

Section 3

MOVING IN

Before you move into your home your Housing Officer will show you around. He/she will give you some general advice and information on the property and the services supplied by us. Once you have accepted your tenancy you need to contact all the local services, gas, electric, water, council tax and other relevant Council departments. You are now legally responsible for your home and the services provided by other agencies. The purpose of this section is to help you with any queries you may have and to help as a checklist for all the things you need to do. If there is anything you are unsure about please contact the Housing Manager.

There are now several different suppliers of gas, electricity and telephone services. We have supplied one telephone number, if you would like to find out about the other agencies that supply these services please look in your local telephone book or telephone talking pages.

Services and Safety

Water supply

If you move in when the weather is cold the water may have been turned off at the stopcock. Some properties have water meters. Please read this meter when you move in and make a note of the meter reading. Inform the Water Company that you have moved in.

Southern Water	General enquiries	01962 714585
	Emergency	0845 278 0845
Bournemouth & West Hants	General enquiries	01202 590059
	Emergency	same
Wessex Water Covers Salisbury	General enquiries	01202 671144
	Emergency	0345 300 600

Protecting from frost damage

To reduce the risk of frost damage to your home:

- Keep your home warm
- Do not leave taps running; the water pipes may freeze and your home may be flooded
- Stop draughts blowing directly onto water pipes

What can you do if a pipe bursts?

Turn off the stopcock, often located under the kitchen sink.

Turn on all the taps to drain the water from the cistern to stop flooding (remove the plugs first).

Turn off the central heating or put out the fire if you have a back boiler.

Contact the office immediately during office hours or call the emergency repairs number.

If you go away

In winter, drain all water from the cistern by turning off the stop tap and turning on all taps. Remember to turn off any gas or electric water heaters.

Flush the toilet to empty it and put salt into the pan to stop the water freezing.

When you return home

Make sure that all taps are left on before turning on the stop tap.

Turn off taps only when water is running freely from them.

Make sure the hot water system is refilled with water before turning on immersion heaters, lighting fires etc.

Gas supply

If there is gas at your property, you will need to inform the Gas Company that you have moved in on British Gas Account enquires 0645 555 900.

Other useful British Gas numbers are:

Emergencies 0800 111 999

Meter reading 0645 555 909

Please read the gas meter and make a note of the meter reading. If you are having any gas appliances fitted, such as a gas cooker, a CORGI registered company **must** fit these. **This is part of your Tenancy Agreement.**

You can improve gas safety in your home by taking the following measures:

- You must get a qualified person to fit any appliances.
- Make sure your gas appliances are well ventilated, they need air to work properly and safely.
- Use gas appliances properly and follow the instructions. For example, do not use cookers to warm a room.
- Vents and flues send the fumes from your heating system outside of your home and should be kept clear for your health and safety. If you allow them to get blocked you are putting yourself at risk. Leaking gas fumes can be dangerous. Look for telltale signs such as soot or stains around a gas fire or water heater, or discolouring, and report immediately to the Maintenance Department.
- Use fireguards with gas fires, especially when elderly people or young children are about.
- Make sure gas appliances are serviced annually.

If you smell gas:

- Put out cigarettes.
- Do not use matches or naked flames.
- Do not touch electrical switches including doorbells and lights.
- Open all windows and doors and keep them open.
- See if a gas tap has been accidentally left on, or a pilot light has gone out.

If you think there may be a gas leak, turn off the supply at the meter and telephone British Gas straight away. Make sure someone is at home when they come. If you think you smell gas in the street, telephone British Gas immediately.

British Gas Emergencies

0800 111 999

Turning off Your Gas Supply

The following information should help:

- Look for the main gas supply tap in your home. It is usually near the meter. Find out how to turn it off. Keep any key in a handy place by the meter.
- Turn off all gas appliances (boiler, fire, water heater, and cooker) before switching off the main supply.
- Turn the main supply gas tap to the 'off' position.
- Before turning the main supply back on, check that all gas appliances and lights are still turned off. Turn the main supply gas tap back to 'on'. The pilot light on appliances can now be lit.
- If the main supply gas tap is stiff and won't turn easily do not force it. Call the local British Gas service engineer who will loosen it.

Electricity Supply

Please read the meter when you move in and phone the Electricity Company to arrange for the supply. Please note that some properties are fitted with electricity key meters. You must contact the Electric Company if you want to change the meter or need a new key.

Southern Electricity	General Enquires	0345 444 555
	Emergencies	0345 708 090

Electricity

Always get an approved electrician to do all electrical repairs and wiring. When you buy electrical goods, check that they have been tested and approved for safety. The following advice will be helpful:

- Do not have too many items plugged into one socket.
- Check flexes and fittings regularly for worn or damaged parts or loose connections.
- Make sure plugs are wired correctly and that fuses are working.
- Avoid long flexes.
- Have safety guards on fires.
- Never use portable electrical equipment in bathrooms (except for shavers in a special shaving socket).
- Do not touch plugs, switches or electrical equipment with wet hands.
- Unplug electrical equipment when not in use, especially television sets.

Telephone

Contact British Telecom on telephone number 150 or Videotron on telephone number 0500 500194 to arrange to take over or install a telephone.

More information

General

Insurance

You are responsible for insuring the contents of your home. In the event of fire, flood, theft or storm damage we have no obligation to give you financial assistance or compensation. You also need to insure yourself against claims from someone else (third party claims), e.g. if your washing machine leaks and floods the flat below, damaging their contents. We are only responsible for repairs to the building.

You must make your own arrangements to insure the contents of your home.

Television aerials and satellite dishes

We will normally provide a television outlet point complete with appropriate cable into the loft. However it is the tenant's responsibility to provide, install and maintain an aerial.

