

Portside Village, Eston

Shared Ownership User Guide

All you need to know
about your new home...



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1. Introduction

Welcome to your new home

This Home User Guide has been prepared to help you become familiar with your new home quickly and easily.

It contains information on how to look after your new home, how to report certain types of problems, electricity and water supply information details, as well as advice on safety and security. We have also included technical help and practical tips on DIY, energy saving and recycling.

When you move into your new home, you will be given various leaflets supplied by the manufacturers and installers of the equipment in your home. Please keep all this information in a safe place together with this handbook so you can refer to it in the future.

Useful contact information

Beyond Housing

Tel: 0354 065 5656

Email: enquiries@beyondhousing.co.uk

Local authority

Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council

Tel: 01642 774 774

Water authority

Independent Water Networks

Tel: 029 2002 8711

Electricity

Scottish Power

Tel: 0345 270 0700

Gas

Scottish Power

Tel: 0345 270 0700

Gas Emergency

Tel: 0800 111999

2. How to report a defect

All defects should be reported to Beyond Housing by phone, by email, or at one of our offices.

Defects should be reported as soon as you become aware there is a problem.

Defects telephone number: 0345 065 5656

Defects email address: enquiries@beyondhousing.co.uk

During the new build warranty period Beyond Housing will forward any defects on to the builder who will contact you to arrange a suitable appointment.

What is not a defect?

The builder will not be required to attend to the issues listed below:

- Cracks, chips, scratches or other visible damage to basins, sinks, WC suites, tiles, kitchen units and work tops, glazing or floor coverings after taking possession of the property
- Normal settlement and shrinkage cracks (see section 3)
- Accidental damage, neglect, vandalism, or a failure to maintain a product in line with the manufacturer's recommendations
- Changes or improvements not carried out by the builder
- Storm damage
- A drainage issue caused by the flushing or disposal of inappropriate products or substances into the drainage system (see section 3)
- Condensation or associated problems caused by a failure to adequately ventilate the property (see section 3)
- Any damage resulting from the removal of fixtures or fittings provided by the builder, including finished flooring (where provided)
- Any issues with lawns/turf where maintenance guidelines have not been followed (see section 7)
- The alteration of internal doors following the installation of flooring (see section 3)
- Any damage resulting from the storage of items in the loft space (see section 3).

Please note you may be charged for unnecessary callouts, including any callouts relating to the items listed above.

Prioritising defects

Defects are put in order of urgency to ensure any emergency repairs are carried out within the deadlines set.

Category A – Emergency repairs

Category B – Urgent repairs

Category C – Routine repairs

Category A defects:

- Loss of water
- Uncontainable leak
- Complete loss of electricity
- If your home is unsecure due to faulty locks
- Toilet not working (if no other toilet)
- Loss of heating in winter months (Nov–March)
- Complete failure of combined central heating and hot water

Category B defects:

- Toilet not working (if other toilet available)
- Containable leak
- Slow draining shower/bath

Category C defects:

- Loose bathroom tiles
- Minor faults to external doors
- Minor faults to internal doors
- Adjustment of kitchen doors/units
- Minor electrical faults
- Loose pipework
- Loose/cracked roof tiles
- Faulty brickwork/pointing
- External render repairs
- Repairs to boundary fences, walls, gates
- Repairs to external footpaths/driveways (non-hazardous)
- Faulty doorbell

Property alterations – All requests must be made to Beyond Housing. You must gain consent before you:

- Make any alterations or additions to the exterior of your home
- Make any structural alterations or structural additions to your home
- Erect any new buildings on the premises
- Remove any of Beyond Housing's fixtures from the premises
- Make any alteration or addition of a non-structural nature to the interior of the premises without the previous written consent of the Beyond Housing (such consent will not be unreasonably withheld).

3. Initial repair period

There is a 10 year 'initial repair period' starting from the lease start date which applies while you own less than a 100% share in the home. Any work that is covered by a warranty or guarantee must be claimed through the policy by the policyholder. Repairs which are the landlord's responsibility during the initial repair period will not be recharged through the service charge.

