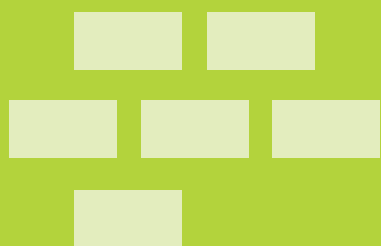


Repair Handbook

Advice on caring for your home



Throughout this booklet you will find information on where to find stopcocks, fuse boxes and meters in your home. You will find it useful to know where these items are. Fill in the spaces below so you have an instant reminder whenever you need it.

Important equipment	Where is it?		
Gas supply tap:			
Electric consumer unit:			
Mains water stopcock:			
Central heating type:	Gas / Electric / Air Source / Communal		
Boiler:			
	Boiler make:		
	Boiler model:		
Hot water tank (cylinder):			
Solar panels:			
	Where is it?	Move in reading:	Date:
Water meter:			
Gas meter:			
Electricity meter:			

Repairs and maintenance contact details	
Online:	
Phone:	
Emergency:	

Repair Handbook for residents

Advice on caring for your home



Revised 8th edition 2016 ISBN: 0 86297 344 9

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Published by Housing Software www.m3h.co.uk

Thanks to the National Housing Maintenance Forum (NHMF)
for advice and testing the product

Welcome to your repair handbook

This Repair Handbook is divided into three sections. The first, **‘Our repairs service’**, covers the service GCH offers including what is their responsibility and what is your own responsibility.

The second section, **‘Diagnosing the problem’**, gives advice and suggests ways of avoiding common problems in your home. The drawings and prompts will help you identify the cause of the problem and report the fault clearly.

The third section covers **‘DIY improvements and adaptations’**, further information on service quality and a ‘Glossary’ to shed light on tricky terms and words.

Keep a record of your important equipment on the inside front cover. Keep a log of gas checks on page 80. These will come in handy for future reference.

This handbook can also be made available in large print.

How to use this handbook

Section label: these are colour guided. This example shows the ‘Plumbing’ section

Subsection title

Safety point:
following this advice can save lives

Be prepared for an emergency
Make sure you know where the main stopcock is, and check that you can turn it off. Turn to the right (clockwise) to turn it off. Turn to the left (anticlockwise) to turn it on. Be sure to know how to turn off your electricity and gas supply in an emergency. If you do not know, ask any of our staff or contractors.

If you have a small leak
Put a bowl under it to try and catch the water.

Clearing a sink or bath blockage
1. Bail out most of the water using a suitable container.
2. Hold a cloth or rag firmly over the overflow opening, and place a plunger over the drain hole. Plungers can be obtained from most DIY shops.
3. Pump the plunger up and down rapidly.
4. After clearing the blockage, it is advisable to clean out the waste trap.
5. Place a bowl underneath the trap and unscrew the joints to remove the trap. Clean thoroughly and replace the trap, checking that the seals are in place and that all joints are screwed up tightly.

Avoid drain blockages
Never dispose of food waste, oil or other debris down your plug hole. Plungers and drain cleaning fluid can help. These can be bought from your local DIY shop or from your local supermarket. Follow the product instructions carefully.

Looking after your washing machine
Make sure the waste pipe fits securely into the waste trap and that the supply pipes are not leaking. Drips and leaks from these connections can cause serious repair problems. If your washing machine has a filter clean it regularly.

References: links to related problems and advice

Drawings: if the one in your home looks different, do not worry. Simply use the example as a guide

Caring for your home:
tips for keeping your home running well

How to report a repair

Step 1: Diagnose

Before reporting the repair you need to look up the problem in this booklet. Please be ready to give us a full description of the problem so we can order the correct repair for you. It would be helpful to know if repairs can be made to outdoor areas without you being at home.

We will also need:

- Your full name, address and postcode
- Your date of birth
- A contact phone number
- An email address
- Some suggestions of convenient times for the repair to be done

Step 2: Report

Report the repair to us by one of the following methods:

- **Online:**
Via **MyGCH** which can be found on our website
- **Email:**
Pictures speak a thousand words so include a photo if you can
- **Phone:**
24 Hours a day by calling **01452 424344**
- **Social Media:**
Searching for '**Gloucester Homes**' on Facebook and Twitter

Step 3: Repair

After the repair has been reported we will:

- Record the details of your repair
- Make an appointment for a GCH repairs engineer to visit you at a time that is convenient
- If the time or date becomes inconvenient to you, call us back as soon as possible. Missed appointments cost money and prevents us looking after other residents
- Need to send a technical officer to assess the situation, if the problem is complex, before we bring in a repairs engineer
- Complete the work to your satisfaction or book any follow-on works while we are there

What is an emergency?

An emergency is defined as something which could cause danger to someone's health or safety, or cause serious damage and destruction to property. Emergency repairs will be carried out within 24 hours.

Emergency contractors will normally make the situation safe to enable proper repairs to be undertaken during normal working hours. The types of work they attend include:

- Incidents that could seriously damage your health or the property e.g. risk of electrocution, gas explosion or severe flooding
- Complete Electrical Failure - Where this is an isolated incident and not power failure to the surrounding area and does not involve lack of credit on the meter
- Central Heating and/or Hot Water failure
- Lift Breakdown (In sheltered housing schemes, or where a person is trapped and we are called to assist the fire brigade)
- Security of property in cases such as safeguarding children or adults, sheltered or supported housing main door entry systems or where police have requested attendance due to other exceptional circumstances
- All toilets in a property not working (unless resident is disabled and unable to reach the working toilet)

We recognise that vulnerable residents will need special consideration in certain circumstances.

The intention of emergency works is to make the situation safe. For example this may include isolating the water supply when a major leak occurs or to board up a broken window that makes a property insecure. Some minor repairs may be completed at the emergency visit but, if required, any follow up work will be given either an urgent or routine response category.

If an emergency repair is requested by a resident but subsequently we are informed that it was not a genuine emergency we reserve the right to charge you for the service.

What to do in a serious emergency

Fire

- Get everyone out and close doors behind you
- Do not go back for any reason
- Warn your neighbours if any of them might be in danger
- Dial 999 from a mobile or a neighbour's phone

Water - burst or leaking pipe

- Turn the water off at the mains
- If electrics are affected, turn off the electricity at the electric consumer unit. See page 26 for more advice
- Call our repairs service using the emergency number

Loss of electricity

- If neighbours are also affected, call your electricity company (the phone number will be on the bill). Otherwise, see advice on page 27
- If the problem persists after following the advice on page 27, call our repairs service
- If our office is closed, use the emergency number

If you smell gas

- Do not turn any electrical switches on or off, or use the door bell, smoke or use matches or naked flames
- Open the doors and windows to get rid of the gas smell
- Check to see if the gas has been left on unlit, or a pilot light has gone out. If so turn the appliance off. Do not relight the appliance until the smell of gas has left the property
- If the leak cannot be stopped by turning off an appliance, or you are uncertain whether it has been stopped, turn the main gas supply off at the meter and call the National Gas Emergency Service ☎ 0800 111 999, Minicom 📞 0800 371 787

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Who is responsible for repairs?

As your landlord, we have a legal duty to carry out certain repairs when they are needed. As legislation changes, the responsibility for types of repair may also change. We will update this booklet to reflect those changes.

Normal wear and tear will occur to your home. If repairs are needed because of neglect or damage by you, or your friends or family, we will expect you to carry out any necessary repairs yourself or pay for the cost of the repair.

On page 12 is a list of repairs showing which are our responsibility, and which are yours. If you still have any queries about a specific repair then contact us.

There may be some occasions when we will carry out a repair for which we are not generally responsible. This will usually depend on your circumstances, and these are known as discretionary repairs.

Your responsibilities

- You are responsible for keeping your home clean and in good condition and for attempting to repair minor problems. This booklet will help you make repairs yourself
- You must take reasonable precautions to prevent damage to your property by fire, frost, bursting of water pipes or blocked drains and sinks
- We strongly recommend that you take out contents insurance for your belongings in your home
- You must provide access each year for the **Home Safety Check** which will check the safety of your home and any gas appliances
- We rely on you to report any faults promptly and as fully and accurately as you can. Be sure to provide access to our contractors at the appointed time to ensure that the repair can be undertaken within our agreed timescales. You may be charged if the contractor arrives for an agreed appointment and you are not at home
- Check the contractor's identification and confirm with them the work that needs

to be done. Keep the area clear of furniture, pets and children

- Please remember that someone else will be moving into your home if you ever decide to leave. Make sure that the property is clean, tidy, reasonably decorated and that all your unwanted belongings have been cleared, including anything in the roof space

Our obligations

- We must keep the structure and exterior of your home and the building in which it is situated in good repair
- We will also keep installations for the supply of water, gas and electricity to your home in good repair and proper working order. This includes annual gas safety inspections and regular electrical safety inspections
- We are legally required to check the safety and operation of the gas installation and appliances once a year. Installations which are not checked and serviced can become inefficient or dangerous
- In the case of flats and maisonettes, we will take reasonable care to keep common entrances, halls, stairways, lifts, passageways, rubbish chutes and any other common parts in reasonable repair
- We aim to provide a good quality service as outlined on page 66-67. We will ask you to tell us if we are meeting this standard

Who is responsible for repairs?

Repair	Details	Us	You
Baths and basins		✓	
Bathroom fixtures and fittings	Toilet seats, bathroom cabinets, mirrors, shower curtains, unheated towel rails, toilet roll holders, plugs and chains		✓
Blockages	Baths, basins and toilets		✓
Boilers	Annual servicing and breakdown	✓	
Carpentry		✓	
Communal areas	Including lighting, doors, door locks, door entry phones, bin stores, recycling areas, cleaning, lifts, communal heating and grounds maintenance	✓	
Decoration	External	✓	
Decoration	Internal		✓
Doors	Including frame and door	✓	
Locks and handles			✓
Doorbells and letterboxes			✓
Individual drains	Damaged	✓	
Drains	Blocked		✓
Electric appliances	Such as cookers, fridges, washing machines and dishwashers		✓
Fences and gates	May include replacements which are not like for like	✓	
Fixtures and fittings	Such as coat hooks, curtains, curtain rails		✓
Floor boards		✓	
Floor covering	Including adapting doors to accommodate carpets		✓
Front door lock	Including keys		✓
Garden to individual home	Including turf, repair or replacement of individual bins		✓
Glazing	If broken into, you must get a police crime number		✓

Repair	Details	Us	You
Heating	Including solar thermal or PV panels	✓	
Hot water heaters	Including immersion heaters	✓	
Infestations	By ants, wasps, bees, cockroaches, mice, rats or bedbugs		✓
Kitchen units	Including worktops	✓	
Light fittings	Light bulbs, fuses, fluorescent tubes		✓
Locks	Including loss of keys and repairs to forced entry if you get locked out		✓
Paths	Including steps, footpaths and ramps	✓	
Pilot lights	Including resetting any heating controls		✓
Plastering		✓	
Plumbing repairs and leaks		✓	
Porches		✓	
Showers		✓	
Sink units		✓	
Stairs		✓	
Switches		✓	
Sockets		✓	
Telephone points			✓
Toilet seat			✓
TV aerials and points	For houses only		✓
Ventilation systems	Including heat recovery systems	✓	
Wall tiling	Bathroom/kitchen	✓	
Washing lines	Including rotary lines		✓
Waste blockages	Including basins, bath and toilets		✓
Water leaks	Including sealant around sinks and baths	✓	
Windows	Including cills, sash cords, catch and frames	✓	

Repair priorities

Some repairs are more important than others.

Emergency repairs

See page 6.

Urgent repairs

If the repair seriously affects your comfort or convenience it will be treated as urgent. An example of an urgent repair is partial loss of power, light or water supply, we will attend to these within 5 days.

Routine repairs

Repairs that can wait a short time (up to 56 days) to be fixed as categorised as routine. They include minor problems with toilets, baths, sinks, doors or windows sticking, plaster repairs, brickwork, and other non urgent internal and external repairs.

Planned maintenance

Where maintenance can be planned in advance we can arrange for it to be done on a group of homes at the same time, to keep costs down.

Examples include external painting, boiler replacements, annual servicing of

gas appliances and central heating and inspection and testing of appliances provided by us.

You will be contacted in advance by the contractor or ourselves to carry out any surveys which may be required before the work starts.

Home adaptation service

As a landlord we are committed to helping residents who need adaptations to their home to help their independent living. We carry out minor adaptations, such as grab rails or lever taps on request. For major adaptations such as stair lifts, ramps or level access we require a referral from an occupational therapist. For more details contact us.

Insurance

As a landlord we only insure the bricks and mortar of your home. Damage caused to the contents (carpets, furnishings, decorations and other belongings) by fire or flood, or by another person such as a thief, vandal or careless visitor could cost you a lot of money. We therefore strongly advise you to have adequate home contents insurance cover.

Damp and mould

Condensation

Condensation occurs when there is a build up of moisture in the air. Warm damp air condenses and forms water when it cools: for example when it touches a cool surface. In your home these are external walls, mirrors, windows, wall tiles and even clothes.

There is always moisture in the air, but you create additional moisture in your home by:

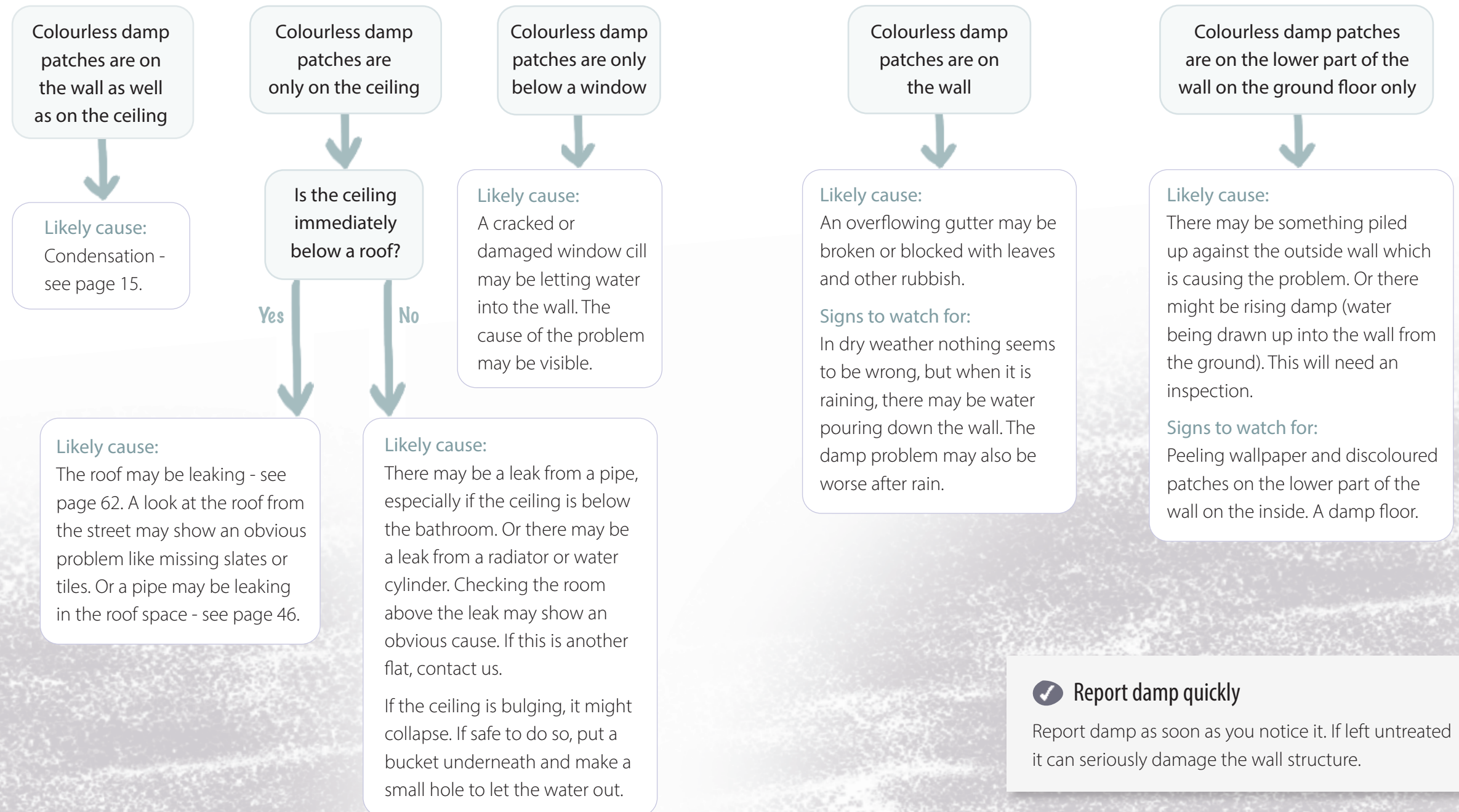
- Cooking or boiling water
- Taking baths or showers
- Drying clothes indoors
- Watering plants
- Using paraffin or bottled gas heaters

If this condensation cannot dry out it will cause mould to form on walls, in cupboards and on window cills, and mildew to form on clothes, especially leather goods.

