a breaker has not tripped in your consumer unit?
- ▶ Do your lights work?

Extractor fan not working

- ▶ Where is the fan, bathroom or kitchen and on which floor?
- ▶ Can you see the make of the fan?
- ▶ What about the fan is not working? Does it run on trickle but not on boost, is it stuck on boost, is it not working at all etc.

Smoke / heat / CO alarms not working

- ▶ Is it a 9v battery model? Have you changed the battery? 9v models are being phased out
- ▶ Where is the smoke detector?

Remember to test your smoke and CO alarms at least once a month to ensure that they are working properly, including checking and replacing the battery, where applicable.

If you are concerned about replacing batteries in your smoke/heat/CO alarms you can contact the repairs helpline and request for a rechargeable repair service. See the Rechargeable Works Policy for further details.

Fixtures and fittings

Where an outgoing tenant has left non-standard fixtures or fittings that are in a reasonable state of repair and are of benefit to the incoming tenant we will maintain them whilst it is economical to do so. Your Housing Officer will have agreed these items with you before the tenancy starts and these items will be recorded in your tenancy file.

At the point that the fixture or fitting is no longer economical to repair, it will be removed and any resulting work completed to make good. At any time during the life of any such fixtures or fittings you may apply for permission to take on responsibility of the item and maintain or replace at your own expense. Permission to do so will not be unreasonably withheld.

Standard fittings



Single socket



Double socket



Fuse spur



Cooker switch with neon



Cooker switch and socket with neon



Pull cord switch with neon



Lamp batten holder



Pendant light fitting



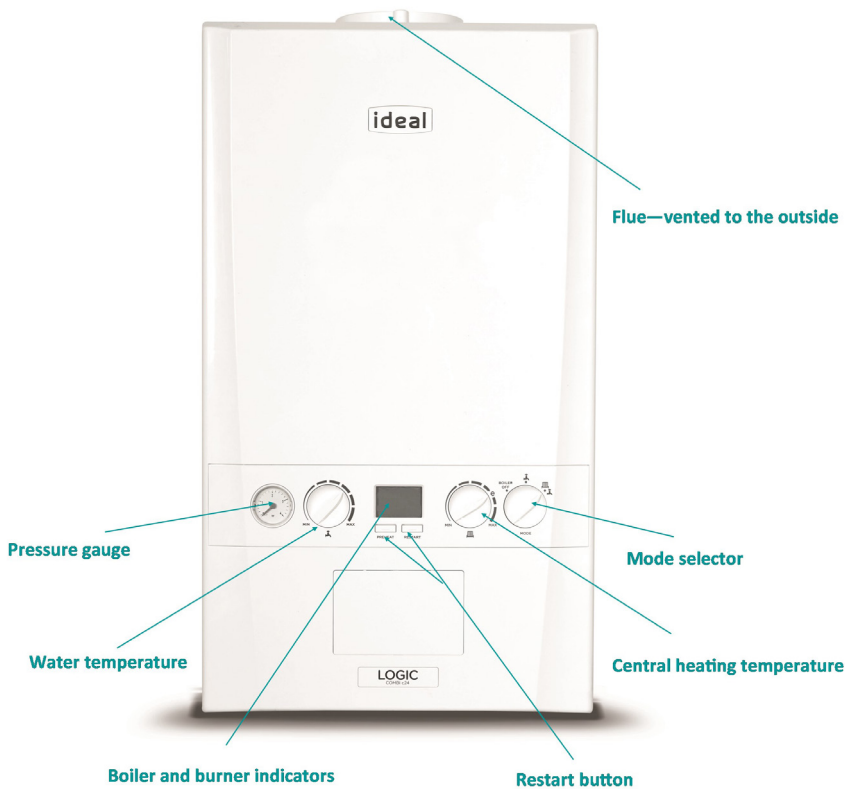
Pull cord switch

Heating and hot water

Total loss of heating

For combi and conventional boiler systems

- ▶ Check that you have power to the boiler. If not check if your consumer unit has tripped. Do you have power to the rest of the house?
- ▶ Check that you have gas by turning on another gas appliance on such as the cooker
- ▶ If you are on a card / key meter, do you have credit?
- ▶ What bar pressure is your boiler on?



Boiler thermostat

Your boiler and thermostat may be different models to those shown in the diagrams. Always refer to the user manual for your model for specific information about your boiler and thermostat.

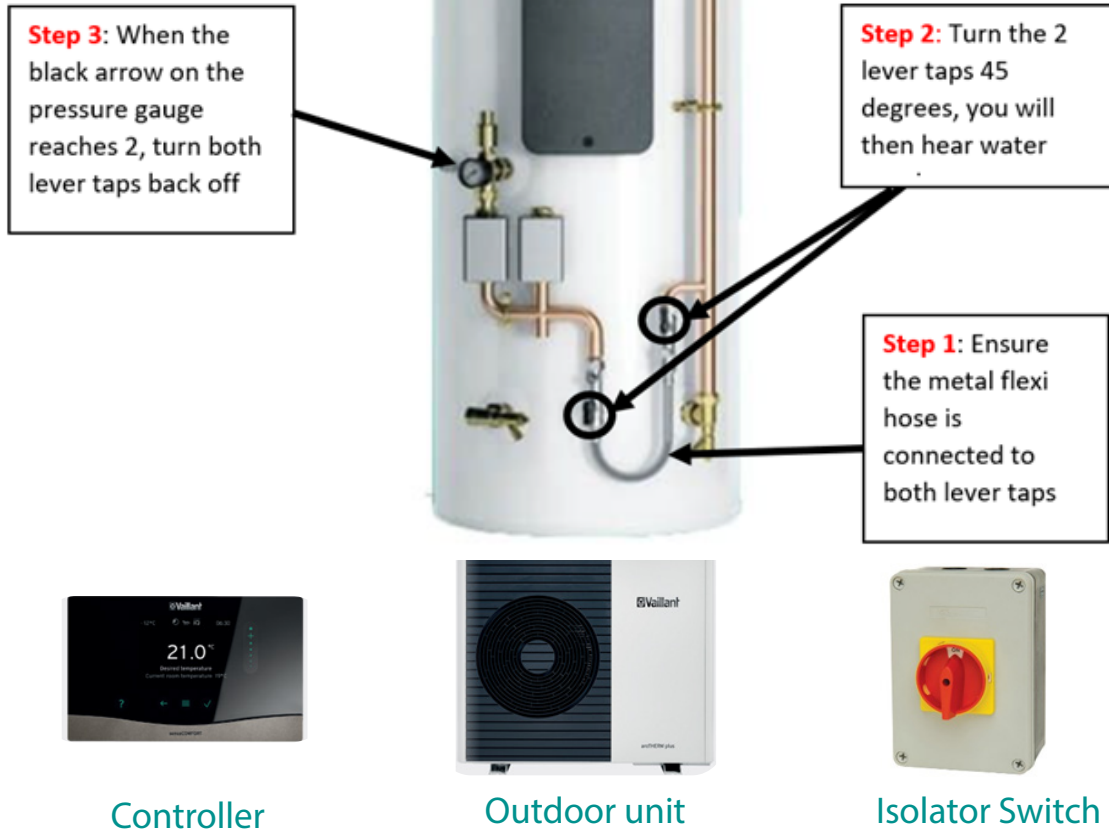
If the bar pressure is lower than 0.4 the boiler will automatically shut down and go into fail safe mode. You will need to re-pressurise the system; refer to the instruction book for your specific boiler. These are available online. If you are having to do this frequently, contact Sure Maintenance to arrange for a visit.

If the bar pressure is around 3, this will eject the additional water and put the boiler into fail safe mode. The system will need re-pressurising. It is important that you don't over pressurise the boiler, no more than one bar pressure. If the pressure is constantly dropping, going high or still not working, contact the repairs helpline or our appointed contractor directly to report the problem. Let them know if this is your only source of heating.

For air source heat pump systems

- ▶ Check that you have power to the outside unit and the switch is in the ON position. If not check if your consumer unit has tripped. Do you have power to the rest of the house?
- ▶ If you are on a card / key meter, do you have credit?
- ▶ Is the bar pressure low? refer to diagram below
- ▶ Is there a fault code showing? Refer to the instructions booklet for more details.

How to repressurize your hot water cylinder



In the event that you have checked the points above and the system still fails to operate normally, you can manually reset the system by turning off the power, waiting 60 seconds, then turning it back on. This can be done using the Isolator switch located above or by the side of your outdoor unit.

If following a system reset, you are still unable to resolve the issue, please contact our repairs helpline or our appointed contractor directly. Let them know if this is your only source of heating / hot water.

For solid fuel systems

You will have an immersion heater to provide hot water, mostly used in the summer months when you may not be lighting a fire to supply the heating.

- ▶ Is there power to the switch next to the immersion heater? (usually identified by a red light)
- ▶ Is the programmer on and set to a high enough temperature to prompt the heating. The room temperature must be lower than the programmed temperature for the radiators to come on
- ▶ Is the pump activating? These are usually located next to the back boiler or inside the airing cupboard, you should be able to hear the pump when it is running.