External and structural repairs

In the initial repair period, the landlord is responsible for the cost of essential repairs to:

- The external fabric of the building
- Structural repairs to walls, floors, ceiling and stairs inside the home.

These are limited to repairs not covered by the building warranty or any other guarantee. You must notify the landlord that the repair is required.

General repairs and maintenance

In the initial repair period, you'll be able to claim costs up to £500 a year from your landlord to help with essential repairs or replacement (if faulty) of:

- Installations in the home for the supply of water, gas and electricity (including basins, sinks, baths and sanitary devices but not other fixtures, fittings and appliances for making use of the supply of water, gas or electricity such as ovens or washing machines), pipes and drainage
- Installations in the home for space heating and water heating.

The amount you can claim each year and the number of years remaining in the initial repair period is in the 'Key information about the home' document. Repairs and maintenance costs over the allowance amount stated in the 'Key information about the home' document, or after the initial repair period ends, are your responsibility.

If you do not claim the full repairs allowance in one year, a maximum of one year's allowance will roll over to the following year. The following example shows how the repairs allowance works if you claim in years two and three.

Year	Repairs Allowance	Allowance claimed for repairs	Roll over to next year
1	£500	£0	£500
2	£1000 (£500 + £500)	£750	£250
3	£750 (£500 + £250)	£0	£500

Claiming the repairs allowance

Please contact your landlord to claim the repairs allowance. The landlord is responsible for deciding whether repairs are essential. They have the right to inspect the home when making this decision.

When you claim for the cost of essential repairs, the landlord will approve or reject claims in a fair and consistent manner. If the landlord declines a claim, they must:

- Tell you why in writing within seven days of receiving your information supporting the claim
- Advise you of your right to dispute the decision
- Set out the complaints handling process.

To carry out repairs that your landlord agrees are essential, you must use a Trustmark approved tradesperson or professionals approved by your landlord. Find a local tradesperson on the Trustmark website.

The repairs allowance will transfer to a new owner if you sell the home. However, if the new owner buys a 100% share, the repairs allowance will not transfer to them.

4. General guidance

Flooring

Underlay and carpet can be fitted directly onto the unfinished floors within your new home. If you would like to fit a different type of flooring, such as vinyl, timber, laminate or tile, then additional work and preparation may be required to ensure it can be fitted in-line with the manufacturer's and/or supplier's requirements. Any additional work needed for the fitting of finished flooring will be at the occupant's own expense and the builder will not be responsible for any additional work required to enable alternative flooring to be fitted.

Where finished flooring has been provided by the builder, the sub-floor will have been prepared in-line with the relevant requirements. The builder will not be responsible for any damage caused by the voluntary removal or replacement of such flooring.

Please note, the builder is required to leave a minimum gap of 1cm between the unfinished floor and the underside of the internal doors. Depending on the thickness of your chosen finished flooring, some doors may need to be altered after the flooring has been fitted to allow them to open and close correctly. Any alterations required to internal doors after flooring has been fitted will be at the occupant's own expense and the builder will not be responsible for any alternations to internal doors following the installation of finished flooring.

Loft Space

Where a loft hatch has been provided, this is to allow for suitable access into the roof space for future inspections and/or repairs. We advise that only professional tradespeople enter the loft space to avoid unnecessary damage and/or injury.

The loft is a ventilated space and is not designed for storage or boarding. Doing so can reduce the thickness of the insulation, reduce the energy rating of the property and potentially invalidate the warranty should any issues occur.

Drying out

Today's new homes include many improvements in construction that have been introduced over the years, but your new home still needs to be run-in gently for the first few months. This is because bricks, timber, plaster and other materials generally absorb water during construction.

As the home is lived in and heated, it dries out. As it dries out, the wood and plaster may shrink, causing small cracks to appear. These cracks are not structurally important and are covered in the normal process of redecoration. Because cracks are inevitable, the builders are not obliged to rectify them unless they are larger than 3mm in width.

