



# HOMESAFE

A handbook on home safety and security  
for residents of council properties



# Introduction

This booklet gives safety advice to Wandsworth tenants and leaseholders. It provides information about how to make your home safer and more secure. It also offers advice on a range of health and safety issues, such as fire, flood and electrical hazards, as well as providing details about a number of organisations who can advise on home security.

Homesafe is intended as a guide only, you should seek expert advice from the appropriate organisations such as the fire service, police service or utility companies if you have any concerns or queries.

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### Disclaimer **please note**

The contents of this booklet are not legally binding and do not affect any tenancy agreement, lease or other legally binding document or arrangement. The council has tried to ensure that the contents are correct at the time of writing, but cannot guarantee their accuracy. If you are in doubt or difficulty; if you are involved in a dispute; or if you need to know your rights; you should seek your own independent legal advice from a solicitor or other suitably qualified person.

This authority is under a duty to protect the public funds it administers, and to this end may use the information you provide for the prevention and detection of fraud.

It may also share this information with other bodies responsible for auditing or administering public funds for these purposes.

# FIRE SAFETY

Your building has been designed and built with fire safety in mind. In single dwellings and blocks of flats, the walls, doors and stairs, have been specially designed to resist fire and stop the spread of smoke.

The council undertakes Fire Risk Assessments to the communal areas of all its blocks. These are reviewed and updated regularly.

### Fire doors and dry riser inlets

It is essential that fire doors and their closing mechanism are properly maintained. They should be kept closed and you should never wedge fire doors open.

Fire safety doors are inspected regularly to ensure that they are in full working order.

### Dry riser inlets

Dry risers are pipes that allow fire fighters to send water to every level of a building without using hoses. They are visually inspected every week and tested every year.

### Access to your estate or block

Roads and other communal areas are designed so that emergency vehicles can

access buildings. Never obstruct access routes with vehicles, dustbins or any other bulky items.

### Keeping communal areas safe

Communal areas such as corridors, staircases and balconies should be kept clear. Domestic waste and rubbish should be put in bins or chutes. Do not store or leave objects in communal areas. This might stop people escaping and may hinder fire fighters from rescuing people.

It is against the law to smoke in communal areas of any public building.



# Smoke alarms

## Get a smoke alarm

The fire service recommends that all households get a smoke alarm fitted. This gives extra time for you and others to escape from a fire.

Smoke alarms detect smoke and fires at their earliest stages and set off an alarm to warn you and your family of the danger.

The housing department fits smoke alarms in tenanted properties. We will fit alarms to existing tenants' homes, on request and at no charge. For further information contact your estate manager (see page 29).

If you own your home, you will be responsible for installing and maintaining smoke alarms in your property. Smoke alarms are widely available from DIY shops and supermarkets. If you have difficulties, local voluntary organisations may be able to fit the alarm for you.

## The London Fire Brigade gives the following advice:

- Test your alarms once a week.
- Consider if anyone in your household has extra needs – for example, if a household member has a hearing impairment, an adapted fire alarm that sets off a vibrating pad or flashing light may be installed. Speak to your estate manager if this is required.
- Make sure any alarms you buy are marked with a current British Standards or European (CE) safety mark, which shows they are approved and safe.
- Fit smoke alarms on a ceiling.
- Make sure you fit an appropriate alarm in every room where there's a fire risk.
- Follow installation instructions that come with the alarm – they all work in different ways.
- Fit your smoke alarms away from kitchens and bathrooms as steam can damage the alarm or set it off by mistake.
- Choose smoke alarms with a 10-year or long-lasting sealed battery.
- When testing your alarm, do not use smoke or flame to test devices.



**Sheltered housing** – If you live in a sheltered housing scheme property, you are not expected to test your home's fire alarm, unless you have installed your own standalone device. Sheltered properties have their own integrated smoke alarm systems. These systems are maintained by Wandsworth Council. Should you have problems with your fire alarm system, please report this to your sheltered housing officer.

**General needs housing** – If you live in general needs housing (housing that is not sheltered), you should test your fire alarm on a regular basis and report any problems or failures. Please refer to the above advice on how to test and clean your alarm.

# Preventing fires and protecting your means of escape



- Never smoke in bed, or anywhere else where you may doze off.
- Keep matches, lighters and candles out of the reach of children.
- Put out cigarettes and candles properly.
- Be careful with cookers and appliances, fires often start in kitchens.
- Check that batteries, plugs, leads and electrical equipment are safe and well maintained.
- Do not overload electrical sockets.
- Use a good fireguard, if required.
- Do not sit too close to a fire or heater.
- Do not dry clothes too close to heaters or fires.
- Do not put heaters or lamps near curtains or furniture.
- Do not pour or throw water on electrical appliances or fire that has been caused by an electrical appliance.
- Do not pour or throw water on electrical appliances or fire that has been caused by fat or cooking oil.
- Ensure furniture is fire resistant.



## Bedtime checklist

There are a number of steps you can take to check everything is safe before going to bed to reduce the risk of fire in your home.

- Close all your internal doors to prevent smoke and flames spreading if a fire starts. Do not wedge self-closing doors open.
- Turn off and unplug electrical appliances, unless they are designed to be left on e.g. fridge/freezer.
- Do not leave the washing machine, tumble dryer or dishwasher on overnight and unattended.
- Do not leave mobile phones, tablets or e-cigarettes charging overnight.
- Check that your hob and oven switches are off.
- Turn off heaters.
- Put candles, incense sticks and oil burners out and never leave them burning while you are asleep.
- Make sure cigarettes are completely out – wet them to be sure. Check embers are cold and empty ash trays.
- Make sure escape routes are clear.
- Ensure you have access to a phone.
- Keep door and window keys where everyone you live with can find them.
- If you or anyone else in the home has mobility issues, ensure mobility aids and methods of calling for help (like emergency pendants) are close to hand in case help is needed to assist with an escape.

## Front Doors

It is important that your front door has 30 minutes fire resistance to stop the spread of fire into common parts of the block.

If you are a tenant, you must not make any alterations to your front door, for example removing the automatic door closers. You must report any repairs to your area team, including if the door closer does not work.

If you are a leaseholder, you are responsible for your front door as set out in the terms of your lease. Inspections of front entrance doors, in blocks that are four storeys and higher, are carried out on an annual basis and you will be contacted if your front door is not compliant. Advice on front doors can be found on the council website at [www.wandsworth.gov.uk/fire-compliant-front-doors](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/fire-compliant-front-doors)

## Security Grilles

The council does not permit residents to fit security grilles over front doors and any internal window grilles must conform to building regulations.

Fitting security grilles to front doors and windows may make your home feel safer from intruders. However, this may make it more difficult for fire fighters to rescue you.

For further advice on security grilles, contact your area housing team.

## Who to contact

For further advice contact your estate manager, co-operative or resident management organisation (RMO). Alternatively, for information and advice about preventing fires in your home or for a free home safety check, contact the London Fire Brigade, see the contacts section or visit: [www.london-fire.gov.uk](http://www.london-fire.gov.uk) or [www.firekills.gov.uk](http://www.firekills.gov.uk).