Radiators

For conventional /combi boilers, air source heat pumps, and solid fuel systems

- ▶ Check the radiator valve, is it turned on?
- ▶ Is the programmer on and set to a high enough temperature to prompt for heating? The room temperature must be lower than the programmed temperature for the radiators to turn on
- ▶ How many radiators are affected?
- ▶ Are the radiators warm at the top and bottom?
- ▶ Do you have hot water?



Storage heaters

- ▶ Is it all of your storage heaters? If not which ones?
- ▶ Check the consumer unit to see if a switch has tripped
- ▶ Make sure the controls are set correctly; please refer to your instruction book, these are also available online
- ▶ Is the make and model number visible? If so, inform the helpline at the time of booking the repair

See page 19 for information on who to contact if you experience heating problems

NWLDC Repairs Team - Blue lines

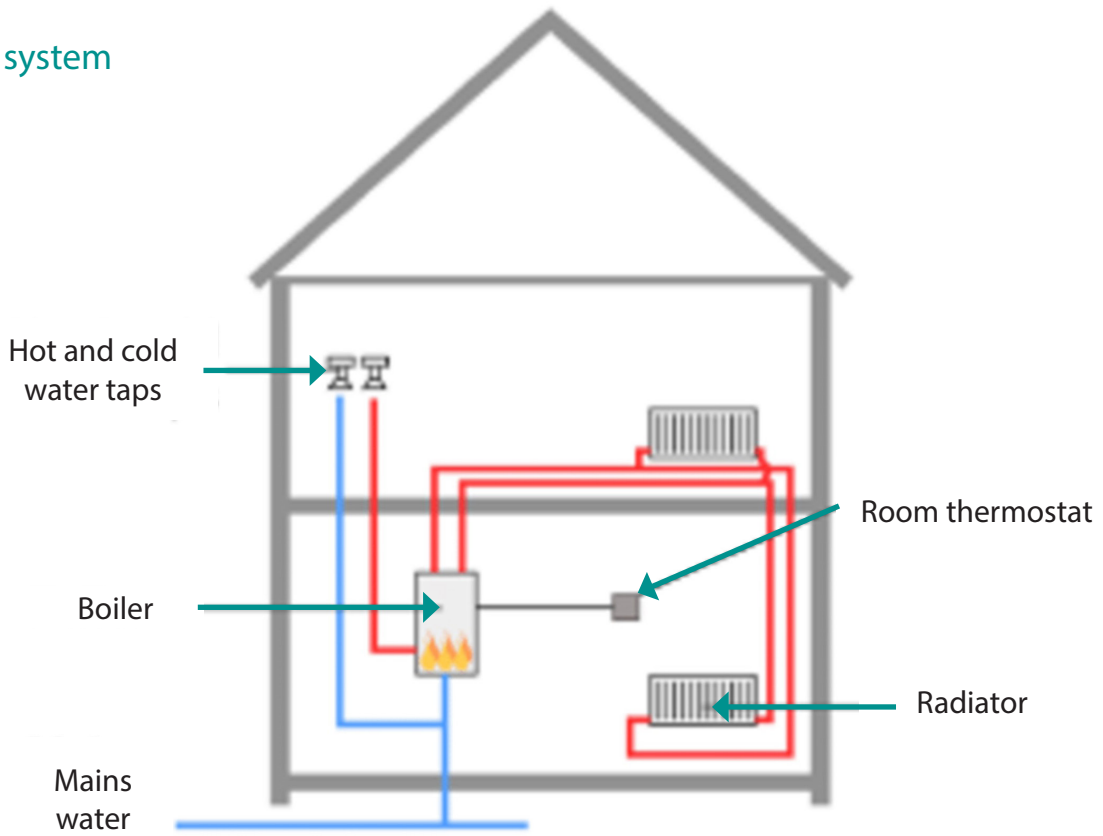
- Repairs / maintenance to domestic hot and cold water system, including the cold water storage tank and cylinder
- Immersion heater
- Repairs / maintenance to all bathroom suites, WCs, waste pipes, kitchen sinks, taps and cold main pipe work
- Repairs / maintenance to all plumbing in bathrooms and kitchens, WCs, waste pipes, kitchen sinks, taps and cold main pipe work
- Repairs to communal central heating systems.

Approved contractor - Red lines

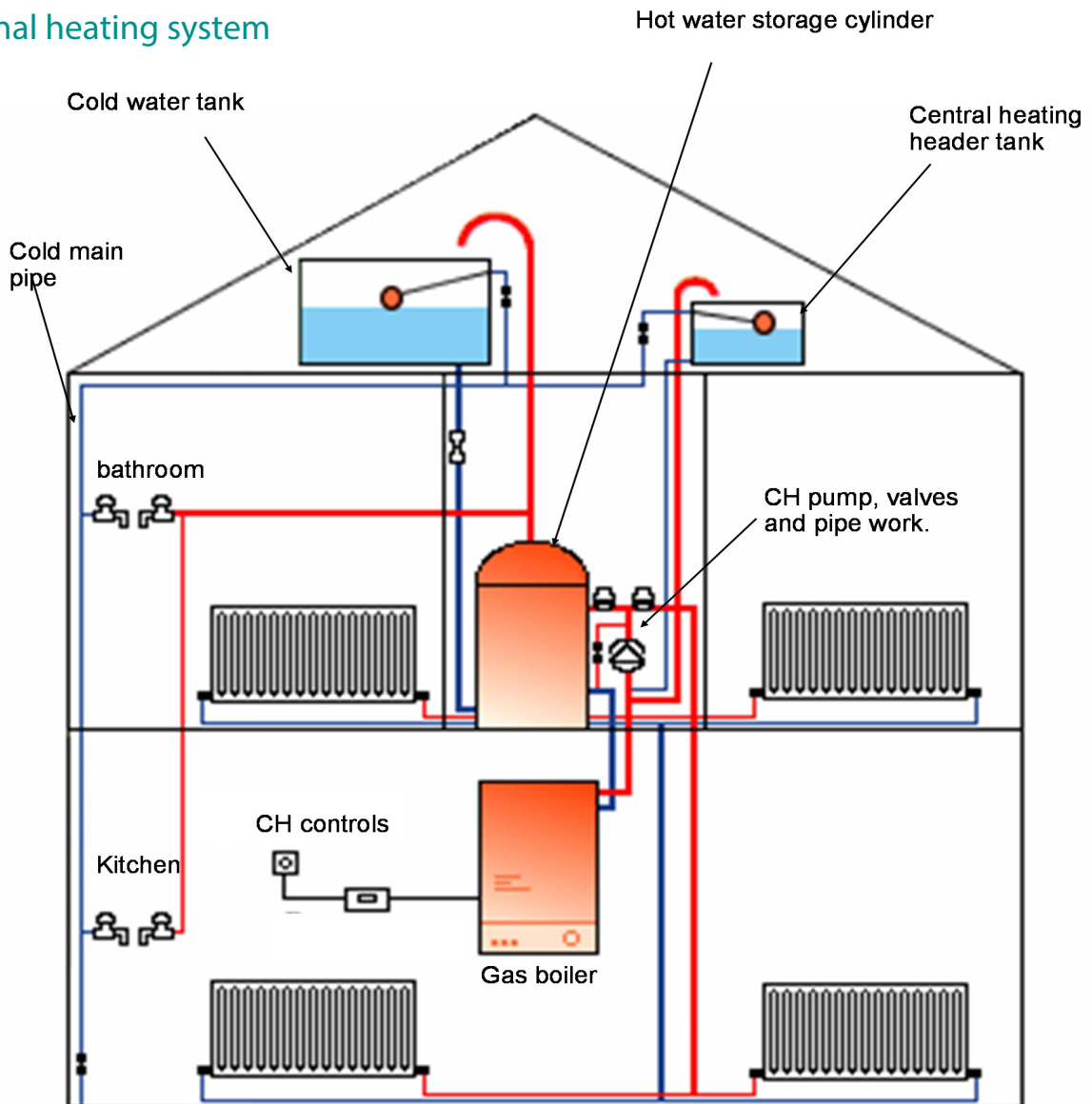
- Landlord gas safety check to all gas fired NWLDC owned homes, including gas communal boilers
- Service, repair and maintenance of all gas appliances, including CO monitors
- Inspection of all associated flues
- Repairs and maintenance to heating systems, including CH pipe work, radiators, controls, valves, thermostats, cylinder and pipe work within 600mm of cylinder, pump and expansion tank
- CH breakdowns during the day and out of hours.

Typical heating systems

Combi boiler system



Conventional heating system



No hot water

- ▶ What heats the water? Gas, electric, air source heat pump or solid fuel?

For gas – check heating controls are set correctly. The water temperature is controlled by your boiler, refer to the instruction booklet for your model of boiler. Is the room heating still working?

For electric – are other electric appliances still working? Do you have a hot water cylinder? Is the thermostat on the cylinder set between 55°C - 60°C

For air source heat pump – check heating controls are set correctly. The water temperature is controlled by your boiler, refer to the instruction booklet for your model of boiler. Is the room heating still working?