In most areas you can have a satellite dish not exceeding 60cm in diameter. You must apply to us, in writing, before installing a satellite dish. However in communal areas we reserve the right to purchase a system more suitable to the communal system and remove individual consent.

Garden sheds

We are usually happy for tenants to erect a garden shed to store garden tools, lawnmowers etc. but permission must be sought prior to installation. The floor area should not exceed 32 square feet (4 square metres) and must be erected on a sound base. When the tenant leaves, the shed must be removed and the garden left in its original condition.

Health and safety

Pest control

Rats and mice will be dealt with by your Local Authority, please contact the Environmental Health department at the Council.

Aids and adaptations for disabled people

If you are disabled and having problems in coping with your home we may be able to make adaptations which will enable you to live more comfortably, for example, handrails and grab rails. If you need help with items such as adapted showers or baths please see your GP. Your GP will write to an Occupation Therapy Department. An Occupational Therapist will visit you in your home and work with you to adapt your home to meet your needs. Please contact the Housing Manager if you would like any more information.

Gardens

You are responsible for maintaining your garden in a tidy condition. If your garden is not maintained to a reasonable standard and/or becomes a health hazard, we may have to restore the garden to its normal state and charge you for the work. Tenants can be served with a Notice Seeking Possession if their garden is not kept to a reasonable standard. Always check with our Maintenance Department before lopping branches from, or cutting down a tree in your garden. Sometimes we have to ask the Local Authority permission before we cut or prune a tree, as it may have a tree preservation order to protect it.

Calor Gas and Paraffin

The Association forbids the use of Calor gas or paraffin in your home.

All properties contain an adequate heating system. If you feel that your home is not properly heated please contact the Housing Manager.

Preventing condensation

Every home suffers from condensation, caused by too much moisture in the air. It happens when the temperature drops - for example near a cold wall or window. The moist air leaves water on the cold surface, often causing dampness and mould.

How can you reduce condensation?

- Keep your home as warm as possible and open windows a little for ventilation.
- Keep kitchen doors shut but make sure there is enough ventilation when cooking.
- Do not let kettles or pans boil longer than necessary; keep pans covered.
- Keep bathroom doors shut when you are running hot water; but ensure adequate ventilation.
- Ventilate kitchens and bathrooms after use.
- Wherever possible, dry clothes outside the home. If you can't, open a window to let air circulate when drying inside.
- Tumble dryers must be ventilated to the outside.
- Do not overfill cupboards and wardrobes. Let air circulate.

If you still get condensation and dampness contact the Maintenance Department.

Damp courses

A damp course in the brickwork of your home should ensure that dampness does not rise from the ground. Make sure that the garden soil level is kept below the damp proof course and airbricks are not obstructed or blocked.

Preventing accidents

Consider the following advice:

- Keep children away from cookers; turn pan handles away from the front of the cooker.
- Do not leave matches or lighters around.
- Do not leave fires unguarded.
- Keep children away from electrical sockets; use safety covers when you are not using them.
- Keep hot drinks away from children's reach.
- Keep all cleaning materials and medicines out of children's reach.
- Fit window locks and keep balcony doors closed.
- Replace used light bulbs at once and use lights when it is gloomy.
- Keep stairs well lit.
- Keep floors and floor coverings in good condition.
- Use non-slip mats and rugs and non-slip polishes.

Making your home secure

We want to make your home as secure as possible. The following advice will help:

- Close all windows and secure and lock all entrance doors when you go out.
- Never leave your curtains closed in the daytime or leave notes for callers at your home.
- When you leave your home for some time, such as a holiday, cancel your milk and newspaper deliveries.
- Never leave money or valuables lying around. Mark valuables with your postcode.
- Fit a chain to your front door.
- Lock up before you go to bed. Make sure the windows on the ground floor, near drainpipes or flat roofs are securely locked.
- Always check the identity of unknown visitors to your home. If you are suspicious call the police.

The Crime Prevention Officer at your local police station will give you more help about making your home secure.

Protecting against fire

Most fires in the home are caused by:

- children playing with matches
- faulty electrical equipment
- being careless with cigarettes, matches, candles, lamps and cooking equipment
- airing clothes too close to heaters and fires
- not using a good fire guard

To prevent fire or minimise its damaging effects, consider the following precautions:

- Close all doors before going to bed or going out. This helps prevent fire and smoke spreading.
- Do not remove the batteries from your smoke alarm. If you don't have one, ask the Maintenance Department to fit one. We will fit additional ones, although there may be a charge.
- Replace exhausted batteries in your smoke alarm.

- Get a small fire extinguisher or fire blanket to help you control fires in the kitchen.
- Never throw water on electrical equipment or burning oil.
- Only use rooms in your home for their proper purpose. Do not use them for storage or as a workshop.
- Do not obstruct hallways and passages, especially with things that could cause a fire.
- All the emergency services need a clear route to deal with emergencies. Help them by parking properly and keeping access roads clear.

If there is a fire in your home

- Leave the room straight away and close the door behind you.
- Do not panic.
- Do not try to put the fire out unless you know you can do so safely and quickly.
- Alert everyone in the home and get them to leave, making sure they close all the doors behind them. This will slow down the spread of fire and smoke. Smoke is the main danger in most fires.
- Call the fire brigade as quickly as you can. Dial 999, give the number you are calling from and ask for the fire brigade.
- Close all windows and doors; if smoke or flames enter your home before you can do this then leave at once and close all doors behind you.
- If the fire is outside your home, for example in a garden shed, telephone the fire brigade and tell your neighbours who may be affected.