New buildings often take a long time before they are fully dried out. While this is happening, they need heat and extra ventilation. During the first winter of occupation, most dwellings require gentle heat over more hours than they may

need in subsequent winters. Allowance should be made for this. The builder will repair any very large cracks caused by this process at the end of the defects period. If possible, try to avoid any decorating during the first year, especially using wallpaper, as it is very difficult to assess the extent of any cracking if the walls have been papered over. Care must be taken not to puncture the external walls.

Minimising cracking

By taking the following steps, you should be able to reduce occurrence of cracking due to shrinkage:

1. Avoid large temperature differences during the day by setting your heating controls at a comfortably low level for longer periods (instead of shorter periods on a higher heat setting). This allows your home to gradually warm up
2. Check to ensure all trickle vents (ventilation slots in your windows) are open 24 hours a day. This allows gradual, gentle ventilation
3. Encourage ventilation by opening windows and internal doors whenever you reasonably can
4. Keep kitchen and bathroom doors closed when cooking or washing as these activities create a lot of water vapour, which should not be allowed to spread to other rooms in your house. Ensure the extractor fans are on when you wash or cook and open a window where appropriate.

Preventing condensation

Condensation is steam or water vapour that turns into water by condensing on cold surfaces, and next to shrinkage is often the most common problem in new homes. It can damage clothes, bedding, floor coverings, decorations and the home itself if mould growth takes hold on walls and ceilings. Homes that are heated and ventilated intermittently are more likely to suffer condensation problems.

The moisture in the air comes from several sources within the house – water vapour is produced in relatively large quantities from normal day-to-day activities such as washing and drying clothes, personal washing and cooking.

To help deal with condensation you should take the following steps:

Produce less moisture

Ordinary daily activities produce a lot of moisture. Be conscious of minimising the amount of moisture you produce when for example boiling kettles, running baths and cooking.

1. Use lids on pans when cooking (this saves fuel too)
2. If possible, dry clothes outside
3. Do not use paraffin heaters (they produce a lot of water vapour)
4. Wipe up wet surfaces after use e.g. bathroom tiles, kitchen worktops and sinks
5. Ventilate to remove moisture.

You can ventilate your home without making draughts. Some ventilation is needed to get rid of the moisture that is produced all the time. Keep your trickle vents open 24 hours a day. Consider having a window ajar when someone is in the room.

You need much more ventilation in the kitchen during cooking so you should open a nearby window. Close the kitchen and bathroom doors when they are in use. This stops the moisture reaching other rooms, especially the bedrooms that are often colder and more likely to suffer from condensation.

Opening and closing doors to circulate the air can ventilate cupboards and wardrobes. Avoid putting too many things in them as this can stop the air circulation. Leave a space between the back of the furniture and walls and if possible do not position wardrobes, beds and large pieces of furniture touching external walls.

You should also:

1. While drying clothes indoors, ventilate the room
2. After a bath or shower, try to ventilate the room to the outside, not the rest of the home – opening a window (closing the door) and/or allowing the extractor fan to run on will help
3. Make sure the extractor fan is operative. Extractor fans often have an air-moisture switch so that they operate automatically while the moisture in the air is above a set amount.

Efflorescence

This is another sign of drying out that may appear as white deposits on outside walls. This is caused by salts coming out of the wall materials. On external walls, the efflorescence will eventually disappear.

5. Mains services

Electricity

The name and contact details of your current supplier can be found on page 4 of this guide. If you want to, you can change supplier.

The electricity meter is located externally in a meter cabinet. The meter and the cable leading to it belong to the supply company and must not be tampered with.

Should you wish to turn off the electricity for any reason, you can do so by using the 'off' button on the consumer unit, which is situated in the entrance hall.

Your consumer unit is equipped with 'circuit breakers' rather than fuses. Circuit breakers are generally more sensitive than fuses and may trip out even when a light bulb fails or if you are using an appliance with an electrical fault or defective plug.

Do not attempt to do any work on an electrical circuit or appliance unless you are suitably qualified.

If a power point is not working, check the circuit breaker and reset if necessary. If it trips again unplug the appliance and contact Beyond Housing on **0345 065 5656**.