# What to do if there is a fire

These simple steps could save your life.

## In the event of a fire – plans for your building

If you live in a block of flats or a building with several storeys, you will have a plan specific to that building. Check the Fire Action Notice and the noticeboard located in the communal area of your building.

**This may be:-**

**Stay put** – Most residential buildings will have a ‘stay put’ strategy, where it is considered generally safer for residents to stay in their flats as long as the heat or smoke from the fire is not affecting them. This is because the structure of the flat – walls, floors, and doors – is designed to give appropriate protection.

**Simultaneous** – This means if there is a fire everyone needs to leave the building, even if there is no fire in their own home. This is less common in Wandsworth and where there are buildings with a simultaneous evacuation strategy, we will work with residents to ensure that they are appropriately informed, and any individual circumstances considered.



## Check your Fire Action Notice

In the communal areas of the buildings, the following information will be displayed on the Notice

- how to report a fire
- a reminder of what the evacuation strategy is for that building
- any other instruction that tells residents what they must do once a fire has occurred, based on the building’s evacuation strategy.

## Fire in a communal area

If you live in a block of flats or a building with several storeys and there is a fire outside your home either in another property or in a communal area, such as a corridor:

- Call 999 for the fire brigade
- It is usually safer to stay in your home until you can be safely evacuated by firefighters
- If smoke or flames enter your home, leave at once and close the doors behind you
- Always use the stairs, do not use lifts.

If you live in a house or a flat inside a house, you should try to escape, where possible. Every household should plan an escape route in case of a fire. You should follow this escape route to leave the house, unless it is blocked by the fire. For help with planning your escape route visit: [www.london-fire.gov.uk/safety/the-home/escape-plan](http://www.london-fire.gov.uk/safety/the-home/escape-plan)

If you are on the ground or first floor, you may be able to escape through a window. Don't jump – use soft materials to cushion your fall and lower yourself down carefully.

### In addition:

- If there is a lot of smoke, get down and crawl as near to the floor as possible, where the air will be cleaner.
- If it is possible tell any neighbours who may be affected.
- Do not go onto a balcony unless it leads to a fire escape route.

## Fire inside your home

**If there is a fire in your home and the route is clear, you should:**

- Shout 'fire' to alert others in the home
- Get everyone out
- Close the door behind you

- Walk as calmly as possible out of the building to the assembly point
- You should not use the lift
- Call 999 for the fire brigade

## If the fire is in your path and you cannot escape, it may be safer to stay in the room you are in. In this event:

- Shout 'fire' to alert others in the home
- Close the door
- Block any gaps to stop smoke coming under the door
- Open a window
- Phone or shout for help
- Wait to be rescued.

## In the event of a fire, always remember...

- Before opening a door, check closed doors/handles with the back of your hand. Never open the door if the handle or back of the door feels warm. There may be a fire on the other side.
- If there is a lot of smoke, get down and crawl as near to the floor as possible, where the air will be cleaner.
- Tell any neighbours who may be affected, if possible.
- Never assume it is a false alarm.
- Keep calm and do not panic.
- Do not stop to pick up valuables.
- Do not investigate the fire or its source. Do not try to put out the fire unless you can do so safely and quickly.
- Always use stairs, do not use lifts.
- Never return to a burning building.

# Calling the fire brigade

- In an emergency dial 999 ask for the fire service.
- Speak clearly and slowly.
- Give your name, phone number and precise address.
- Say where the fire is in your home – for example, the kitchen.
- Say if anyone is trapped in the property or in a particular room.



## Also, if you live in a flat or maisonette give the:

- Address, including the number of your flat (if the fire is in your home).
- Tell them which floor the fire is on (for example, fifth floor).

## Escape planning

You will only have a short time to get out. So make an escape plan and test it so you know what to do if there is a fire.

- Plan your escape route rather than waiting until there is a fire.
- Think of another way out in case your normal route is blocked.
- Keep escape routes and exits clear – do not put bikes, prams or other objects in corridors, hallways or staircases.
- Make sure you and your family know the escape plan and tell them where door and window keys are kept.
- You might also want to keep valuable documents in a metal fire-proof box.

## Free fire safety advice and assessments

If you are concerned that your home is at risk of fire, you can complete a Home Fire Safety Check online

[www.london-fire.gov.uk](http://www.london-fire.gov.uk)

Depending on the outcome of the Fire Safety Check, you may be recommended to carry out a room-by-room assessment of your property or to book a free home safety visit from your local fire service. They will inspect your home, help identify any potential fire risks, show you how to reduce or prevent fire danger and help you make a fire escape plan. If you are potentially vulnerable, the fire service may carry out a Home Fire Safety Check in person.

## Escape planning for mobility impaired vulnerable residents

If you are mobility impaired, for example, have hearing, sight or cognitive impairments that may affect your ability to leave your property in the event of a fire in your home, contact Wandsworth's Housing Department who will discuss with you the available options to keep you safe.

# ELECTRICITY

Electricity is used throughout our homes. Appliances, plugs and cables that are old or poorly maintained can be a real danger and fire risk.

## Testing electrical installations.

We are required to test the electrical installations in our tenanted properties and communal areas at least every five years. As part of the tenancy conditions, access must be given for our staff and contractors to carry out testing.

## Your mains supply

Be sure you know how to turn off the electricity supply at the mains switch in case of an emergency. The mains switch will be on the consumer unit, also known as the fuse box, which is often situated in the hallway or under the stairs. When this switch is turned off the electricity supply to your home will be cut off.

## Spotting the risks

There are danger signs to look out for on all electrical items in your home that will reduce or prevent an incident.

### Look out for:

- Hot plugs and sockets, fuses that frequently blow, flickering lights and scorch marks on sockets or plugs. These are all signs of loose wiring or another electrical problem that should be fixed.
- Overloaded sockets – too many plugs in one socket can overload it and lead to overheating or fire.
- Badly positioned cables – can lead to trips and falls or other accidents, such

as a kettle being pulled from a work surface.

- Electricity and water – cables and plugs should never be located near water or in danger of getting wet. Make sure that electric fires, hair dryers are kept away from water.
- Check the condition of sockets, cables and plugs regularly.
- Switch off electrical appliances when not in use and remove plugs from sockets.
- Make sure your electrical appliances are wired correctly.

**live** = brown or red wire,

**neutral** = blue or black wire,

**earth** = yellow and green or green wire.



## Using the right plug fuses

Fuses in your plugs are designed to stop overheating. Please see the guidance below to find the right fuse to use.

### Appliances up to:

- 700 watts = 3-amp fuse (coloured red).
- 700 to 3,000 watts = 13-amp (coloured brown).

## Using adapters

It is safer to use a bar adapter than a block adapter. Only use one adapter per socket. Do not allow the total current used by the appliances plugged in to add up to more than the rating of the extension lead. Check the current rating of the extension lead before plugging appliances into it. Most are rated at 13 A, but some are rated at only 10 A or less – the rating should be clearly marked on the back or underside of the extension lead. Try to buy an adapter with a circuit breaker feature.