✓ Things you can do to reduce condensation:

1. Produce less moisture by covering pans and turning down the heat when they are boiling, switching off boiling kettles, and drying clothes outside, or in a well ventilated room, and not using paraffin or bottled gas heaters.
2. Ventilate the room to let the moisture out, by opening a bathroom or kitchen window for a while to let the steam escape, or using an extract fan; and by keeping the trickle vents on your windows open. If you have fans, please ensure they are always on, clear from obstructions and the filters are regularly cleaned.
3. Keeping your home warm by maintaining a low background heat: this need not result in significantly increased heating costs.
4. Wipe down where moisture settles.

Damp in your home



✔ Report damp quickly

Report damp as soon as you notice it. If left untreated it can seriously damage the wall structure.

Boiler

There are various types of boiler. Some are powered by gas, electricity, solar or photo voltaic panels on the roof, a communal boiler or a communal heating system.

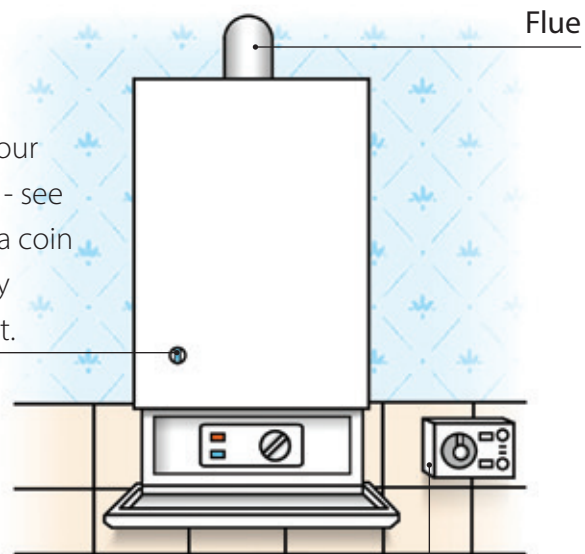
If you share a communal boiler with your neighbours ask them if they are having the same problem.

! Gas fumes

If you have a gas boiler and there are fumes in your room, it may be a gas leak. Follow the emergency plan on page 7. Do not smoke, use matches or turn any electrical switches on or off. Open the windows.

Ignition light

If it is not on check your electricity is working - see page 27. If you have a coin or credit meter it may have run out of credit.



Time clock and thermostat

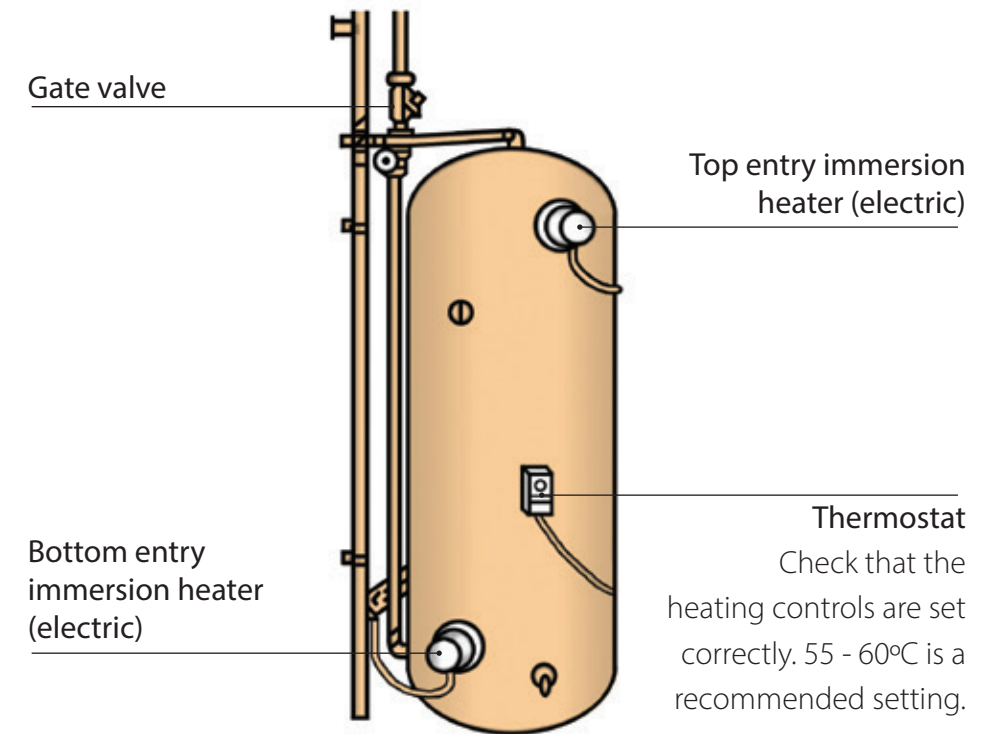
Is the timer for the boiler set correctly for hot water and heating? For advice on settings see page 21.

✓ For future reference

It is useful to know how your boiler heats your home, when it was last serviced, its make and model. Record this important information about your boiler at the front of this book for future reference.

Hot water cylinder

Modern cylinders may look white with a built in insulation material. Some cylinders may have an insulation jacket.



Thermostat
Check that the heating controls are set correctly. 55 - 60°C is a recommended setting.

✓ Be prepared for an emergency

Make sure you know where the main stopcock is, and check that you can turn it off. Also, be sure to know how to turn off your electricity and gas supply in an emergency. If you do not know, ask any of our staff or contractors.

✓ During freezing spells

Keep the heating on all the time, and turn the thermostat down during the night and if you are out all day.

What is carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning?

Carbon monoxide poisoning is caused by gas appliances and flues that have not been properly installed, maintained or that are poorly ventilated. CO is a colourless, odourless, tasteless, poisonous gas produced by incomplete burning of carbon-based fuels, including gas, oil, wood and coal. Carbon-based fuels are safe to use. It is only when the fuel does not burn properly that excess CO is produced, which is poisonous. When CO enters the body, it prevents the blood from bringing oxygen to cells, tissues, and organs.

Signs to watch for in your home:

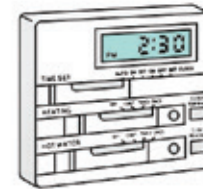
Any one of the following could be a sign that there is carbon monoxide in your home.

- The flame on your cooker should be crisp and blue. Lazy yellow or orange flames mean you need to get your cooker checked
- Dark staining around or on appliances
- Pilot lights that frequently blow out
- Increased condensation inside windows

Carbon monoxide alarm

GCH will install carbon monoxide alarms where required and will service these annually.

Sources of further information: www.gassaferegister.co.uk, www.hse.gov.uk



Digital timer



Room thermostat



Clock timer

How to set a central heating digital timer

1. Check the clock is showing the correct time. If not, put the timer switch to 'clock' and adjust the time using the 'forward' and 'reverse' buttons.
2. Reset the timer switch to 'auto'.
3. Set the 'heating' and 'hot water' switches to come on once, twice, or stay on all the time, as you require.

Room thermostat

If you have a room thermostat a comfortable temperature is between 18°C and 20°C. Check that the thermostatic valves on the radiators are set correctly.

How to set a central heating clock timer

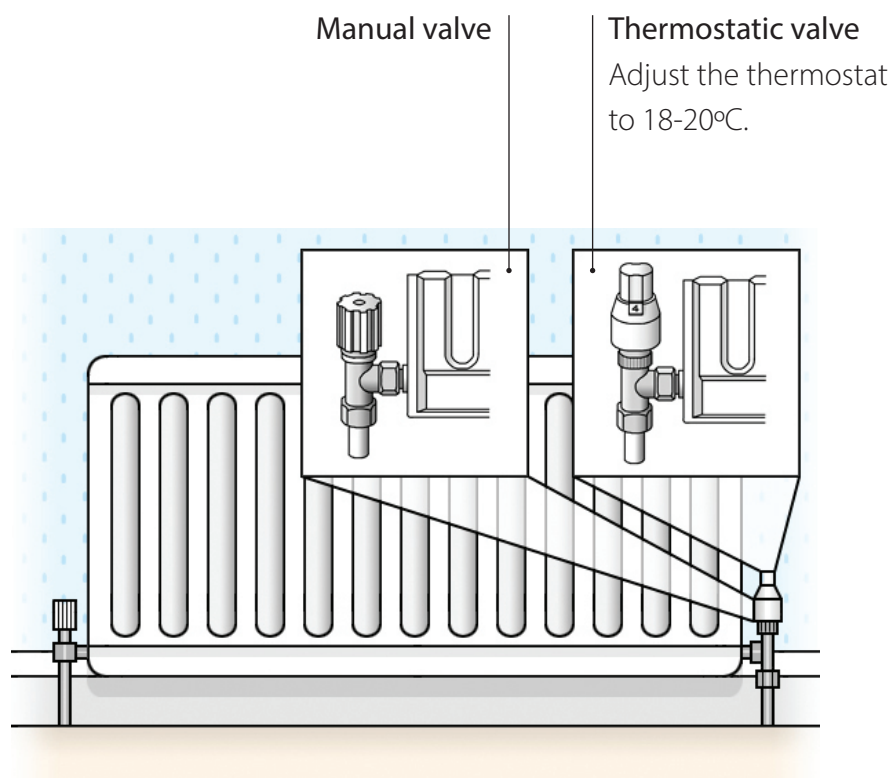
1. Turn the clock until it is showing the correct time.
2. Decide when you want the heating to come on and go off and set the pins or arrows for those times.
3. Set the timer switch to 'timer' or 'auto' as appropriate to the unit.

! Carbon monoxide (CO)

If you have a CO alarm or indicator which shows the presence of CO, switch off the appliance and open the doors and windows. Shut off the gas supply at the meter and call the National Gas Emergency Service on ☎ 0800 111 999.

! Smell gas?

Shut off the gas supply at the meter and call the National Gas Emergency Service ☎ 0800 111 999, Minicom 📞 0800 371 787.



✓ Avoid damp damage

Always report any leaking, damaged or loose radiators as soon as you notice them.

If there is a leak

Place a dish or bowl underneath the leak. Pull back any carpets and lay down newspapers or towels to absorb any dampness. Turn the radiator valve off.

If the whole radiator is cold

Check that the radiator valve is open. If more than one radiator is cold, the whole heating system may need to be checked by a plumber.

Warm at the bottom and cold at the top

It may be because air is trapped in the system. Bleeding the radiator releases this air and allows hot water to fill the whole system.

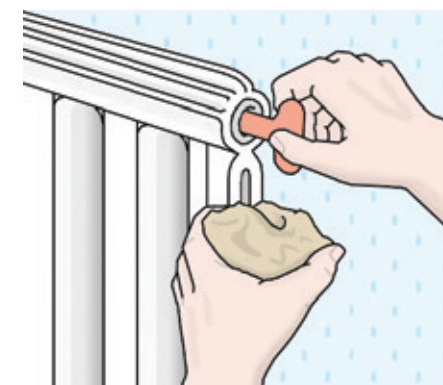
How to bleed a radiator

Do not bleed the radiators if you do not feel competent and confident to do so.

Do not bleed the radiators if you have a combination boiler: this type of boiler will have either a pressure gauge or a low pressure light on the front or underside of the boiler, and you will probably not have a hot water cylinder.

Turn off the heating system before bleeding, otherwise the pump might draw more air into the system.

You will need a special radiator key, available from most DIY and hardware shops. You will also need a rag or cloth and a bucket or bowl.



The bleed valve is the small square nut at the top end of the radiator. Place the key over the valve and hold the cloth around it to catch any water. Gently turn the key anti-clockwise until you hear a hiss - this is the air being released. When water starts to come through, turn the key back clockwise to shut the valve off. DO NOT unscrew the valve completely as the plug will come right out.

✓ Saving energy in your home

The cost of energy and water is going up every year so you want to make sure that you use as little as possible in your home. There are simple ways to do this without making life uncomfortable.

- Use energy efficient light bulbs
- Switch electrical appliances off when they are not in use: do not put them on standby
- Look for 'Energy Saving Recommended' ratings when buying appliances
- Use lower temperatures for washing
- Make sure the dishwasher or washing machine is full before you switch it on
- Set room heating to 18°C - 21°C and programme heating and hot water for when you need it
- Draught proof doors and windows
- If you do not have loft insulation grants may be available to install it
- Defrost your fridge and freezer regularly
- Only put the amount of water you need in the kettle to boil

What are Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs)?

EPCs are provided on all new tenancies from 1st October 2008. The certificate carries an energy audit on your home, and recommendations on how to make it more energy efficient.

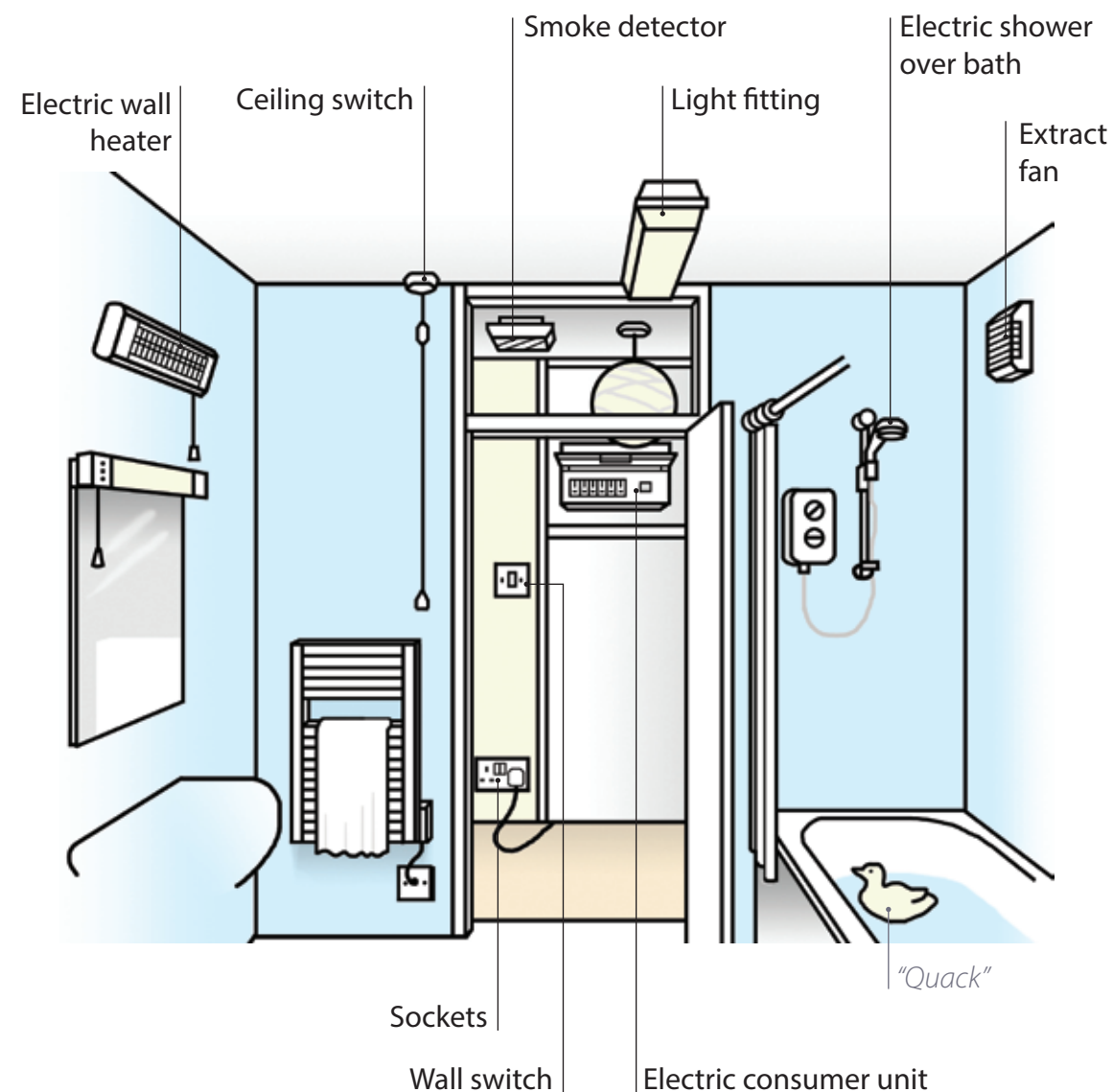
It gives your home a standard energy and carbon emission efficiency grade from A to G, where A is the most efficient and with the average to date being D.

Your energy certificate can be found at www.gov.uk/find-energy-certificate. If you would like a new certificate, please call us.

