



# Information for Tenants

As you may be aware, it is important to ensure that the home that you rent is safe to live in. There is a strong link between housing conditions and your health.

There are some items that are mainly your responsibility as a tenant (see the Health and Safety Checklist) and there are the repairs and general maintenance that are generally the responsibility of the letting agent or landlord.

### What do I do if there is a problem with repairs to the property I rent?

Firstly you should contact your landlord or letting agent to bring it to their attention. No-one else may have contacted them about it.

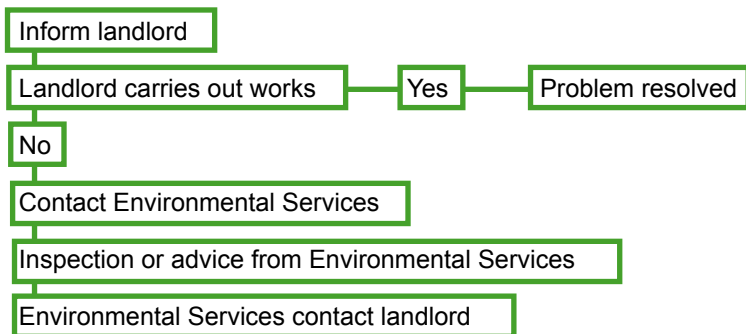
If they do not carry out the repair within a reasonable time or you are concerned because you consider the item is dangerous, contact Environmental Services for assistance on 01353 665555.

It is a good idea to have the details including the name, address and telephone number of your landlord available to give to the officer, so that they can contact the landlord quickly for you to try to resolve the problem.

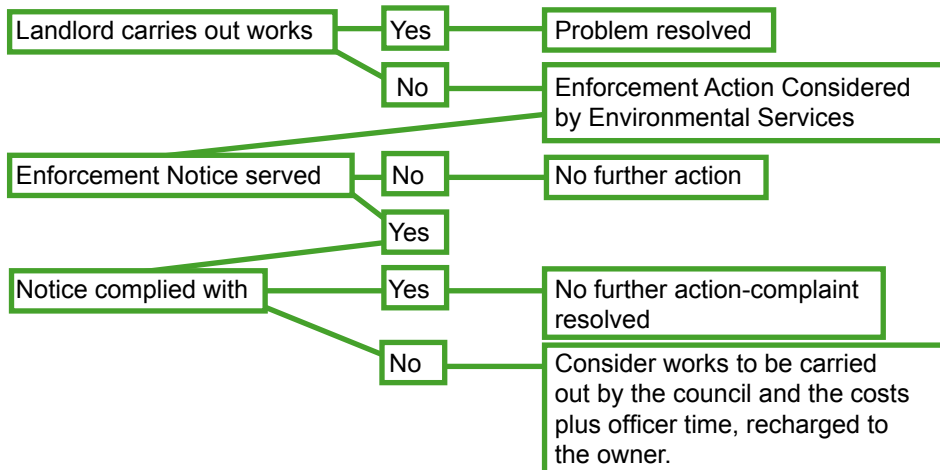
An officer may need to visit to inspect your property and then contact your landlord or letting agent to request them to arrange for the works to be carried out. Depending on the severity of the works, if the landlord or letting agent is not co-operative, further formal action may be taken. Formal action is however, only taken as a last resort. Where formal action is taken, a notice can be served on the responsible person for the works to be completed within a specified time. If the notice is not complied with, the owner may incur hefty costs and the work may be carried out by the council. The council may also consider prosecuting the landlord..

### Flow Chart for General Repair Enquiry

#### **Housing repair/maintenance problem**



*continue on page 3*



### Fire Safety

Fire obviously poses a serious risk. Many fires can be avoided but, if a fire does begin, you need to know how to react in such an emergency. Fire detection devices, such as smoke detectors and alarms, can give early warning of a fire. You or your landlord may be able to obtain free smoke alarms by contacting the Fire Authority

- Get to know what to do in the case of a fire. There should be a notice telling what you need to do and clear signs for your escape route
- Keep escape routes e.g. stairs, hallways clear and unobstructed
- Do not remove batteries from the smoke alarms at any time
- Check that any fire fighting equipment or alarms are regularly checked and maintained

### Gas Safety

- Check with your landlord to see the report for the gas installations. These should be checked once a year.

### Electrical Safety

- Check with your landlord if you are unsure about the electrics to see the electrical report. The electrics should be checked regularly.

### Home Safety Inspection Checklist

Here is a general checklist for you to 'hazard spot', so that you can check your home so that you can try to avoid some of the hazards to prevent accidents or obtain further advice.

- Are carpets and other floor finishes properly fitted down?
- Are loose mats non-slip on the underside?
- Is lighting good at changes in floor level, steps and stairs?

- Are stairways and landings protected safely? Do they have handrails?
- Are windows child safe? Can you still get out in an emergency?
- Is any low level glazing properly fitted with safety glass?
- Do floors, stairs or other parts of the building seem unsafe in other ways?
- Are anti-topple brackets fitted to cookers and cooker safety guards where children are present?
- Are worksurfaces sufficient to keep children away from kettles and other hot or sharp objects? Do they fit close enough to both sides of the cooker to help stop children from reaching pan handles?
- Are self-closing fire doors, smoke detectors, fire alarms, & emergency lighting fitted & maintained?
- Is a fire blanket provided in the kitchen area? Do you know how to use it?
- In a fire, could you leave the building by the front door without using a key and reach a place of safety?
- Do gas appliances work properly? Is there discolouring around gas fires or the top of water heaters?
- Have you seen the Gas Safety Certificate that the landlord should get for your home each year?
- Do electrical wires trail where they can be damaged, be in contact with water or be a trip hazard?
- Are electrical sockets overloaded, overheating, or giving electric shocks? Are wires old or damaged?
- Is furniture labelled as complying with fire regulations and a warning that 'Carelessness causes fire'?
- Do people who are young, elderly, have a disability or who are otherwise less able to react to an accident or emergency situation live in or visit your home? Is special care, advice or help needed?

### Other useful telephone numbers:

**Emergency Services - 999**

**Gas Emergencies - call British Gas - 0800 111 999**

**NHS Direct - 0845 4647**

**Health and Safety Executive - Gas boiler safety/carbon monoxide enquiries - 01582 444200**