## Mains fuses and circuit-breakers

Mains fuses and circuit-breakers are safety devices to cut off the electricity supply.

If a light or an electrical appliance does not work, it may be because a fuse has blown. If a fuse blows, it is your responsibility to replace it with the correct fuse. This might be because there was a fault with the appliance or because you were using too many electrical appliances at the same time and have overloaded the system.

If you are sure that the appliance is in good working order and that you have not overloaded the system, there might be an electrical fault.

Some homes have circuit-breakers instead of fuses as a safety cut-off for the

electricity. A circuit-breaker is a switch that turns off the electricity supply if there is a fault. Do the same safety checks as you would if a fuse has blown and reset the switch to on. If the circuit-breaker continues to switch off, there might be an electrical fault.

For information about re-setting your fuse box, please visit [www.wandsworth.gov.uk/safety-in-the-home](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/safety-in-the-home)



## Electrical fires

Sometimes, a fire can be started by an electrical appliance or electrical fault; this is known as an electrical fire.

If you have an electrical fire in your home;

- Pull out the plug; or
- switch off the power at the fuse box.

This may stop the fire immediately.

However:

- Never use water on an electrical fire.
- Do not take any personal risks.
- Call the emergency services on 999.

## Who to contact

If you are a tenant, you should report an electrical fault to your estate manager. Leaseholders are advised to contact a qualified electrician who is NICEIC registered, and residents of RMOs should contact their local office.

You can find further information in the **contacts section**.

## Electric scooters, electric bikes and lithium batteries

Battery fires, often caused by batteries found in electric scooters and bikes, can be incredibly ferocious fires and spread quickly out of control, causing major property damage or death.

Any items left in communal areas will be removed.

### Reduce the risk of overheating:

- Batteries can get warm during their use. Allow them to cool down before attempting to re-charge.
- Batteries should always be charged on hard flat surfaces where the battery can be kept cool.
- Batteries can also pose a risk if they have been damaged, so try to ensure they are not getting knocked around while in use or while being carried.
- Batteries should also never be exposed to extremes of temperature.

### Follow the instructions:

- Always follow manufacturers' instructions when charging
- Never leave it charging unattended or on charge while you are asleep.
- Make sure you unplug your charger once it's finished charging.
- Always use the correct charger for your batteries and buy any replacements from a reputable seller:



- Never block your escape route with e-bikes or e-scooters
- Store and charge them somewhere away from a main through route or exit.

### Disposing of a lithium or rechargeable battery

Lithium batteries and rechargeable batteries should not be placed in the same bins as your regular rubbish or recycling. If they overheat, they may cause it to catch fire. Batteries can be taken to your local library, leisure centres and several other locations for safe disposal. For more information about disposing of your batteries, visit our website [www.wandsworth.gov.uk/rubbish](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/rubbish) and go to Waste and Recycling A-Z, Batteries.

# GAS

## Gas servicing

### Tenants

If you have a council installed gas-fired heating or hot water system, it will be serviced and inspected annually by the council's contractor. Even if you do not have gas appliances, inspection of all redundant gas pipework in the property will need to be undertaken annually by our contractors for safety reasons.

The council has a legal duty to inspect and properly maintain all gas appliances that it owns. You must ensure that access is given to the council's contractors. Failure to give access may result in the council forcing entry or seeking a court injunction to enter the property and costs could be awarded against you.

You should report any faults and defects to the contractor, who is required to respond within 24 hours.

You can find the name and contact details of your contractor on page 31.

You should not under any circumstances install your own gas-fired heating or hot water systems.

Gas cookers must be installed by a recognised Gas Safe registered engineer.



# Gas leaks – what to do if you can smell gas



If you think you have a gas leak turn off the gas supply at the meter, which is often situated in the hallway or under the stairs, immediately contact:

National Grid gas emergency (free phone): **0800 111 999** or Wandsworth Joint Control Centre **020 8871 8999**

**If there is a suspected gas leak you should:**

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

All gas distribution companies are responsible for dealing with gas leaks and emergencies in their respective networks. If you smell gas or you suspect that there has been an escape of fumes such as carbon monoxide call the 24-hour National Emergency line **0800 111 999**.

Engineers will attend any gas leak free of charge. If the leak is inside your home, they will make it safe by turning off the supply. If there is a problem with an appliance or pipe work, they will give you information about who to contact to have the appliance repaired.

## Leaseholders

You should have your gas appliances serviced by a Gas Safe registered engineer annually.

If you sublet your property, you are required by law to arrange for gas appliances to be properly maintained and inspected every year by a Gas Safe registered engineer. A copy of the certificate must be given to your tenant.

Failure to observe these requirements may make you liable to prosecution. You must be able to produce proof of this inspection and annual service to the council at any time.

## Priority Services Register

The Priority Services Register is a free support service that makes sure extra help is available to people in vulnerable situations.

**This may be because you –**

- Are of pensionable age.
- Have a sight, hearing, mobility or mental health condition.
- Need to use medical equipment that requires a power supply.

- Are in other potentially vulnerable situations.

Services may include free gas safety checks if you own your own home, advance notice of scheduled power cuts, priority support in an emergency and assistance in understanding bills and communications. Please check with your supplier. To find your electricity or gas distributor go to [www.thepsr.co.uk](http://www.thepsr.co.uk)

## Priority services during interruptions

If you are disabled, chronically sick or of pensionable age and a gas emergency has resulted in your heating or cooking appliances being disconnected, you are entitled to receive alternative heating and cooking equipment for free until your normal appliances are fixed. To find out more about free services and the priority services schemes contact Citizen's Advice (formerly Consumer Direct service) 0808 223 1133. To find your electricity or gas distributor [www.thepsr.co.uk](http://www.thepsr.co.uk)

## Liquid petroleum gas

The use and storage of liquid petroleum gas in flats and maisonettes is **not permitted** by the council.

## Paraffin heaters

This form of heating can be dangerous and a major source of condensation. You must not have or use paraffin heaters in your home.



# Carbon monoxide poisoning

The best way to prevent carbon monoxide leaks is to make sure your gas appliances and installations are inspected annually.

By law, landlords must install carbon monoxide alarms in all tenanted properties with an alarm in all rooms being used as 'living accommodation' where there is a 'fixed combustion appliance', other than a gas cooker.

Please allow access to install this if requested. You may also contact the housing area team using the contact details on page 29 who can arrange for a carbon monoxide detector to be fitted. Tenants are responsible for testing their alarms and to get in touch with us if there is an issue.

**Carbon monoxide poisoning is sometimes referred to as a silent killer because:**

- You can't see it.
- You can't taste it.
- You can't smell it.

Carbon monoxide is a poisonous gas that can build up when household gas appliances like boilers, water heaters and cookers are faulty or not getting enough oxygen to burn effectively.

The early symptoms of poisoning include tiredness, drowsiness, headache, pains in the chest and stomach pains. You are particularly vulnerable when you are asleep.