General safety guidance relating to electricity can be summarised as follows:

- **Always** unplug any appliance before carrying out any maintenance i.e. changing a fuse
- **Always** ensure appliances are fitted with the correct fuses as recommended by the manufacturer
- **Always** follow the manufacturers' instructions for wiring appliances
- You are strongly advised **not** to use a portable electric fire in the bathroom
- You are strongly advised **not** to use an electric hair dryer or any other portable electric appliance in the bathroom
- **Do not** attempt to repair, alter or extend electrical installations
- **Do keep** a torch close to the consumer unit in case of an emergency
- You are protected by a residual current breaker. These breakers are easy to re-set by returning the switch to the on position.

Gas

The name and contact details of your current supplier can be found on page 4 of this guide. If you want to, you can change supplier.

The main gas enters your home via a wall mounted or ground meter box located next to the front entrance door. In emergencies, a lever valve in the meter box can turn off the gas. Any gas appliances should be installed by a Gas Safe Registered fitter.

If you smell gas or are worried about gas safety, you can call the National Gas Emergency Service on 0800 111 999 at any time, day or night every day of the year. Your call is free and you will be put through to a trained operator who will take all the details. All calls are recorded, and may be monitored.

- **Do not** create a flame or operate electrical switches
- **Do** put out flames, open doors and windows and keep people away from the area and turn the gas off at the control valve.

Water

You cannot change water supplier.

Each property has its own water supply and water meter, which is on the front pavement. The water company reads the meter and sends you a bill regularly.

Your water supply can be turned off at the stopcock, which is usually found in the kitchen unit below the sink.

You will find connections for a washing machine in the designated washer space. We recommend a qualified engineer installs your washing machine.

In the event of a major leak on any of the water services, the stopcock should be turned off and you should contact Beyond Housing on **0345 065 5656**.

Minor leaks such as a dripping tap or radiator valve can usually be dealt with without isolating the whole of the water system, but again it is important that you notify Beyond Housing on **0345 065 5656**.

Telephone

Telephone sockets have been provided. To set up a telephone connection, you will need to contact your chosen supplier directly to arrange this service.

TV aerial

TV points are usually wired back to the loft space for future installation of an aerial. Please note, an aerial is not usually provided.

Buried services

Dig your garden with care, a layer of top soil is provided for planting, you should not dig below this level. Special care should be taken to prevent contact with services that are buried in the grounds of the property.

The electricity, gas, telephone/TV and water services normally enter the property from buried ducts at the front of the property. Gas and electricity supplies are laid generally in straight lines to the meter unit. Depths typically start at about 400mm.

Drainage for the property is often routed across rear and front gardens; the system also includes inspection chambers, which may be located on paths or in the soft ground. These chambers have an important role in the maintenance of a free running drainage system. Therefore, they must not be covered or overgrown. If covers are found to be loose or ill-fitting they should be reported to Beyond Housing on **0345 065 5656**.

6. Equipment

Hinges

Hinges should be lubricated periodically with light machine oil. Whilst squeaking of hinges is a sign of lack of lubrication, if it occurs frequently then pin misalignment should be investigated.

Locks and latches

The correct operation of a lock or latch, assuming correct fitting, is often affected by movement of the door or frame caused by climatic conditions or wear on hinges.

Lubricant should occasionally be applied to the side and striking face of latch bolts. Grease should not be applied to the internal lock mechanism, as this will attract dust.

Cylinders

Cylinders should not be lubricated with oil, as this will attract dust, which can affect their smooth operation. They should be maintained with a periodic application of powdered graphite into the keyway.

Lever handles

Back plate and rose fixings should be periodically checked for tightness and adjusted if found loose. Badly fitted and maintained furniture can prevent the lock from operating correctly. Spindle grub screw fixings should also be checked and tightened.

Care of ironmongery finishes

Frequent dusting using a soft dry cloth and occasional washing with warm soapy water, followed by a light application of good quality wax polish will provide a good foundation for preserving the appearance of most finishes. Chemical sprays, cellulose based thinners and silicone based polishes should be avoided. Ironmongery fitted externally will require greater attention due to increased exposure to atmospheric conditions.

