



# Your Handbook

## We're Livv Housing Group.

We provide around 13,000 homes across Liverpool City Region and the North West. We offer apprenticeships, training and local projects to provide opportunities and support for customers. We work with our partners to support and develop communities.

### Livv Online

Livv Online is our digital platform that will help you manage more of your home and tenancy online. From paying your rent to reporting repairs, you can access more Livv services at the touch of a button, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, at times that work for you.

You can:

- pay your rent
- view your account
- view your repairs
- give feedback
- contact our team

Just visit [livvhousinggroup.com/your-home](https://livvhousinggroup.com/your-home) to get started. You'll need your tenancy number to register – you can find this on your tenancy agreement. If you don't have it to hand, contact our team via Live Chat, phone or email.



0151 290 7000  
0800 561 0007 (Freephone)



Live Chat online service on our website  
[livvhousinggroup.com](https://livvhousinggroup.com)



[contactcentre@livvhousinggroup.com](mailto:contactcentre@livvhousinggroup.com)



Write to us – Livv Housing Group,  
Lakeview, Kings Business Park,  
Prescot, Merseyside L34 1PJ

Follow us on:



LivvHousing



@livvhousinggroup

**We're open:**

**Monday to Friday - 8am to 8pm**  
**Saturday – 9:30am to 1pm**

We'll visit you at your home at least once a year and we'll hold regular drop-in sessions in your local community – you can find out about these via our website, social media and Livving magazine.

# Welcome

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## Some handy information about your home

This handbook has everything you need to know about your home and the services and standards that you can expect from us. It'll include important information about your tenancy and how we'll look after you and your new home.

We've included some important safety information and a list of useful contacts so that you'll know who to call.

Keep this handbook and your tenancy sign up information in a safe place so that you can refer to it when needed.



# Your tenancy

## Your tenancy agreement

When you move into your new home, you'll receive a copy of your tenancy agreement, certificates for your new home and keys/fobs for doors and windows.

The tenancy agreement is an important legal contract between us and you. We offer different tenancy types. The type of tenancy you have will be written on the front of your agreement.

Terms and conditions will be explained to you when you sign the tenancy agreement. Please keep this document safe.

## Our responsibilities

We promise to:

- give you written notice to change your rent or service charge
- speak to you about any proposed changes to your tenancy agreement
- carry out repairs to the structure of your home
- make sure the communal spaces are kept clean, clear and safe
- let you know before we come to your home to carry out repairs or inspections.

## Changes to your circumstances

Don't forget to tell us if things change. This includes any changes to your household, your health or mobility, or even your mobile number, email address or next of kin.

It's important you let us know so we can provide you with the best service we can.

If you have any changes, or require this information in a different format (for example large print), you can let us know through Livv Online, Live Chat, by telephone or by writing to us.

## Your responsibilities

You must:

- pay your rent on time
- tell us about any repairs you need
- allow us to visit or inspect your home
- live in your home
- give us four weeks' notice before you move out
- make sure your home is decorated, and kept clean and tidy
- keep the outside areas clean and tidy
- be a good neighbour.



# Your home

## Moving in

When you move in, we'll make sure your new home:

- is clean and clear
- offers a comfortable living environment
- has had all required safety checks, eg. gas and electricity
- has doors that open and close correctly and are in a working condition
- is watertight and free of any major defect
- has kitchen and bathroom floors that are in a usable condition
- has bathroom tiles and fittings (bath/shower, sink and toilet) that are usable and hygienic
- has smoke/heat detection alarms that are in working order.

## Utilities

When you move into your new home, the gas and electricity will be supplied by OVO Energy.

We share information with OVO, and OVO will register your details with the energy accounts. They'll let the council know so your council tax account will be set up. OVO Energy will also contact your water supplier and your account will be set up with them.

If your new home has a pre-payment meter, we'll make sure that it's topped up with credit when you move in.

You can change supplier at any time. There's no obligation to stay with OVO Energy.

## TV, telephone and internet

TV aerials are your responsibility. Unless you live in a flat with a communal area where a service charge applies, you'll need to arrange the installation of any phone, satellite and TV media packages.

If you'd like internet/wifi, you'll need to choose a provider and cover the cost.

Don't forget, if you watch television you'll need to arrange your own TV licence.



## Pets

Your tenancy agreement will say whether you're allowed to keep a pet at your home. Most of our homes will allow one dog, cat or caged bird. If you want to own a pet, we'll need you to give us information about it, and to sign a Responsible Pet Ownership agreement.

It's important to remember that we can withdraw permission for you to have a pet at any time if your pet causes a nuisance. All animals should be kept under control and mess should be cleaned up immediately and disposed of. Your pet shouldn't show aggression or cause nuisance or noise disturbance.

## Home improvements

If you want to make alterations or improvements to your home, you must write to us and include the plans, quotes and details of the person or company you'd like to carry out the work (including their qualifications and insurance where appropriate).

For gas/electrical changes you must use a qualified contractor.

These improvements or alterations include installing light fittings, kitchens or bathrooms, removing walls, installing electric vehicle charging points or outdoor lighting, replacing windows or doors (including internal doors), and any structural or building work.

