



20

Section 20 —

Things that can help around your home

Read this first

This part is **not** a list of rules.

Nothing here is something you must do. Nothing here changes your tenancy.

Looking after the building is our job. If something is wrong with your home, tell us, and we will put it right. That is true whether or not you have done any of the things in this part.

These are just ideas that some people find useful. Take the ones that help you. Leave the rest.

The main points

- ✓ These are ideas, not rules.
- ✓ Telling us early about a small problem stops it becoming a big one.
- ✓ It helps to know where your stopcock, fuse box and meters are.
- ✓ If you are worried about the cost of heating, tell us.
- ✓ If you see damp or mould, tell us. We will find out what is causing it and put it right. Section 8 explains more.

Knowing your home

It helps to know where a few things are, before you need them. Ask your support worker to find them with you and write them down here.

What

Where it is in my home

The stopcock — this turns the water off

The fuse box — this has the switches for the electrics

The electricity meter

What	Where it is in my home
The gas meter, if you have gas	
The gas tap, if you have gas	
The way out if there is a fire	

If you do not know where these are, ask us. We will show you.

Telling us early

This is the most useful thing in this whole section.

A small problem is easier and quicker to fix than a big one.

Tell us about:

- a small leak or a drip
- a damp patch or a bit of mould
- a door or a window that does not shut properly
- a smell you cannot explain
- a noise that has just started
- a crack that is getting bigger
- an alarm that beeps or chirps

You are right to tell us, even about a small thing. You are helping. Section 5 explains how to tell us.

If the water is leaking

1. If it is safe to do so, put a bucket or a bowl under the leak.
2. If it is a bad leak, turn the water off at the stopcock, if you know where it is and you can reach it.
3. Telephone us on 0151 909 5919. This works at any time of day or night.
4. If water is coming near anything electric, do not touch it. Telephone us straight away.

Your support worker can do these things with you or for you.

If the electricity goes off

1. Look out of the window. If everybody's lights are off, it is a power cut, not your home.
2. If it is just your home, tell your support worker. They will check the fuse box and the meter for you.
3. If your support worker cannot put it right, they will tell us. You can also telephone us.
4. Never touch anything electrical if your hands are wet, or if there is water nearby.

Keeping warm, and the cost of it

Being cold in your home is not good for you. It is bad for your health, and cold homes can also make damp worse.

If you are worried about the cost of heating your home, please tell us. It is a very common worry.

We can look at why your bills may be higher, for example whether:

- your heating is working properly
- there is a problem with your home that is making it cost more

Your support worker can help you find out about other help with energy costs.

Some things that can help:

- close the curtains when it gets dark
- shut the doors of rooms you are not using
- if you have radiator valves, turn down the ones in rooms you do not use — but keep the room you sleep in warm enough
- tell us if a radiator is cold at the top or does not get warm at all, because that usually means something needs fixing

Never use a portable gas heater or a paraffin heater. They are dangerous. They can cause a fire, and they can make damp much worse. If you are relying on one because your heating is not good enough, please tell us straight away.

Damp and mould

Damp and mould are usually caused by something about the building. Finding the cause and fixing it is our job.

Some things can help alongside that work, but they are not a substitute for it, and some of them will not be possible for everybody. That is understood.

- open a window a little after a bath or shower, if you can
- use the extractor fan if there is one, and tell us if it does not seem to work
- put a lid on pans when you cook, if you can
- leave a small gap between big furniture and an outside wall, if you can move it
- if you dry washing indoors, dry it in one room with the door shut and a window open a little, if you can

Please do not stop using your heating to save money if it makes your home cold and damp. Tell us instead.

Section 8 explains what damp and mould are, how to tell us, and how quickly we must act. It also explains cleaning mould.

Water and drains

Please do not put these down the sink:

- cooking fat, oil or grease — let it cool and put it in the bin
- tea leaves or coffee grounds

Please do not put these down the toilet:

- wipes of any kind, even ones that say flushable
- nappies
- cotton wool or cotton buds
- kitchen roll

Only toilet paper goes down the toilet. This is the most common cause of a blocked drain.

If something is draining slowly, tell us early. A slow drain usually becomes a blocked one.

In very cold weather

- Try to keep your home a little warm, even when you are out, so that pipes do not freeze.
- If you are going away in winter, tell us and tell your support worker. Section 4 explains why.
- If a pipe freezes, do not use anything hot on it. Telephone us.

- If you see a pipe that has burst, turn the water off at the stopcock if you can, and telephone us straight away.

Electricity and things you plug in

- Do not plug lots of things into one socket with an adaptor.
- If a plug, a lead or a socket is hot, or damaged, or has a burning smell, stop using it and tell us.
- Do not run leads under carpets or rugs.
- Turn off things like heaters and hair dryers when you are not using them.
- Charge e-bikes and e-scooters safely. Never in a hallway, a stairway, or where you would get out. Section 7 explains more.

Fire

Section 7 is all about fire safety. Two things are worth repeating here.

1. If an alarm beeps, chirps, or does not work, tell somebody straight away.
2. Never prop open a fire door, and never leave anything in a hallway or a stairway.

Somebody at the door

- You do not have to let anybody in.
- If someone says they are from Harbour Light and you are not sure, do not let them in. Ask your support worker, or telephone us to check.
- If you are not sure, do not open the door. Telephone us on 0151 909 5919 and ask whether the person is really from us.
- Real workers do not mind waiting while you check.

Section 12 explains more about staying safe from people who might try to take advantage of you.

Things that are worth doing now, not later

- Find out where your stopcock and fuse box are.
- Write your important numbers on the page in Section 18.
- Tell us if anything would make it easier for you to deal with us. Section 13 explains.
- Tell us about that small thing you have been meaning to mention.

Getting help to understand this

If any of this is hard to understand, that is OK. Ask your support worker. You can also ask a relative, a friend or an advocate to help you.

You can ask us for this information on paper, in a bigger size, or in another format. Just ask us or ask your support worker.

More detail

This box is for support staff, relatives, advocates and social workers.

Framing. Nothing in this section creates or implies a tenancy obligation, and nothing in it affects Harbour Light's repairing duties under section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 or the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018, or its obligations under the Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025. A tenant who has done none of these things retains exactly the same rights as one who has done all of them.

Damp and mould. This section does not change Section 8. Harbour Light will always investigate a report of damp or mould.

Capability. Support staff carry out weekly alarm testing, weekly water-temperature checks and legionella flushing on Harbour Light's behalf (SLA clause 2.7). This section does not ask tenants to do any of these.

Electrical advice. Tenants are not asked to reset tripped switches. Support staff check the consumer unit and meter, and report to Harbour Light if they cannot resolve the problem.

Portable heaters. The prohibition stated here matches Section 9.