

All you need to know about your home

Customer Handbook



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Welcome

Hello.

This handbook gives you information you need about your rights and responsibilities as a Livv Housing Group (Livv) customer including the standards of service you can expect from us, important things about your tenancy or leasehold and how we'll look after your home and help you. We've also provided vital safety information, and a list of useful contacts so you know who to call when you need us.

Keep your handbook safe so that you can refer to it when you need to.



Call us:
0151 290 7000 / 0800 561 0007 (Freephone)



Want to chat? Try our Live Chat service online:
livvhousinggroup.com



Email us:
contactcentre@livvhousinggroup.com



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



We're open:
Monday to Friday - 8am to 8pm
Saturday - 9:30am to 1pm

Moving in

Removals

We offer low cost, fully insured packing and removal service.

Blinds

We can provide and fit roller and vertical blinds in a variety of styles, patterns and colours to suit you and your budget.

Flooring

We have an extensive selection of affordably priced, quality carpets, laminates and vinyl flooring in many styles, colours and patterns.

Removals

When you sign your tenancy agreement, we'll give you the keys to your new home:

- 3 front door keys
- 3 back door keys (where applicable)
- 1 key or fob for any communal areas

If you lose any keys, you may be charged for replacements. At the end of your tenancy, we'll ask for a complete set to be returned to us, so keep them safe.



Insurance

We insure the structure of your home (buildings insurance) but you're responsible for insuring the contents. It's your responsibility to arrange this.

We can supply contents insurance for Livv customers. Find out more in the My Home Contents Insurance booklet included with this pack or call: **0345 450 7288**

thistlemyhome.co.uk

Lettable standard

When you accept your tenancy, we'll make sure your home is at a 'Lettable Standard'.

We'll make sure:

- it's clean and clear
- has an appropriate degree of thermal comfort
- is safe for you to move into
- has had gas and electricity safety checks
- all doors open and close correctly and are in a serviceable condition
- we provide keys for all doors, communal doors and windows
- the property is watertight and free of any major defect
- kitchen and bathroom floors are in a serviceable condition
- bathroom tiles and fittings (bath/shower, sink and toilet) are usable and hygienic
- smoke/heat detection alarms in the property are in working order

Utility bills

You're responsible for setting up utility accounts in your name for your new home. This includes gas, electricity and water.

TV and telephones

TV aerials are your responsibility, unless you live in a flat with a communal area where a service charge applies – we're not responsible for previous installations of phone, satellite and TV media packages.

Home improvements

For assured tenants only, if you wish to make alterations or improvements, you must put the request in writing to us, including plans and quotes for the work where appropriate. For gas/electrical changes you must use a qualified contractor.

Furniture

Our general needs properties are let unfurnished. Furniture projects run by local charities and voluntary organisations offer second-hand furniture at a low cost. For more information, visit: knowsley.gov.uk/residents.

For more information about our services:



Call us:

0151 290 7000 /
0800 561 0007 (Freephone)



Email us:

contactcentre@livvhousinggroup.com



Understanding your rent

Livv Online

Paying your rent has never been easier! You can access your Livv Housing rent account 24 hours a day where you can:

- check your rent balance
- pay your rent online
- view existing repairs
- review your personal data

It takes five minutes to register now:

livvonline.com



Paying your rent

Your tenancy agreement states whether you pay monthly or weekly. If you pay your rent weekly it's due every Monday. This is usually by direct debit. You can also pay over the phone, or at a PayPoint facility.

Soon after signing your tenancy agreement, you'll receive a payment card; you must keep this safe even if you currently have no rent to pay. If you're claiming Housing Benefit, you'll need this payment card when you migrate onto Universal Credit.

Housing benefit

You may be eligible for help with payment of your rent, depending on your financial circumstances. Claims can be made by calling **0151 443 4042** or emailing benefits@knowsley.gov.uk

Your responsibilities

Your rent account should never be in arrears. Paying your rent is your responsibility.