It's important that you request permission from us for any changes that you want to make. We'll consider all requests. If we agree to alterations, you'll be required to maintain and repair these in the future.



## Home contents insurance

We're responsible for the building that you live in, however we're NOT responsible for the contents inside, including your furniture, furnishings and personal belongings.

We strongly advise that you arrange your own home contents insurance in case any of your items are damaged or lost.

## Moving out

We'll be sorry to see you go, but if you want to end your tenancy, you'll need to give us notice in writing. We can visit you with the paperwork, or we can send you a signable agreement by email. Your tenancy agreement will tell you exactly how much notice that you'll need to give – this is usually four weeks but could be one calendar month.

We'll need to discuss the rent and arrange and complete an inspection of your home. We'll also agree how you'll return the keys to us. Before you move out, you'll need to:

- make sure you've paid your rent and any other charges before you move
- leave it clean and tidy with no damage
- make sure no belongings or rubbish are left in your home, garden, lofts or outbuildings (including furniture and curtains)
- return all the keys you were given when you first moved in
- tell the utility companies (gas, water, electric) that you're moving
- tell your local council's benefits team that you're moving and provide your new address (if you claim benefits)
- give us your new address
- request the Post Office to redirect your mail to your new address
- make sure your home is empty and no one is still living there.

When you leave, your home should be left clean and clear, and in a good state. We will recharge you for any damage or clearance of items left behind.

## Deceased Customer and Succession of Tenancy

We know that when a loved one passes, there is a lot to deal with, all while coming to terms with your loss. So, we want to keep everything as simple as possible and not add any further stress to an already difficult and sad situation.

Therefore, please contact us as soon as possible to update us following the death of your loved one, family member, partner or friend so we can support you appropriately.

Succession of a tenancy can be complicated but we're here to guide you through the process, as succession is not always guaranteed. Every situation is unique and how it progresses depends on several factors, so contacting us directly is the best way to get all your questions answered quickly.

For further information, please refer to our Deceased Customer Policy on our website. This can be found here: [livhousinggroup.com/your-home/policies/](http://livhousinggroup.com/your-home/policies/)

## CCTV and video doorbells

Did you know you have to let us know if you'd like to install CCTV or a video doorbell? This is because it's classed as an alteration and is seen as a change to your home. So, get in touch and we'll consider your request.

Before you buy CCTV or a video doorbell for your home, here's some things to consider:

- you mustn't record anything or anyone except your own home, garden and outdoor space
- could you install other security measures around your home instead of CCTV or a video doorbell, such as motion sensor lights?
- CCTV and video doorbells can't record your neighbours' homes and garden – this is a breach of their privacy. Think carefully about how you'd position and where you'd install any CCTV or video doorbells, so they'll only record your home
- let your neighbours know you're planning to install CCTV or video doorbells

For more information, please visit [livhousinggroup.com/your-home/home-safety/](http://livhousinggroup.com/your-home/home-safety/)

# Whatever's going on, Livvi's here to help. With less stress and more support.

Livvi is a new way for us to support customers — clearer, simpler, and more approachable. She helps us move away from formal, complicated language and instead speaks like a helpful neighbour.

Livvi doesn't replace our teams; she complements them by making information more relevant and easy to understand. When you hear from Livvi, it's just us — finding better, more human ways to help.

**Meet**



# Stuff Livvi can help with:



## Booking repairs

guiding you through how and when to get things fixed.



## Checking your rent

making rent info easy to understand.



## Wellbeing tips and support

from mental health resources to staying active.



## Staying safe and connected

from home safety tips and scam advice to local events, community groups, and support services.



## Getting stuff sorted

quick, clear help when something's gone wrong at home.

# Paying your rent

Our Financial Support Team are experts in helping to manage your money and sustain your tenancy. We can help with claiming benefits, maximising your income and providing advice and information.

It's your responsibility to pay your rent and service charges on time. We'll agree at sign up how you can do this.

Whichever payment method you choose, you are responsible for payments reaching us on time and your account should never be in arrears.

## Ways to pay your rent and service charges:

- Direct Debit
- Online Banking (Payee: Livv Housing Group, Bank sort code: 20-51-01, Account number: 80986089, Bank: Barclays, 48B & 50 Lord Street, Liverpool, L2 1TD)
- Livv Online
- using our 24-hour automated service: 0330 041 5553 (calls are charged at 7p per minute)
- in-person at a Post Office or Paypoint, using either card or payment card and your Allpay Payment Card

You can also make payments using Livv Online, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If you need help setting up your rent payments you can call us or use Live Chat and we can help you.

If you're struggling to pay your rent, please contact us straight away so we can support you. The earlier you contact us the better, as there'll be more we can do to help.

Scan QR code below to pay your rent online.