It is strongly advised that solvents, metal polishes, or cleaners containing abrasive powders or abrasive cloths and pads should not be used for cleaning lacquered or electro-plated finishes.

Kitchen unit door and drawer fronts (melamine and foil wrapped)

These should be wiped clean with a cloth dampened with water containing a mild detergent. Avoid over wetting. Do not use any abrasive cleaning agents, acids, bleaches, petrol or solvents. Similarly, do not use scouring pads, wire wool or any similar cleaning aids.

Kitchen drawer boxes

To clean drawer boxes, remove drawers from units and brush to remove loose dirt, etc. Wipe clean with silicone furniture polish or cloth dampened with mild detergent. Avoid harsh, abrasive cleaning materials, solvents and particularly avoid saturating the drawer bottom with water.

Kitchen unit hinges and drawer runners

These should be inspected periodically and any dirt, fluff or grime removed by means of a vacuum cleaner nozzle and flexible nose or soft dry brush or duster. Lubrication should not normally be necessary. However, household spray polish can be used as a lubricant if required.

Interior of kitchen units

Brush out any loose dirt etc., and clean interior surfaces by means of a silicone furniture polish or cloth dampened with water containing a mild detergent. Polish surfaces with a soft dry duster. As with drawer boxes, avoid any harsh or abrasive cleaning materials and excessive water or any other liquid.

Kitchen worktops

Most everyday stains may be removed by wiping with a cloth dampened with water and a mild detergent. Persistent stains can be removed with a mild abrasive cleaner, but harsh scouring powders should be avoided.

Stains on textured worktops are best removed using a household spray type cleaner and a nylon bristled hand brush moved in a circular fashion. Afterwards wipe clean with a damp cloth.

Certain chemicals and strong dyes can cause damage and discolouration. Spillage of such things as beetroot juice, concentrated fruit juice, dye, shoe polish, chemicals, etc. should be mopped or wiped off and thorough cleaning commenced immediately.

Stainless steel sink

Your sink should be washed with warm soapy water, wiped dry and then buffed with a soft cloth to restore the polished surface. Using undiluted disinfectants and bleaches on your sink will leave a permanent stain if not removed immediately. Clean the area with plenty of water containing a mild detergent. Do not use any harsh abrasives or scouring powders.

General kitchen do's and don'ts

- **Do** wipe away any spillages immediately from worktops or within units
- **Do** thoroughly clean all units regularly
- **Do not** chop food directly on the worktop surface – use a chopping board
- **Do not** place hot pans, cigarettes, etc. on the worktop surface or sinks, use protective mats or ashtrays
- **Do not** leave unit doors, oven doors etc. open longer than necessary; this could cause injury to yourself or others
- **Do not** overload shelves.

Cleaning windows

- Slightly dirty frames can be cleaned with warm water and washing up liquid
- Extremely dirty frames should be cleaned with a cleaning agent
- Abrasive cleaners as well as dry cleaning with a duster should be avoided. Cleaning solutions and polishes that contain solvents or thinners should not be used. Aggressive chemicals like these will attack the window frames and seals
- Rust patches can only appear because of external metal particles from the outside atmosphere.

Frequency of cleaning

The accumulation of atmospheric grime makes it necessary to clean the surface of the window regularly to maintain its appearance. In badly polluted, industrial, marine or city centre locations it is recommended that cleaning is carried out once every three months, and in relatively rural locations once every six months. Cleaning can usually be carried out when the window glass is cleaned.

Glass and glazing

All glass installed complies with BS 6262 – 1982, and the Building Regulations in place at the time of the installation. The exact type and specification of the glass installed will be detailed on our production drawings.

Door and window hardware

All moving parts, locks, hinges, side arms etc., must be oiled with a light grade lubricant on a six-monthly basis, or more frequently when under heavy use or if there is a salt or chlorine atmosphere.

Replacement hardware is available from ourselves if required, due to breakage or damage.

Blockages – kitchen waste pipes

If a blockage occurs and the sink is full of water, try to remove the blockage by using a suction cup plunger (if you feel able) to force water up and down the waste pipe.