The risk increases if you sleep in a room where an appliance without a balanced-flue, such as an open fireplace with a chimney, is left burning at night. A balanced-flue appliance normally has a vent or flue outlet direct to an outside wall.

It is now illegal to convert or let a bedroom that contains an open flue appliance without a safety device.

## Carbon monoxide – what to look out for

Your appliance may be faulty if it has yellow or orange flames, soot or stains around it or if the pilot light frequently goes out or there is increased condensation inside your windows.

## Carbon monoxide – what to do if you suspect a leak

- Switch off the appliance.
- Turn off the mains gas supply.
- Open all doors and windows to ventilate the rooms.
- Contact your GP for health advice.
- Tenants should contact the council and leaseholders should contact a Gas Safe registered installer or the emergency contacts in this booklet.

## Be carbon monoxide safe

Generally, you should ensure that air is circulating freely and there are no obstructions to flues or vents.

- Do not use a gas appliance if you suspect it is not working properly.
- Do not cover an appliance or block the vents.
- Do not block or obstruct any fixed ventilation, grilles or air bricks.
- Do not block or cover outside flues or chimneys.
- Do not fit draught stripping to doors of a room containing a gas appliance.

### You can reduce the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning by;

- Fitting a carbon monoxide alarm.
- Making sure ventilation is free flowing and outlets are free from blockages.
- Having gas appliances regularly serviced. The council carries out annual inspections of tenanted properties.

If you have any concerns about your appliance, tenants should contact their estate manager, in the first instance, or the National Grid.

## Who to contact

For further information and advice about gas and gas systems, tenants should contact their estate manager, leaseholders are advised to contact a Gas Safe registered supplier and residents of RMOs should contact their local office. You can find further information in the contacts section.

### You also can seek advice from:

- Your gas supplier or the National Grid Gas Emergency (formerly Transco) freephone **0800 111 999**.
- The Gas Safe Register [www.gassaferegister.co.uk](http://www.gassaferegister.co.uk) or **0800 408 5500** (freephone)
- A Gas Safe registered contractor.
- Wandsworth Joint Control Centre out of hours **020 8871 8999**.

# WATER

## Water checks and quality

Drinking water in England and Wales is of a very high quality, however, on rare occasions you may have a problem with your drinking water. Water should be clear and bright; if it is discoloured, cloudy or has an unusual odour you should contact your water supplier.

### Council quality checks

The council carries out water risk assessments for all blocks with communal stored water supplies as well as regular checks of boosted supplies of mains water and all communal heating systems.

### Looking after your own water quality

To ensure water quality in your own home is kept to a high standard it is recommended that if your property is left empty for more than a week that you run the taps for a couple of minutes on your return and flush your toilet. Good

hygiene and maintenance is important – taps, shower heads and toilets should be regularly cleaned and descaled as these are areas where bacteria can flourish.

### Water mains and supply

Make sure you know where your mains water tap is located and how to turn off the water supply to your home.

The water system will not usually cause problems, but it is important that you know what to do if something goes wrong. If you are not sure how the water supply to your home works, contact your estate manager, residents of RMOs should contact their local office.



# Pipes and overflows

## Burst pipes

If you have a burst pipe, there are a number of measures you can take to prevent further water damage or flooding:

- Turn off the water at the mains stopcock.
- Turn on **all cold water taps** - this will drain any remaining water from the system. But do not turn on hot water taps when draining tanks, this may cause more damage to the system.
- Wrap a cloth or something similar tightly around the leaking pipes, put a bucket under the pipe, if possible.
- Turn off the boiler and immersion heater. However, gas fires can still be used.
- Turn off electricity at the mains switch as water may have touched the electric system. Make sure a qualified electrician checks the whole system before turning the supply back on.

If you have a burst pipe, tenants should contact their estate manager, leaseholders should contact a qualified plumber and residents of RMOs should contact their local office.

Outside normal working hours tenants should contact Wandsworth Joint Control Centre on **020 8871 8999**.

## Overflow problems

Overflow pipes are fitted to toilet cisterns and cold water tanks as safety outlets. If water continues to pour into tanks after they are full, the overflow pipe allows it to flow out.

Overflow problems can be caused by a sticking or faulty valve which should close when the tank is full. If the cistern or tank overflows, try the following:

- Flush the toilet.
- Press the ball-valve in the tank gently

below the surface of the water and allow it to rise slowly. Try this three or four times.

If the overflow continues to run you should seek assistance, see the **contacts section on page 29**.

## Water Pipes and cold weather

Water can cause all types of problems in cold weather, for example, pipes might freeze and crack, so make sure you have put in place some simple measures before winter:

- Check where your mains water stopcock is and that it works.
- Check that tanks and pipes are well insulated.
- Make sure you have adequate home contents insurance, in case your contents are damaged by water or flooding.

## Frozen pipes

**If you have frozen pipes:**

- Check that the mains stopcock can be turned off, in case of leaks when the ice melts.
- Turn off the mains stopcock when you are not using the drinking water supply.
- Allow natural warm air to circulate around the tank and frozen pipework. Do not use any electrical appliance to speed up this process.
- Do not use hot water taps until the water system has completely thawed because, if you have a copper tank, you might damage it.

Do not try to clear any airlocks to get the water system working again until all the pipes, tanks and overflows have thawed out.

# Condensation

Condensation is caused when warm moist air meets a cold surface.

The common sources are steam, tumble dryers and drying washing on radiators. In most cases, condensation can be prevented by allowing the warm, moist air to escape through an air-vent or open window.

Sometimes condensation is confused with damp. Condensation is surface moisture, whilst damp is moisture that has entered the fabric of the structure (e.g. rising damp or rainwater dripping from a leaking gutter onto a solid brick wall).

## Advice for reducing condensation

- Open windows or air vents.
- Try to keep all rooms a little warm, especially in cold weather.
- Keep bathroom and kitchen windows slightly open to let steam escape especially when cooking (use lids on saucepans), washing or bathing, but keep the doors shut to avoid moisture travelling around the rest of your home.

## Damp and mould

If you have damp and mould in your home you're more likely to have respiratory problems, respiratory infections, allergies or asthma. Damp and mould can also affect the immune system and your mental health.

Mould and damp are caused by excess moisture. Moisture in buildings can be caused by leaking pipes, rising damp in



basements or ground floors, or rain seeping in because of damage to the roof or around window frames.

# If you have condensation and mould



If you already have condensation and mould in your home, there are things you can do to avoid it getting worse.

## Condensation

You may notice that condensation is present on windows throughout the day and especially in the mornings. It is therefore good practice to wipe windows and sills with a clean dry cloth each morning to remove any water that has settled and remember to keep sills clutter free.

## Remove small mould patches

You should always contact us first if mould patches begin to develop in your property so that we can arrange to remove the mould and investigate the cause.

However, if you do decide to remove mould yourself, make sure you wear gloves and follow these steps:

- Wash the mould growths with bleach and water (one part bleach to four parts water)
- Clean with a mould spray (fungicidal spray)
- Leave surfaces to dry with plenty of ventilation
- Do not reuse cloths infected with mould/spores as this will spread the problem

## If you need help with damp and mould

If you are a council tenant and notice there is damp and mould in your property, you should contact the mould removal team.