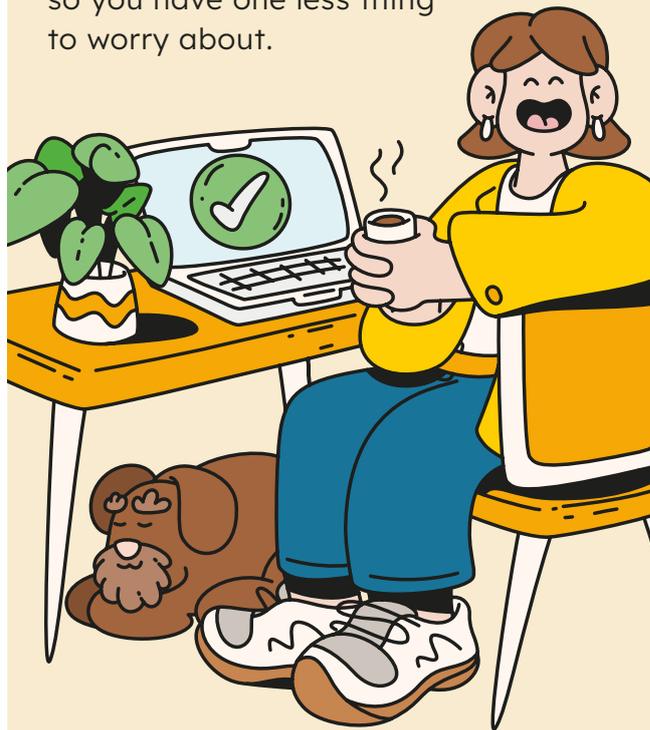


## Help with costs

You may be entitled to help with your housing costs through Universal Credit (DWP) or Housing Benefit. We can offer help and advice if you're unsure about this.

## The easiest way to pay is Direct Debit.

Once you've set it up the first time, it automatically pays your rent out of your account so you have one less thing to worry about.



Here to help you Livv

## Universal credit rollout

If you are entitled to benefits, the way you receive some of these is changing. For those claiming legacy benefits (housing benefit, income support, working and child tax credit, income-based job seekers allowance, and income related employment and support allowance), these will be paid monthly, in one universal credit payment.

The main change is that housing costs may be paid directly to you, and you'll need to make the payment to us.

This change is going to impact new and existing customers and if you need advice or support, we're here to help. Our Financial Support Team can advise on how to manage your claim and apply for help with housing costs.

## Service charges

Along with your rent you may also need to pay service charges. These will be detailed in your tenancy or license agreement, and like your rent, may be changed at a later date. If these do change, we'll write to you to let you know with plenty of notice.

Examples of service charges are: communal heating, lighting, and cleaning, gardening services, some utilities and other communal facilities such as laundry services. The 'life-line' system in our Inspired Living schemes is also subject to a service charge.

Any service charges will be clearly explained in your tenancy agreement, and for more information about service charges our Service Charge Policy is available on our website. If you have any questions about your service charge you can contact us.



# Community safety

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) and hate crime can have a massive impact on our customers and the wider community. We work closely with customers and partner agencies to prevent ASB and hate crime, and we'll challenge it when it does occur.

You can report ASB or hate crime to us through telephone, website, email and letter.

We take a strong approach to ASB and hate crime investigation and resolution. All reports of ASB are allocated to a designated advisor who'll investigate. They'll agree an action plan with the customer which will outline the next steps and a clear communication plan. We'll offer tailored support to customers throughout.

Any action we take will be proportionate to the situation. We'll always aim to treat customers with fairness and take all views into account.

Our dedicated Community Safety Team are here to help you if you're experiencing anti-social behaviour, hate crime or domestic abuse.

## Antisocial behaviour (ASB)

### Examples of ASB

- excessive/unreasonable noise
- verbal abuse/harassment/intimidation threatening behaviour
- hate related incidents
- vandalism or damage to home
- nuisance from animals
- physical violence
- litter/rubbish/fly tipping
- garden nuisance
- misuse of public/communal areas
- dangerous dogs/banned breeds, or dogs that are out of control.

### What isn't ASB

- parking
- children crying or playing
- people gossiping in the street
- disputes on social media
- 'dirty looks' or rude gestures
- general household noise/DIY at reasonable times
- cooking odours
- smoking in own homes
- one-off parties
- barking dogs (for short periods of time)
- dog fouling
- uncontrolled dogs
- cats in gardens
- general everyday domestic noise
- lifestyle and personal differences.



## Domestic abuse

We support survivors of domestic abuse.

Customers can talk to us, and we'll agree how we communicate with them to keep them safe:

- we'll communicate with customers in a way that suits them and their needs
- we'll listen with compassion and believe them
- we'll focus on individual needs and respect our customer's decisions
- we'll work with customers to assess any risk and agree an appropriate action plan
- we'll help customers understand their housing and tenancy options
- we'll tell customers about specialist agencies who can also offer them support and advice
- we work alongside partners, including the police and support agencies, to provide a community response.

If you're experiencing domestic abuse, call our team on 0151 290 7000. We can help you find the right support. If you're in immediate danger, call 999.

## Safeguarding

Safeguarding means protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. By working together with customers and other agencies, we aim to safeguard customers and prevent and stop both the risks and experience that abuse or neglect can create.

We can all help protect people by understanding safeguarding, knowing how to spot the signs and taking action.

What should you do if you have a safeguarding concern?

If you think someone is being abused or neglected, you should tell someone you trust. This could be a friend, teacher, social worker, doctor or healthcare professional, or a police officer. Ask them to help you report it.

