



DEALING WITH ROUTINE MAINTENANCE

We have put together some important Information for Tenants regarding routine and emergency maintenance.

This helpful information should assist you with simple procedures that can be completed by you as tenants. It provides information on what we class as routine maintenance and what is classed as an emergency as well as how and when you should report maintenance to us.

Should you require any clarification on any of the points below please do not hesitate to contact us.

Many thanks,

Chrissie & Lauren

Reporting Maintenance:

All maintenance issues or any problems you experience relating to the property should be reported to Butfield Lettings in a timely manner. Failure to do so could result in further/additional damage which may be the responsibility of the tenant.

Routine Maintenance can be reported by phone or email during office hours:

Monday – Friday 9am to 5.30pm

Call us: 01249 55 41 41

Email us: info@butfieldlettings.co.uk

Routine Maintenance:

When a maintenance issue is reported to us (or an issue is picked up during a routine visit), we will log the issue and approach your landlord advising them accordingly. Butfield Lettings or the Landlord will arrange contractors dependent upon the nature and urgency of the task and will respond accordingly. Depending on the works required the landlord may require quotes to be undertaken prior to works being actioned. We use local contractors that we recommend to landlords, however some landlords have their preferred contractors.

Once works have been instructed, the contractors will contact you directly to make appropriate arrangements for access. If tenants are not available during working hours, providing both you and the contractor are in agreement we can issue keys for your property to the contractor so access can be gained. We do not accompany these visits.

Whilst every effort is made to complete work to a good standard and as quickly as possible sometimes there are items missed. If this is the case we would appreciate it if you could make us aware.



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General Maintenance Tips:

Tenant Like Manner

In addition to a landlord having responsibilities throughout the course of a tenancy, there are also responsibilities on you, the tenant.

As a tenant in a rented property, you are expected to act in a 'tenant-like manner' and in doing so carry out duties in and around the property that are reasonably expected of you.

Below you can find information how to report and deal with different situations that might arise. Acting in a tenant-like manner would include the following:

Electrics and Appliances:

- Change light bulbs, regardless of their height or type. This includes fluorescent strip style lights, removing covers off lights and spot lights.
- Ovens and other appliances might have batteries fitted to power items such as clocks and may need changing periodically.

Appliances not working:

If you've got an appliance in the house that isn't working and was supplied with the property, you will need to check the following:

1. Does another appliance work in this plug socket? If so, you know it is the appliance which is faulty, as opposed to the power source.
2. If another appliance doesn't work in this socket, check that the electrics haven't tripped.
3. If the appliance appears faulty, you will need to check the fuse in the plug if it has one. If it needs changing, it is your responsibility to change it with a fuse of correct ampage.
4. If you have changed the fuse and checked you are using the appliance correctly, it is likely you will need a specialist contractor. Please call Butfield Lettings during normal office hours.

Appliances:

- Empty washing machine and tumble dryer filters regularly.
- If a vacuum cleaner/Hoover is supplied then empty the cylinder or bags regularly. This will help keep the appliances working at their optimum level. Please note that a vacuum cleaner will not necessarily be supplied at every property.

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Smoke Detectors:

It is the tenant's responsibility to carry out basic maintenance which includes:

- Cleaning the smoke detectors by wiping and hovering them.
- Checking the smoke detectors by use of the test button to check they sound - this should be done at least weekly.
- Replacing the batteries as necessary - the smoke detectors are designed to 'beep' when the batteries are getting low. Most of these detectors use a 9 volt 'square' battery. The smoke detectors remove from their base in a variety of methods but usually twist or slide off.

Tripped Electrics:

If the power has gone off to your plugs or lights in part of your house or flat- or the whole property - then you will need to check the following:

1. Turn off the appliances and lights in the affected part of the house, otherwise the electrics could just keep tripping.
2. Locate your fuse box - this could be in the basement, close to the front door or in a cupboard in the front bedroom or lounge. This isn't an exhaustive list - you may need to have a look around.
3. Check all of the circuit breakers are in the ON position. If they aren't, turn them all the way off and then ON.
4. Wait 20 seconds to check the circuit breaker doesn't trip again. If it does, you probably haven't unplugged the faulty item, so check again.
5. If the circuit breaker doesn't trip, you can turn on one item at a time. If the circuit breaker trips as you turn an item on, then it is likely that this one is causing the fault. Leave this item off.
6. If the circuit breaker keeps tripping and you are sure you have unplugged all appliances, you will need an electrician. If it is your appliance causing the fault, you will be responsible for fixing or disposing of it as well as the call out charge.

If you're worried that the electrics aren't safe, contact Butfield Lettings and we will make arrangements to call an electrician. However, please note that if you haven't followed the above steps then you may be liable for the charge.