The contact details for the mould removal team are:

- Telephone: **020 8871 8887**
- Email: [mould.removal@wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:mould.removal@wandsworth.gov.uk)

## After you have reported the issue

Once you have reported a problem, arrangements will be made for any mould to be removed and the property inspected to diagnose and advise on repair and improvement options to tackle the underlying cause of the problem.

You will also be provided with detailed advice as to how to reduce and prevent condensation, damp, and mould in your property.

# Floods

Floods are becoming more frequent in the UK, some parts of the borough may be more prone to flooding than others due to their location, such as properties at the bottom of a hill or near rivers. We all need to be prepared in case we live near flood areas, have a relative in the area or happen to be in these locations when they become flooded.

## If you get a flood warning

Here is some simple advice to prepare for a flood and what to do if there is a flood:

- Move family members, pets, vehicles, valuables and other items to safety (if possible).
- Alert your neighbours, particularly older or disabled people.
- Put sandbags, floodboards or even towels in place, plug sinks/baths and put a sandbag in the toilet bowl to prevent backflow. But make sure your property is still ventilated to allow air flow.
- Be ready to turn off gas and electricity supplies, unplug electrical items and move them upstairs, if possible. You may need help to turn off supplies – so be prepared.

## During a flood

- You and your family's safety is a priority – do not put yourself at risk.
- Try to keep warm and dry and move upstairs, if possible, until help arrives.
- Do as much as you can in daylight, as once it gets dark it is much more difficult.
- Be prepared to evacuate your home/ premises, please co-operate with emergency services and the council.
- Floods can kill, so do not try to walk or drive through floodwater. Six inches of fast flowing water can knock you over and two feet of water will float your car. High waters may release manhole

covers so there may be other hazards you cannot see.

- Never try to swim through fast flowing water – you may get swept away or get hit by an object floating in the water.

**Please remember, be prepared and safety comes first.**

## Who to contact:

If you get caught in a flood, you can call these emergency lines:

- Floodline on **0345 988 1188**
- Emergency services on **999**
- Wandsworth Joint Control Centre on **020 8871 8999**
- To find out if you live in a flood-prone area, contact the Environment Agency or see the website [www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk)

For further information and advice about water, leaks and floods, tenants should contact their estate manager, leaseholders are advised to contact their water supplier and residents of Resident Management Organisations should contact their local office.

Or you could contact the following organisation who has comprehensive information and advice:

- Thames Water  
[www.thameswater.co.uk](http://www.thameswater.co.uk)

# ASBESTOS

Many people have worries about asbestos, but undisturbed asbestos usually poses no problem.

Asbestos is a naturally occurring fibrous material which, if in good condition, presents negligible risk. When disturbed or damaged, however, asbestos-containing materials will release asbestos fibres and dust into the air, which are potentially dangerous.

In the past, asbestos was added to a variety of products to strengthen or fireproof them and used in the construction of some homes until the ban on asbestos came into force in November 1999. Most instances of asbestos in housing are low risk and unlikely to harm your health.

Undamaged asbestos in good condition will not release asbestos fibres. There is no danger unless the fibres are released and inhaled. If you suspect that there is damaged Asbestos Containing Material (ACM) in your home, contact your estate manager. Do not scrape, drill, cut, sand or disturb the area until checks have been carried out.

Under your lease agreement and tenancy conditions you are not permitted to change the structure or fabric of your home without prior consent from the council. This is to ensure work carried out is to the appropriate standard and to ensure proper controls are in place to reduce any possible exposure to asbestos fibres.

The council is required by law to hold a register of where asbestos is located in communal areas (for example, landings, lobbies and stairwells). This does not extend to individual homes.

The government has provided best practice guidance that the council adheres to. The underlying principle embraced by the Health and Safety Executive is that it is

always better not to remove or otherwise disturb an ACM, unless it is damaged or in the line of unavoidable work.

## Tenants

You must not remove asbestos containing material. The council will decide whether removal is necessary by taking expert advice. If required, a licensed contractor will remove and dispose of material or to encapsulate it (work to enclose or seal asbestos-containing materials).

## Leaseholders

You must not remove asbestos containing material. If you suspect there is material in your property that contains asbestos you must employ the services of a licensed asbestos analyst/contractor to test and then encapsulate or remove and dispose of the material under controlled conditions. The only exception to this is if the asbestos is within the communal ducting which runs through your property. In this instance the council will inspect and take any necessary remedial action.

## Who to contact

If you have any concerns about asbestos, tenants should contact their estate manager. Leaseholders should contact a licensed contractor and inform the council of the inspection or works if these are likely to affect neighbouring properties. Residents of RMOs should contact their local office.

To find out further information see the **contacts section**.

# HOME SAFETY

## Window safety

If your home has windows above ground floor level, remember that they can present a safety hazard if left open, particularly to a small child. If there is a fault with your window, report it immediately and keep the window closed until the repair is completed.

### Window restrictors

A restrictor mechanism is a safety device that is fitted to limit how far the window will open.

Some properties were built and designed before window safety restrictor mechanisms were introduced. Although, restrictors are not a statutory requirement, the council will, on request, fit window restrictors to those tenanted properties above the first floor that may not currently have them.

If your property has a safety restrictor mechanism fitted, it is important that you ensure that it is in full working order. This safety mechanism must never be released other than to clean the outside of the window, after which it must be put back to its correct safety position. Tenants should contact their estate manager for further details.

You should report defects to your window safety mechanism immediately to your estate manager.

Leaseholders are advised to install window restrictors, particularly if there are young or vulnerable people living in the property or if it is being sub-let.

### Window locks

Some windows have safety locks fitted to prevent them from being opened, except when being cleaned.

You should ensure that windows that open for cleaning purposes only and are fitted with locks that have a removable key, are kept locked at all times when cleaning is not in progress. These windows should not be opened for ventilation and the key should be kept securely out of reach of children.

Generally, the housing department does not fit window locks or supply replacement keys, except where the lock is an integral part of the window. You are advised to have a spare set of keys cut.



# Security – door entry

The council has fitted entry call systems in some blocks for extra security. If your home has one, please:

- Keep the main door closed.
- Do not let anyone into the building that you do not know or who you are not expecting.
- Be aware of people trying to slip into the building behind you as you enter or leave.
- Report any breakdown immediately (see the contacts section). Where the security of the whole block is affected a repair contractor must attend within 24 hours.

## Security – looking after your own home

There are a range of safety measures you can use to protect yourself and your home:

- Check the identity of callers to your home. Council employees, representatives from the police, utility suppliers (gas, water and electric) and government officers all carry identification. Do not let anyone in your home if you have any suspicions and call the police.
- When you go out or go to sleep, make sure you close all windows and lock all doors.
- When you go away cancel any regular deliveries (newspapers, groceries) that you have to your home.
- Install a spy-hole in your door.
- Do not leave notes outside for callers or friends when you go out.