We'll respond to, record and risk assess all safeguarding concerns and incidents, working in partnership with, and referring to other agencies as necessary.

We'll report serious incidents and/or allegations of abuse to the police to investigate.

# Useful contacts.

### Be Kind to My Mind

[bekindtomymind.co.uk](http://bekindtomymind.co.uk)

### Independent Age

advice and support for older people 0900 319 6789

### Modern Day Slavery

[modernslaveryhelpline.org](http://modernslaveryhelpline.org)

### Merseyside Domestic Violence

[mdvs.org](http://mdvs.org)

### Women's Aid

0808 2000 247

### Safe Lives

[safelives.org.uk](http://safelives.org.uk)



# Support available to you

Did you know as a Livv customer you can easily access a whole range of services designed to help you improve your wellbeing, financial health and career opportunities?

We want every single one of our customers to live well and flourish in their homes and lives which is why we believe it's important to look after more than just bricks and mortar. Healthy, thriving communities are made of more than safe, secure, good quality homes which is why we want all our customers to have the support they need to overcome the challenges in their lives and thrive.

Discover the range of support available to you and contact our friendly, knowledgeable team and get the help you need today. It all starts with a chat...



## Your health and wellbeing

Everyone needs a helping hand from time to time, and no matter what you're facing, we're here to help.

Our team is here to offer expert advice and link you with specialist services to help you improve your wellbeing, mental and physical health. We work with you to make you feel better so whether that's finding an event that will help you meet new people, a course to teach you a new skill, improve your fitness or one-on-one support or access specialist services, we have a range of options you can explore.

## Employment and training

Looking for work or a new career challenge? Then we can help! Whether you've been unemployed for a while, are wanting to get more from your job or learn a new skill, get in touch with our team today.

We'll work with you to get you into or closer to employment all while helping you improve your skills, grow your confidence and hopefully land your dream role!

## Get connected

Want to meet people in your local area, make new friends or expand your social circle? Then let us unlock the door to a whole new world (both on and offline!) for you. We can help you find local groups and activities, introduce you to the wonders of the world wide web and teach you all the skills you need to get online.

## Financial support

Money worries are one of the main stressors we all face which is why we're here to help with whatever you need.

Whether you need support paying your rent and household bills, are worried about debt, need advice about your Benefits or Universal Credit or are looking for tips on how to make your money go further, we can help.

Last year alone, we helped over 4,000 customers manage their money and we can help you too!

## Cost of living

As the cost of everyday essentials and household bills rise, we're here to help and there's lots of things we can do to ease the pressure on your purse. From linking you with Citizens Advice, unlocking support via government schemes and Credit Unions or sharing some simple energy saving hacks our team is on hand to support you and your family.

Depending on your circumstances, we can also help you with the costs of school travel passes or applying for white goods and energy saving devices.

## Get in touch today

Contacting us is the first step you can take to improve your wellbeing, so find out more by visiting [livvhousinggroup.com/help-support](https://livvhousinggroup.com/help-support) and reach out today. We look forward to hearing from you.



# It all starts with a chat.

Whatever you're worried about, we're ready to help you figure it out.



**Livvi**

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# Helping you to stay in your home

## Meeting customers' needs

We aim to help customers and their families live independently in their homes for as long as possible. We can make reasonable adjustments to support you in your home and to help you access our services.

We also work with specialist agencies who may be able to help you.

## Aids and adaptations

### What's an adaptation?

Adaptations include equipment, extra fittings, or minor alterations to your home to help with accessibility.

During your tenancy with us your needs may change, and we can provide advice if this happens. Equipment and adaptations can include:

- ramps
- lever taps
- grab rails

## Assessment for adaptations

Requests for adaptations are usually assessed by an Occupational Therapist or somebody in a similar role. For some small adaptations, assessments can be carried out by our trained colleagues.

If you'd like to speak to us about aids and adaptations, or if you need support or advice, please get in touch and we can discuss your needs and the best way forward.

You can also contact your local authority to request an occupational health assessment, or request advice and support in relation to care needs through organisations such as the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB), SAFFA or Age Concern.



# How to make a complaint

We try our very best to deliver a service we can be proud of but know that from time to time we fall short of the high standards we set ourselves and our customers are unfortunately left feeling dissatisfied. We see complaints as a chance to learn, develop and improve our services and welcome your feedback, so please get in touch so we can work with you to rectify the situation and put things right.

## What is a complaint?

We adopt the Housing Ombudsman's definition of a complaint: "an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual customer or group of customers".

The type of complaint we can consider may include, but isn't limited to:

- failing to provide a service when we should have
- providing a poor standard of service
- making a mistake in the way we provide a service
- failing to meet our existing service standards or comply with our policies
- relevant building safety complaints.

When a customer is unhappy, we'll try to resolve their issue as early as possible. This means putting something right quickly and offering an apology. We'll offer to raise a complaint whenever there is dissatisfaction, but we recognise that not all customers want to go through the formal process. This information will be logged to provide a clear record of all issues raised.