For solid fuel – check there is power to the switch next to the immersion heater, usually identified by a red light. Do you have a hot water cylinder? Is the thermostat on the cylinder set between 55°C - 60°C

Also, refer to the Other Useful Information section on Legionella, found at the back of this handbook.

Insurance

You are responsible for the contents in your property. If you wish to protect your contents, we advise taking out adequate home contents insurance to cover your home and belongings against accidental damage. NWLDC work in partnership with Specialist Insurance Provide to offer a low cost insurance for our tenants, which can be added to your rent account. Further information can be found on page 9.

Leaks

Stopping a leak that is part of the heating system

If you have a leak on any part of the heating system you need to turn the boiler off.

The pipes that are connected to your heating system are classed as a sealed system. This means that the water in the system is supplied via a connection into the boiler before it goes into the radiators. Often these leaks are slow and you will have time to put something under the part that is leaking to absorb the water or contain it, before you close the water supply valve to the boiler off.

Non-combi boilers – You will also need to close the water supply valve off that feeds the boiler. If you are unable to turn off the valve, contain the water in something that you can keep emptying once full.

If you are in doubt about whether you have a combi boiler or not, turn off the water supply valve.

Radiator leak

- ▶ Where is the leak coming from? A valve that connects to the pipe, a valve that connects to the radiator, the radiator itself or the pipe work?
- ▶ If it is not the pipework or the section that is attached to the pipework, turning the radiator valve to OFF may stop the leak whilst you wait for an engineer to attend
- ▶ Try to contain the leak in a bowl or baking tray or something similar and empty as required.



Thermostatic valve



Manual valve

Stopping a leak that is not part of the heating system

The first thing you need to do is switch off the main stop tap / Surestop. This stops the water supply and prevents any more water from entering the property. These are usually located in the kitchen where the water main comes into the property.

Stop tap



Surestop



Gate valve



There will still be water in the pipes that may need to be emptied / contained. At the source of the leak place a bowl or tray underneath as well as something to absorb the water such as a towel.

Isolation valve

Next look for an isolation valve on the same pipe as the leak, find the one that is before the part that is leaking. Using a screwdriver, turn the valve to the off position as shown in the picture. This will turn off the supply of water to the section that is leaking.

Now you can turn your stop tap / Surestop back on. This means you don't lose all of your water supply and will still be able to use other parts of the system. You should then call the helpline to report the repair.

Isolation valve ON



Isolation valve OFF



Warning - If any electric fittings get wet do not touch them, turn off your electric supply at the consumer unit by turning the relevant switch to OFF. If you are unsure, turn off the main switch.

Plumbing problems

Clearing a blocked toilet

Remove most of the water from the toilet pan into a suitable container such as a bucket. Push a plunger to the bottom of the pan and pump up and down vigorously about 10 times. This creates a vacuum and pressure which may shift the blockage. If you do not have a plunger you can try your toilet brush.



Do not use plungers or toilet brushes with a metal disk, these may chip or crack the toilet bowl.

Check if the blockage has gone by flushing the toilet, it is important that you removed the water first or the toilet may overflow. Ideally place towels around the base of the toilet to absorb any excess water.

You may need to repeat the process several times before the toilet flushes normally again.

Toilet misuse

A very small percentage of blockages are caused due to problems with the pipework, most blockages end up as rechargeable repairs as they are caused by putting unsuitable items down the toilet. Nappies, wet wipes, sanitary towels and toilet air fresheners are just a few examples of non-flushable items. If we attend and it does not relate to a genuine repair, you will be recharged for clearing the blockage.

Clearing a blocked waste pipe – sinks, baths, showers or wet room gullies

It is your responsibility to clear waste pipe blockages. Remove as much water as possible into a suitable container like a bucket. If it's the bath, you may need to empty the water down a sink that is not blocked or pour the water down an external drain.

Hold a flannel or cloth over the overflow opening and place a plunger over the drain hole, pump the plunger up and down rapidly. This may need to be repeated.

If you are unable to clear it with a plunger, it is likely that the waste trap is blocked solid. Place a bowl or tray under the trap, unscrew the trap, clean it thoroughly and replace the trap. Check to make sure that it is securely fitted and not leaking.

Bottle trap



P trap



S trap



Trap and washing machine connector



How to avoid costly repairs

Fibrous materials

Wet wipes and nappies are the number one cause of blockages; they are not flushable and can cause serious damage to pipework and drains. Cotton wool balls and feminine hygiene products must not be put down the toilet. There are some types of wet wipes which are flushable; always double check the packaging and if in doubt, don't flush it!

For tips and how to look after pipes and drains go to:

www.stwater.co.uk/my-supply/waste-water/looking-after-your-sewers/avoiding-blockages/

Grease from fats and oils

Grease from fats and oils may be liquid when entering a drain, but as soon as it gets cold it rapidly congeals and becomes a sticky solid mass that clings to pipe walls and attracts further waste to it.

Use a fat trap (a lined, disposable container) to pour waste oils and fats into or even an old coffee jar, keep it under the sink that way it's always available and can be disposed of when its full.

Every few weeks put a handful of baking soda down the drain followed by lots of hot (but not boiling) water. This helps to dissolve and loosen any fats that may have started to build up.

Food waste

Ensure you are scraping your plates clean before putting them in the sink. Use a mesh plug hole screen to trap larger waste particles. A cupful of white vinegar or a shop bought drain cleaner could be used every so often to help clean the drain. Always follow the manufacturers instructions.

Hair

Hair often causes blockages as it binds together. The simplest way to avoid this is to place a mesh plug hole screen over your shower and bath drains. These are relatively cheap and are available from most hardware and household stores. In wet rooms the gully filter will need cleaning out regularly.

Most blockages are avoidable but can be costly to unblock. You can use a drain cleaning fluid periodically to help stop blockages, always read the instructions before using. It is important that you play your part in keeping your home in a useable condition.

If the blockage is on a communal run this needs to be reported to Severn Trent. This can be done by phone or on their website, see page 28 for more information.

Overflow running

- ▶ Is it running continuously?
- ▶ Is the toilet float working?
- ▶ Is the cistern flushing as normal?
- ▶ Are you able to adjust the float (ball) attached to the valve below the level of the overflow pipe?

Please note - Modern close coupled toilets overflow straight into the pan. If water is constantly running into the pan, report it to the repairs helpline.

If you have a water storage tank, this also has an overflow that works in the same way as a toilet overflow.

Toilet flush not working

- ▶ Is the handle still operating correctly or does it feel loose?

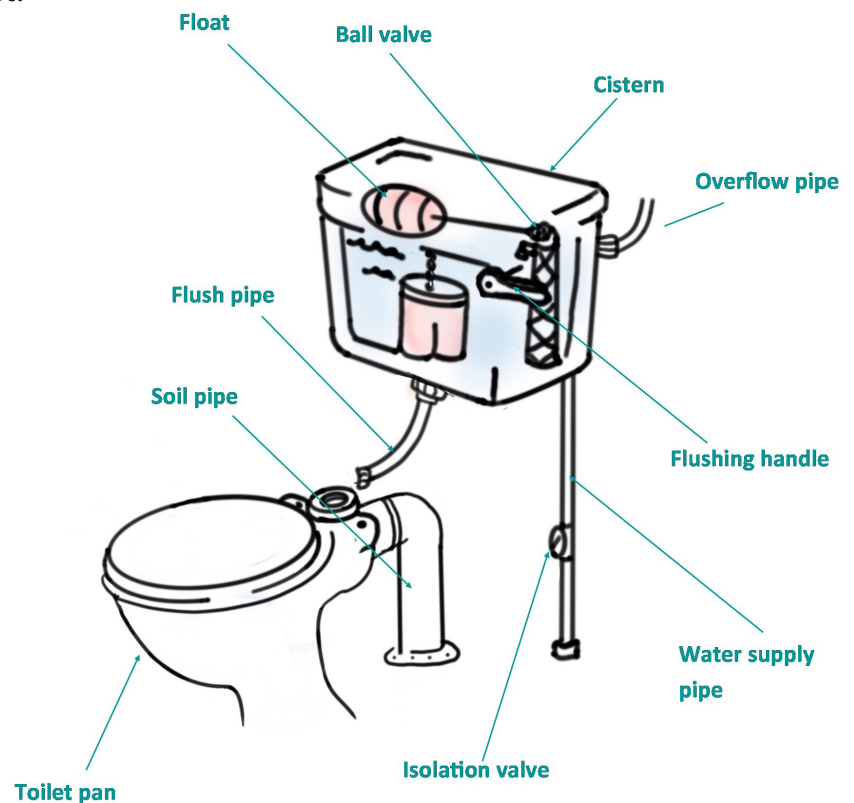
If so, as a temporary measure remove the top of the cistern and pull the rod up that is attached to the flushing handle, this will manually flush the toilet.

- ▶ Is there any water coming from the cistern into the pan?

If not, as a temporary measure fill a bucket with water and pour it quickly into the pan, this mimics the action of flushing the toilet.