Energy Efficiency Rating		
	Current	Potential
Very energy efficient - lower running costs		
(92-100) A		
(81-91) B		
(69-80) C		73
(55-68) D		
(39-54) E		
(21-38) F	37	
(1-20) G		
Not energy efficient - higher running costs		

! Electrical fire

If electrical fittings are smoking, turn off all power and call the emergency number.



Electric consumer unit

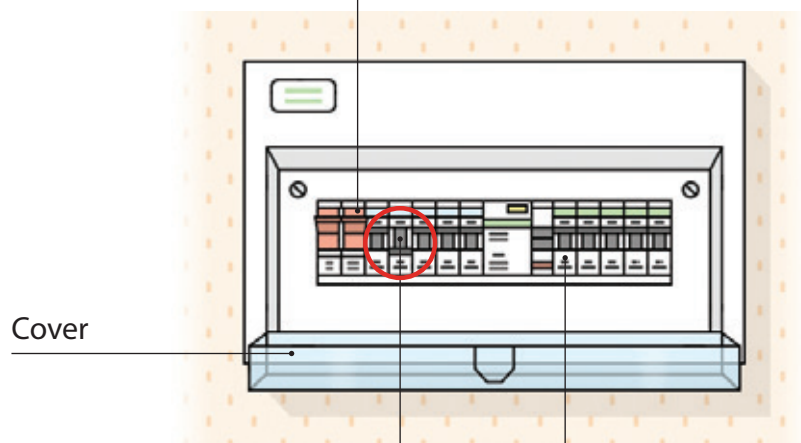
This is the control centre for electricity in your home and is often referred to as a “fuse box”. Modern electric circuits are fitted with a circuit breaker fuse system: if a fault develops, a switch is tripped in the electric consumer unit and the circuit is broken.

! Be safe with electricity

Never tamper with the electrics in your home. Turn off the electricity before investigating a problem. Use the main ON/OFF switch on the electric consumer unit to do this.

Main ON/OFF switch

Use this switch if you need to turn all the electrics in your home on or off. It is useful to know where this is in case of emergency.



Cover

Tripped switch

The switch shown has ‘tripped’ so there will be no electricity to this area of your home.

Trip switches

The electric supply in your home is organised into areas. The trip switches in your electric consumer unit control the electric supply to these areas.

✓ Electric meter

You will find your electric meter next to your electric consumer unit. Give your electricity supplier regular meter readings so that they can give you accurate electricity bills.

✓ Avoid tripped switches

Watch out for the following:

- A faulty light bulb
- An overloaded socket
- Too many appliances being used at the same time
- A faulty or misused appliance
- An overfilled or empty kettle
- An unclean toaster
- A worn out or cracked cooker ring
- A faulty immersion heater
- A faulty connection on leads to appliances such as TVs or HiFi
- A blown light bulb

No power in your home

The most common cause is a tripped switch or blown fuse. If you have a coin or credit meter, ensure it has enough credit. If neighbours are also affected, contact your electricity supplier, using their website or the number on the bill. If your home is the only one affected, and you have checked the electric consumer unit, you are sure the bills are paid or the meter has credit, contact your electricity supplier. If they are unable to help, contact us.

When a switch is tripped

1. Open the cover on the electric consumer unit to expose the trip switches. The electric consumer unit is usually next to the electricity meter.
2. Check which switches have tripped to the OFF position and put them back to the ON position.

If tripping occurs again

It is probably being caused by a faulty appliance. You need to identify which circuit is affected and which appliance on that circuit is causing a problem.

Go around the house noting which set of lights or sockets are not working. Unplug all appliances on that problem circuit and switch off the immersion heater. Switch the tripped switch to the ON position and plug in the appliances one by one until the trip goes again. Leave that appliance unplugged. If one of our appliances is at fault, report the repair; otherwise get it fixed by a qualified electrician or service engineer.

✓ Smoke detector checks

Smoke detectors need to be cleaned and tested once a month to make sure they will operate effectively. Care should be taken not to damage any of the internal parts. Never allow a smoke detector which is run from mains electricity to get wet.

✓ Reduce condensation

Always use an extract fan if you have one. They are important to remove moisture from bathrooms and kitchens. If fans are not working, you will experience damp and condensation problems which can be expensive to treat.

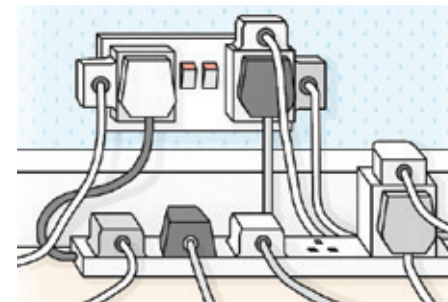
Smoke detector or alarm

Smoke alarms usually beep every 45 seconds to warn you the battery is running out. You are responsible for replacing the batteries in smoke detectors.

Extract fan

You must tell us if the fan is not working, broken, or loose.

Make sure the fan is switched on at the switch and on the pull switch if it has one. See page 25.

✓ Avoid an electrical hazard

Do not overload plug sockets by using multiple plug adaptors

Sockets

If the socket is smoking, not working, damaged or loose you must report this problem. Faulty appliances are your responsibility.

If the socket is not working see if the other power sockets nearby are working. Check that the appliance works in another socket or see if a different appliance works in the problem socket.

The socket outlets in your home will take square pin plugs. Check if the fuse in the plug has blown. The plug which you require will have a fuse inside it.

Lights

If the lights are not working find out if the power sockets are working. If they are not it might be a power problem or a tripped switch in your electric consumer unit.

If other lights in your home are working the light bulb may need replacing.

If the lights are flickering or the fixings are damaged you may need an electrician to look at the problem.

What is fire?

Something catches fire when it gets too hot, and will only burn if it has air.

A fire will produce ash, flames, heat and gases. The gases are the most dangerous thing because they can be poisonous, or can leave no air for people to breathe.

Very few people die in fires, but the ash, flames and smoke can cause terrible damage to your home.

✓ Keep fire escape routes clear



Keeping safe

To make sure you will be safe if a fire happened in your home, you need to think about three things:

1. Warning

The sooner you know there is a fire, the sooner you can escape and call the fire brigade to put out the fire. Smoke and heat detectors are important to give you warning that a fire has started.

2. Spread

Stopping a fire from spreading, stops more property and people being affected and gives you more time to escape.

Everything in your home from paint to furniture to walls can catch fire. By making everyday choices to use materials with a good fire rating you, your housing provider and any workmen can improve the fire safety of your home and stop fire spreading.

3. Escape

Being able to escape from a fire is essential. In communal blocks fire escape routes should be signposted and kept clear. If you live in a house make sure you know how to escape.

✓ Fire prevention

Simple things you can do to reduce the risk of a fire starting in your home.

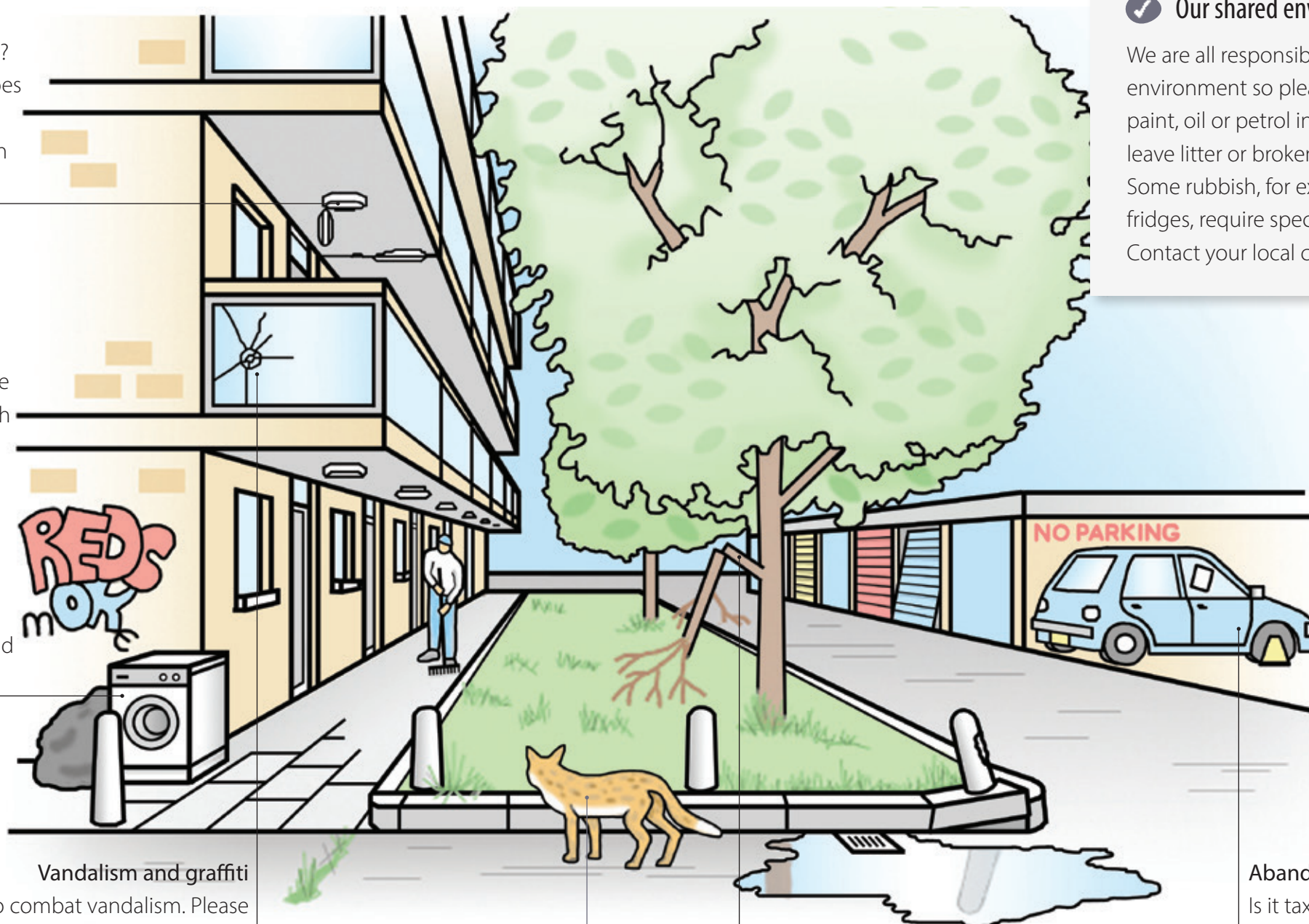
- Do not overload extension leads. Do not connect one extension lead to another. Christmas tree lights powered by an extension lead are a common cause of home fires. See page 29
- Keep electricity and electrical appliances well away from water
- Check your lampshades - they should tell you the maximum watt light bulb to use. If you use a higher wattage, the lampshade may get too hot and catch fire
- Check your cables - repair any with damage
- Never dry clothes or fabrics on electric heaters. These can easily get too hot and catch fire
- Check your smoke alarm - do you have one and is it working? Do you know what to do if the fire alarm sounds?
- If your escape route does not have emergency lighting keep an emergency torch easily available
- Never let escape routes be used for storage even for a short time
- Never leave the kitchen whilst cooking
- Keep tea towels or cloths, cables and appliances away from the cooker
- Keep the kitchen clean and free from grease. Wash the grill pan every time you use it
- Use sparking devices rather than matches to light gas stoves
- Keep hot oil levels to a minimum
- Keep doors shut
- If a fire door needs to be replaced make sure the new door is the right specification
- If you use an open fire make sure you have the chimney swept regularly
- Discourage smoking, use of matches and candles in your home

Communal lighting

What is wrong with it?
(Does not turn on, does not turn off, flickers, fittings broken) Which lights are affected?

Rubbish

Your rubbish is your own responsibility. We can help if the rubbish chutes are broken or blocked. Untidy rubbish areas can be a fire hazard. We can help if you can tell us what sort of rubbish has been dumped and who put it there.



Vandalism and graffiti

We need your help to combat vandalism. Please tell us quickly when you see it. Do not assume that someone else will report it. We will prosecute vandals to discourage others, and save rent money being used to repair vandalised areas.

"I can remember when this was all fields"

Trees

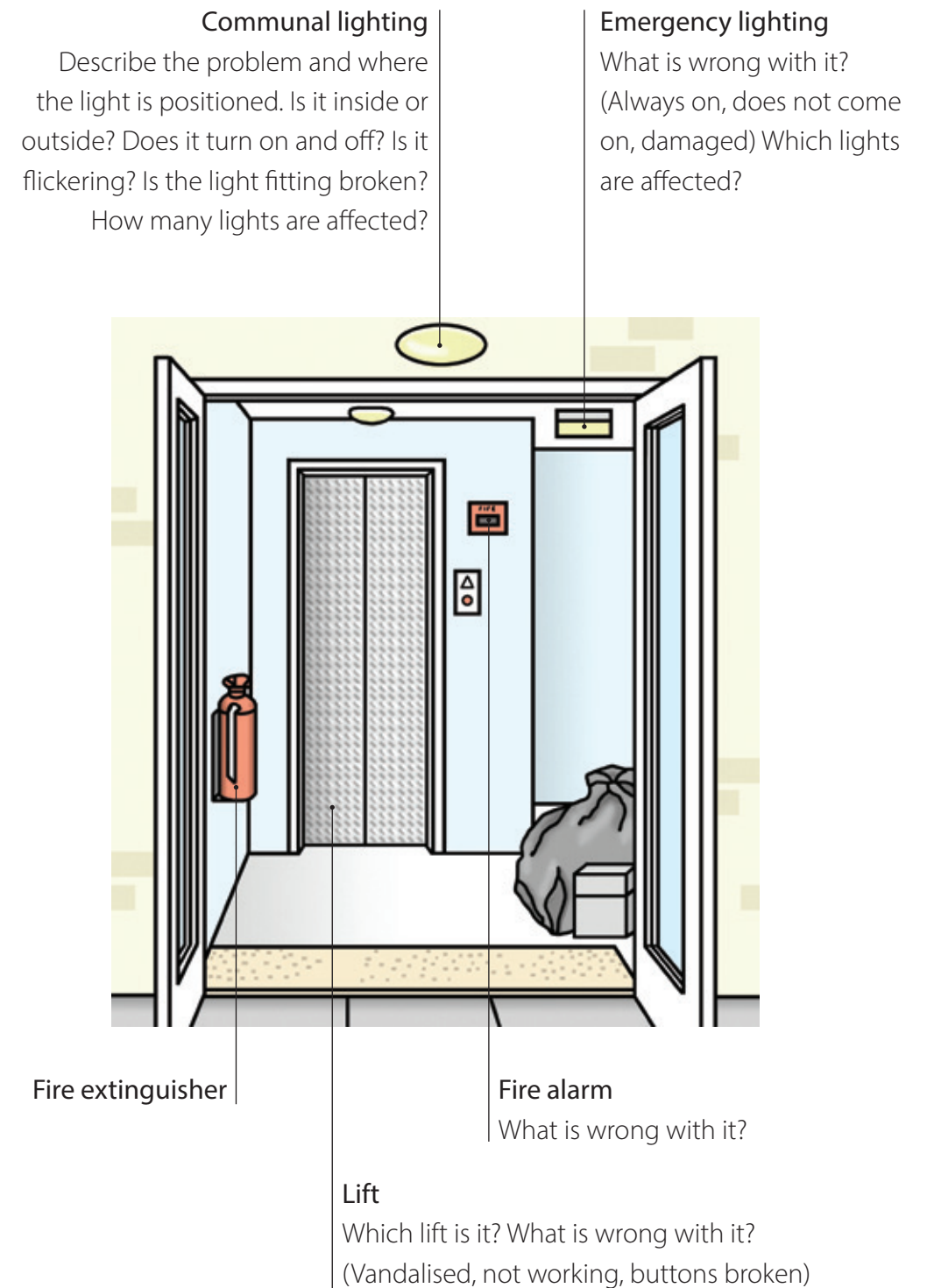
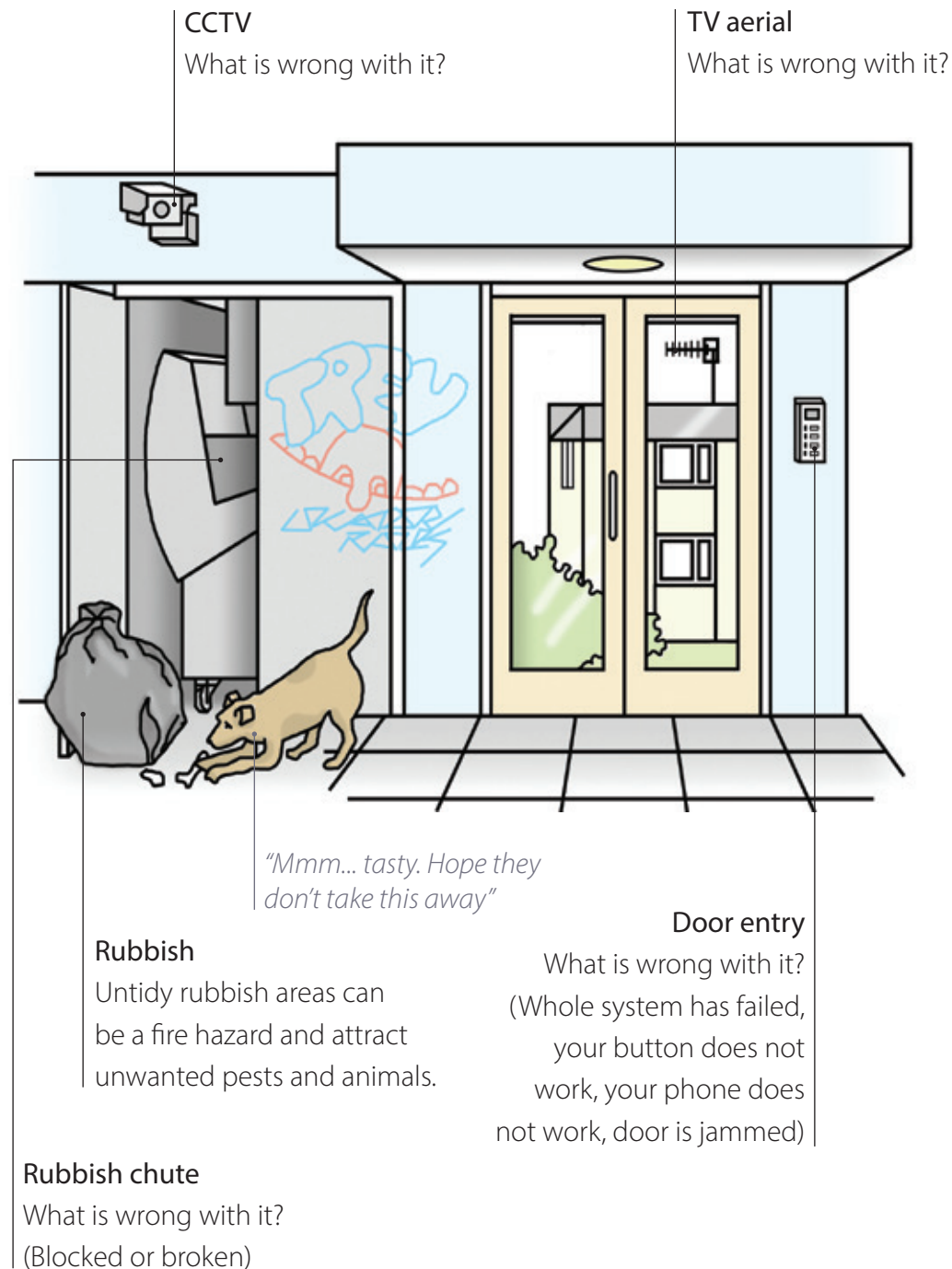
Tell us if the trees are blocking paths, obscuring light or have broken branches which might be hazardous or bad for the health of the tree.

