



**Section**

**8**

**Living in your home**



## Section 8 Living in your home

### Preventing Fires

You should fit smoke detectors in your property. You should test them regularly and if your detector is battery-powered, renew the batteries annually.

Before going to bed at night or when you go out:

- Make sure all fires are out or have a guard
- Make sure all cigarettes are extinguished and don't throw them into bins
- Don't dry clothes over heaters
- Don't leave chip pans unattended
- Don't leave lit candles unattended.

### Electrical Safety

- Unplug appliances when not in use
- Use the correct fuses in plugs
- Isolate any faulty switch or socket. Pull out the fuse or switch off the trip and unplug appliances
- Don't touch exposed wires. Turn off the electricity at the mains
- Don't touch wet fittings. Turn off the electricity at the mains and don't use again until it is completely dry
- Don't overload sockets. Avoid double adaptors – use only one appliance at a time in a socket.

### Smoke Alarms

You are responsible for testing these appliances. We recommend that you test your alarm once a week. If the alarms are battery operated and fail to sound during the test, or if the low battery indicator starts to bleep, you must replace your battery immediately.

Any mains powered alarm systems in communal areas will be maintained by the management company.

### If you smell Gas

- Open doors and windows to get rid of the gas
- Check to see if the gas has been left on unlit or if a pilot light has gone out
- Turn off the gas at the meter
- Don't operate doorbells or electrical switches
- Don't smoke or use naked flames
- Call Transco immediately. **Phone: 0800 111 999**



## **Preventing carbon monoxide fumes**

Buy officially approved appliances, marked with the British Standard Kite Mark. Use 'Gas Safe' registered gas installers to install new gas appliances and fires  
**Important - arrange for a 'Gas Safe' registered contractor to check all gas appliances in your home annually; this is your responsibility.**

## **Running a business from your home**

You are not permitted to run any trade or business from the property.

## **Absence from your home**

If you intend to leave your home for a long period, please let us know before you go. This is so we know the plans you have made for paying the rent, and for looking after the property. We need a contact address for you in case of any emergency. If you are absent for 90 days or more this may affect your buildings insurance.

## **Rubbish disposal**

Bracknell Forest Council should provide you with a wheelie bin or dustbin. Please make sure that you dispose of your household refuse carefully. Do not leave bags or refuse in communal hallways. Do not allow rubbish to accumulate in your home or garden. You can take larger items to the Waste and Recycling site at Longshot Lane, or contact Bracknell Forest Council to arrange a special collection, for which there may be a charge.

## **Pets**

Always ensure that your pet is kept under control. Do not allow it to cause a nuisance either by making excessive noise or by fouling communal grounds and footpaths.

## **Parking vehicles**

You can park roadworthy and taxed cars in designated parking areas. There is no allocated parking on our estates. Do not park heavy trade or commercial vehicles, caravans and boats on any parking areas owned by Bracknell Forest Homes. Please take care not to block estate roads and do not park vehicles on grassed areas. Untaxed and unroadworthy vehicles should not be parked on the Association's land.



## **Repairing vehicles**

Do not carry out extensive vehicle repairs from your home. When carrying out servicing and minor repairs, make sure that you do not cause damage to paths and roadways or disturb your neighbours.

## **Abandoned vehicles**

It is illegal to abandon a vehicle and they are an eyesore. We will report abandoned or untaxed vehicles to Bracknell Forest Council. The owner may be charged for its removal.

## **Communal areas and estates**

If you live in a flat you may share the hall and stairs with other residents. You may also share other areas such as communal gardens and unadopted access roads. The management company arranges for the upkeep of the communal areas, and you pay for this through your service charge.

Where you share hallways and stairs with other residents, please do not store bikes, toys or prams in these areas. If you store such items in these areas, you may be creating a health and safety risk or breaking fire regulations.

## **Satellite dishes and cable TV**

If you live in a flat, you will need to obtain the written consent of the management company before putting any television, radio or other aerial / dish outside the property.

## **Your own garden**

You are responsible for looking after your garden if you have one. Make sure you control weeds and do not store rubbish in your gardens as this may attract vermin.

## **Adapting your home**

If you or a member of your family has restricted mobility and needs an adaptation to your home, you should contact Bracknell Forest Council Social Services. Examples of adaptations include grab rails, level access ramps, walk in showers, ground floor extension or stair lift.



## **Anti-social behaviour - Give respect, Get respect**

Everyone should be able to enjoy their home and to feel secure within their community.

We are committed to proactively tackling anti-social behaviour, including domestic violence and racial harassment. We understand this has a negative impact on people's lives and can lead to a decline in communities.

If you want information about how we deal with reports of anti-social behaviour and how we can support victims, please contact the Neighbourhood Management Team and ask for information leaflets.

### **In an emergency, do not hesitate to call the Police on 999.**

For non-emergencies please call 0845 8 505 505.

## **Abuse of staff**

Your lease may say you must not cause a nuisance to the landlord or managing agent and this includes our staff and contractors. This also applies outside normal office hours and to staff working in your home. In the same way, our staff and contractors should always act in an acceptable way towards you. We will take appropriate legal action, including the possibility of forfeiture, if you abuse or assault our staff or contractors who are carrying out work on our behalf.

## **Insurance of your property**

If you live in a house you are responsible for insuring the property.

If your property is a flat then the management company is responsible for insuring the buildings of which your property forms a part. You will have to pay the cost of the insurance premium in your service charge.

## **Contents insurance**

We do not insure the contents of your home, or personal belongings. It is your responsibility to make your own arrangements for contents insurance.

Bracknell Forest Homes has negotiated a low cost home contents insurance scheme for tenants and leaseholders who occupy their own property. The scheme has been arranged in partnership with the insurance brokers Jardine Lloyd Thompson and is organised by the National Housing Federation. If you would like the details of this insurance please contact us to request a pack.