Close coupled toilet



Banging pipes are usually caused by air trapped in the system.

- ▶ How often does it occur?
- ▶ What happened just before the pipe starts to bang?

Burst pipes

Turn the main water supply off. For external bursts, refer to page 27 for further actions required

No water

- ▶ Are your neighbours affected?
- ▶ Could the pipes be frozen?

Showers



- ▶ Where is the shower? Over the bath or a cubicle?
- ▶ What type of shower is it, electric or thermostatic bar?
- ▶ If it's electric, do other electrical appliances work?
- ▶ Is the make and model number visible?
- ▶ Do you have hot water in other areas of your home?
- ▶ If the shower is leaking where is it leaking from?
- ▶ Does the cubicle door close / seal correctly?
- ▶ Has the seal gone around the shower or around the bath?
- ▶ Is the shower tray watertight, if not what has caused the problem?
- ▶ For wet rooms, is the flooring watertight, is it still sealed?

Replacement shower curtains are tenant's responsibility. If you have a shower over the bath you must ensure that a shower curtain is used every time. Damage caused by leaks from not using a suitable screen or curtain to contain the water are rechargeable.

Please note: Domestic wet rooms are not designed to have water sprayed outside of the shower area and must be used with a curtain or leaks will occur. This would be considered a rechargeable repair.

Bathroom and kitchen sundries

Loose sanitary items

- ▶ What has caused it to become loose?
- ▶ Are you able to tighten it? If not why not?

Plugs and chains

NWLDC will ensure that every sink has a plug and chain before you move in; subsequent plugs and chains are your responsibility.

Sealant

- ▶ Which area has the sealant come away from? Bath, shower, basin, sink, worktop etc.
- ▶ What is the length of the affected area?

Loose, broken or damaged tiling

- ▶ Which room are they in?
- ▶ Are they floor or wall tiles?
- ▶ How many tiles are affected? Or how many rows?
- ▶ What colour and size are they?
- ▶ What caused the tiles to be loose, broken or damaged?

Taps

- ▶ Which tap is affected? Sink, basin, bath etc.
- ▶ What type of tap is it? Mixer, pillar etc.
- ▶ Does the tap work? If not, what is wrong with it?
- ▶ Is the tap dripping?

If the water escaping cannot be contained in the basin this will be escalated.



Pillar tap



Mixer tap



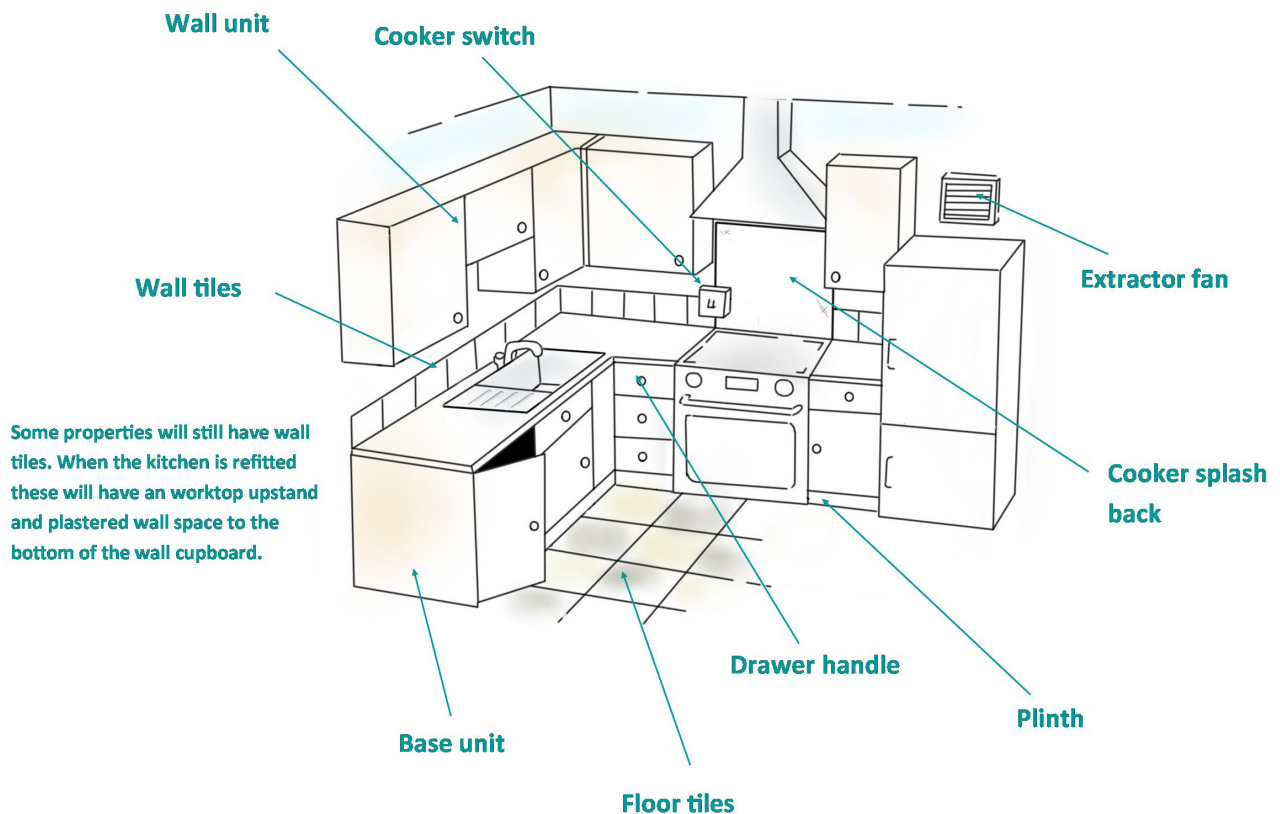
Bath and basin taps

Toilet seats

NWLDC will ensure that every toilet has a new seat before you move in; subsequent toilet seats are your responsibility. Due to the nature of how a toilet is used, it will need tightening on a regular basis.

Adjustments

Tenants are responsible for carrying out small repairs and adjustments, such as kitchen cupboard hinge and drawer adjustments. If repairs are required as a result of not carrying out these adjustments, the associated repairs costs are rechargeable. We are responsible for repairing any defects relating to wear and tear only. Cupboards are not to be removed to fit larger appliances in without written permission from us.



Stairs, handrails, internal doors and woodwork

Stairs

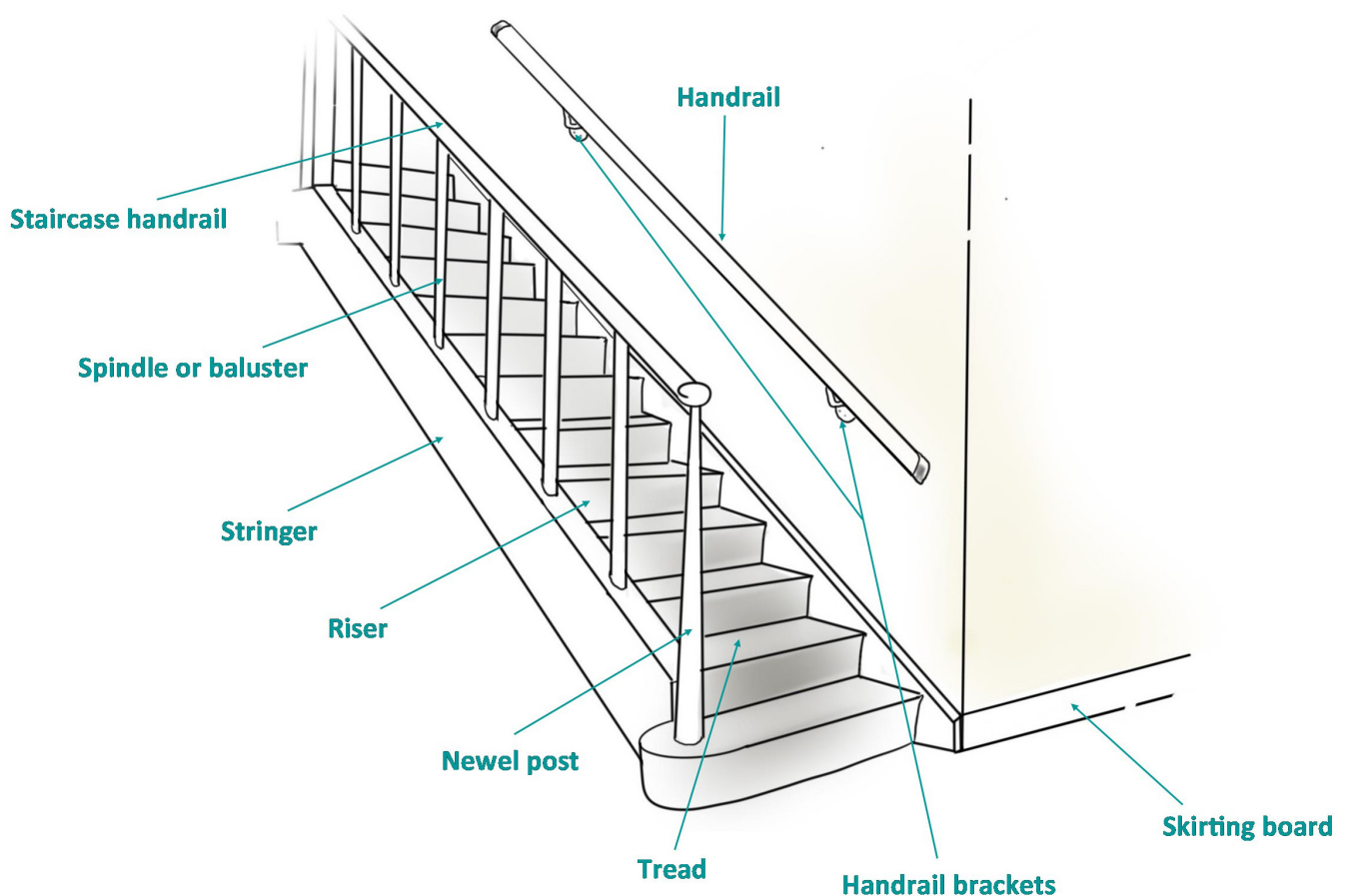
- ▶ What is wrong with the stairs?
- ▶ How many stairs are affected?
- ▶ What are the stairs made of? Wood, concrete, etc.
- ▶ If it is loose, can it be tightened? If not, why not?