- Do not put keys under a mat outside your front door or keep them in a place accessible from an open letterbox.
- Keep door keys safe as it is your responsibility to replace them if they get lost or stolen.

### For further advice contact:

- The Metropolitan Police, Crime Reduction Officer at your local police station.
- The council's community safety service.
- Neighbourhood Watch - to join or form a scheme in your area, visit: [www.wandsworth.gov.uk/neighbourhood-watch](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/neighbourhood-watch)

Older, disabled or vulnerable tenants may be entitled to free security assessments and works.

# Protecting your belongings



You can put in place a few simple security steps to keep your belongings safe from would-be thieves.

- When you go out make sure you close and lock all windows and doors.
- Mark valuable property with your postcode using an ultra-violet marker pen.
- Make copies of personal documents, such as passports, drivers licence and bank accounts in case they are stolen. It will be easier to report, replace and track them down in the event of a burglary.
- Do not leave keys on tables by the front door. Thieves will steal keys through letterboxes.
- Install an intruder light and/or alarm, if possible.
- If you are going away for a few days, tell a friend or relative.

## Insurance

You are advised to insure the contents of your home. The council is not responsible for the contents of your home. Insuring your belongings could save you a lot of money in the event of theft, loss or damage. You may also be responsible for damage caused to your neighbours' property, if it is deemed to be your fault.

There are many insurance companies that can tell you how much it will cost to insure the contents of your home. Always get quotations from several companies and choose the one that best fits your needs.

Do not be tempted to save money by under-insuring, it may cost you more in the long run.

If you have anything stolen from your home report it to the police. Your insurance company will need a crime number to process a claim.

You can obtain further information from:

- British Insurance Brokers Association (BIBA) **0370 950 1790** [www.biba.org.uk](http://www.biba.org.uk)
- Association of British Insurers (ABI) **020 7600 3333** [www.abi.org.uk](http://www.abi.org.uk)
- Leaseholders with building insurance claims should contact:  
Enquiries and claims **020 8871 6413** or **0800 028 0336**  
[insurancegroup@wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:insurancegroup@wandsworth.gov.uk)



## Bogus callers

Bogus callers may pose as council officers, water, electricity or gas workers, and even police officers so they can get access to your home and steal money and belongings from your home. You can prevent this type of crime by taking a few precautions.

### Follow the three step rules:

- **Stop** – before you open the door.
- **Chain** – put your door chain on.
- **Check** – check through a spy hole, ask for their identification and check it carefully before letting anyone in.

When ringing to check a caller is valid, always look up their office/company telephone number yourself.

Do not use a telephone number supplied by the caller, as bogus callers could have an accomplice answering the call.

If someone arrives unannounced, ask for an appointment at a convenient time. Officials will not mind being asked to do this. You can then arrange an appointment yourself.

If you are concerned ask a relative or friend to visit whilst the worker is in your home.

If you are approached by anyone suspicious or if you feel intimidated call the police and report it. Bogus callers are often not reported and the more information gathered about bogus callers, the easier it is for the police to apprehend them.

For further information visit the council's Community Safety Service on [www.wandsworth.gov.uk/what-you-can-do-to-prevent-crime](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/what-you-can-do-to-prevent-crime)

## Protecting your identity

You may be taking some precautions to keep your identity safe. However, identity theft is a growing concern and has increased dramatically over recent years.

### Keeping your identity safe:

- Shred all personal information before you throw them away: this includes bank statements, salary information or anything with a name and address.
- Set up a mail redirect if you move home.
- If you live in a shared house, consider collecting debit cards or cheque books from your branch.
- Do not give your personal details to unknown callers or email companies (this is called phishing), or when you could be overheard.
- Try to avoid carrying your personal documents with you and keep them in a safe place in your home.
- Keep your bank/credit card and PIN number safe – remember a bank will never phone to ask for your PIN.

- Ensure a website is both secure and bona fide before registering and making online payments, there should be a golden padlock symbol and a web address beginning https.
- Delete suspicious emails without opening them.
- Have a good firewall on your computer and install all security updates offered by your computer software company.

## Avoiding accidents – reducing trips and falls

Many accidents in the home are caused by trips and falls. By following a few simple steps you can reduce the risk to you and your family.

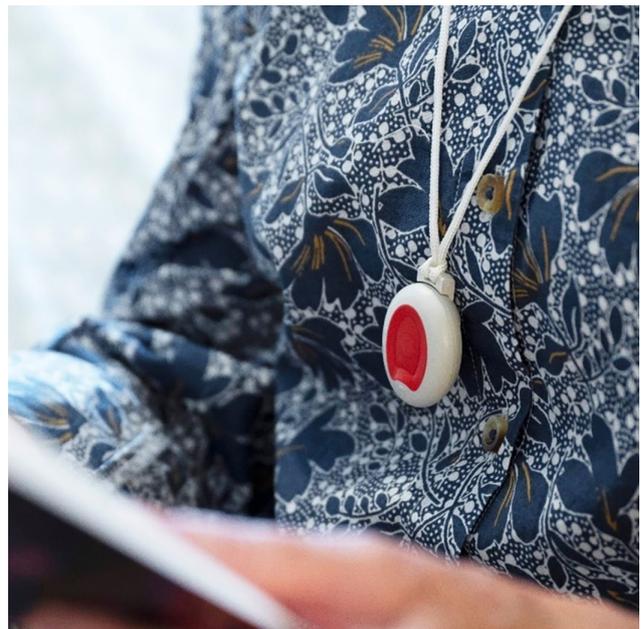
- Look around the home for anything that might cause an accident, for example, slippery floors, trailing cables, toys or other objects on the floor or staircase.
- Wear suitable footwear.
- Make sure that worn carpets or loose mats are made secure to avoid them slipping.
- Ensure that spillages are cleaned up straight away
- Keep walkways free and de-cluttered.
- Take care on sloping or uneven floor surfaces.
- Use handrails and/or walking aids, such as walking sticks, if required.

- Do not be tempted to carry large or heavy loads which will make it difficult to keep your balance or stop yourself falling.

For further information older people should contact Age UK (**see the Contacts section**) who provide a range of advice and information.

You may also want to contact the council's WATCH lifeline service, which provides a pendant activated emergency alarm service for older, disabled and vulnerable clients. This service provides help if you fall, take ill or have an accident in your home. The installation will also include a linked smoke detector. The service is available to all residents in the borough and there is a charge for the service.

WATCH lifeline **020 8871 8198**



# Home emergency plan

You are advised to put in a place an emergency plan. This should include what to do and who to contact if there is an accident or incident and it should be individual to your household.



## Escaping from your home

Work out an escape route if you need to exit your home during an emergency. You should think about:

- Who needs to escape, family/pets.
- Know where your keys are located.
- Keep hallways clear.

Make a list of people to contact during an incident or emergency. You could write these emergency contacts on a notice board or store them in your phone. So if there is an accident or emergency you or family members, such as young children, know who to call.