The risk of blockage can be reduced if you pour fat that goes hard when cold into an empty tin or milk carton and place in the bin rather than down the drain.

Blockages in baths and basins

Blockage here is normally caused by a build-up of hair and soap and becomes noticeable when the shower or basin starts to drain away more slowly.

Note: All basins, sinks and baths are fitted with removable waste traps which can be unscrewed and cleaned as necessary.

Blockages resulting from misuse by customers may be rechargeable.

We would like to remind you toilets are designed to flush water, human waste and toilet paper ONLY.

Never flush disposable nappies, sanitary towels, disposable razors etc. down the toilet. These can cause serious blockages, which will require the services of a drain cleaning company to clear, and the cost of this service will be your responsibility.

Cleaning sanitary ware

Baths, basins and sinks should be cleaned with recommended products to avoid damaging the surfaces. Do not use scouring or gritting cleaners. Bleach should not be mixed with lavatory powders nor allowed to stand in stainless steel sinks.

Ceramic tiles

The routine cleaning of glazed ceramic wall tiles should be carried out after the removal of any loose dirt or grit by wiping off with a dry cloth, followed by washing with warm water to which a neutral, low sulphate detergent has been added. After a further rinse with clean water to ensure thorough removal of the detergent solution the installation should be given a final, wipe down and polish with a clean, dry, soft cloth. Abrasive powders, which may scratch the glaze, must not be used.

Floors – Bathroom, kitchen and WC

The floor is covered with vinyl sheet, which has been stuck down. These floors may be cleaned with water and a mild detergent using a clean mop. Please ensure that no hard-abrasive types of cleaners are used.

7. Environmental design features

Well insulated

Walls, floors, roofs and separating walls are all insulated to the latest Building Regulations requirements with products attributing low global warming potential.

Energy efficient windows

Site-specific materials and window styles are chosen to improve thermal comfort within the home, thus reducing fuel costs and the impact on the environment. All windows that are fitted are low-e argon filled double-glazing.

Efficient gas boiler

Is a high efficiency gas combination boiler, which will reduce fuel usage and provide on demand heating and hot water.

Low energy lighting

All fittings within your home accommodate compact fluorescent lamps, which save energy and have a much longer life than standard bulbs.

Water efficient appliances

We have provided you with a leaflet, which fully explains the European Environment Labelling Scheme that recommends A/A+ appliances should be purchased to achieve maximum efficiency and value for money.

Good sound insulation

All properties will be constructed in compliance with Part E of the Building Regulations.

Environmentally friendly materials

Wherever practical locally sourced materials are used. All materials are sourced from suppliers/manufacturers with the appropriate legislative environmental certifications.

Timber from sustainable harvest sources

Certified or recycled timber has been used in the construction of your home.

Certified timber means that the timber has been harvested in accordance to certain standards. Most of these schemes also operate a chain of custody control to ensure that the wood is, verifiably, from the certified source. It requires that the timber is marked and/or separated from uncertified timber through all processing stages from the forest to the retail shelf.

Energy

Your home and global warming

The earth is surrounded by an atmosphere, which keeps it at a constant temperature. Certain gases released into the atmosphere make it work like a blanket, trapping heat in. These are known as greenhouse gases.

There is evidence that the earth is heating faster than ever before because we produce too many of these harmful greenhouse gases. For example, the nine warmest summers in the UK since records began have occurred in the last twelve years.

As well as saving the earth, it is estimated the average household could also save £300 a year in energy bills by being more energy efficient.

Heat your home for less

A few simple steps could result in your home costing less to heat, as well as producing less of the harmful CO2 emissions. The Energy Savings Trust recommends you:

- Turn your thermostat down by 1°C as this can cut more than 10 per cent from the average central heating bill
- Close your curtains at night and make sure they are tucked behind the radiators (saves up to £15 a year)
- Close windows when the heating is on – but remember to leave vents open to prevent condensation
- Wear warm clothes when indoors during winter months. Set heating controls so that your property is not heating when you are not going out for long periods
- If you have adjustable radiator valves, turn them down (but not off) in rooms not in use.