Handrails

- ▶ What part is affected? Bracket, handrail or upright posts?
- ▶ Can it be fixed or is it broken?

Internal doors

Internal doors are fully functional and secure with appropriate ironmongery at the time of tenancy. You are responsible for any adjustments and maintenance required including alterations to fit carpets. To save costly recharges, regularly tighten screws that are becoming loose.



Woodwork

Skirting boards, picture rails, architrave and battens are the responsibility of the tenant to maintain unless they have been removed by a council operative as part of carrying out a council responsible repair. You require permission to remove any of these items and are responsible for any damage to the wall and floor finishings that are caused by removing them.

Walls and floors

Walls

If you are concerned about structural stability of the walls, contact the repairs helpline who will arrange for an inspection to be carried out.

Decorative finishes

Decorating the property and keeping it in a good decorative order is your responsibility. This includes small areas of plaster repairs and small cracks in the wall plaster. Tenants should fill smaller cracks with decorative filler. If you have cracks in your wall plaster that are larger than the thickness of a £1 coin, report these to the repairs helpline. If you have cracks in a ceiling that has a decorative finish such as Artex contact the office for advice as Asbestos may be present. If areas of plaster are falling away from the wall or ceiling, contact the helpline telling them:

- What area is affected?
- What size is the affected area?
- What caused the damage to the plaster?

When stripping wallpaper, you must take care not to remove the finish coat of plaster with scrapers or by the use of steam strippers. The use of a steam stripper wets the finish coat and can result in large areas becoming loose and falling away or being pulled away when removing wallpaper. If this occurs, you may be responsible for replacing the plaster at your own expense or we will repair it and the costs may be recharged to you. Recharges of plastering will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Floors

We provide each property with a kitchen and bath, shower or wet room floor covering as part of the Empty Homes Lettable Standard, which we will maintain during your tenancy. All other flooring present at the time of tenancy is classed as a sub-floor which would be covered with your own choice of flooring (excluding laminate flooring). If a flooring repair is required due to intentional or unintentional actions these may be recharged to you.

Please note - floor tiles were often made by mixing Asbestos into the tile and adhesive, so it is important that you do not disturb any sub-floor tiles. If you wish to install new flooring other than carpets, you will need to request permission through the property alterations process.

If the floorboards are loose, broken or rotten report this to the repairs helpline.

Damp, mould and condensation (DMC)

Every day activities cause condensation



Damp, mould and condensation can be a real concern in any home. Condensation is a form of damp but is often preventable by you making small changes at home.

NWLDC is responsible for leaks (e.g. windows, roofs, guttering and plumbing), penetrating and rising damp which often leave a tidemark and will require work to the structure of the building.

Tenants are responsible for mould caused by condensation. Information about what causes mould, how to tackle it and more importantly how to prevent it are available on our website

www.nwleics.gov.uk/repairshandbook

Excess moisture should be mopped up with a cloth; leaving it will result in mould growth. If black mould is reported we will arrange for a Damp, Mould and Condensation assessment of the property. The DMC assessment will identify any work that is our responsibility, as well as any action required by yourselves.

Properties with communal spaces

If you live in one of our properties with communal spaces, please report problems with:

- Emergency lighting
- Communal lighting
- Door entry problems
- Fire alarm issues
- Communal washing areas
- The communal TV or satellite aerials that are fitted to properties where planning conditions apply

NWLDC are not responsible for communal aerials that are fitted to shared properties. These are the responsibility of the tenants using this facility.

NWLDC is responsible for the communal and shared areas of a property. Please report any repairs to the repairs helpline.

You will be supplied with two fobs for the door entry system at the point you move in; any additional or replacement fobs are chargeable. Contact your Housing Officer if you wish to purchase an additional fob or require a replacement.

External decoration to communal areas is carried out as part of a cyclical programme, where required.

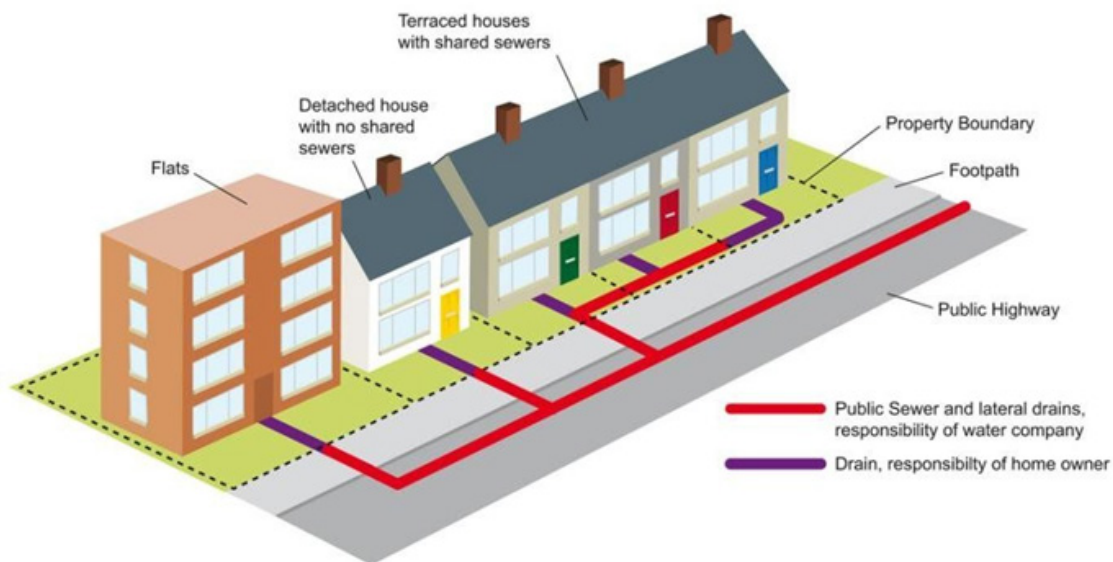
Drainage and external pipework

Problems with drainage

This section refers to blockages that are in the external drainage pipes. If you have drainage problems find out if your neighbours have the same problem, they may have already reported it. The diagram below shows what is landlord and tenant responsibility (purple), and what is Severn Trent's (red). If your blockage is on a communal run this needs to be reported to Severn Trent. You can do this by phone on 0800 783 4444 or via their website which has a handy interactive map showing ongoing works and reported issues in your area.

Check your area or report a problem www.stwater.co.uk/in-my-area/check-my-area/

Whilst NWLDC will clear blockages from the sections marked in purple, this will be a rechargeable repair if it is found to be a blockage as opposed to a drain repair. Examples being blockages caused by wet wipes, nappies, sanitary items etc.



The diagram only shows the front of the property, however the same applies where drainage and pipes are at the back or side.

