

Adaptations

If you have a disability, we can help you to make your home more suitable to live in and help you to manage it more independently.

The types of adaptations available include:

- Grab rails
- Lever taps
- Stair lifts
- Level entry showers
- Access ramps
- Handrails

In order for us to make any adaptations to your home, we will normally require a referral from Leicestershire County Council Adult Social Care Services.

If you consider that adaptations are required to your home, please contact the Repairs Desk on 01530 454635.

If you wish to contact the Leicestershire Adult Social Care Services directly, please refer to the following details:

Leicestershire County Council
Adult Social Care Services
3 High Street
Coalville
Leicestershire
LE67 3EA

Tel: 01530 275200

Damage to property and recharges

We expect you to look after your home and where willful or accidental damage is suspected, we will inform you of your liability for the cost of repair or replacement.

Improving your home

You must write to us and get written permission before starting any work on improvements or alterations to your home. We will only refuse permission for good reasons, and if we can agree to what you want to do, we will write and tell you.

We may give compensation for certain improvements you make to your home if you then decide to move. The amount is dependant on the type of work and how long since the work was completed.

Paying for repairs you are responsible for carrying out

If you wish us to undertake small repairs for which you are normally responsible, for example internal decoration using our direct workforce, we will first consider if we have the resources to undertake the work and to complete it within your required timescale.

If we agree we have an opportunity to carry out the work, we will provide a written quotation for you. No work will be undertaken without written proof of acceptance of our quotation.

Please note, this is not a subsidised service and all such quotations will be based on normal, full-cost market prices.

Tenants' and residents' associations

We encourage you to participate in your local community. Tenants' and residents' associations provide advice, support and social opportunities to our customers and we welcome the comments and feedback from members on a wide range of issues.

For details of your nearest tenants' and residents' association, or advice on how to form one, please contact 01530 454605.

Advice in an emergency

Actions to take will depend on the emergency, but some basic tips are:

- **If you smell gas.**
Switch off the gas supply at the meter, open windows to ventilate the room, do not switch any lights or sockets on or off, avoid or extinguish naked flames, Call Transco on the national emergency gas line , 0800 111 999
- **If you have a fire.**
Stay calm, evacuate everyone from the building, and close all doors and windows behind you if you can, (if an external gas meter) Isolate the gas supply at the meter, Dial 999 and ask for the fire Service
- **If you have a burst pipe**
Turn off the main stopcock, switch off your immersion heater if you have one, switch off your heating and hot water system, turn on all taps to drain off as much water as possible, try to find where the water is coming from and put a bucket or towels under it, report the problem to us.

Condensation in your home

Condensation occurs when warm, moist air meets a cold surface such as a window, mirror or wall. This cools the air down and turns the moisture it contains back into water droplets.

We cannot prevent moisture in the air – we add to it every time we breathe out, and too little moisture in the air can cause throat problems.

Too much moisture in the air can inhibit our ability to keep cool in hot conditions.

The moisture you produce will increase the risk of condensation occurring. This can create conditions in which mould growth can damage clothing, furniture and decorations.

It is unavoidable that some moisture will be produced as we use our homes. Simple changes in your living conditions can significantly reduce the amount of condensation you create, for example:

- Cover saucepans with lids when cooking
- Open windows to ventilate kitchens (but beware of security risks)

- Dry clothes outside when ever possible
- Keeping kitchen and bathroom doors closed from the rest of your home
- Wipe down any condensation on windows and walls each day
- Use extractor fans (where these are fitted)

Carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colourless, odourless, poisonous gas that can kill without warning. It cannot be seen and it has no smell.

The initial symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are similar to influenza, but without a fever. They include headache, fatigue, shortness of breath, nausea and dizziness.

If you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning, stop using any gas or coal appliances immediately. Turn off the gas at the mains and allow the property to be ventilated. Do not use the appliance again until you have contacted us.

The risk of carbon monoxide poisoning is not unique to gas appliances!

Precautions to prevent the risk to your health include:

- All heating appliances should be installed and serviced by competent installers and fitted to manufacturer's instructions.
- All appliances should be serviced regularly
- Never block outside grills, flues or airbricks
- Never block air vents on an appliance
- Never sleep in rooms that have a gas back boiler

Maintaining your home

You must ensure that your home is properly maintained. We will carry out the repairs for which we are responsible. You are responsible for some repairs. When we get lots of requests for repairs we try to tackle the most serious ones first.