Hot water

The mixing valve has a wax capsule thermostat that maintains a stable temperature, ensuring safe operation for the user of 43°C. TMVs (thermostatic mixing valves) have been installed to the bathroom washbasins and to the bathroom shower.

Lighten your bills when you light your home

In most homes, lighting accounts for around 10 to 15 per cent of an electricity bill. If everyone in the UK installed one energy-saving light bulb, we would save enough harmful CO₂ to fill the Royal Albert Hall nearly 200 times. The Energy Saving Trust advises:

- Energy saving lights bulbs use 70 per cent less energy than normal light bulbs but are just as bright
- Switching from a standard bulb to an energy saving bulb can reduce your electricity bill by up to £9 a year
- Remember to turn the lights off when you leave a room – no matter what kind of bulb you have – this can save you £7.50 a year.

Dedicated low energy lights supply 100 per cent of your home's lighting. The average life of a CFL is 8–15 times longer than that of traditional bulbs. While the purchase price of a CFL is typically 3 to 10 times greater than a traditional bulb, the extended lifetime and reduced running cost more than compensates for this.

Use your kettle to stop your bills boiling over

You can help save energy in many ways around the home even when making yourself a cup of tea or coffee. It is easy to use your kettle efficiently and save money.

- Only put as much water as you need when boiling the kettle but always cover the element
- Remove lime scale in your kettle by leaving in a cup of vinegar overnight. Kettle elements coated in lime scale use more energy.

Washing savings

Washing and drying your clothes can be a costly business – but it need not be. A few seconds' preparation could help you save energy and money when you do your laundry.

- Modern washing powders and liquids work just as well at lower temperatures. Washing at 40°C will use a third less electricity than at 60°C
- Run the washing machine with full loads.

Let clothes dry naturally if possible using the rotary dryer available on the premises.

Say goodbye to standby

How many of us leave appliances plugged in all the time? If chargers for devices such as mobile phones and laptops were unplugged when not in use, the UK could save enough electricity each year to power 115,000 homes.

- People leaving appliances on standby waste almost a billion pounds' worth of electricity in the UK every year.
- Do not leave appliances on standby or on charge unnecessarily. Once they are fully charged or not in use switch them off.

8. Exteriors

Turf aftercare

Proper care for your turf after laying is vital for developing a healthy beautiful lawn. The following information is intended to guide you through the early stages when your turf is at its most vulnerable. Bear in mind that site conditions and time of year should be taken into consideration when caring for your new turf.

Never let establishing turf dry out.

1. Water your new lawn immediately after installation using a hose and sprinkler. A watering can or hand held hosepipe is not good enough. If cracks appear in the turfed lawn, it is a sign of under-watering
2. Pay particular attention to the edges and corners. You should have your sprinkler on for approximately 45 minutes per area
3. Irrigate twice a day for the first week
4. Irrigate once a day in the second week
5. Irrigate as necessary depending on weather conditions in the third and following weeks
6. Water areas near buildings and paths more often where reflected heat dries the turf out faster
7. Be aware windy days dry the turf out just as fast as hot days
8. Turf is a living plant and requires as much loving care as any other garden plant – more so during establishment
9. It is best not to walk on the turf while your lawn is establishing. When moving your sprinkler use planks to spread your weight across the area.

Maintenance

1. During the first three weeks, avoid heavy or concentrated use of your lawn. This will give the turf and roots an opportunity to firmly knit with the soil and ensures that your turf will remain smooth
2. Mow your new turf approximately ten days from laying during the spring and summer seasons, or after three weeks during the autumn and winter depending on grass growth
3. Adjust your mower to its highest setting – it is vital that the new turf is not cut too short or scalped during the early mowings, or left to get too long
4. Take care to avoid scalping, keep mower blades sharp and never use a strimmer to cut your lawn
5. An occasional change of mowing direction can be beneficial
6. Rolling of your new turf may benefit the establishment of your new lawn.