### This might include:

- Emergency services **999**.
- Relatives, friends or neighbours.
- Plus other useful contacts such as your GP/doctor or NHS: **111**
- Utility companies (gas, electricity, water, telephone).
- Bank, passport office and DVLA (in case personal documents are lost or stolen).

## Get to know your home

You should know where rooms and services are located. Know the easiest route to and from each room and where your fuse box or circuit breaker, water stopcocks and gas supply meter are located. Knowing these instantly helps during an emergency, especially if you need to tell a firefighter where a room is located.

## Keep documents safe

You are advised to keep personal documents such as passports, bank books, birth certificates and drivers' licences in a secure place. You should also copy these and store the copies in a different place (preferably a metal fire retardant box). Keep contact numbers for each organisation in case you need to report them lost or stolen. If you cannot copy them, write down any reference numbers.

## Test your plan

Finally, if you put in place an emergency plan, go through it with family members, check contact details and test it, so that you are all aware of:

- When to seek assistance.
- Who to contact.
- What to do.

# CONTACTS

<b>Emergency services</b>	If an incident is of a serious or criminal nature call the Emergency Services on <b>999</b> (ask for an ambulance, the fire service or police).
<b>Housing emergency contacts</b>	Wandsworth Joint Control Centre 24 hours <b>020 8871 8999</b> or email: <a href="mailto:hms@wandsworth.gov.uk">hms@wandsworth.gov.uk</a> For properties managed by the council or out of hours emergencies.
<b>Council switchboard</b>	<b>020 8871 6000</b> or visit the council website <a href="http://wandsworth.gov.uk">wandsworth.gov.uk</a>
<b>Housing area teams</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Central team 020 8871 5333</li> <li>■ Eastern team 020 8871 7439</li> <li>■ Southern team 020 8871 7288</li> <li>■ Western team 020 8871 5530</li> </ul> <p>or email: <a href="mailto:hms@wandsworth.gov.uk">hms@wandsworth.gov.uk</a></p> <p>by post: Housing Department, Wandsworth Council, Town Hall Wandsworth High Street, London SW18 2PU</p> <p>If you do not know your area team or estate manager contact: <b>020 8871 6864.</b></p>
<b>Emergency repairs</b>	Contact your estate manager in your area team. If the incident is out of hours contact the Wandsworth Joint Control Centre If you have a general repair you can either contact your estate manager or you can report a repair and track its progress online at: <a href="http://wandsworth.gov.uk/housingonline">wandsworth.gov.uk/housingonline</a>
<b>WATCH Lifeline service</b>	The emergency alarm response service for vulnerable, older and disabled residents in the borough. WATCH Lifeline – emergencies (24 hours) <b>020 8871 7741</b> <a href="mailto:watch@wandsworth.gov.uk">watch@wandsworth.gov.uk</a> WATCH Lifeline enquiries - contact the Joint Control Centre on 020 8871 8999
<b>Emergency warden services (24 hours)</b>	Sheltered tenants and vulnerable residents <b>020 8871 7741</b> <a href="mailto:wardenservices@wandsworth.gov.uk">wardenservices@wandsworth.gov.uk</a>

## Resident Management Organisations and Co-operatives

All Saints	020 7627 8600	<a href="mailto:office@allsaintscourt.org">office@allsaintscourt.org</a>
Battersea Fields	020 7622 7499	<a href="mailto:office@batterseafields.co.uk">office@batterseafields.co.uk</a>
Carey Gardens	020 7498 3664	<a href="mailto:housing@careygardens.co.uk">housing@careygardens.co.uk</a>
Convent	020 8874 6856	<a href="mailto:convent25@aol.com">convent25@aol.com</a>
Felsham Road	020 8788 0572	<a href="mailto:office@felshamroad.org">office@felshamroad.org</a>
Goulden House	020 7924 5213	<a href="mailto:office@gouldenhouse.org">office@gouldenhouse.org</a>
McCarthy Court	020 7228 2894	<a href="mailto:office@mccarthycourt.org">office@mccarthycourt.org</a>
Patmore	020 7622 4495	<a href="mailto:team@patmorecoop.org.uk">team@patmorecoop.org.uk</a>
Totteridge House	020 7738 2358	<a href="mailto:office@totteridgehouse.org">office@totteridgehouse.org</a>
Wimbledon Park	020 8780 9980	<a href="mailto:office@wimbledonpark.org">office@wimbledonpark.org</a>

## Other council services

Environmental Health	020 8871 6127
Estate Services (general)	020 8871 7446
Repairs (communal areas)	<a href="mailto:hms@wandsworth.gov.uk">hms@wandsworth.gov.uk</a>
Home improvement agency	020 8871 6161 or email <a href="mailto:hia@wandsworth.gov.uk">hia@wandsworth.gov.uk</a> Home improvement agency grants (private properties) 020 8871 6171 or email <a href="mailto:hia@wandsworth.gov.uk">hia@wandsworth.gov.uk</a>
Housing – insurance enquiries and claims	020 8871 6413 or 0800 028 0336 <a href="mailto:insurancegroup@wandsworth.gov.uk">insurancegroup@wandsworth.gov.uk</a>
Leaseholder enquiries	020 8871 7282 or <a href="mailto:propertyaccts@wandsworth.gov.uk">propertyaccts@wandsworth.gov.uk</a>
Lift defects	020 8871 8999 or <a href="mailto:hms@wandsworth.gov.uk">hms@wandsworth.gov.uk</a>

Door entry system defects	020 8871 8999 or <a href="mailto:hms@wandsworth.gov.uk">hms@wandsworth.gov.uk</a>
Communal heating/hot water – repairs	<p>If you live in a Wandsworth Council block with a centralised heating and hot water system and pay heating and hot water charges, defects should be reported to the contractor Smith &amp; Byford.</p> <p><b>Smith &amp; Byford: 020 8722 3431 or 0808 196 1791</b> or email <a href="mailto:wandsworth.gas@smithandbyford.com">wandsworth.gas@smithandbyford.com</a></p>
Gas maintenance contractor (individual heating/water repairs)	<p>If you are a Wandsworth Council tenant and have a heating system with a boiler in your property and live in Putney, Roehampton or Tooting, heating and hot water defects should be reported to the contractor T. Brown.</p> <p><b>T Brown: 080 0977 8472 or 020 8786 1244</b> or email <a href="mailto:repairs@tbrown.com">repairs@tbrown.com</a></p> <p>If you are a Wandsworth Council tenant and have a heating system with a boiler in your property and live in Battersea, Wandsworth or Earlsfield, heating and hot water defects should be reported to the contractor PH Jones.</p> <p><b>PH Jones: 020 3657 0304 or 0333 004 2333 or 0800 0234 069</b> or email <a href="mailto:wbc repairs@phjones.com">wbcrepairs@phjones.com</a></p>
Air Source Units	<p>Air-Source heating and hot water units defects should be reported to the contractor (PH Jones) : <b>020 3657 0304 or 0333 004 2333 or 0800 0234 069</b> or <a href="mailto:wbc repairs@phjones.com">wbcrepairs@phjones.com</a></p>
Gas maintenance contractor (Individual heating/hot water repairs)	<p><b>0800 977 8472 or 020 8786 1244</b> <a href="mailto:repairs@tbrown.com">repairs@tbrown.com</a></p>