Underground burst water mains leak

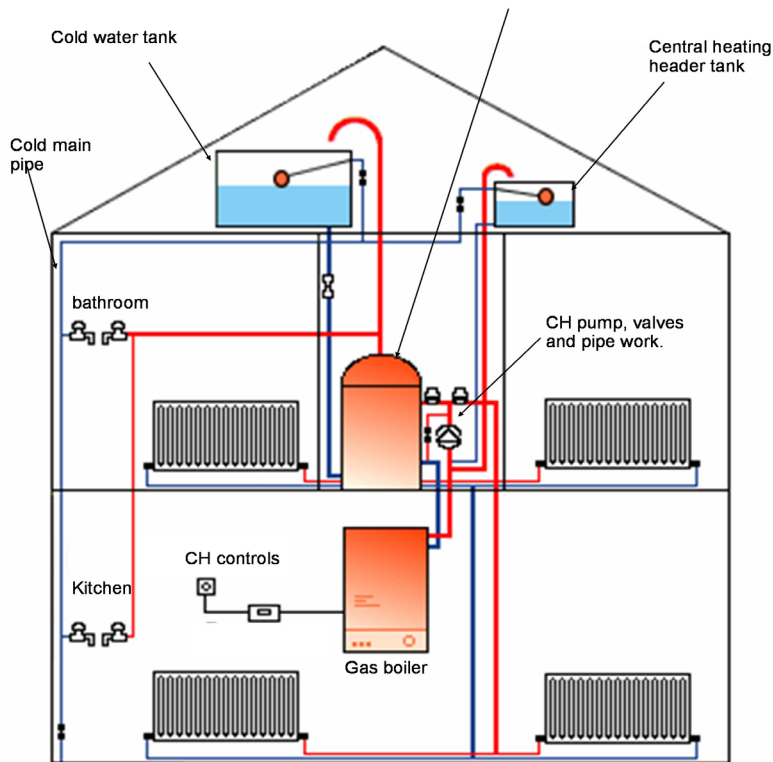
Helpful information is available in Severn Trent's Repairing Leaks leaflet

www.stwater.co.uk/content/dam/stw/my-water/document/repairing-leaks-leaflet.pdf

Gully blocked

- ▶ Where is the gully?
- ▶ Is there anything blocking the gully?
- ▶ Have you removed any debris that might be causing the problem?
- ▶ Is there a problem with the gully cover that might be the reason for the blockage?

Guttering and downpipe defects



- ▶ What part has the defect?
i.e. gutter, downpipe, soil pipe etc.
use the diagram to help you
- ▶ If it is leaking, where is it leaking from?
i.e. broken gutter, hopper, pipe joint etc.
- ▶ What is it made of - plastic or cast metal?
- ▶ What colour is it?
- ▶ What shape is it, square or round?
- ▶ Can it be reattached or is it broken?

Items covered by Sure Maintenance Ltd.

- Land Lord gas safety check to all gas fired Council owned homes, including gas communal boilers.
- Service, repair and maintenance of all gas appliances, including CO monitors.
- Inspection of all associated flues.
- Repairs and maintenance to heating systems, including CH pipe work, radiators, controls, valves, thermostats, cylinder and pipe work within 600mm of cylinder, pump and expansion tank.
- CH breakdowns during the day and out of hours.

Red Sections

Items covered by Repairs Team.

- Repairs / maintenance to domestic hot and cold water system, including the cold water storage tank and cylinder.
- Immersion heater
- Repairs / maintenance to all bathroom Suite: WCs, waste pipes, kitchen sinks, taps and cold main pipe work.
- Repairs / maintenance to all plumbing in bathrooms and kitchens, WCs, waste pipes, kitchen sinks, taps and cold main pipe work.
- Repairs to communal central heating system

Blue sections

Inspection / manhole cover defects

- ▶ If it is dangerous, cover the area or mark it off to alert others where it is safe to do so
- ▶ What is the problem?
- ▶ Is it the casing, cover frame or manhole cover that is the issue?
- ▶ Is it fully accessible?

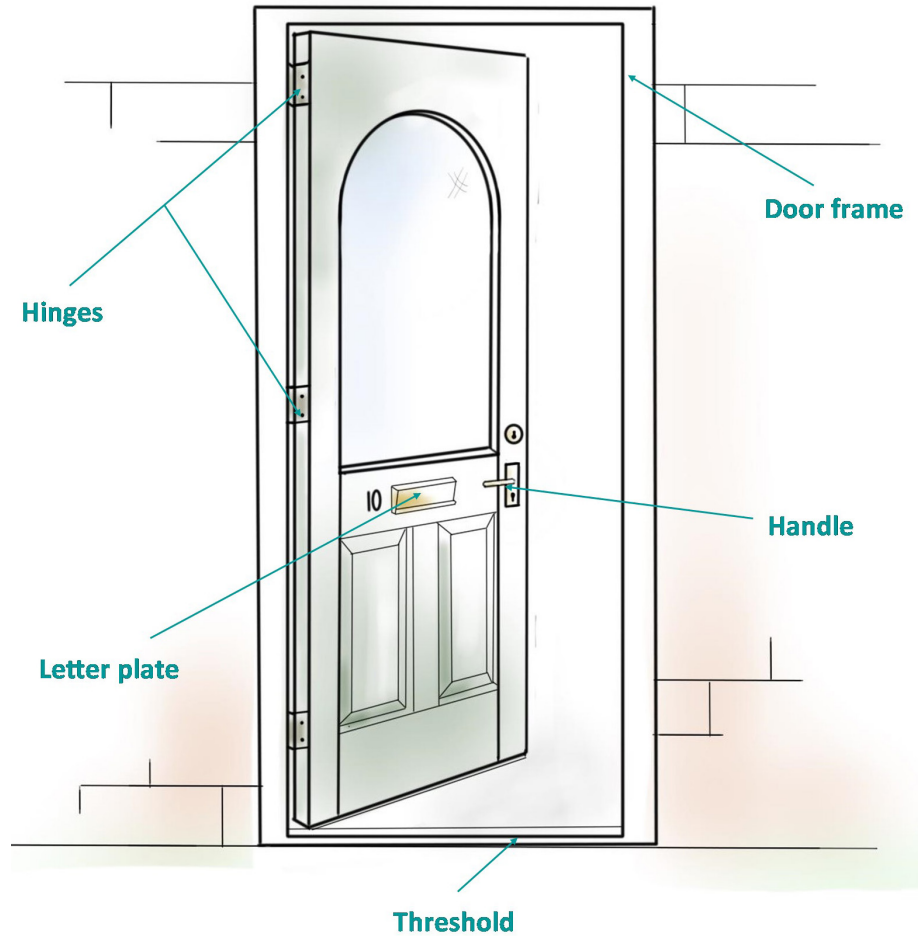
Inspection / manhole chamber overflowing

- ▶ Have you contacted Severn Trent?
- ▶ Are your neighbours experiencing the same issue?
- ▶ Is there a risk that water could come into the property and how far away from the house is it?

External doors and windows

Doors

- ▶ Which door is it?
- ▶ What type of door is it? composite, PVC or wood
- ▶ Can you open the door?
- ▶ Can you lock the door?
- ▶ What type of lock is it?
- ▶ Do you have another door you can use instead?
- ▶ How did it happen?
- ▶ Which part of the door appears to be faulty, damaged or rotten? Use the diagram to help you identify the parts that are effected.



Multi point lock



Yale lock



Mortice dead lock



Keys

Tenants are solely responsible for looking after and replacing any keys including window keys that relate to the tenancy. We provide a chargeable service to install a key safe to your property; please contact the repairs helpline for further information. This is considerably cheaper than paying for repairs if you lose your keys and we need to gain entry to your property.

If you need us to attend because you have lost your keys and are unable to gain access to your property you will be charged for the gain entry service, any associated repairs and any out of hours call out charges, if applicable. You may contact your local locksmith as an alternative to our service.

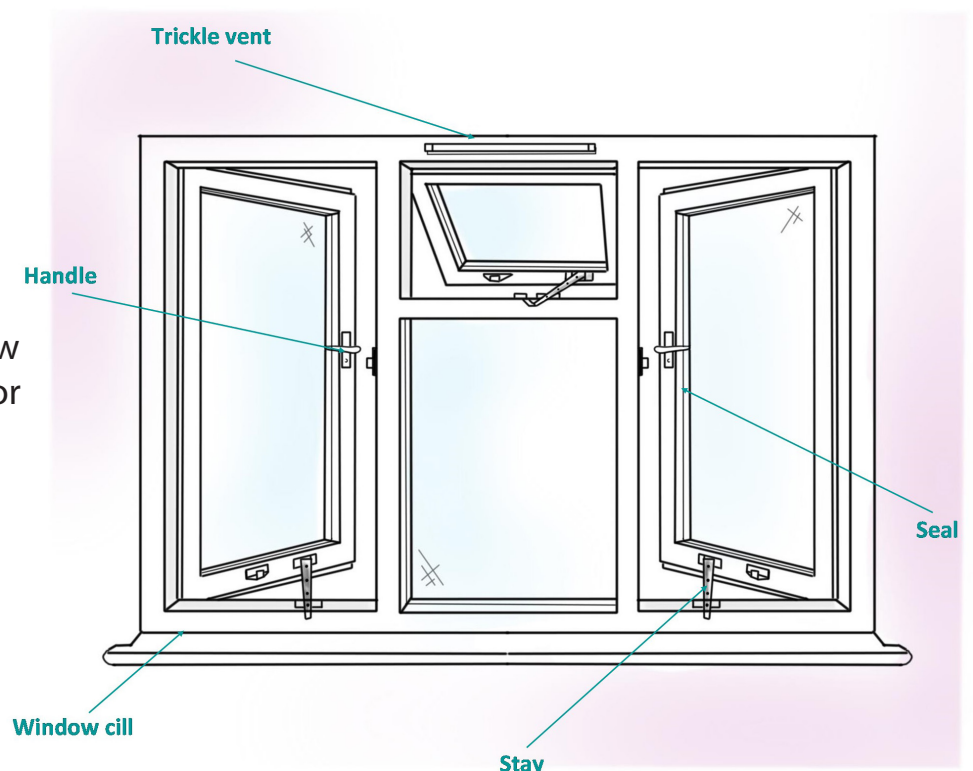
Report any faulty locks to the repairs helpline. These are three of our most common locks:

If a window is damaged or cracked and needs to be replaced we will measure for the new glass/ double glazed unit and board up the window to keep the property secure. Due to each piece being manufactured to size, a further appointment will be arranged for the fitting.