Abandoned vehicle

Is it taxed? How long has it been there? Find out the reporting procedure from your landlord.

✓ Our shared environment

We are all responsible for the environment so please do not put paint, oil or petrol into the drains or leave litter or broken glass around. Some rubbish, for example old fridges, require special disposal. Contact your local council for advice.



✓ Damp and condensation

Use your fan to get rid of excess moisture in the air. Follow the advice on condensation on page 15. Check the seal around your sinks are in good repair otherwise they can cause damp damage to surrounding areas.

✓ Infestations

Keep the kitchen clean with food in sealed containers and free from rubbish to stop mice and other pests coming to your home.

✓ Avoid drain blockages

Never dispose of food waste or oil down the plug hole. Plungers and drain cleaning fluid can help clear blockages. These can be bought from your local DIY shop or from your local supermarket. Follow the product instructions carefully.

Cupboard

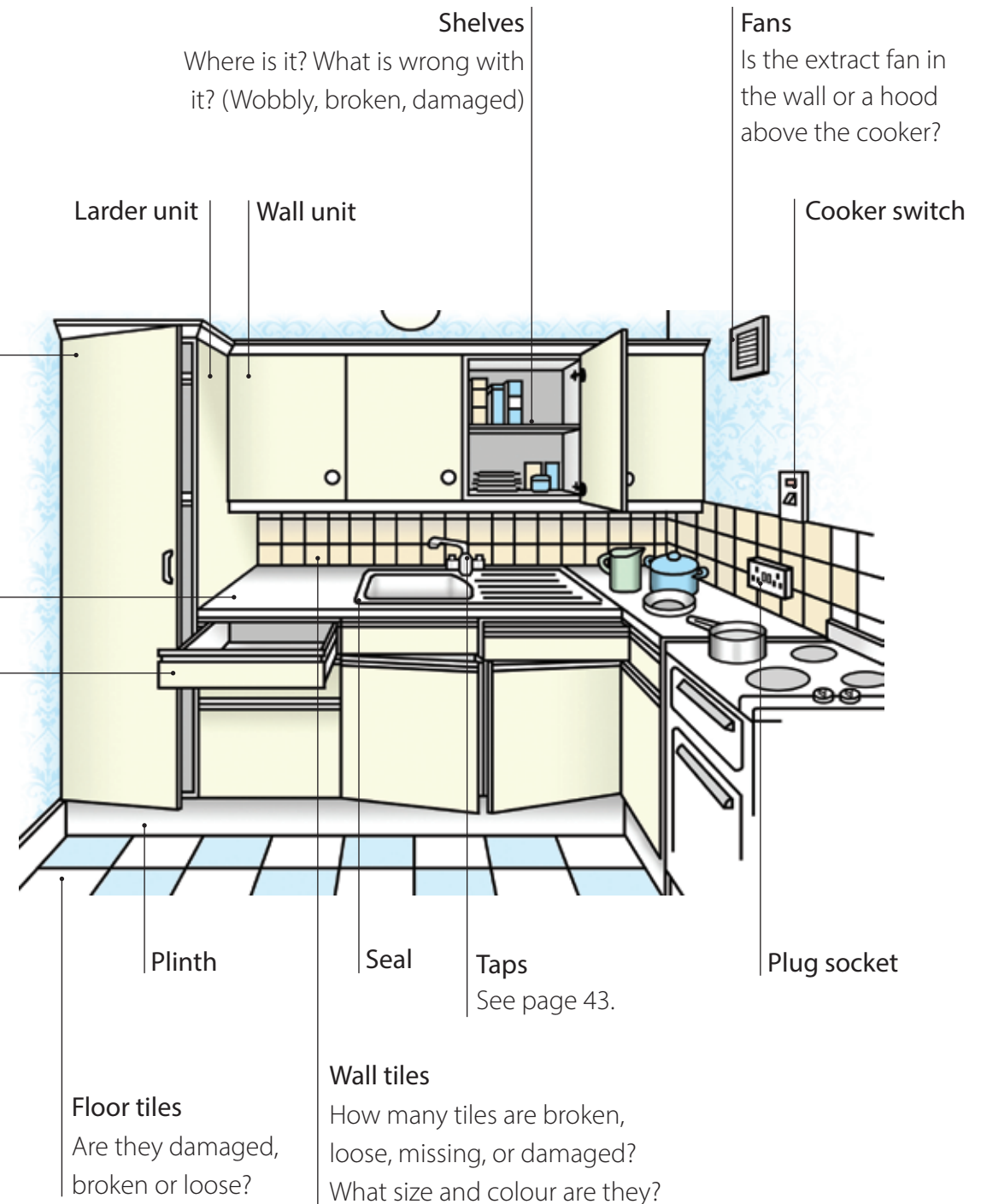
What is wrong with it? Is it a corner cupboard, a floor cupboard or wall cupboard? Does it have one or two doors? Is it the door, drawer, handle, shelf or hinge which is broken or loose? What colour is it? Can you see any name of make or manufacturer inside the cupboard?

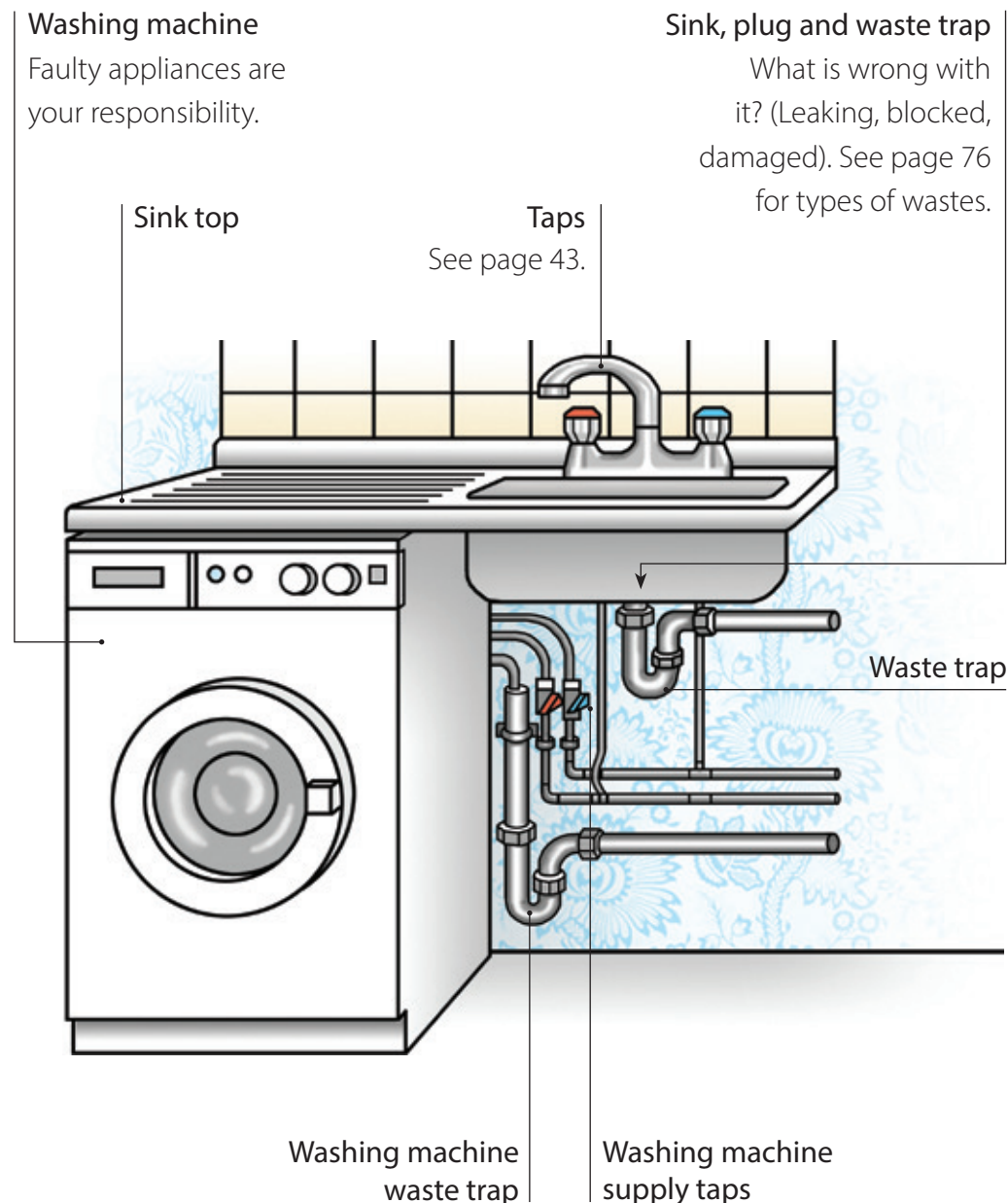
Worktop

Is it damaged or loose? How big is the damaged part? How did the damage happen?

Drawer

Is it broken, jammed, sticking, damaged or missing?





! Be prepared for an emergency

Make sure you know where the main stopcock is, and check that you can turn it off. Turn to the right (clockwise) to turn it off. Turn to the left (anticlockwise) to turn it on. Be sure to know how to turn off your electricity and gas supply in an emergency. If you do not know, ask any of our staff or contractors.

If you have a small leak

Put a bowl under it to try and catch the water.

Clearing a sink or bath blockage

1. Bail out most of the water using a suitable container.
2. Hold a cloth or rag firmly over the overflow opening, and place a plunger over the drain hole. Plungers can be obtained from most DIY shops.
3. Pump the plunger up and down rapidly.
4. After clearing the blockage, it is advisable to clean out the waste trap.
5. Place a bowl underneath the trap and unscrew the joints to remove the trap. Clean thoroughly and replace the trap, checking that the seals are in place and that all joints are screwed up tightly.

✓ Avoid drain blockages

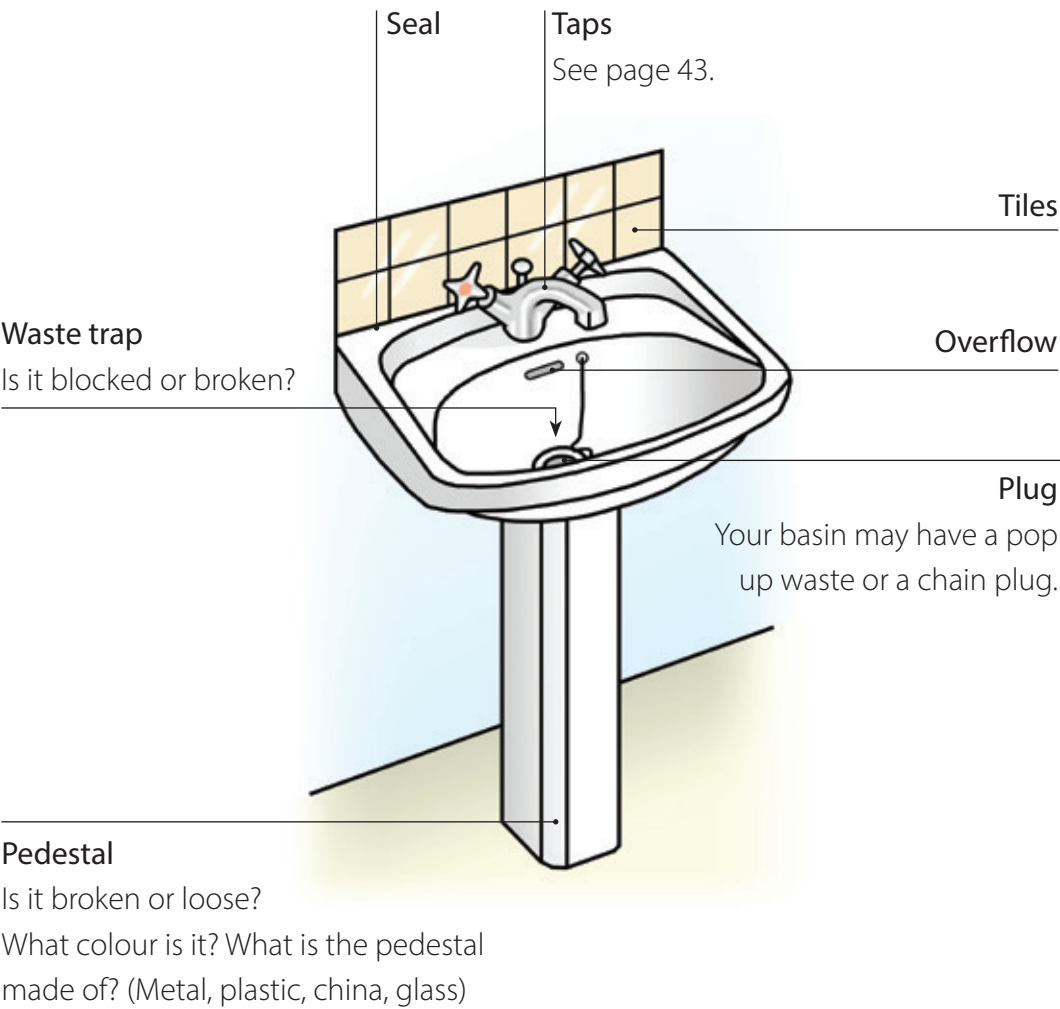
Never dispose of food waste, oil or other debris down your plug hole. Plungers and drain cleaning fluid can help. These can be bought from your local DIY shop or from your local supermarket. Follow the product instructions carefully.

✓ Looking after your washing machine

Make sure the waste pipe fits securely into the waste trap and that the supply pipes are not leaking. Drips and leaks from these connections can cause serious repair problems. If your washing machine has a filter clean it regularly.

Basin

Is it loose, broken, blocked or leaking? How did the damage happen? What is the basin made of? (Metal, plastic, china, glass)



Bath

Is it broken or leaking? What is the bath made of? (Metal, plastic, china, glass) What colour is it?