## How to make a complaint

The quickest way to make a complaint is to head to [livvhousinggroup.com/contact-us/compliments-complaints/](https://www.livvhousinggroup.com/contact-us/compliments-complaints/) and complete the online form but there are other ways you can get in touch:

**Call us** 0151 290 7000 or 0800 561 0007

**Email us** [contactcentre@livvhousinggroup.com](mailto:contactcentre@livvhousinggroup.com)

**Write to us** Lakeview, Kings Business Park, Prescot, L34 1PJ

**Message us** using the Live Chat function on our website

For more information, please see our Complaints and Compliments Policy on our website.

## The Housing Ombudsman

If after talking with our team, you're dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint or feel that it wasn't resolved, you can go directly to The Housing Ombudsman for advice and support.

They can help you throughout the life of your complaint and provide additional advice and guidance on your complaint.

The Housing Ombudsman can be contacted by:

**Phone** 0300 111 3000 Monday – Friday, 9.15am – 5.15pm

**Fax** 020 7831 1942

**Email** [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

**Post** The Housing Ombudsman Service, PO Box 1484, Unit D, Preston, PR2 0ET

**For more information visit:** [www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

# Repairs and maintenance

As part of your tenancy agreement, you must report any repairs or maintenance issues to us as soon as you discover them. It's important to us, and part of our landlord obligations to make sure that your home is safe for you and your household and that it meets the Decent Home Standard. This standard is set by government and sets out the minimum standard of rented homes.

**You can report repairs to us by using the customer portal to make an appointment, Live Chat on our website or calling us on 0151 290 7000.**

We'll ask for as much information as possible so that we can provide the best repairs and maintenance service to you and categorise your repair into priority. These categories are:

1

## Emergency

we aim to attend to the repair within 24 hours. These repairs may affect the safety or security, or the health of your home. Examples include providing temporary heating, uncontrollable water leaks and serious electrical faults

2

## Urgent

we aim to complete these repairs within seven days. These repairs don't usually cause a major inconvenience. Examples include a minor leak, partial loss of heating or no heating in warmer months or follow up work to an emergency that has undergone a temporary fix. Whilst we aim to complete these repairs within seven days, if multiple visits are needed then it may take us up to 28 days

3

## Routine

we aim to complete these repairs within 28 days. These repairs can usually wait a little longer as they cause only minor inconvenience. Examples include a leaking gutter or damaged kitchen unit. Whilst we aim to complete this work within 28 days, if we need to make multiple visits then we'll aim to complete the repair within 56 days.

4

## Major Repairs

we aim to complete these repairs within 56 days. These repairs are more complex and require multiple visits or the expertise of different skilled operatives to fix. Examples of major repairs include drainage, groundworks and fencing repairs



## Planned works

This work is the replacement of major components such as kitchens, bathrooms or windows.

## Compliance works

This includes work outside of normal maintenance or servicing schedules that we need to do to fulfil our landlord compliance obligations.

## Cyclical maintenance

This is planned cycles of work for maintaining external elements of a property (external repairs and painting) and servicing of mechanical and electrical equipment.

If you have any concerns about your home, we can advise, or arrange for one of our tradesmen or surveyors to attend your home.

## Chargeable repairs

As part of your tenancy agreement, you agree to maintain your home to a reasonable standard. If you don't do this, and we need to carry out any repairs to fix an issue, then you may be charged. We may charge for repairs when it:

- falls under your responsibility, including gaining access due to lost keys or blockages to baths, basins and toilets
- is a result of negligence or misuse caused by you, a family member or visitor
- is to return the home to its former state due to unsatisfactory or unauthorised changes
- is to sort out an overgrown or poorly-maintained garden, including rubbish removal from the home, outhouse or garden when you move out.

## Top tips

- keep a bin in the bathroom. Baby wipes, sanitary products, nappies etc will cause blockages and should always be put in the bin, not the toilet
- the only things that should be flushed are human waste and toilet paper
- never put food scraps, fat or oil down the sink or toilet.

## 'How To....' help

Check our website for our 'How to' videos – they provide an easy step-by-step guide to help you solve some problems in your home.

# Get it sorted.



If something's not quite right, get in touch and we'll get it sorted.



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## Responsibilities

Type of repair	Responsibility	
	Livv	Customer
Filling small plaster cracks		•
Plastering	•	
Replacing lost keys and locks		•
Easing internal doors to fit carpets		•
Repairs due to wear and tear	•	
Repairs due to tenant neglect or damage		•
Additional security		•
Repair any defects to the fabric of the building (including plaster work) caused by water ingress	•	
Prevent condensation build up by adequately heating and ventilating the property		•
Clearing blocked sinks, basins, toilets or shower wastes		•
Plumbing in washing machines		•
Tap washers	•	
Sink and bath plugs		•
Shower curtain and rail		•
Renew and fix toilet seat		•
Leaks	•	
Hot and cold water tanks	•	
Bleeding radiators		•
Re-lighting boilers		•
Boiler repairs	•	
Radiator leak	•	
Gas leak within property	•	
Gas servicing	•	
Gas/electric fire fitted by Livv	•	
Gas/electric fire fitted by customer		•
Sweeping chimneys based on who fitted the gas appliance	•	•
Replacing fuses to appliances		•
Replacing light bulbs		•
Extractor fans	•	