Windows

- ▶ What is wrong with the window? Use the diagram to help you.
- ▶ Where is the window and on what floor?
- ▶ If in a stairway, can the window be accessed fully from inside or is it over the stairs?
- ▶ Is the property still secure?
- ▶ Does the handle work properly?



Roofs and chimneys

Roofs

- ▶ What type of roof is it? Flat or sloping?
- ▶ What is wrong with your roof?
- ▶ How big is the area that is affected?
- ▶ Does it affect any electrics?
- ▶ If you are not able to contain a roof leak, is there anything else that is affecting it?

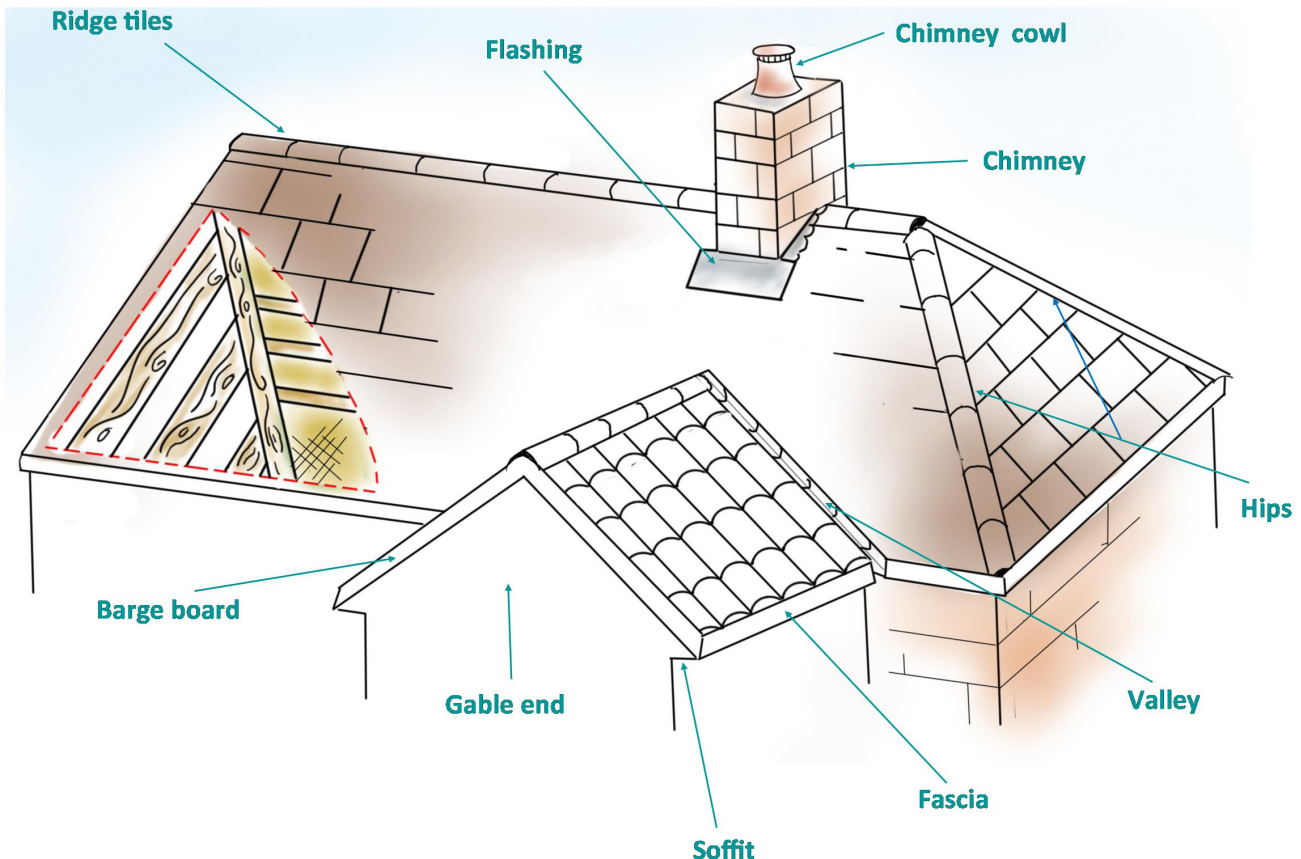
Chimneys

- ▶ Which part is affected? Chimney cowl, pots or brickwork?
- ▶ What is wrong with it?
- ▶ Is the chimney shared with another property?

You are responsible for aerials and satellite dishes fitted to the property. All satellite dishes must be removed at the end of your tenancy. For communal aerials / satellite dishes refer to the sheltered schemes section later in this booklet.

Loft spaces

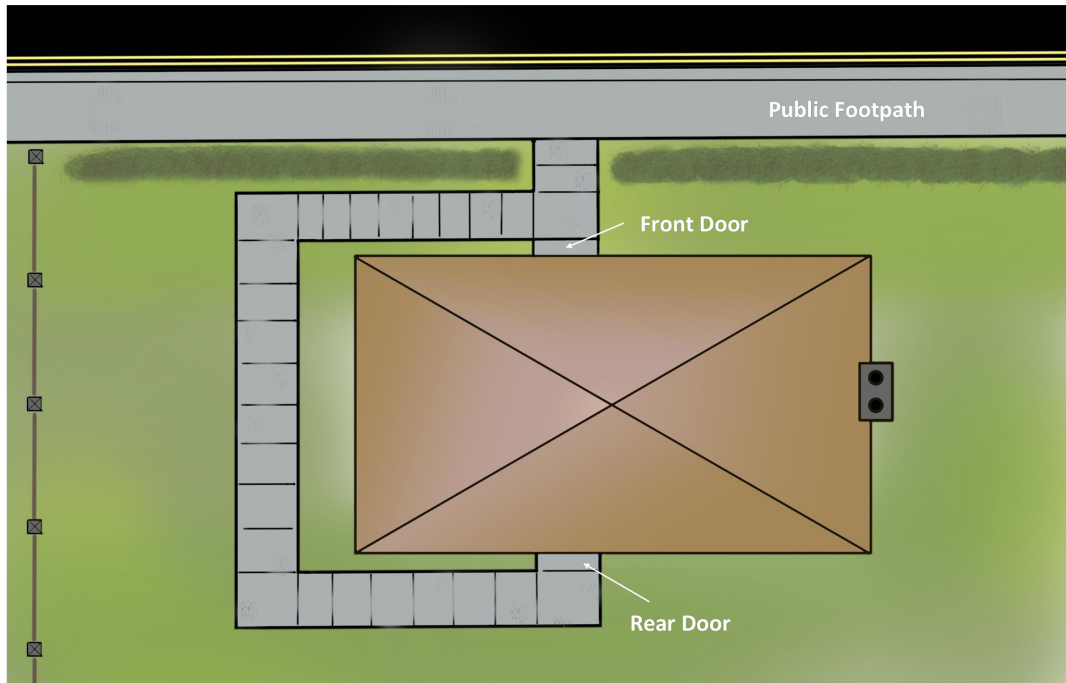
Loft spaces are not built for the purpose of storage and are not load bearing. Lofts should be kept free of tenant belongings. Any cost of repairs that are associated to items stored in the loft or from people entering and exiting the loft will be rechargeable.



Pathways, paved areas and steps

Pathways and paved areas

We are responsible for providing a safe pathway from the front of the property boundary to the front door, and from the front door to the back door (if applicable). The minimum width must be 600mm and would not exceed 1200mm. These are referred to as qualifying pathways.



If you have a qualifying pathway that is unsafe with a trip hazard of 25mm or more we will attend to repair it. If our operative believes it needs replacing, they will carry out a temporary repair and refer it to the asset management team for consideration in an estate improvements programme. However, a referral does not guarantee that the pathway will be replaced.

If you have any other paved areas that were present at the beginning of your tenancy which are unsafe, with a level difference of 25mm or more, we will complete a survey of the area. If it is not cost effective to repair we will remove the paving and level the area.

Where already present, consideration will be given to maintaining a paved area directly outside the rear door up to a maximum of 20% of the rear garden space.

- ▶ Based on the information above, is it a qualifying pathway or paved area?
- ▶ What is wrong with the area? Cracked, pitted, breaking up
- ▶ What has caused the problem?
- ▶ How big is the affected area?
- ▶ What is it made from? Concrete, tarmac, square or rectangle paving slabs etc.
- ▶ Can the work be carried out without you being there?