Shower head

Is it broken or does water not come out?

Wall tiles

Where are the tiles? How many are affected? Are they damaged, broken or loose? What size and colour are they?

Shower hose

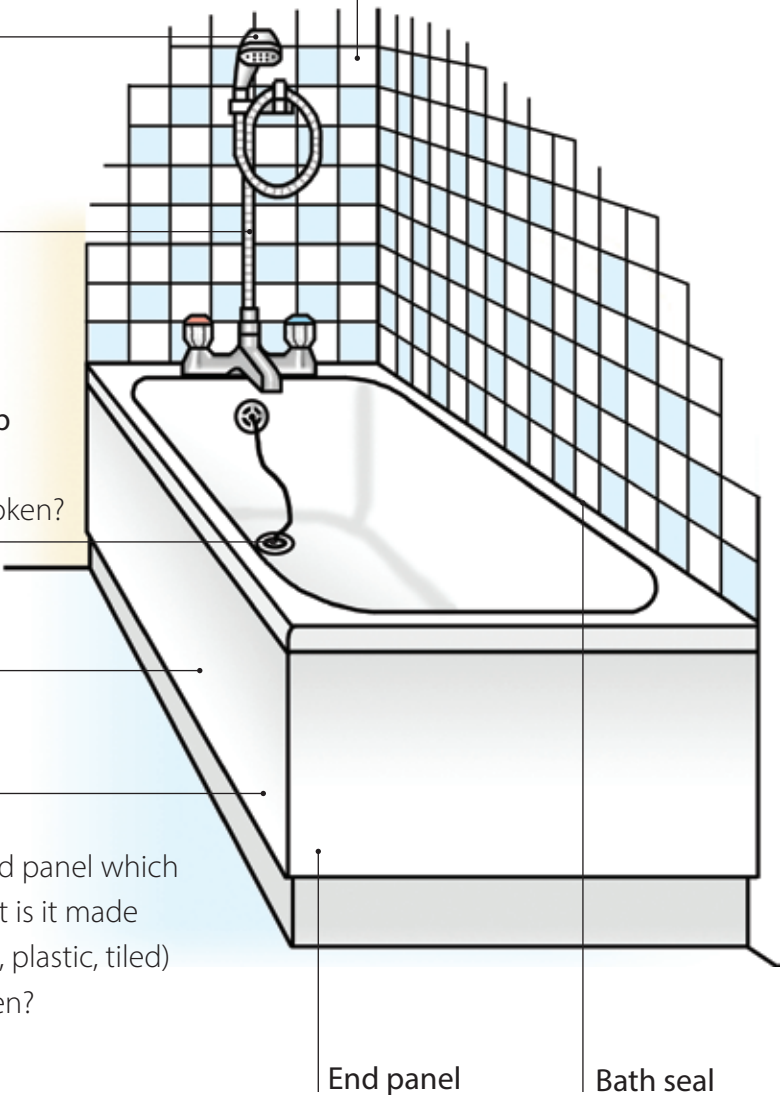
Plug to waste trap and pipe

Is it blocked or broken?

Side panel

Bath panel

Is it the side or end panel which is damaged? What is it made from? (Hardboard, plastic, tiled) Is it loose or broken?



Shower

What type of shower is it? (Electric, over the bath) Can you see a make or model number on the shower? Which part of the shower needs repairing?

Shower controls

Is it damaged or not working?
Is there hot and cold water? Do you have hot water elsewhere in your home? If it is electric, has the switch tripped?

Shower head broken

Is it broken or does water not come out? Is there a build up of limescale?

Cubicle door

Is it broken or stuck?

Shower tray seal**Shower hose****Wall tiles**

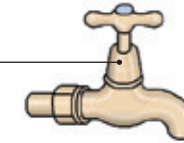
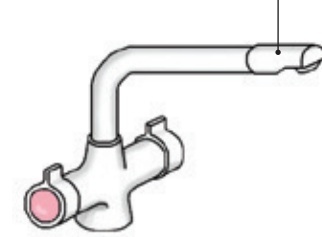
How many are affected? What size and colour are they?
How did it happen?

Shower tray

Is it leaking or broken? Is it made of ceramic or plastic?

Shower drain**Tap**

What type of tap is it? What is wrong with it? (Loose, broken, dripping, no water coming out, will not turn off)

Bib tap**Lever mixer tap****Monobloc mixer taps****Standard pillar tap**

✓ **Prevent limescale damage**

A build up of limescale around taps and shower heads can lead to leaks. Limescale can be removed from taps, shower heads, baths and sinks with vinegar, lemon juice or descaler bought from your local supermarket.

✓ **Avoid damp**

Check the seal around your sinks are working otherwise they can cause damp damage to surrounding areas.

✓ **Avoid shower drain blockages**

Hair does not break down so always remove hair from your plug hole. Plungers and drain cleaning fluid can help. These can be bought from your local DIY shop or from your local supermarket. Follow the product instructions carefully.

Toilet

Is it your only toilet?
What colour is it?

Flush

Is the mechanism moving properly? (Handle, button, chain) You can use a bucket of cold water down the pan to flush until the problem is fixed.

Overflow

Is it running or leaking? Does the overflow run outside? Is the cistern flushing? Is the float working? Is the overflow running continuously?

Cistern

Is it cracked, loose, leaking or not working? If cistern is not filling, the ball valve may be stuck. It might work again if you nudge it by hand.

Pan

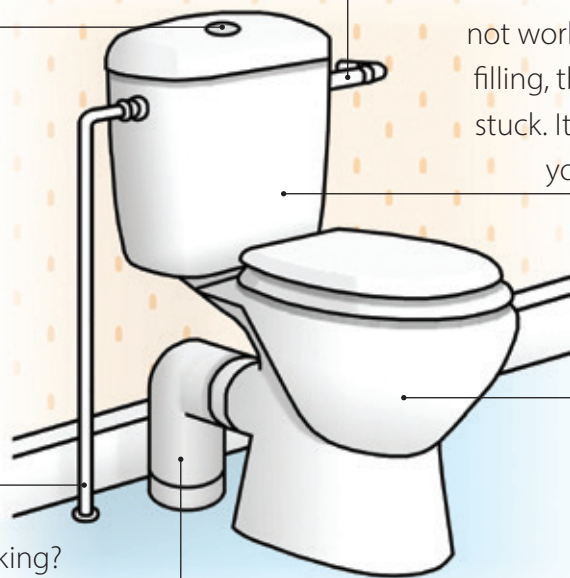
Is it cracked, loose, leaking or blocked?
How did it happen?

Soil stack

Is it blocked, leaking or broken? Is your toilet causing the blockage? Do you live in a flat or a house? If you live in a flat, which floor are you on?

Supply pipe

Is it blocked or leaking?
What caused the blockage?

**Clearing a blocked toilet**

Follow these steps:

- 1 If the pan is already full, remove most of the water into a suitable container using a jug or bowl.
- 2 Push the toilet brush or plunger to the bottom of the pan and pump up and down vigorously about 10 times. This creates a vacuum and pressure which may shift the blockage.
- 3 Check by flushing the toilet to see whether the blockage has gone. You may need to repeat the process several times before the toilet flushes normally. Do not use plungers with a metal disk, as these may chip or crack the toilet bowl.

Stopping a cistern overflow

As a temporary solution, try lifting the float to close the ball valve: if this stops the overflow, try to tie it up, using a piece of wood and some string, as in the diagram.

**✓ Avoid bathroom blockages**

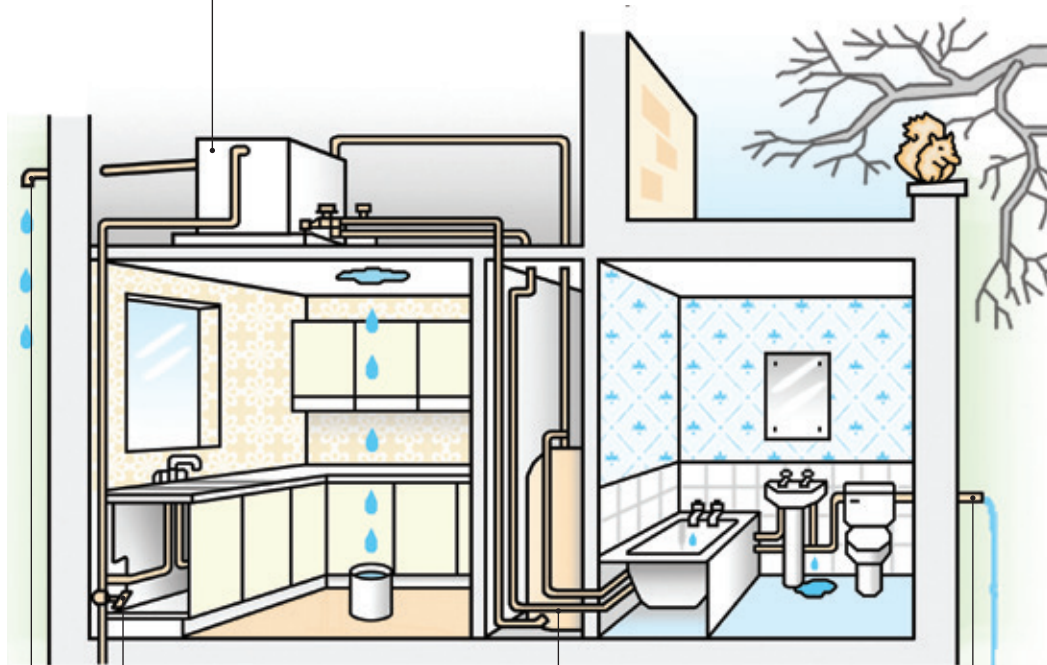
Air fresheners that attach to the rim of the toilet pan should not be used. Blockages are usually caused by unusual objects: nappies, toys, sanitary towels, air fresheners. If such a blockage occurs as a result of one or several of these objects becoming lodged, you may be charged for clearing the blockage.

Hair does not break down so always remove from the plug hole.

Drain cleaning products can be bought from your supermarket.

Cold water storage tank

What is wrong with it? (No cold water, tank leaking, tank overflow is running, tank is cracked) Is there cold water at the kitchen sink? Is the overflow running outside? Are the pipes frozen? Are the neighbours affected?



Gate valve (controls water from cold water storage tank)

Overflow (from bathroom)

Overflow (from cold water storage tank)

Pipes

Is the problem inside or outside the building? Are they noisy, burst, leaking, or frozen?

Isolating a leak

Some items of equipment may have their own isolation valve (either a gate valve, or a service valve). If not, you may be able to isolate the fault by just turning off a gate valve on a pipe coming out of the cold water tank. This will leave you with some services, even though it might only be cold water at the kitchen tap. You could then temporarily flush toilets using a bucket of cold water.

Limiting water leak damage

Place a dish or bowl underneath the leak. Pull back any carpets and lay down newspapers or towels to absorb any dampness.

Ceilings beginning to bulge?

The most likely cause is a leak from above. Look for signs of damp or leaks. Ceiling plaster can also bulge without being wet. Ask your landlord to inspect the problem.

! Serious water leak

See emergency section on page 7. Turn off your water supply at the main stopcock. If water is near electrical fittings, do not touch them and switch off your electricity at the electric consumer unit.

✓ Be prepared for emergencies

Find out where your stopcock is for turning off your water supply. In case electrics are affected know where your electric consumer unit is for switching off your electricity supply.

✓ Going away during winter?

To avoid the risk of burst pipes during freezing weather, lower the setting on your central heating room thermostat but leave the heating on.

Door

Is it your own door or communal one? Can you still open and close the door?
Can you get past the door into and out of your home? Which part of the door is damaged? What is wrong with it? (Jammed, damaged, rotten, leaking, draughty)

✔ Reduce the danger of fire

Keep yourself and your family protected. Never wedge a door open if it is fitted with a door closer to reduce the risk of the spread of fire.

✔ Keep your home secure

Make a habit of checking all doors and windows are locked before leaving the house.

Door closer
These allow doors to self close and reduce the spread of fire. There are two types of closers: overhead ones and concealed ones that fit in the door frame.

Outside door pull

Chain

Panel
Which panels are damaged?
What is it made of? (Wood, single or double glazed, wired glass, metal, UPVC)

Threshold

Weatherboard

Door frame

Door viewer

Rim night latch

Letterplate

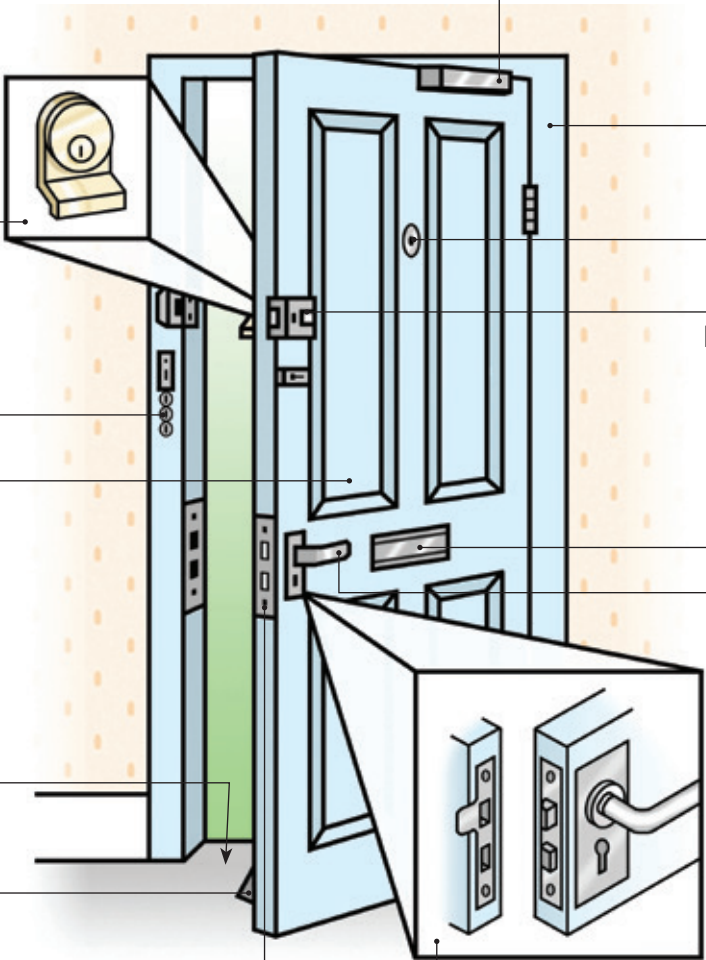
Handle

Lock

What type of lock is it? What is wrong with the lock? (Lever handle faulty, spring worn out, lock not fitting into the keep, locked out, latch defective)

Mortice sash lock

Rain leaking in under the door
Does the door have a weatherboard?



Window

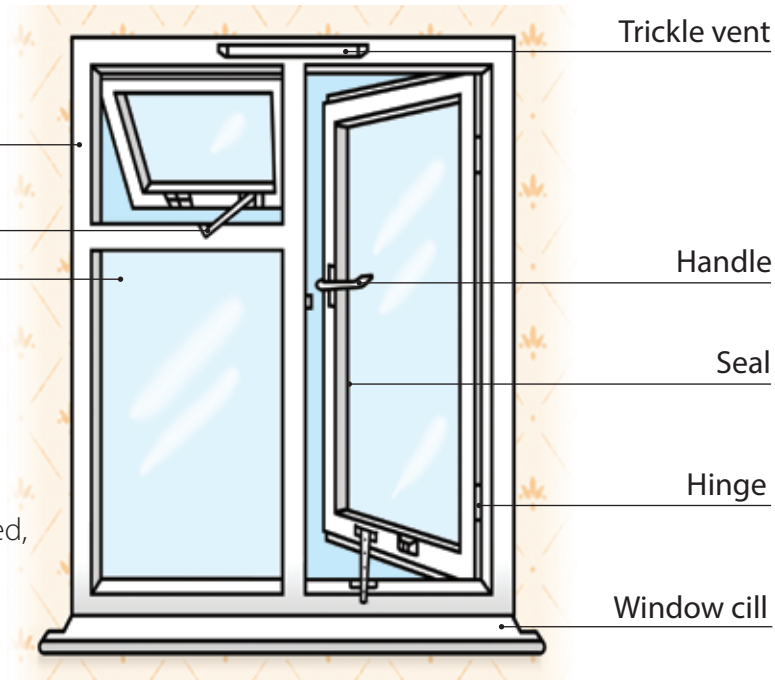
Where is the window? (Which floor, front or back of house) Which part is damaged? What is the window frame made of? (Wood, metal or plastic) What type of window is it? (Sash, casement, pivot or tilt and turn window) Is your home secure?