Feeding

As a rule of thumb, a balanced fertiliser containing similar levels of Nitrogen (N), Phosphate (P) and Potash (K) should be applied every four to six weeks during the growing season. Always follow the manufacturer's recommendations with regard to the quantity, timing and method of application. A policy of little but often will help maintain your lawn in peak condition.

Car parking

Car parking spaces have been provided for all properties.

Please do not carry out engine oil changes on these areas. Spillages will seriously damage the surface and pollute the environment.

9. Services to communal areas

Beyond Housing provides a number of services to communal external areas.

Services may include (as appropriate):

- Lighting to road and footpaths until adoption by local authority
- Communal landscape
- Roads, footpaths and communal paved areas until adoption by local authority
- Drainage
- Maintenance of estate fencing.

The above services are included in your service charge and are based on incurred costs. Beyond Housing makes no profit on service charges.

10. Security

- Do not allow strangers into your house without asking for proof of identity and being satisfied with that identity
- Whenever you leave your home, even to visit a neighbour for a short time, make sure your entrance door and all windows are secure
- Never leave valuables where they can be seen by looking through a window. Hide small valuable items like jewellery in a safe place
- Make sure the contents of your home are insured against fire, theft and any terms about declaring valuables are complied with.

Have valuable items photographed and use the new marking methods available so your goods can be traced if stolen.

11. Useful information

Junk mail

If you want to stop receiving unaddressed mail delivered by Royal Mail to your home, you can do so by contacting Royal Mail at:

**Freepost RSTR-YCYS-TGLJ
Royal Mail Door to Door Opt Outs
Kingsmead House
Oxpens Road
OXFORD
OX1 1AA**

Email: optout@royalmail.com

You will then receive an opt-out form to your address, which you must sign and return for security reasons and to verify that residents at the address have requested the opt-out.

Once you have returned this form, Royal Mail will stop delivering unaddressed items to your address within six weeks.

The opt-out will last for a period of two years from the date they receive your opt-out form. If you wish to continue your opt-out after the two year period you can do so by contacting them at optout@royalmail.com or on **01865 796964**, or at the address above.

Please be aware the opt-out service only relates to unaddressed mail, which counts for about 25% of the total volume of unaddressed mail items in the United Kingdom. Royal Mail is still legally obliged to deliver all addressed mail, which includes mail that is addressed 'To the occupier' (or with any other generic recipient information), as well as mail that is personally addressed to you by name.

If you would like to stop any other unwanted communications please visit www.mydm.co.uk which provides details on all other preference services, or call **0845 703 4599**.

Fixing to a wall

The type of fixing you should use to attach items to walls depends on the construction of the wall and the weight of the item. Pictures and other light items can be hung on all types of walls using steel picture hooks or masonry nails.

Fixing to the external masonry wall

Heavier items can be fixed using wall plugs and screws. You should ensure the wall plug and screw penetrate through the plaster or plasterboard, well into the blockwork.

Decorating

The walls and ceilings of your home have been painted with emulsion paint and the woodwork has been painted with gloss.

Walls

Further coats of emulsion and oil-based paints or wallpaper can be used for later redecoration, once the walls have dried out (this normally takes nine to twelve months). When you redecorate, use decorator's filler to make good any minor gaps and plaster cracks, which have arisen from normal drying-out and shrinkage.

If, later, you want to remove wallpaper from a wall with a plasterboard finish, avoid scraping too vigorously, otherwise the surface may be damaged.

Ceilings

Redecoration should follow the guidelines highlighted above.

Woodwork

New woodwork absorbs a lot of paint or stain and so the first painting of a home may not give as good a finish as later repainting. The surface should be cleaned and prepared properly and be completely dry before repainting.

Environmental considerations

There are several things that you can do to help the environment whilst carrying out DIY:

- Use environmentally friendly products and components
- Use timber from sustainably managed sources that has been certified by the Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC) or the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes (PEFC).

Carrying out DIY activity such as drilling, hammering and sawing can be noisy and disturbing. Please be considerate regarding the time of the day that you carry out your DIY tasks and alert your neighbours before you start a noisy job, whether it is inside or outside your home.

My important numbers





Contact details

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