Type of repair	Responsibility	
	Livv	Customer
Lighting	•	
Sockets	•	
Immersion heater	•	
Communal gardens and grassed areas	•	
Entry phone	•	
Lifts	•	
Beams	•	
Chimney stacks	•	
Foundations	•	
Rainwater and soil pipes	•	
Timbers and joists	•	
Gutters, soffits & bargeboards		•
Roof covering	•	
Brickwork	•	
Insect/rodent infestation to block	•	
Concrete screeds	•	
Pathways - where installed by Livv	•	
Floor joists	•	
Floor boards	•	
Skirting boards	•	
Floor tiles	•	
Kitchen/bathroom vinyl	•	
Carpet		•
Laminate		•
Internal decorations		•
Decorations to and maintenance of communal areas	•	
Window fasteners, catches etc - not damaged by customer	•	
Window frames	•	
Window glazing		•
Communal fencing, walls and gates	•	

For further information, please see our Repairs Policy on [livvhousinggroup.com/your-home/policies](https://livvhousinggroup.com/your-home/policies)

# Safety in your home

## Communal areas

Communal areas are common in flats and are areas that everyone in your building has access to, including entrance hallways, landings, corridors, stairwells, meter cupboards, lifts, open walkways, external pathways, gardens and balconies.

As a responsible landlord we have a responsibility to ensure that communal or shared areas are safe. We're required by law to make sure that the buildings we own and the communal areas within them meet fire safety requirements.

This means if there was a fire or an emergency, there must be nothing in the communal areas of your block of flats or scheme that could:

- prevent people from escaping the building
- stop the emergency services from carrying out their duties
- give off toxic smoke or gas when burning
- explode due to high temperatures (eg. glass)
- cause the fire to spread more quickly

## Safety in communal areas

We have some rules about using the communal areas to keep everyone safe, particularly in case of a fire or emergency.

Please don't:

- leave any personal items in the communal areas
- leave any unwanted items or rubbish in the communal area
- display decorative items in the communal areas
- store or charge electric mobility scooters in the communal areas

We regularly visit our communal areas, and if any of these items are found, we'll try to identify the owner and ask them to remove them immediately.

We'll remove and dispose of any items left in the communal area without notice as per our Building Safety Policy. We may also take tenancy enforcement action against customers who are responsible, and charge for costs.

If you have any concerns about communal areas, please contact us to report these.



## Gas safety

It's essential for your health and safety that we carry out a yearly gas check within your home. This is the law - and must be completed even if you don't have a live gas supply.

### Gas safety checks

When your gas safety check is due, you'll receive an appointment letter from us. If you need to re-arrange, please contact us.

The free inspection takes about 45 minutes and it won't be intrusive. Evening and Saturday appointments can also be arranged.

In an emergency, if you smell gas or suspect a gas leak, you should immediately:

- turn off the gas supply at the meter
- put out naked flames
- do not smoke or strike matches
- open doors and windows to ventilate the room
- do not operate electrical equipment or use electrical switches
- contact the National Grid Gas Emergency freephone: 0800 111 999
- contact us on 0151 290 7000 / 0800 561 0007 (freephone)

## Electrical safety

It's our responsibility to maintain the electrical circuits in your home. For your safety, we must carry out safety checks every five years and will need access to your home to do so.

When performing an electrical safety check, our engineer will:

- check for any faults
- test the wiring
- check fuses or circuit breakers fitted are the correct type and size, ensuring that circuits are labelled correctly
- check and test that the earthing is correct and meets current regulations

### Preparing for a visit

We'll let you know in advance when your safety check is due and will visit at a time that suits you.

Before the service you'll need to:

- ensure that we can access all sockets in your home
- ensure access to the fuse boards, especially if they're located inside cupboards.

If you need to rearrange, please contact us.

# We're a phone call away.

Contact us on 0151 290 7000 / 0800 561 0007 (freephone).



**Livvi**

Here to help you Livv



## Lifts

If you live in one of our blocks of flats or any home that has a lift:

- passenger lifts, and assisted living lifts are serviced every six months by an approved qualified lift contractor, to ensure continual lift operation and safety
- for assisted living lifts (like stairlifts and through floor lifts) it's essential that you provide access and work with us for this servicing.

## Fire safety

Your safety is our priority. We work with the Fire and Rescue Services in all our blocks to make sure we do all that we can to keep you safe.

How we manage and reduce the risks of a fire in your home:

- we undertake inspections of communal areas in blocks to identify any potential breaches in fire safety and make sure that we resolve them
- we provide robust monitoring of fire alarm systems. if the system detects heat/smoke, the monitoring station will call the fire service
- we routinely maintain all fire detection and alarm systems, emergency lights, smoke ventilation systems and dry risers
- we undertake a fire risk assessment (fra) on all our common areas.
- we undertake regular inspections of your flat's fire door and any other fire doors within your communal areas.