Window frame

What is wrong with it? (Jammed, damaged, rotten, broken)

Stay**Glass**

Is it single or double glazed? What type of glass is it? (Clear, wired or obscure) What is wrong with it? (Jammed, damaged, broken)



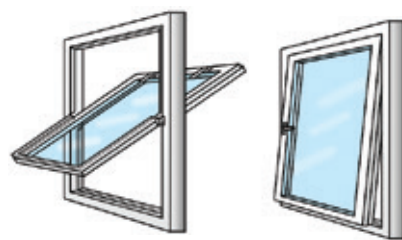
Casement window

Window fittings

What is wrong with them? (Defective, loose, missing) See page 76.



Sash window



Tilt and turn window

✓ Avoid damp

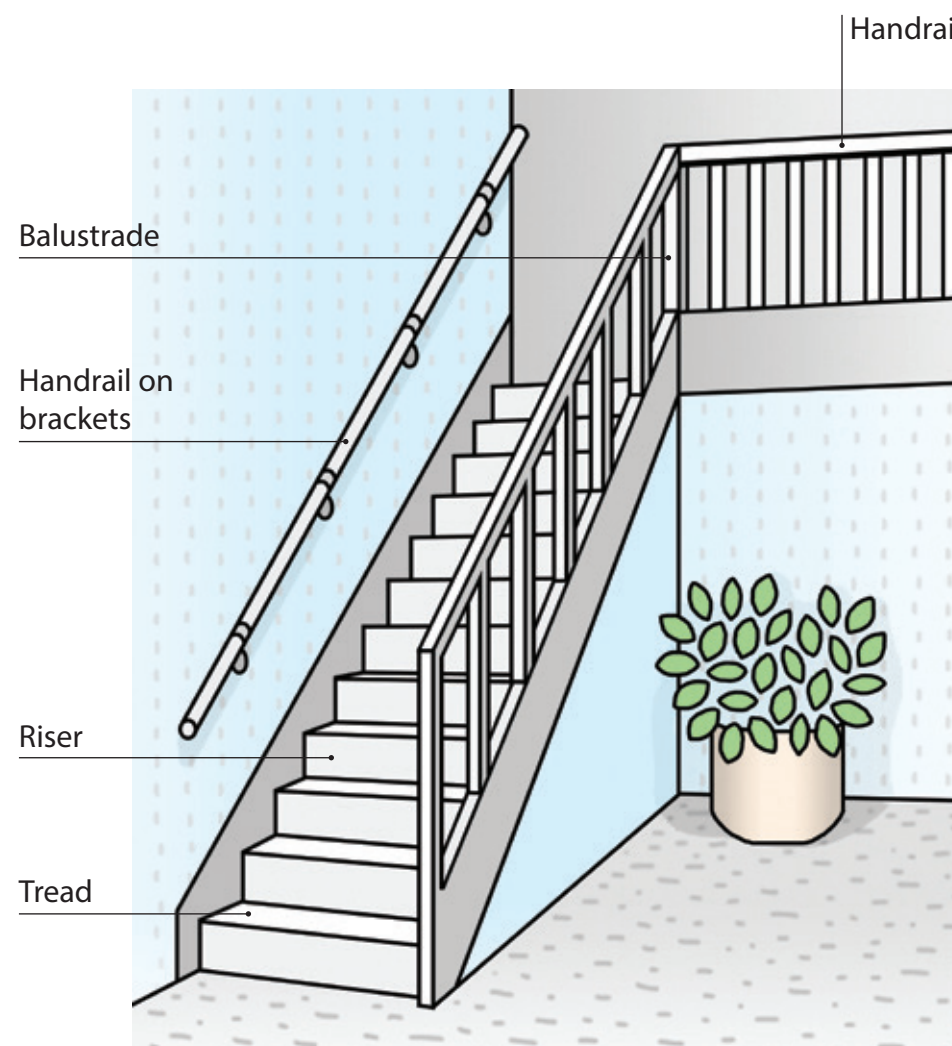
Ventilate your room regularly to reduce the build up of moisture. Wipe down if moisture settles. Keep trickle vents open.

Stairs

Is it inside your home or a communal staircase? How many steps are affected? What are the stairs made of? (Wood, concrete) What is wrong with them? (Loose step, broken step, handrail faulty)

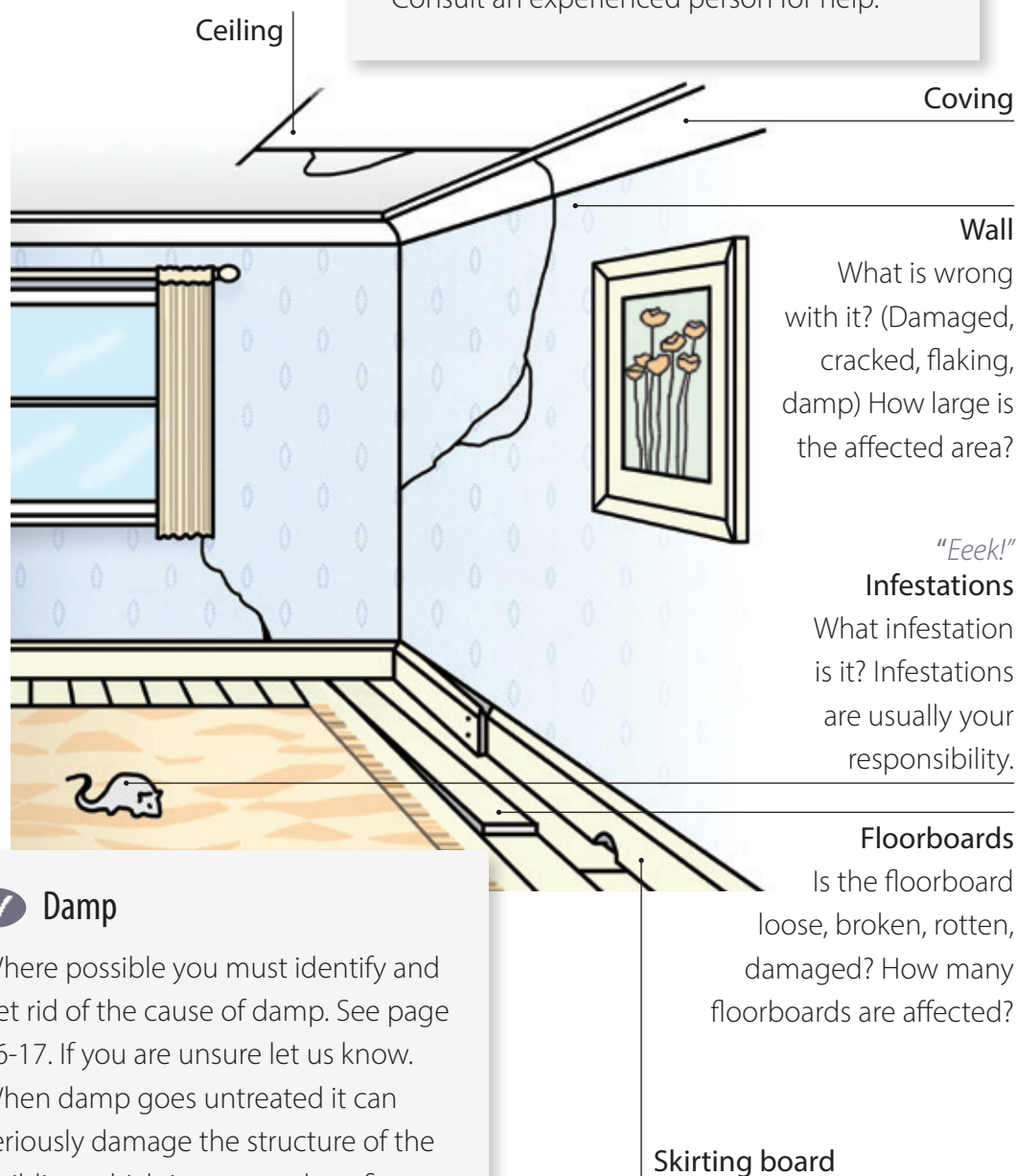
! Avoid accidents

Warn others of any hazards.



✓ Looking after your walls

Be very careful when fixing anything to walls. There are special types of fixings to use depending on how the walls were built and the weight of the items you want to hang. Consult an experienced person for help.



✓ Damp

Where possible you must identify and get rid of the cause of damp. See page 16-17. If you are unsure let us know. When damp goes untreated it can seriously damage the structure of the building which is very costly to fix.

What is asbestos?

Asbestos is a mineral that was used as a building material because it is rigid and fire resistant. It can still be found in:

- Corrugated roofing panels or walls of garages/sheds
- Partitions in lofts
- Floor tiles
- Ceiling tiles and textured coatings (Artex)
- Wall and bath panels
- Asbestos insulation boards/linings (such as to boiler cupboards)
- Insulating material around pipes
- Water tanks in lofts
- Insulation in storage heaters
- Rope seals and gaskets (flues and boilers)
- Rainwater pipes, gutters and flue pipes
- Composite roof tiles
- Flash pads to old electrical fuse boards/switches
- Fire protection/stopping (between floors and partitions)
- Ironing boards and fire blankets

Is asbestos safe?

If it is in good condition it is safe to leave asbestos in place providing that it is sealed and not likely to be disturbed.

If asbestos is damaged or in poor condition it releases fibres into the air. These can be harmful if inhaled, particularly if in high concentrations or for a prolonged period.

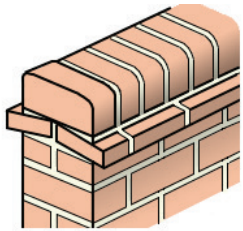
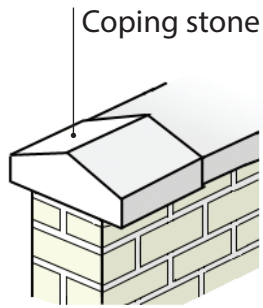
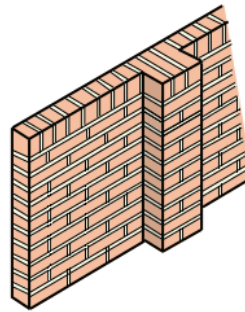
! Be safe with asbestos

Never drill, sand or saw asbestos. Always consult your landlord and seek professional advice. Make sure that a UKAS accredited surveyor or ARCA approved removal company is used to remove anything you think might contain asbestos materials.

Asbestos waste is classed as hazardous and can only be disposed of at a licensed asbestos waste disposal site.

! Avoid accidents

Warn others of any hazards.

Wall with
brick copingWall with concrete
or stone copingHalf brick wall with
projecting pier**Garden wall**

What part of the wall is damaged? What is wrong with it? (Collapsed, cracked, wobbly, vandalised)
Is the wall your own or shared with a neighbour?
What is the wall made of? (Brick, concrete)

✓ An autumn checklist

Before the cold weather sets in, take care of your outside areas.

- Are there any tiles or slates missing or broken on your roof?
- Are there any leaks or blockages from gutters, downpipes or drains? For advice see page 64

Please notify us of any problems. We can then repair them before they get worse and cause you any inconvenience.

Render
Is the affected render around a door or window frame? Is it cracked, loose, missing?

Downpipe
See page 64.

Window sill



"Whassup?"

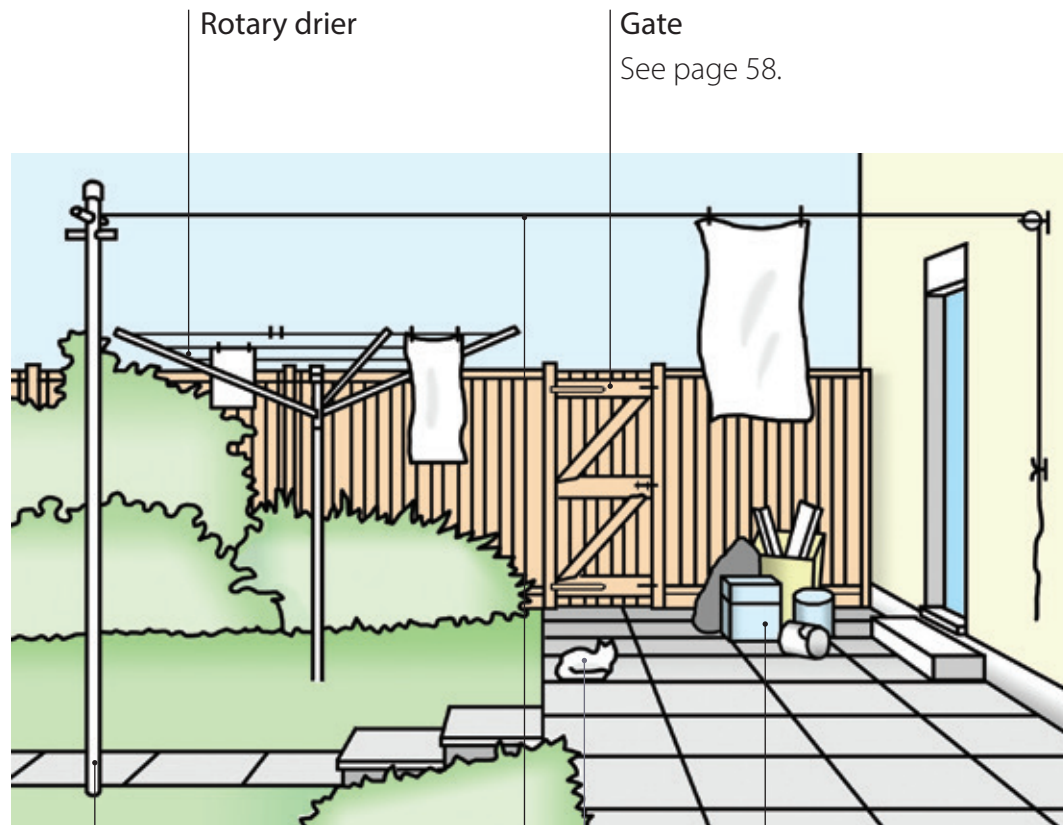
Threshold

Shed

What is wrong with it?
(Broken, damaged, shed
vandalised, door faulty)

Brickwork

Where is the brickwork? What is
wrong with it? (Cracked, damp)



Rotary drier

Gate

See page 58.

Washing line post

What is it made of?
(Concrete or metal)

"Miaow!"

Rubbish dumped

See page 32.

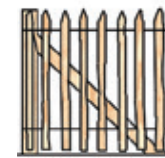
Washing line

What is wrong with it? (Broken, stolen, damaged) What type of clothes line is it? Is the pulley or the bracket broken?

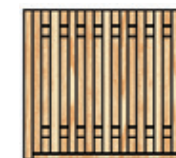
Fence

Where is the fence? (Front, back, side) Is it your fence or a communal fence? What kind of fence is it? (Boarded, chestnut pale, timber palisade, ranch style) What are the posts and panels made of? (Wood or concrete) What is wrong with it? (Broken, fallen over, damaged, rotten) Can the work be done without you being at home?

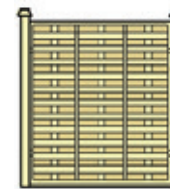
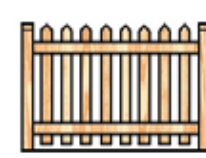
Chestnut pale



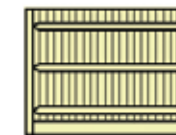
Hit and miss



Palisade



Interwoven



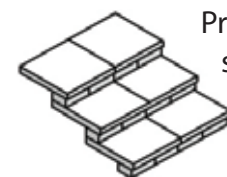
Close boarded



Chainlink

Paving and steps

Where is the path/step? (Front, back, side) Is it your paving/step or a communal area? What is wrong with it? (Damaged, loose, missing, pothole) What type of path/step is it? (Flag, concrete, gravel, brick) How big is the affected area? How many slabs or steps are affected? Is it hazardous? If so let others know. Can the work be done without you being at home?