Responsibility for repairs

We are legally obliged to maintain and repair certain elements of your home. This includes:

- Maintaining a supply of hot and cold water to your home
- Ensuring your home is structurally sound and weather tight
- Maintaining the windows, gutters, external doors and drains
- Keeping the electrical wiring safe
- Carrying out an annual gas safety check

A full list of the small repairs you have a right to have done quickly and easily is provided under the heading 'Right to repairs'.

Where a repair to something we normally maintain is due to neglect, carelessness or deliberate action of your self, family, visitors or others, we reserve the right to recharge you for the repair resulting from it.

You are responsible for maintaining certain parts of your home. These are listed in your tenancy agreement. Some of these items are:

- Keys and light bulbs
- Toilet seats, toilet roll holder, towel rail or ring
- Mixer taps, tap washers and plugs to sinks, baths and washbasins
- Internal decoration
- Smoke alarms (unless we have fitted them and they are connected to the electrical supply)

- Any improvements you make to your home

If you want us to carry out any repairs that are your responsibility, please note that you will be charged for the cost of the repair plus the cost of organising the work and an administration charge.

If you are not sure who is responsible for the repair, please refer to the 'Repair Responsibility Checklist' at the back of this handbook.

Reporting a repair

Our repairs desk is open 8:45am to 5:00pm, Monday to Friday.

To help you report repairs easily, you can report a repair in any of the following ways:

- By telephone on 01530 454635
- Via the website by using the online form on: www.nwleics.gov.uk
- By email to: repairs@nwleicestershire.gov.uk
- By letter to:
Repairs Desk, Housing Department,
North West Leicestershire District Council,
Council Offices, Coalville
Leicestershire, LE67 3FJ
- By fax to: 01530 454636
- In person by calling at the Council Offices.



EQUALITY STATEMENT:

INCLUSION OF AVAILABILITY:

This leaflet is available in other languages, formats, on computer disc on request.

Please contact the Business Support Team on 01530 454545 or e-mail: Housing@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

It will also be posted on the council's website at: www.nwleics.gov.uk

However you report a repair enquiry, please include the following details to allow us to respond accordingly:

- Your name
- Address
- What repair is needed or the nature of your enquiry
- A contact telephone number so we can arrange a convenient appointment to carry out the repair.

Other repair contacts

The following are not our responsibility and should be reported directly to the following:

- For gas leaks contact Transco on 0800 111 999
- For gas meters contact your supplier
- For water leaks in the road contact Severn Trent Water on 08457 500 500
- For street lighting and highways contact Leicestershire County Council on 0800 626203

Out-of-hours emergency service

We operate an emergency repair service outside normal working hours where a defect is life threatening; will cause injury; is a major threat to a residents security; will cause more than minor damage to the property.

The contact number is: **01530 454789**

Examples of emergency repairs include:

- Gas escape within the property
- A major roof leak
- A blocked toilet or drain affecting the only available toilet
- Total loss of electrical power or lighting circuits (caused by other than a power cut)
- An extensive leak to a main water supply pipe or a burst tank
- Total loss of heating or hot water in winter months (15th Oct. to 15th March)
- Insecure windows, doors or door locks
- Lock changes following stolen keys (reported to the police)

You should not use this service unless you are sure the repair cannot wait until the next working day.

You may be charged for the cost of the visit if we feel that the problem is:

- Not an emergency
- Caused by something which you may have done
- A faulty electrical appliance
- Required a police crime number

How quickly can you expect repairs to be done?

We set targets for the maximum time you should have to wait for a repair.

- **Emergency** – where there is a risk of personal injury or serious property damage. These repairs will normally be dealt within 24 hours.
- **Urgent** – where there is no danger but inconvenience is being caused. These repairs will normally be done within 7 calendar days.
- **Normal** – where there is no serious inconvenience. These repairs will normally be done within 4 weeks.

Planned and cyclical maintenance

Major items of non-urgent repairs, total replacements or refurbishment are done on an estate basis rather than an individual property basis. This work is placed into a relevant programme and allows us to complete more for the same money.

Examples of planned maintenance projects include external cladding, re-roofing and replacement windows. We will provide information of future confirmed programmes on our website: www.nwleics.gov.uk

Cyclical maintenance can be either necessary repairs we undertake regularly after a preset period, such as pre-painting repairs every 5 years, or preventative maintenance where we service items to prevent a failure that could put your well-being at risk, such as annual gas servicing.

Appointments

If we require access to your home to complete repairs, you will be offered a morning or an afternoon appointment for your convenience.

Morning appointments cover the period 8am to 12 noon. Afternoon appointments cover the period 12:30pm to 5pm.