What you can do to reduce the risk of fire in your home:

- don't use or store gas cylinders, paraffin, petrol or other flammable liquids in your home.
- never place candles on or near flammable materials like paper or fabric
- only ever use candles in a stable floor holder and never leave candles unattended
- keep matches and lighters out of reach of children
- never overload plugs or sockets
- never leave cookers unattended, avoid using chip pans and keep children away from the kitchen while you're cooking
- report broken switches, sockets, light fittings, exposed wiring etc. to our contact centre to arrange a repair
- if your own electrical items have exposed wires, stop using them and arrange for them to be repaired or replaced
- if you charge electric mobility scooters, scooters, wheelchairs or bike batteries at your home, avoid charging them around anything that is flammable
- ensure your smoke detectors are in good working order and never charge them whilst asleep or away from home.
- testing smoke alarms
- once a week, press test button in centre and release
- the alarm will emit a loud noise and stop automatically.

### Maintaining your smoke alarm

- remove dust every 3 months with a vacuum cleaner with a soft brush
- do not use solvents or cleaners and do not paint the alarm.

## Carbon Monoxide

Carbon Monoxide (or CO) is a poisonous gas with no smell or taste. It can make you feel unwell, and even be life-threatening if it builds up.

It's produced when fuels like gas, oil, coal and wood don't burn fully. Accidental exposure to carbon monoxide is most commonly caused by appliances that aren't properly installed, maintained or ventilated.

We check your gas appliances once a year to make sure they're working properly and to reduce the risk of carbon monoxide. We've also installed CO detectors in all our properties, which will sound if there's a dangerous build-up of carbon monoxide in your home.

If your CO alarm sounds:

- open all windows and doors
- turn off any electrical appliances and light switches
- turn off the gas supply at the meter control valve (if you know where it is).
- call us
- contact the National Grid Gas Emergency Service.

You can find out more about the symptoms and causes of carbon monoxide poisoning on the NHS website.

## Damp, mould and condensation

### Damp

Damp is when a room holds more moisture than it should. Condensation is the most common cause of damp, however it's not the only cause.

There are several causes of damp, a few are:

- leaking pipes, waste pipes, and drainage
- rain seeping through damaged roof tiles, from blocked gutters or around window frames
- rising damp at the bottom of a wall due to a defective damp course

- penetrating damp around windows or on external walls.

Early signs of damp could be:

- a musty smell
- dark discoloured patches on walls or plaster
- rotting woodwork
- appearance of mould or mildew on walls/floors/ceilings.

If your home has signs of damp, please contact us as soon as possible and we can arrange an inspection and take any remedial action.

### Mould

Mould is a fungus that grows in wet or damp conditions. If not dealt with, mould can cause serious health problems.

How to deal with mould

- mould needs to be cleaned specifically with a mould cleaning product – these products will be available in most supermarkets. Please follow the instructions on the product.
- if you identify mould and haven't seen signs of condensation or what could be causing it, please contact us and we'll investigate it.

### Condensation

Moisture production is caused by everyday living, from cooking meals to taking a shower. Normally, moisture will remain in the atmosphere, but as the temperature drops, steam/water droplets form as condensation, often being spotted on glass or windows.

How to avoid condensation

- when cooking, try to reduce the amount of moisture by cooking with lids on pans
- when running a bath or taking a shower, open a window or use an extractor fan where available
- when washing clothes, put clothes outdoors to dry if possible. If not, place in bathroom with windows open and or extractor fan on. Avoid drying clothes on radiators as the moisture will stay in the room and condense on other surfaces.

## Water safety

### Legionella and Legionnaire's disease

Legionella is a bacterium that lives in water supply systems. It's not a major risk in homes, but can be a risk in some places, such as used water outlets.

The risk posed by Legionella in our properties is minimal. To date, there's never been a reported incident. However, we want to make our customers aware of any risks.

### Dealing with and preventing Legionella and Legionnaire's disease

We inspect a sample of multi-occupancy properties annually. Any Legionella risks will be identified and rectified. We also flush water systems in all vacant properties pre handover.

There are also some simple steps you can take to reduce the risk of being exposed to Legionella bacteria such as:

- if you leave your home for more than two weeks, run all water outlets for around two minutes to freshen up the system
- descale the shower head to keep it clean and effective
- don't alter the temperature of your boiler or immersion heater. These should remain on the optimum setting (greater than 60°C or 140°F).

## Waste and recycling

Please visit your local council website for details on waste collection dates and times in your area.

### Recycle

One of the best and easiest things you can do to be more eco-friendly is to recycle your paper, cardboard, plastic and metal (such as food tins). Most local councils offer curbside collection, or you can take your recycling to any recycling centre in the country.

### Reduce

You can also try and reduce waste, by selecting goods, like fruit, that don't come with loads of packaging. Another way is to throw away as little food as possible. For tips and tricks to help make your groceries go further, visit [lovefoodhatewaste.com](http://lovefoodhatewaste.com).

### Reuse

For all collections consider whether there is a better use for your unwanted goods other than sending them to landfill. They could be used by someone else or could be recycled or repaired.

### What to do with waste that's not covered by the standard weekly collection

Please remember to dispose of hazardous waste such as paint, white spirits, batteries and unwanted medication responsibly.

To find out more about which materials can be reused, recycled or disposed of and where, as well as information on your local recycling centre, please visit [recyclenow.com](http://recyclenow.com)



## Asbestos safety

Asbestos can be found in most homes in the UK that were built before 2000. Most asbestos in housing is low risk, and if in good condition will unlikely cause harm to your health.