If your circumstances change, you should tell us and your local council and:

- provide all information requested for your Housing Benefit claim
- tell us if you're having difficulties paying your rent

How we can help

If you're struggling to pay your rent, it's important to contact us straight away. We can advise you about applying for benefits you might be eligible for.

Our team is well trained and highly experienced in Welfare Reform Benefits and have helped our customers access many unclaimed benefits. We can help with completing Disability Benefit and Housing Benefit claim forms as well as advising on Universal Credit, Benefits Cap and Bedroom Tax.

We can provide basic advice on organising debts and refer you to different agencies who can help you resolve any debt problems.



Universal Credit

Universal Credit is for people who are looking for work or who are on a low income.

Universal Credit affects you if you're of working age and are claiming, or want to claim, any of these benefits:

- Income-based Jobseekers' Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit

See page 8 for more information on Universal Credit.

If you receive Universal Credit, your payment may include help toward your rent. It's your responsibility to pay your rent to us and to ensure that you can pay it in full.

For more information about Universal Credit, visit: livvhousinggroup.com

Rent arrears

If you get behind with your rent, we'll deal with things quickly, efficiently and in a confidential and sympathetic way. We'll contact you throughout the process to advise and help you manage your account. We'll always try to come to an arrangement with you to start making repayments. As long as you keep to this arrangement and the outstanding debt decreases, we won't take any further action against your tenancy. However, if you don't keep to this arrangement, you may be at risk of losing your home.

For more information about our services:



Call us:

0151 290 7000 /
0800 561 0007 (Freephone)



Email us:

contactcentre@livvhousinggroup.com

Universal Credit: Claiming Online

How to claim Universal Credit

You can make a claim for Universal Credit online on the GOV.UK website

If you can't get online, ask friends and family to help you. If this isn't possible you can contact a DWP adviser on **0800 328 5644** or text phone **0800 328 1344**.

When calling you need the same information that is needed to claim online.

Making a claim

Before you start your claim, you must create an account. The account will be connected to an email address, so you need an email address before applying.

Your claim then has 4 steps

- **your claim** - providing all of the information needed for your claim
- **verifying your identity** - this is done via the government 'Verify' system or can be done in a Jobcentre. You'll need proof of identity such as a passport, driving licence or bank card
- **submit claim** - you'll be given details of your responsibilities and likely payment
- **next steps** - what you need to do next to be paid Universal Credit



What you need to complete your claim

To help you complete the questions you'll need the following information:

- your contact details
- bank or building society account details
- National Insurance number

You can find your National Insurance number on:

- payslips
- previous letters about your benefits
- letters from HMRC about your tax
- a letter sent to you telling you what your National Insurance number is
- a National Insurance number card

If you don't have a National Insurance number, you can still apply for Universal Credit and a National Insurance number will be allocated during the new claim process.

You may also need details of:

- current employment (for example, employer name and how often you are paid)
- total monthly earnings including the gross amount (this is on your payslip)
- your rent and service charges
- tenancy agreement details
- income (this is income on top of or instead of earnings, for example income protection insurance payments)
- savings and other capital (you may find this information on your latest bank statement(s) or share certificates)
- any other benefits you already get

Other things you need to know

- allow at least half an hour to submit your claim. You can complete it in stages if you need time to collect information needed for the application
- only give correct information - you may need to provide proof of anything you mention during your claim

Submitting your claim

Before you submit your claim, you'll be shown the details you have entered to check (you can change them if needed) and a summary of your responsibilities.

You'll be asked to sign a Claimant Commitment and confirm that the information you have provided is correct and complete.

When you submit your claim, you may be asked to provide more information, such as evidence confirming information you have given. This must usually be provided within one calendar month. The date you started your claim could change if you don't supply any information requested or sign your claimant commitment on time.

Once your claim has been submitted, an Adviser will contact you to arrange an interview which you must attend. At this interview you must accept your Claimant Commitment.