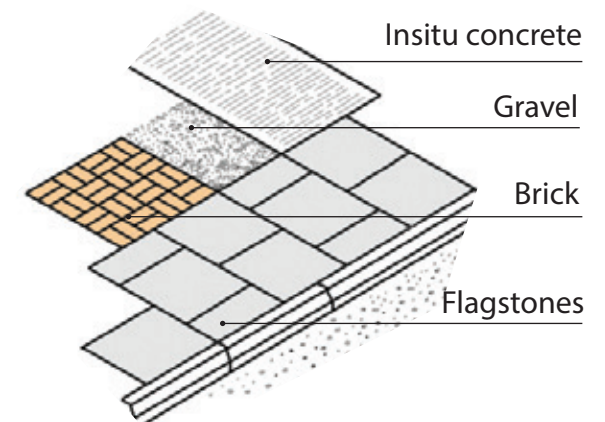
Pre cast concrete steps on brick



Insitu concrete steps



Brick steps



Insitu concrete

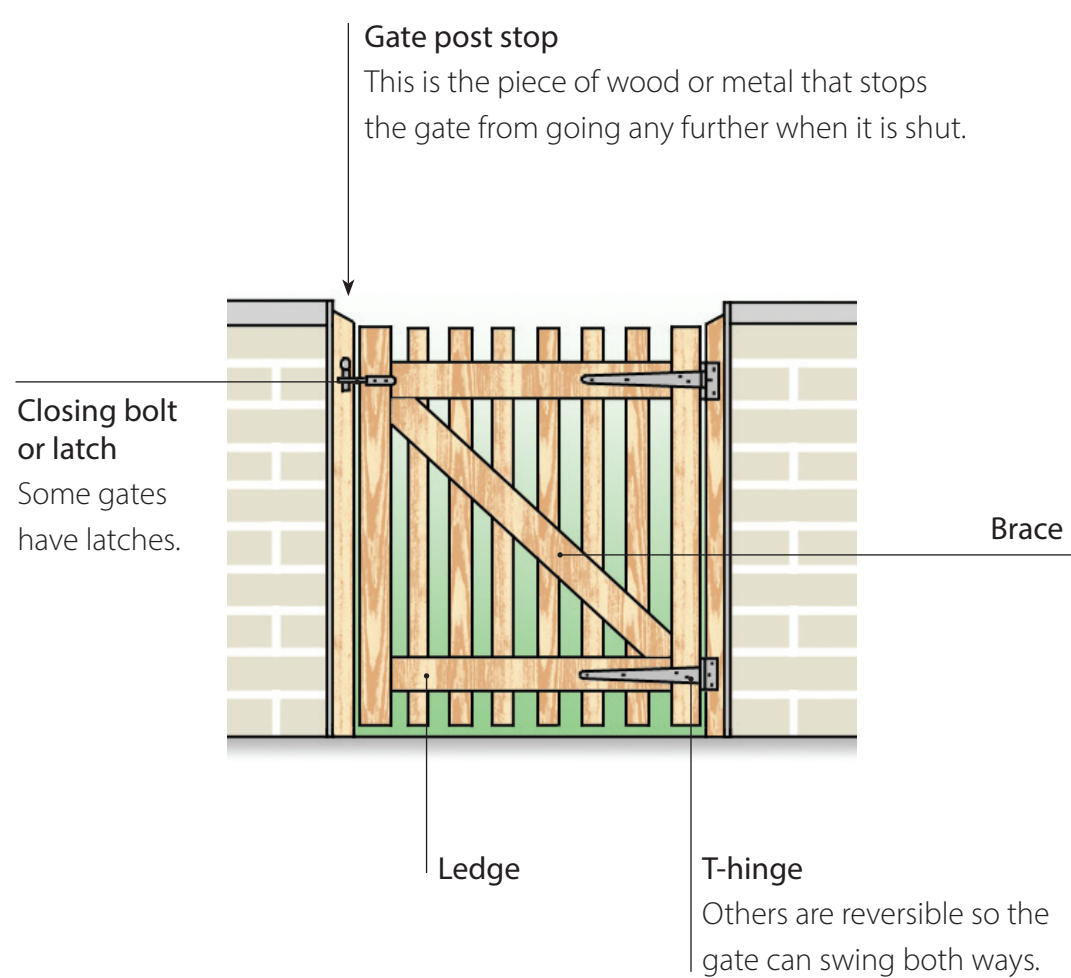
Gravel

Brick

Flagstones

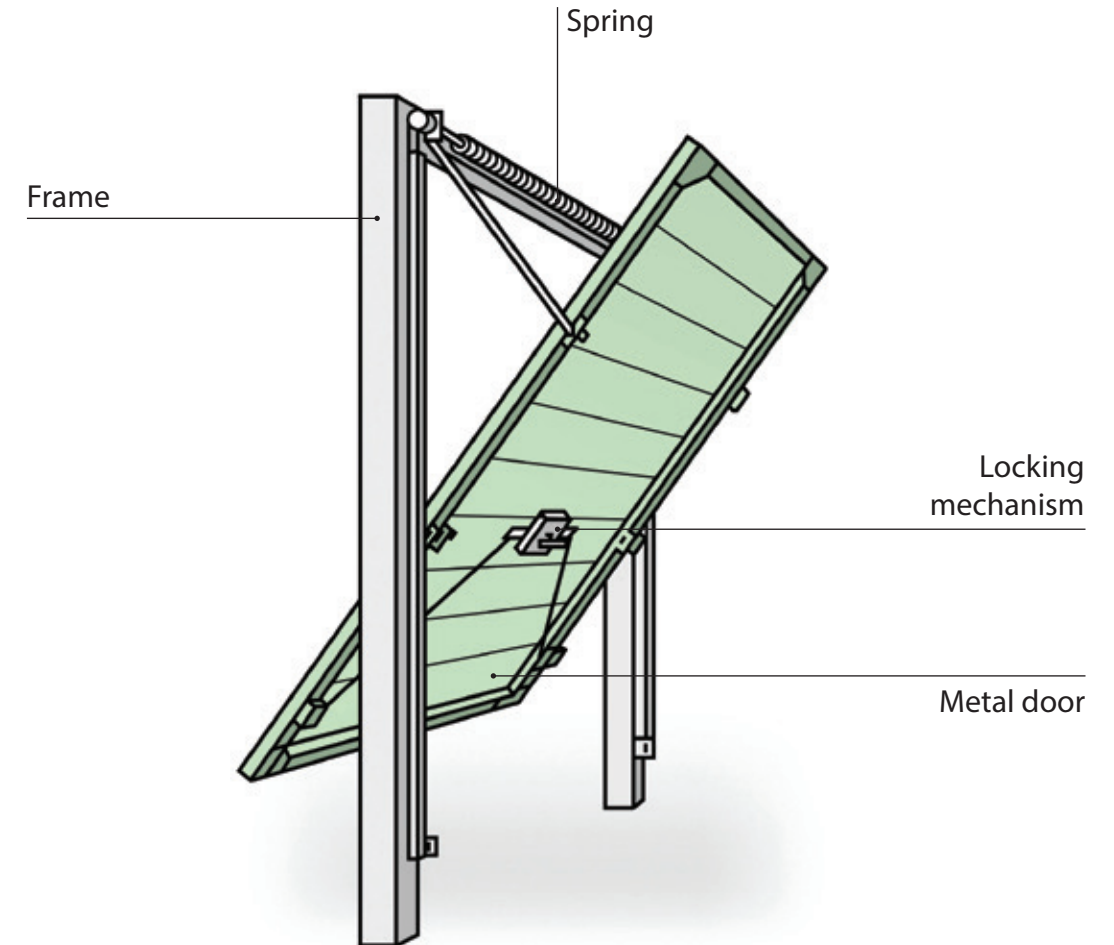
Gate

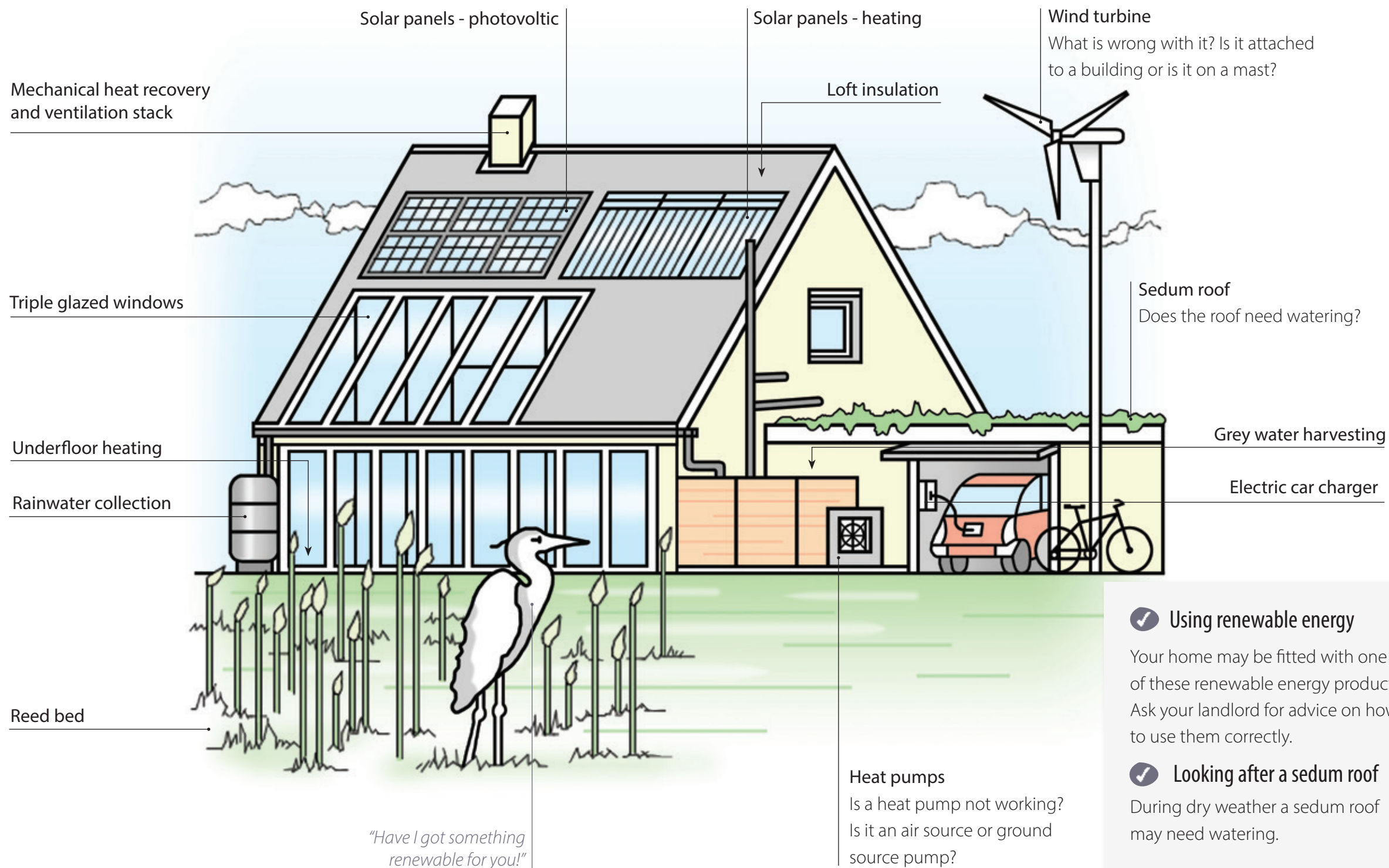
Where is the gate? (Front, back, side) Is it your gate or a communal one?
 What type of gate is it and what is it made of? (Wood or metal) What is wrong with it? (Broken, rotten, jamming, loose) Which part is faulty? (Latch/bolt, hinge, post, stop) Can it be repaired without you being at home?



Garage door

What is wrong with your garage door? (Door faulty, lock is broken, keys are lost, brickwork damaged) What type of garage door is it? (Up and over garage door as shown below, rollover) What is the door made from? (Wood, metal)





✓ Using renewable energy

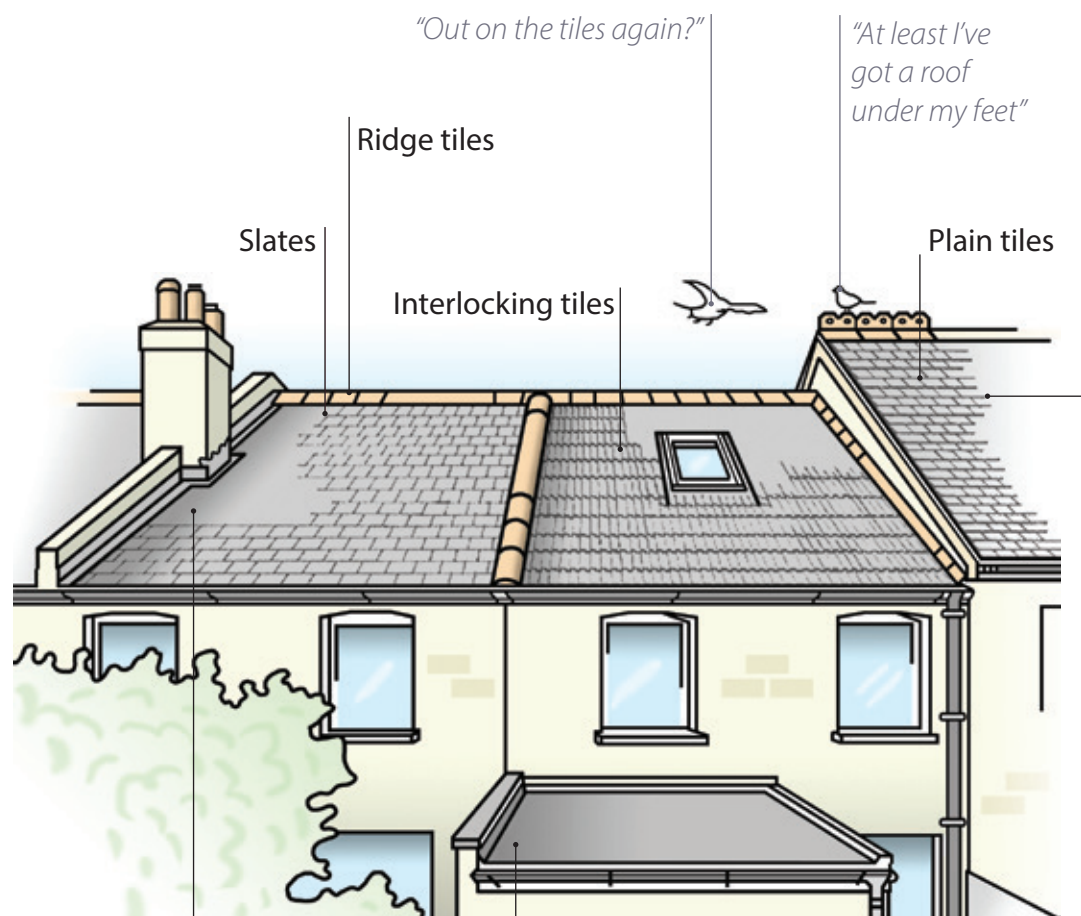
Your home may be fitted with one of these renewable energy products. Ask your landlord for advice on how to use them correctly.

✓ Looking after a sedum roof

During dry weather a sedum roof may need watering.

Tiles/slates

What type of roof is it? (Slate, tile, flat) What is wrong with it? (Missing, broken, loose, leaking) Which part of the roof is affected? How large is the affected area? Does it need a tarpaulin? Are the electrics affected?



"Out on the tiles again?"

"At least I've got a roof under my feet"

Ridge tiles

Slates

Interlocking tiles

Plain tiles

Flat roof

Can you see what type of roof covering there is? Types of coverings might include: felt (not soft fuzzy stuff but a stiff greenish material with small bits in it), asphalt (black) or zinc (greyish metal). Is it a 'green roof' planted with low growing plants?

Pitched roof

A pitched roof is a sloping roof.

✓ If there is a leak

Try to stop the water causing more damage. Use buckets to catch drips if the leak is coming through the roof inside your home.

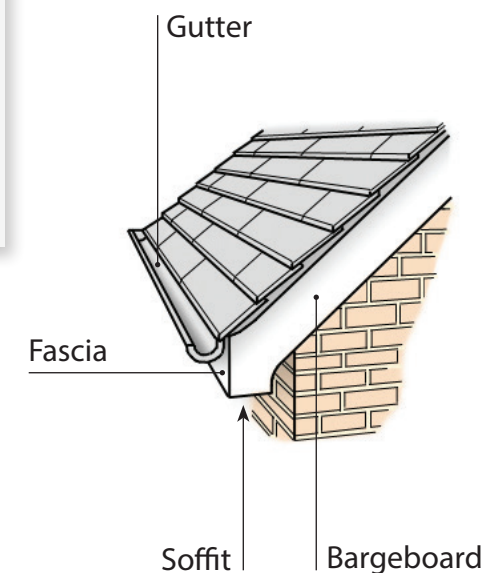
✓ Sweep chimneys regularly

If chimneys are in use they must be swept by a professional or else they pose a fire risk.

Roof leak

Are you sure that your roof is leaking? A leak might be coming from a pipe or tank in the loft. If you are unsure then please let us know. Are the electrics affected?