We unfortunately cannot give you a specific time when we will be visiting your home, but please tell us if you are involved in a school run.

It will be helpful if you tell us if your household includes elderly, vulnerable or disabled people or infants under the age of three years old.

Although appointments are normally arranged for internal repairs and inspections, appointments can also be arranged for external works where you may be required to arrange access, or if you have concerns regarding the security of your home.

Preparing for the appointment

We will allocate an amount of time to each appointment that we believe is sufficient to carry out the repair. We may be unable to complete the work in one visit if:

- The description of the required repair was wrong
- A full description of the required repair was not reported
- No preparation was carried out prior to our arrival at the property
- No one was at home to provide access

If an appointment is arranged, you must make the necessary steps to protect your belongings and to help us proceed with the repair without unnecessary delay. Such preparations will depend on the repairs to be undertaken and their location within the property, but may include:

- Emptying of cupboards and base units where if they are to be replaced
- Removal of curtains and ornaments in window sills
- Relocation of valuable items from access routes
- Removal of sanitary items around toilets and bathroom suites
- The lifting of laminate flooring
- The partial emptying and relocation of furniture
- Lifting of carpets

The repairs desk will provide advice on the preparations necessary.

Keeping appointments

We will send you an acknowledgement of each repair reported, so you know what priority the repair has been given and when we intend to do the repair if an appointment is required.

When an appointment has been made it is important that you are available when our operative calls. If you are not in, a visiting card will be left indicating that we were unable to complete the necessary repairs. You should respond quickly and contact the number on the visiting card to avoid the repair being cancelled.

If you still require the repair to be completed, you should contact the Repairs Desk on: **01530 454635**

Allowing access to your home

Our officers, engineers and any other person authorised by NWLDC, may at some time be required to access your home to carry out essential repairs and maintenance. You must allow us access to undertake essential repairs and surveys.

Keeping your home secure

We will carry out repairs using our own operatives or an approved contractor to carry out the work on our behalf.

All our staff and contractors carry an identity card. Please make sure you check this before letting anyone in your home. However, should you be in any doubt as to the identity of the caller, please contact our repairs desk on **01530 454635**.

Right to repairs

You have the right to have certain small repairs done quickly within a set period. They total 20 in number (known as “qualifying repairs”) and include urgent repairs which are likely to affect your health, safety or security. These are:

- Loss of all heating
- Loss of electrical power
- Unsafe electrical fitting
- No hot water
- No habitable living room or bedroom
- Loss of power for cooking
- Loss of washing or toilet facilities
- A leaking roof
- A blocked flue serving an open fire or boiler
- Toilets which do not flush
- A blocked sink, bath or basin
- Leaking water or heating pipes, tank or cistern
- Loose or broken banisters or handrails
- Mechanical extractor fan in kitchen or bathroom not working

If a qualifying repair is not completed within the prescribed period, you have the right to ask us to chase the contractor or to appoint another. The prescribed period varies from 1 day to 7 days, dependant on the repair. In certain circumstances, you are entitled to ask for compensation for the delay.

Our Code of Conduct

We aim to keep your home in good repair and provide an efficient repairs service that responds to your needs.

When undertaking duties on behalf of NWLDC, our operatives and approved contractors will be polite and behave in a reasonable and appropriate manner to you, other residents and visitors to your home.

We will respect your property and take all reasonable measures to ensure repairs are undertaken in an efficient, competent manner with interruption and disruption kept to a minimum.

We expect our operatives and approved contractors to work in a safe environment, free from threatening behaviour. To be treated politely and respectfully, and to take appropriate action in confrontational situations.

When dealing with complaints, comments and compliments we will:

- Provide you with information about how to report a complaint, comment or compliment
- Record all complaints, comments and compliments and use them to help review and improve our services.
- Acknowledge all complaints within two working days
- Respond to all complaints within ten working days
- Treat complaints confidentially and fairly
- Tell you how you can take your complaint further if you are not satisfied with our response
- Apologise when we are at fault and do our very best to put things right.

Annual gas safety checks

We value you as a customer your safety is paramount. We need to check that your gas appliances are working properly, otherwise your safety and, in extreme cases, your life may be at risk!

We have a legal responsibility to carry out a gas safety check every 12 months and this requires access to your home.

Not only will this ensure your safety, it also means your heating system is likely to be more reliable and less likely to break down, and more efficient which will save you money on fuel bills.

It is very important our approved gas servicing contractor has access to carry out the safety checks. If you do not provide access we will get permission to enter your home from the court and charge you for all extra costs incurred.