Steps

- ▶ What is wrong with the steps?
- ▶ Where are they located?
- ▶ Where do the steps lead to?
- ▶ What are they made out of? Concrete, bricks, square or rectangle paving slabs etc.
- ▶ How big is the area effected? i.e. how many slabs or rough size of the area?

Hard standings and driveways

Hard standings

If you have any hard standing areas that were present at the beginning of your tenancy which are unsafe, with a level difference of 25mm or more, we will complete a survey of the area. If it is not cost effective to repair we will remove the hard standing and level the area.

- ▶ What is wrong with the area? Cracked, pitted, breaking up
- ▶ What has caused the problem?
- ▶ How big is the affected area?
- ▶ What is it made from? Concrete, tarmac, square or rectangle paving slabs etc.
- ▶ Can the work be carried out without you being there?

Driveways

- ▶ Does the driveway have a dropped curb to the road the full length of the driveway width?
If no, see Hard standings above.
- ▶ What is wrong with the driveway?
- ▶ What has caused the problem?
- ▶ How big is the affected area?
- ▶ What is it made from? Concrete, tarmac, paving slabs – square or oblong, gravel?
- ▶ Is there a trip hazard of 25mm or more?

Please note: You must have written permission to install a driveway, and will also need to acquire planning permission for a dropped kerb to do so. Driveways that have not been installed to the NWLDC standard and/or do not have a dropped kerb, are classed as a hard standing.

Garages

There are three types of garage at NWLDC:

1. A garage within the boundary of your property, usually made of prefabricated panels or brick
2. A garage on a site with multiple other garages
3. A garage that you have erected on one of our empty garage site plots

For garage types 1 and 2 report any repairs issues to the repairs helpline. We do not maintain garages erected on your rented garage site (3).

- ▶ What is wrong with the garage?
- ▶ Where is the issue? Walls, floor, roof or doors
- ▶ What is it made from? Pre-fabricated panels or brick
- ▶ Can the work be carried out when you are not there?

Please note: garages that are made of pre-fabricated panels or have asbestos roofs will be removed when they are no longer economical to repair.

Gardens

The upkeep of garden spaces is your responsibility. If you are concerned about the upkeep, including the maintenance of hedges and trees, please contact your Housing Officer for advice.

Boundary walls, fencing and gates

We are responsible for marking the boundary, there is no legal requirement to provide a physical barrier. However, fencing may be renewed as part of our estate improvement programme, subject to funding.

Boundary walls

- ▶ Is the wall your own wall or shared with a neighbour?
- ▶ Where is the wall? Front, rear, left side, right side as you are looking at the property from the front
- ▶ What is wrong with the wall?
- ▶ Is it leaning? If so, what is it leaning towards ie path, green space, neighbours garden etc.
- ▶ If damaged, what caused the damage?
- ▶ Can we complete the work without you being at home?

Fencing

We will repair and maintain fencing that is there at the start of your tenancy until it is no longer financially viable.

Where it is beyond economical repair the in-house repair team will make the area safe, which includes bracing or removal of the fencing. If the fencing needs to be replaced, it will be referred to the asset management team for consideration in an estate improvements programme.

- ▶ Which fence is it? Left side, rear, right side
- ▶ What type of fence is it? See diagrams of fencing to help identify the fence.
- ▶ What are the posts made out of? Wood, metal or concrete
- ▶ Does it have a concrete or wood or gravel board?
- ▶ How high is the fence?
- ▶ What is wrong with the fence? Damaged, broken, rotten etc.
- ▶ Can it be re-secured?
- ▶ What is either side of the fence? Public pathway, neighbouring property etc.
- ▶ Can work be done without you being at home?



Closeboard fencing



Post and rail



Picket fencing

Gates

Gates that are there at the start of a tenancy that started in 2020 onwards will be maintained by us for fair wear and tear. Gates present prior to 2020 will be decided on a case-by-case basis. We do not maintain any gates that you have installed.

Enjoy your home

Other useful information

Supply of utility services

- ▶ Electric
- ▶ Gas
- ▶ Water
- ▶ Telephone/broadband

We are not responsible for any items relating to service supply such as meters, telephone lines or points. If you should have any issues please contact your supplier directly. You are able to change your supplier at any time during your tenancy.

Infestations

Infestations such as rats, mice, wasps and flies in most cases are your responsibility. Please contact the Customer Services Team by visiting the council website www.nwleics.gov.uk/pestcontrol or calling **01530 454545**. We will however carry out any repairs that are required to stop any vermin entry to the property once the infestation has been eradicated.

Aids and adaptations

Aids and adaptations help make homes more accessible and easier to live in. They are sometimes required to enable a person to be discharged from hospital. The size and permanence dictates whether the alteration is categorised as a minor or major adaptation.

Minor adaptation examples

- ▶ Grab rails
- ▶ Hand rails
- ▶ Keysafe fitting
- ▶ Small ramps

Major adaptation examples

- ▶ Stairlift
- ▶ Level access shower
- ▶ Through floor lift
- ▶ Large ramps

Most minor adaptations are fitted by our in-house repairs team, however all referrals must be authorised by either Leicestershire County Council's Adult Social Care or an occupational therapist no matter whether they are minor or major.

For more information please visit www.leicestershire.gov.uk/adult-social-care-and-health

Approved contractors

In addition to the In House Repairs team, a selection of approved contractors carry out a variety of work throughout the district. Approved contractor updates are advertised in In touch, the tenant newsletter.

You will be informed if your repair requires one of our approved contractors. In some cases they will contact you to arrange a suitable appointment. If an approved contractor has not been able to gain access, they will leave a card for you to call them. See page 18 for further details on your requirement to allow access for these visits.

Specialist servicing is often managed as part of a programmed cycle; you will be notified of any upcoming programmes either by our asset management team or directly by the approved contractor.

Anyone working on behalf NWLDC is required to carry identification and produce it on arrival. If you are ever unsure about a contractor please contact the repairs helpline before letting them into your home. If an ID card isn't shown to you, please ask to see it; we won't be offended and you have the right to refuse access if ID is not shown.

Approved contractor	Service provided
ABCA	Fire alarms
Alliance	Off road parking
Dalrod	Drainage and jetting
Dodd Group	Fixed wire testing
European Asbestos Services (EAS)	Asbestos removal
Emperor Scaffolding Ltd	Scaffold
GEZE Uk Ltd	Door entry systems
Sure Maintenance	Heating*
JLA	Laundry appliance maintenance
Kas and Bersche-Rolt	Structural surveys
K.S Digital	Communal aerial repairs
Laker BMS	Aids and adaptations
LES	Lift maintenance
MCP Environmental	Asbestos surveys
Merisons Ltd	Specialist repairs
Morgan and Lambert	Gas consultancy services
Premier Mobility	Aids and adaptations
Rybka	Domestic energy assessments
Second Element Ltd	Water management services
Spectra	Intercom system maintenance
Sure	Air source heating installations
T&S Heating	Out of hours repairs
Tunstall Healthcare UK	Technology enables services
UK Gas Services	Home improvement support contractor

Legionnaires' Disease

As your landlord we have a legal obligation to ensure you are aware of the possible causes and symptoms of Legionnaires' disease so you can identify any problems easily and report any concerns to us.

What is Legionnaires' disease?

Legionnaires' disease is a pneumonia-like illness caused by Legionella bacteria and is potentially fatal. It is caused by the inhalation of small droplets of water from contaminated sources containing high levels of Legionella bacteria. Everyone is susceptible to infection, however, some people are at higher risk, including:

- People over 45 years of age
- Smokers and heavy drinkers
- People suffering from chronic respiratory or kidney disease and,
- Anyone with an impaired immune system

Where is Legionella found?

Legionella bacteria are found in the natural environment and may contaminate and grow in water systems, including domestic hot and cold water systems.

The main areas of risk are where the bacteria can multiply and increase to dangerous levels and then spread e.g. in spray from showers and taps, even in dishwasher and washing machine pipes.

They survive low temperatures and thrive at temperatures between 20 – 45°C if the conditions are right. They are killed by high temperatures at 50°C or above.

What precautions can you take?

Residents of rented domestic accommodation should follow the below guidelines to minimise the risk of Legionnaires' disease within their home.

Most importantly, make sure that:

- Hot water in the system is kept hot
- Cold water is kept cold
- The water is kept circulated

In particular, it is important that you:

- Tell us if the boiler or hot water tank are not working properly, particularly if the water is not coming out of the taps at a sufficiently high temperature. It should come out at a temperature of 50°C after it has run for a minute at the latest, be aware of scalding.
- Do not interfere with the settings on your boiler or hot water system. The hot water will be set so that the water reaches a temperature of 60°C or above.
- Tell us if the cold water is still running warm after you have initially run off any water, which may have accumulated in the pipes. It should not be above 20°C.
- Tell us if you have debris or rust in your water
- Ensure all taps and showers run for at least two minutes a week.

When you first move in and vacant periods

Flush through showers and taps for ten minutes for the first time and following a period of non-use such as a holiday, being in hospital etc. If you are going to be away longer than two weeks please contact the your housing officer to let them know if possible.

Clean the shower head and hose periodically, descale and disinfect it. This should be done at least every six months.