Gabled roof



Soffit

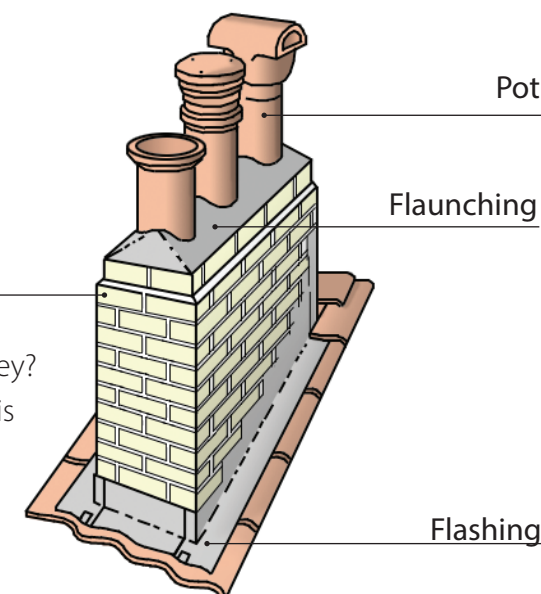
Bargeboard

Pot

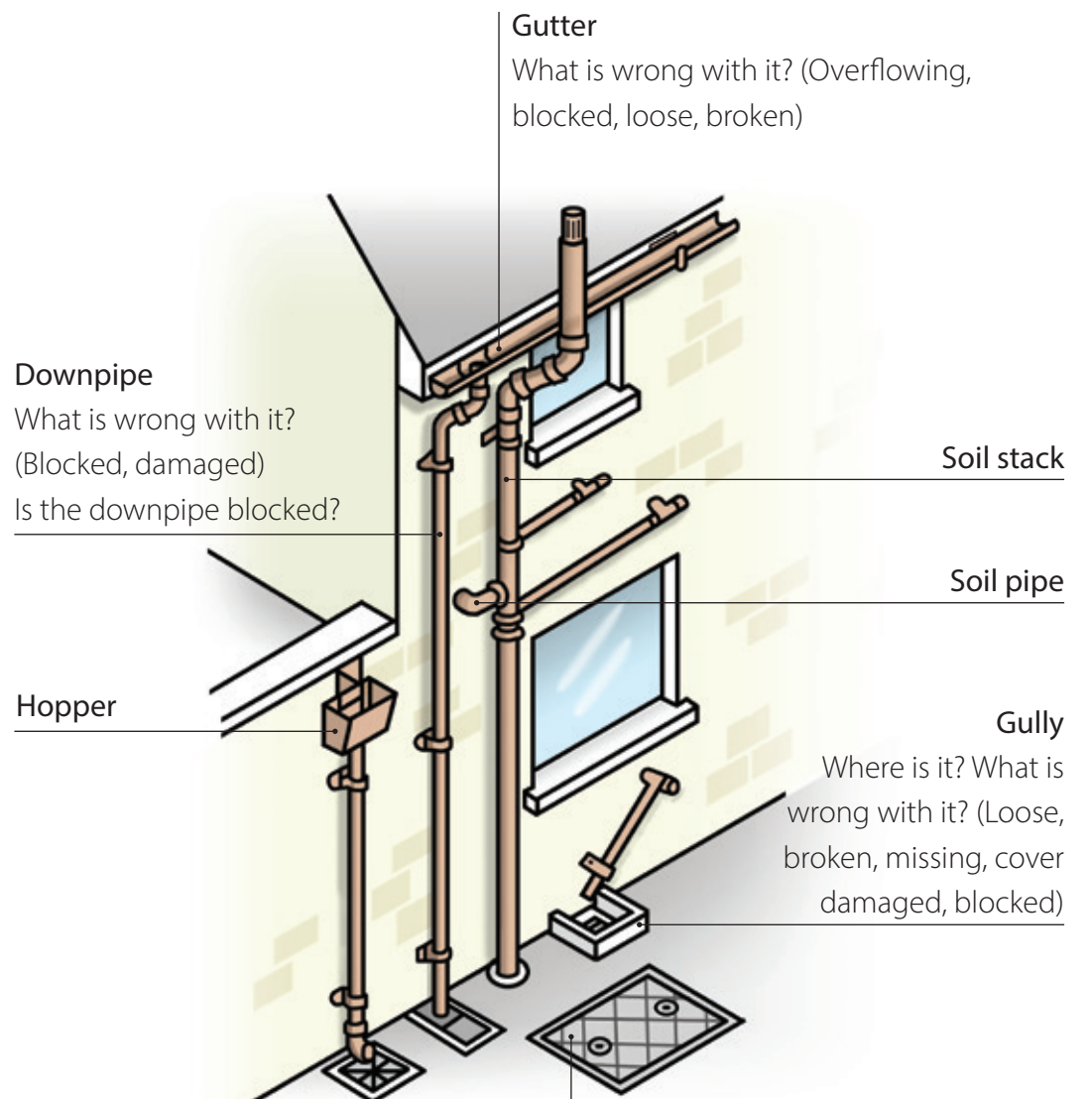
Flaunching

Chimney stack

Is it your chimney or a shared chimney? Is it damaged, loose, or missing? If it is dangerous, warn other people.



Flashing



✓ Avoid blockages

Keep gullies clear of leaves and other debris so that water drains away easily. Try to clear leaves and other rubbish from your gutters.

Infestations

Residents are responsible for managing pests within their own individual homes and any private gardens

Rodents

If you find Evidence of rodents in your home, you should contact Gloucester City Council's Environmental Health and Pest Control Team on **01452 396396** or visit www.gloucester.gov.uk/environment-waste-recycling/animals-and-pests/book-a-pest-control-visit. The Council will investigate and treat issues with mice or rats when the pests occur indoors at domestic properties. There is a cost for this service, but a discount is available to individuals on benefit.

GCH will also visit your property and block up any holes or entry points, liaising with the local authority where required.

Insects and Bedbugs

If you have issues with any of the above it is your responsibility to deal with them.

Products to deal with these pests are widely available from local supermarkets and information of how to deal with them is widely available online.

GCH Responsibility

GCH will remain responsible for all pests within communal areas and blocks. GCH may carry-out pest control work in individual properties for vulnerable residents or to prevent the spread of pests. GCH will recover any costs for pest control where infestations have been caused by residents – for example, by not reporting issues or allowing rubbish to accrue.

DIY improvements and adaptations

Before you make any alterations to your home you must write to us to obtain permission. We have to ensure that your home is not damaged or made unsafe. In some cases you will also have to obtain planning permission or building regulations approval from the local authority. An alteration is anything which is an addition or change to the property or its gas, electrical or water supply.

Further information can be found in our alterations policy which can be found at www.gch.co.uk/your-tenancy/policies.

Quality of service

Our performance

We will inspect a proportion of repair jobs when they are completed, and instruct the contractor to remedy any unfinished or poor quality work.

You can help us achieve the highest quality by returning any customer satisfaction survey or questionnaire we send you. You can request an inspection of repair work that you consider to be of unacceptable quality by telephoning the office where you report your repairs.

Code of conduct

We require staff and contractors to ensure that works are carried out with the minimum of disruption to residents. They are required to:

- Introduce themselves and show proof of identity. Do not hesitate to ask to see it
- Explain the nature and purpose of the job
- Behave in a proper and professional manner at all times, refrain from smoking, using bad language, and playing radios loudly
- Take care of the resident's property and possessions and protect them at all times from dust, paint and the risk of damage

- Keep the resident's home secure at all times
- Keep safe all materials and equipment used on site
- Reconnect and test services such as water, gas and electricity at the end of each working day
- Clear any rubbish arising from works from the property, from the garden and other areas outside the property
- Make good any damage to decorations
- Comply with health and safety legislation and relevant codes of practice
- Comply with our equality and diversity policy
- Where major works are involved, agree the extent of removal of items such as carpets, furniture, and their condition, before the work commences

Right to repair

Some small urgent repairs are covered by the Right to repair. This law requires us to carry out qualifying repairs quickly and without cost to you. If these repairs are not completed after two requests, and you have provided full access, you may be entitled to compensation.

Complaints

We are committed to providing a high standard of service to our residents. However, if you think we have failed to provide a satisfactory service, you should make use of our complaints procedure, which is designed to resolve complaints as quickly as possible.

Further information can be found in our complaints policy which can be found at www.gch.co.uk/your-tenancy/policies.

Notes

Notes

Glossary

This section gives explanations of words which are used by people with technical training to describe parts of buildings. If you do not understand what someone from the repairs service is saying, ask them to explain more clearly using this book to help.

Airbrick

A perforated brick with specially formed holes, usually made of clay, metal or plastic for building into walls to allow the passage of air, for example below a suspended timber ground floor.

Bargeboard

A timber or plastic board inclined at the pitch of a sloping roof surface and covering the end of the roof timbers at the gable. Usually positioned outside the line of the gable wall so that the roof covering overhangs and protects it. See page 63.

Ceiling

The overhead finish to a room or area.

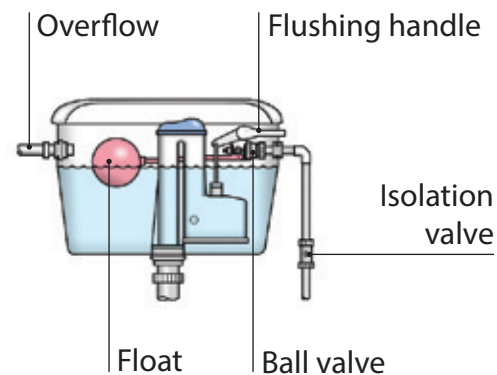
Cill or Sill

A protruding feature below a window or door, used to direct rainwater away from the window or door and wall below.

Cistern

The upper part of a toilet suite that

holds the water for flushing. May sit directly above the toilet pan or separated but joined by a supply pipe.



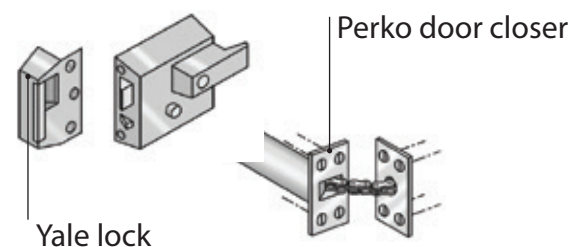
Coping

The upper part or finish to the top of a wall usually of engineering bricks, concrete or stone. It protects the wall from damage by bad weather. See page 54.

Electric consumer unit

An electric consumer unit is often referred to as a "fuse box". It is a box containing a single row of fuses or breakers which protect electrical circuits in case of a fault. It also enables the isolation or switching off of the electric supply within the building.

Door fittings



Downpipes

Pipes which take rainwater from the roof gutters down to the underground drainage system.

Eaves

The bottom edge of a pitched roof slope, edge of a flat roof or bottom part of a roof that is protruding from the wall of a house at roof level.

External wall

A wall which has at least one face is exposed to the weather or earth. An enclosing element of a building.

Fascia

A board or trim of timber or plastic attached to the brickwork or ends of the rafters. It is often just below the roof eaves, supporting the gutter and creating a barrier to prevent damage by bad weather into the roof space. See page 63.

Flashing

A strip of thin material (commonly metal, felt or other sheet material) used to weather proof any joint from the weather, for example the joint between a roof and a wall. See page 63.

Gable

The triangular part of the end wall of a building. See page 63.

Gabled roof

A roof of building having gables at each end. See page 63.

Gutters

Open channels that collect rainwater. Roof gutters run along the lower edge of a roof slope collect rainwater and discharge it at the downpipe.

Header tank

A small water storage tank which facilitates topping up of the water in a central heating system.

Hip

An external angle at a roof formed where two slopes meet or join. Often covered with a tile or flashing.

Hipped roof

A sloping roof having hips as opposed to gables.

Joist

A horizontal, timber, supporting member.

Lintel

A concrete or steel beam built over a door.

Limescale

A white deposit of calcium carbonate which collects as a residue around taps, waste outlets and in showerheads reducing the water flow. The substance

also collects in kettles after boiling water.

Main drain

The main drain is the part of your drainage system by which your household waste and foul water is taken from your home, usually underground, to the community main drainage system or water authority's sewer.

Manhole

An access or inspection pit or chamber constructed within an underground drainage system.

Party wall

A shared dividing wall separating two adjoining buildings or properties.

Pitched roof

Any sloping roof that is more than 10 degrees from the horizontal. See page 62.

Plaster

A substance applied to wall and ceiling surfaces in one or a series of coats to provide a smooth, hard surface when set.

Plasterboard

A rigid board made from layers of fibreboard or paper bonded to a gypsum plaster core, used as part of a wall finish. It is sometimes also referred to as gypsum board or wallboard. Can be used as a base for plaster or direct decoration.

Pointing

The joint finish between masonry units in a wall, or around window and door frames and the like.

Purlins

Horizontal timber or metal support in a roof.

Rafter

A sloping, supporting (usually timber) in a pitched roof construction (usually spanning from the ridge to the wall plate) above which is fixed the roof finish.

Ridge

The summit (top edge) of a pitched roof where the slopes meet. Often covered by a tile or flashing. See page 62.

Sash window

A window constructed of two moveable panels (sashes) that are counterweighted. Opened and closed by sliding vertically. See page 50.

Soakaways

A pit dug into the ground, usually filled with gravel or hardcore but sometimes having a perforated lining, to which surface water is run to and permitted to soak away naturally into the surrounding ground.

Soffit or soffit

The underside of a construction element such as a roof or cornice. See page 63. The soffit board is the timber or plastic board on the underside of the overhang of the roof.

Soil stack

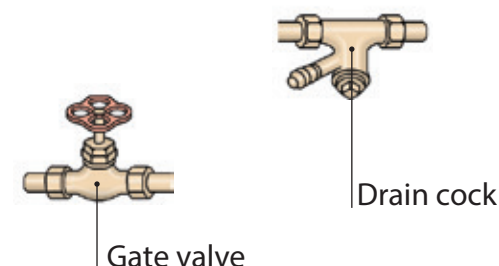
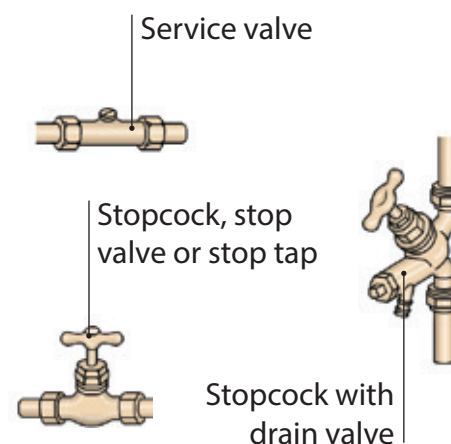
The main vertical pipe into which flows the waste water from the soil pipes in a structure.

Soil pipe

A cast-iron or plastic pipe for carrying discharges from toilet fixtures from a building into the soil drain. Also known as soil line

Stopcocks and gate valves

Devices for turning on and off the water flow to all or part of your home. Like a tap if you turn it clockwise (to the right) it turns on and anticlockwise (to the left) it turns off. Stopcocks may be turned partially open or closed to restrict flow. Gate valves should be turned fully open or closed.



Thermostat

A control device which allows the maximum and minimum temperature of a system to be set and maintained, usually having a dial or digital display.

Trickle vent

A small opening in a window, window frame, door frame or other component which allows permanent flow of a small amount of ventilation in spaces intended to be naturally ventilated when windows, doors, etc are otherwise closed. See page 50.

Threshold

A horizontal timber/stone at the foot of a door frame. Usually an external door frame.

Underfelt

A layer of material under the outer roof covering which is visible above the rafters from inside the loft space.

Valley

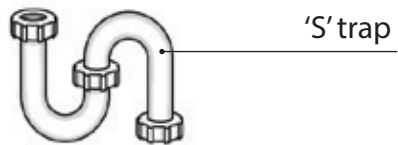
The internal intersection between two sloping pitched roof surfaces. Usually lined with a flashing but sometimes formed using shaped valley tiles.

Ventilation

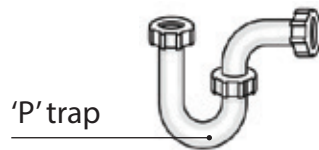
The movement of air from outside a building to the inside.

Waste trap

A waste trap is a dipped section of pipe that always contains water. All fixtures must contain traps to prevent sewer gases from leaking into the house. Solid materials such as grease may accumulate here and cause blockages.



'S' trap



'P' trap



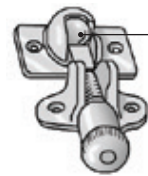
Bottle trap



'P' trap with
washing
machine
connection

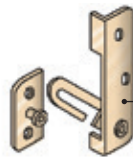
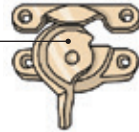
Window locks

Attached to opening window sashes and casements to enable them to be locked internally to ensure security against entry from the outside.



Brighton sash fastener

Fitch sash fastener



Restrictor stay



Casement stay

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Annual gas checks record

Annual gas checks are carried out to keep your gas boiler well maintained. Keep a record for future reference.

[illegible]



Revised 8th edition 2016 ISBN: 0 86297 344 9

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Published by Housing Software **www.m3h.co.uk**

Thanks to the National Housing Maintenance Forum (NHMF)
for advice and testing the product