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Plumbing and Drains:

With regards to the plumbing and drains, although you are not responsible for any structural works required you may be responsible for blockages and smells if they have been caused by yourself. Wet wipes and sanitary products do not break down as quickly as toilet paper and are commonly the cause of blocked drains. Oil and grease can build up slowly causing blockages. If small amounts get into the sink please flush through with hot soapy water. Please dispose large amounts of oil/grease via alternative means. Waste being pushed down the drain can cause both blockages and nasty smells if the food lodges and rots in the trap.

If a plumber is instructed to clear pipe work and we are advised the cause is a result of incorrect usage, all costs incurred would be passed onto you as the tenant.

If you notice unpleasant smells coming from appliances such as dishwasher or washing machine please empty all filters then run the appliance, empty and run on the hottest cycle. If you are experiencing smells from sinks, baths or showers please run several litres of hot soapy water down the drain. If this does not cure the problem please try some drain unblocker, such as 'Mr Muscle Sink & Plughole Unblocker' (Regular bleach is often ineffective.) If the problem persists please let us know and we will advise your landlord accordingly.

Water Leaks:

A common issue we experience are water leaks and it is important these issues are quickly identified and actioned. Often water leaks are noticed outside of office hours when appliances are being used. If you notice a water leak you should, where possible, isolate this. Often taps or appliances such as washing machines will have isolation taps; alternatively the main stop cock will prevent any more water accessing the property. If the water is coming through the ceiling, it may be the bath/shower sealant lifting and if this is the case we would request you do not continue to use this until repaired. When reporting the leak to us, please advise where possible the cause as this will speed up the repair works.

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Condensation and Mould Growth:

Mould growth is often a direct result of condensation. Condensation will occur in most homes, particularly in the winter months. Condensation occurs when air carrying water vapour comes into contact with a cool surface, at the reduced temperature less water can be held by the air and it is deposited onto the surface as condensation. The most vulnerable areas of the property are rooms where a large amount of moisture is produced, i.e. kitchens and bathrooms. Mould often occurs because of condensation and usually appears as pinpoint black spots which can cover large areas of surfaces most noticeably on ceilings and external walls. It is often most severe in the corner of rooms and behind furniture. Simple changes can prove effective in tackling condensation dampness.

Consider these steps to help control condensation issues:

- Keep lids on saucepans whilst cooking.
- Vent any tumble dryers to an outside wall.
- Avoid the use of bottled gas and paraffin heaters as these produce high levels of vapour.
- Dry washing outside where possible.
- When creating steam in the kitchen/bathroom open windows and close doors to these rooms. This will let moisture escape and prevent it from spreading through the house.
- Trickle vents within windows should be open but leaving windows open for a significant period of time is not recommended as it will make the rooms cold and actually increase the likelihood of condensation.
- Background heating should be maintained within the property and the temperature should be above 15 degrees centigrade.
- Wipe down windows and frames whenever condensation is present

Remember, the control of condensation requires a combination of sufficient heating, ventilation and insulation.

Boiler Faults/Heating:

If you experience problems with the heating please go through the below steps to help establish the most likely cause. If there is a fault with the boiler, the landlord is responsible for necessary repairs. If however the engineer visits and finds the fault is caused by user error, the call out charge for the engineer is your responsibility as the tenant.

- Make sure the gas supply is turned on and other gas appliances are operating (e.g. fire, cooker)
- Ensure there is power to the boiler, it is switched on at the wall and the main on/off control is set to the 'on' position
- Check the pressure is at the correct level. This should be in green, usually between 1 and 1.5 bars.
- Check the central heating and hot water are set to the correct temperature
- Check the timer is on and calling for heating/hot water
- Check the room thermostat (if fitted) is set to high enough temperature
- If an error code is displayed or lights are flashing, make a note of what has happened and try resetting the boiler.

If this does not rectify the problem please let us know, providing us with as much information as possible including the make and model of the boiler and any error codes or lights that may be flashing.



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Bleeding a radiator:

Another common problem is radiators only partially heating, often leaving the top of the radiator cold. Again this would be your responsibility as a tenant. Please see below how a radiator needs to be bled.

- Turn the central heating off
- Obtain a radiator key, if you do not have one, universal keys can be purchased from places such as B&Q or Wilkinsons
- Insert the key into the bleed valve at the top of the radiator, have a rag ready to catch the small amounts of water that will come out of the radiator with the trapped air
- Turn the key in small amounts, a quarter or half turn at a time
- Turn the key, usually anticlockwise, to release the trapped air out of the radiator. As soon as water starts to come out turn the key in the opposite direction to close the bleed valve

PLEASE NOTE THAT IF ANY CONTRACTOR ATTENDS FOLLOWING A REPORT OF DAMAGE OR DISREPAIR AND THE CALLOUT WAS UNNECESSARY OR AS A RESULT OF TENANT (INCLUDE GUEST) DAMAGE, THE TENANTS WILL BE LIABLE FOR THEIR CALLOUT CHARGE AND ALSO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING GOOD ANY DAMAGE.