## Safety and security

Community safety (general enquiries)	<a href="mailto:communitysafety@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk">communitysafety@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk</a>
Anti-social behaviour	<p>Wandsworth Joint Control Centre 24 hours <b>020 8871 8999</b> or email <a href="mailto:hms@wandsworth.gov.uk">hms@wandsworth.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Graffiti 24-hour telephone hotline: <b>020 8871 7041</b></p>

<p><b>Domestic Abuse</b></p>	<p>If you are in immediate danger, always call <b>999</b>. For non-emergencies, dial <b>101</b>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ National Domestic Violence Helpline (Freephone 24 hour helpline) <b>0808 2000 247</b></li> <li>■ Victim Support Wandsworth <b>020 7801 1777</b></li> <li>■ One Stop Shop (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm) <b>020 7801 1777</b></li> <li>■ Stay Put, Stay Safe Scheme: Security measures for your home (Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm) <b>020 8871 7333</b> or email <b>landlordlettings@wandsworth.gov.uk</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Hate Crime</b></p>	<p>If you are in immediate danger, always call <b>999</b>. For non-emergencies, dial <b>101</b>.</p> <p>If you are being subjected to hate crime or antisocial behaviour by another tenant, you should contact your estate manager or Area Team to make them aware of the issue.</p>
<p><b>Local police</b></p>	<p>There are five local police stations in Wandsworth borough based in Battersea, Wandsworth, Lavender Hill, Tooting and Putney. If you wish to contact the police and it is not an emergency call:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Non-emergency <b>101</b></li> <li>■ Textphone <b>18001101</b></li> </ul> <p>Or find your local area's Metropolitan Police team at: <a href="http://www.met.police.uk/a/your-area">www.met.police.uk/a/your-area</a></p> <p>Crimestoppers <b>0800 555 111</b></p>
<p><b>Victim Support South London</b></p>	<p>If you've been affected by crime, call The London Victim and Witness Service (LVWS). Lines are open 8am-8pm, Monday to Friday. <b>0808 168 9291</b></p> <p>Supportline - If you need support outside of your local team's opening hours, you can call our Supportline for free. <b>08 08 16 89 111</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.victimsupport.org.uk/resources/south-london">www.victimsupport.org.uk/resources/south-london</a></p>
<p><b>Fire</b></p>	<p>Emergency (only) <b>999</b></p> <p>The council fits free smoke alarms for tenants. For further information contact your area team.</p> <p>If you are concerned that your home may be at risk of fire your local fire service can give you advice and fit a free smoke alarm. Contact Home Fire Safety Centre <b>08000 28 44 28</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.london-fire.gov.uk">www.london-fire.gov.uk</a></p>

## Other useful contacts

<b>Gas and electricity</b>	<p><b>Emergency contact numbers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ National Grid Gas Emergency (free phone) <b>0800 111 999</b></li><li>■ UK Power Cut <b>105</b></li></ul> <p>Alternatively, for general advice, consumer information about electricity suppliers or to find a gas or electricity supplier, contact:</p> <p><b>Citizens' Advice Bureau</b> (formerly Consumer Direct Service) <b>08454 04 05 06</b></p> <p><b>Priority services register</b> To find your electricity or gas distributor <a href="http://www.thepsr.co.uk">www.thepsr.co.uk</a></p>
<b>Electricity NICEIC</b>	To find a registered electrician see <a href="http://www.niceic.com">www.niceic.com</a>
<b>Water</b>	<p>Consumer council for water (offer advice and information to consumers about water services and suppliers).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Advice line: <b>0300 034 2222</b> <a href="http://www.ccw.org.uk/contact-us/">www.ccw.org.uk/contact-us/</a></li></ul>
<b>Water companies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Thames Water <b>0800 316 9800</b> or report a problem online through <a href="http://www.thameswater.co.uk/contact-us/report-a-problem">www.thameswater.co.uk/contact-us/report-a-problem</a></li><li>■ For other water operators go to <a href="http://www.water.org.uk/customers/find-your-supplier">www.water.org.uk/customers/find-your-supplier</a></li></ul>
<b>Floods</b>	<p>Contact the Environment Agency Floodline (information on flood warnings) <b>0345 988 1188</b> <a href="http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk">www.environment-agency.gov.uk</a></p>
<b>Asbestos</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Health and Safety Executive (HSE) <a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos">www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos</a></li><li>■ Incident Contact Centre <b>0300 003 1647</b></li><li>■ Wandsworth Environmental Health helpline <b>020 8871 6127</b></li></ul>
<b>Building Safety Regulator</b>	Report building safety and fire safety concerns <b>0300 790 6787</b>
<b>Insurance (non-council)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Association of British Insurers <b>020 7600 3333</b> <a href="mailto:info@abi.org.uk">info@abi.org.uk</a> <a href="http://www.abi.org.uk">www.abi.org.uk</a></li><li>■ British Insurance Brokers Association <b>0870 950 1790</b> 8th Floor, John Stow House 18 Bevis Marks, London EC3A 7JB. <a href="mailto:enquiries@biba.org.uk">enquiries@biba.org.uk</a> <a href="http://www.biba.org.uk">www.biba.org.uk</a></li></ul>

<p><b>Advice, grants and financial assistance</b></p>	<p>A range of grants are available to make your home more safe and secure. Please contact the individual agency to find out if you are eligible and for further information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Cold weather payment</b> – for households on low income. Contact your nearest Pension Centre or Job Centre Plus.</li> <li>■ <b>Warm Home Discount</b> – financial assistance to help pay for heating and insulation improvements. Generally, for household on low income or disability related benefit. Freephone: <b>0800 030 9322</b></li> <li>■ <b>Winter fuel payments</b> – this is an annual payment to help older people with their heating bills. <b>0800 731 0160</b> Textphone: <b>0845 601 5613</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Smoking</b></p>	<p>NHS Stop smoking service <b>0300 123 1044</b> <a href="http://www.nhs.uk/smokefree">www.nhs.uk/smokefree</a></p>
<p><b>Age UK (Wandsworth branch)</b></p>	<p>Offers a range of information and advice about home safety, security, grants and financial assistance available to older people.</p> <p><b>Local branch:</b> 549 Old York Road Wandsworth SW18 1TQ Telephone: <b>020 8877 8940</b> Or visit the website: <a href="http://www.ageuk.org.uk/wandsworth">www.ageuk.org.uk/wandsworth</a> email: <a href="mailto:info@agewandsworth.org.uk">info@agewandsworth.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>NHS 111</b></p>	<p>Call <b>111</b> <a href="http://www.111.nhs.uk">www.111.nhs.uk</a></p>
<p><b>HM Passport Office</b></p>	<p><b>0300 222 0000</b> <a href="http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-passport-office">www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-passport-office</a></p>
<p><b>Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)</b></p>	<p><a href="http://www.dft.gov.uk/dvla">www.dft.gov.uk/dvla</a></p>





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