Asbestos can be found in:

- insulation around pipes, boards, steel work and riser panels
- textured finishes
- ceiling tiles and vinyl floors
- service ducts
- bath panels
- heating appliances and domestic equipment
- fire-break materials used in lofts
- cement sheets used as roofing, cladding or guttering.

### Do's and Don'ts with Asbestos

#### Do

- always check with us first when making home improvements. We'll ensure that everything will be safe and done correctly, so there's no risk to you or your home. You'll need written approval before you begin. If we need to test for asbestos samples, we'll arrange and pay for this
- treat the area with caution and tell us if there has been damage
- contact us if you want to do anything DIY related that could affect asbestos, this includes any alterations
- only use a specialist contractor to remove and dispose of asbestos.

#### Don't

- worry - asbestos is only a problem when disturbed
- drill, sand, cut or disturb an area with asbestos
- dust, sweep or vacuum asbestos.

### Further information

If asbestos fibres are inhaled, they could pose a serious risk to your health. If there is any asbestos in your home, it's locked inside the product it is used in. As mentioned above, there's only a risk if these products get damaged or disturbed.

If you suspect asbestos, don't touch it or try to clean it up. Contact us straight away and we'll arrange someone to inspect it.

As always, if you're unsure about anything visit our website at [livvhousinggroup.com](http://livvhousinggroup.com)

**Our website  
is the best  
place to  
reach us.**

Get access to the information  
you need, wherever you are.



# Let us know

We welcome your compliments, suggestions and complaints and we use your feedback to make continuous improvements to our services. We keep records of all the feedback we receive, and we check this regularly to make sure we're dealing with all comments effectively and consistently.

## Let's talk, we're listening

### You can make a real difference...

As a Livv customer, you'll know what it's like to live in our homes and have first-hand experience of the services we provide.

We value, listen to and act on the views of all our customers.

By telling us how we're doing and sharing your thoughts, ideas and experiences you can teach us what customers need, support us to make service improvements, influence our decisions, make a difference to your community and help us to get things right.

### How can I get involved?

It's simple really, if you want to be involved in helping us improve and shaping our future, then you can!

There are loads of ways to get involved and make a difference – regardless of the time you have or the commitment you can give.

### Customer Scrutiny Panel

The Livv Quality and Improvement Panel (or QuIP for short) is a small group of customers responsible for scrutinising services and helping us to prioritise improvements we need to make.

QuIP complete two in-depth reviews of our services each year. They choose the focus of each review based on our performance and what you have told us is important. The QuIP report the findings and recommendations from each review directly to our Board.

QuIP is open to all customers living in a Livv property. If you're a customer and would like to join, there are sometimes places available. No experience is required, just a willingness to work alongside us, to provide and challenge ideas that help us to improve our homes and services.

### Customer Feedback

Complete service surveys from the comfort of your own home.

We'll ask for your feedback on our services as you receive them: such as when you speak with our contact centre or have a visit from one of our team for a repair, gas servicing or electrical testing.

### Take part in our annual Tenant Satisfaction Survey

The Regulator of Social Housing has created a system to see how well social housing landlords in England are doing at providing good quality homes and services. This includes a set of Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) that we report on. These measures include a set of question to help us, our Board, you (our customers), and the Regulator understand how we're performing. Surveys take place across the year, and you'll be asked to take part in one of them.

### Customer Involvement

Sometimes the issues we want to explore, or the services we want to improve, are more complex. We have a number ways we can hold quality conversations and hear ideas that create a greater depth of understanding, and enable us to shape our services.

## Join our Customer Voice

We email our customers surveys, to help shape and influence our decision-making, and they form our Customer Voice. Any customer can join and you'd receive around one survey a month. In return, you'll be entered into prize draws for a chance to win a supermarket voucher of your choice.

### You tell us

We welcome different ways you might want to get involved beyond what we already do. If you're part of a tenant group, residents association, a group of neighbours or in a group with other customers you have something in common with and you'd like to talk then get in touch. Simply email us at [customervoice@livvhousinggroup.com](mailto:customervoice@livvhousinggroup.com)

### We're listening

Your feedback is important to us. It helps us to improve, shape and develop services to meet your needs. We'll let you know how our conversations have influenced what we do and we'll publish this information on the 'We're listening' section of our website at [livvhousinggroup.com](http://livvhousinggroup.com)

## Sharing Information

Livving Magazine is our customer magazine that is sent to all customers twice a year and is full of information and updates about your home, your community and the support available to you as a Livv customer. You'll receive it through the post and please get in touch if you have any feedback about the content so we can make sure it is full of useful and relevant information.

## Use your voice and have your say!

Now you know all the ways you can get involved and help shape the services we deliver.

Visit [livvhousinggroup.com/get-involved/](http://livvhousinggroup.com/get-involved/)

We can't wait to hear from you!









Livv is a registered provider of social housing, and we must adhere to the standards set by the Regulator of Social Housing.

The regulator sets standards and carries out robust regulation focusing on driving improvement, and ensuring providers are well governed, financially viable, and provide value for money. The regulator can take action if the standards aren't being delivered.

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