You must tell Universal Credit if any of your circumstance change after you submit your claim. When your claim is up and running you can report a change of circumstances via your online journal.

For more information about our services:



Call us:
0151 290 7000 /
0800 561 0007 (Freephone)



Email us:
contactcentre@livvhousinggroup.com

About your tenancy

Your Tenancy Agreement

Your tenancy agreement is a legal contract between you and Livv - your landlord. Terms and conditions will be explained to you when you sign the tenancy agreement. We offer 3 types of tenancies depending on your circumstances and the property:

1 Assured tenancy with Preserved Right to Buy

This applies to people who had secure tenancies with Knowsley Borough Council which transferred to us on 15 July 2002.

2 Assured tenancy

This applies to people who were housed by us from another social landlord after 15 July 2002, and already had this type of tenancy. It doesn't have the Preserved Right to Buy.

3 A starter tenancy

This applies to all new customers. It means you'll have a probationary tenancy for your first 12 months. If there are no problems during this time, your tenancy will be converted to an assured tenancy (type 2).



The tenancy agreement outlines your rights and responsibilities and ours. By signing the agreement, you accept these rights and agree to abide by your responsibilities.

We will:

- give you written notice to change your rent or service charge
- consult over any proposed changes to your tenancy agreement
- complete necessary repairs to the structure of your home

You will:

- pay your rent in advance
- notify us of any repairs needed
- occupy your property as your principal home
- give us 4 weeks' written notice if you're moving out
- maintain the internal decoration and not cause damage to your property
- maintain the garden area and prevent it from overgrowing (if you have one)
- avoid causing nuisance to neighbours by your behaviour or that of your visitors

Service charges

In addition to your rent, some properties have a charge for other services provided which may include but are not limited to:

- communal heating
- lighting and cleaning of communal areas
- landscape maintenance
- buildings insurance and management

All service charge items are detailed in your tenancy agreement and are reviewed each year.

Anti-social Behaviour (ASB)

Anti-social behaviour is defined by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 as "acting in a manner that causes or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress."

Livv's tenancy agreements set out responsibilities of our tenants as follows:

Not to cause, commit or allow anyone living with you, or your visitors to cause or commit any act or omission in your home, in communal areas, on surrounding land or in the locality of your home which is, or is likely to:

- be a nuisance or annoyance to; and/or
- interfere with the peace and comfort of: and/or
- cause injury or offence

Livv takes ASB extremely seriously. If you are experiencing ASB please contact us on **0151 290 7000** and we will work with you to keep you safe and find a solution. For more information visit: [livvhousinggroup.com](https://www.livvhousinggroup.com)

Pets

You need written permission from us before you are allowed to keep a pet. Please refer to your tenancy agreement for more information. Permission won't be withheld in respect to tenants or prospective tenants with disabilities who depend on pets, e.g. Assistance Dogs.

For more information about our services:



Call us:
0151 290 7000 /
0800 561 0007 (Freephone)



Email us:
contactcentre@livvhousinggroup.com



Supporting you in your home

Our Tenancy Sustainability Officers offer support to those customers who may need some additional support to maintain their tenancy, and customers who've not held a social housing tenancy before.

The team help you manage your home and give you the confidence to manage independently. If necessary, we'll signpost you to other agencies to provide additional support, with your consent.

As part of your application to Livv, we'll assess whether you need support from this team. If we feel you would benefit from this, it will be offered to you. It's highly unlikely that you would be offered a tenancy if you refuse to accept this additional support.

How does the tenancy support service work?

The support is provided by trained officers who visit you at home to discuss any help you need and develop a personalised action plan with you. This sets out what you want to achieve and the support that is available. Often we'll need to contact other agencies or organisations on your behalf.

Tenancy support is not intended to replace any help you may be getting from departments and organisations such as Social Services, Women's Aid or the NHS, but provides additional support to help sustain independent living in your home.

If you need support, please call: **0151 290 7000**

For more information about our services:



Call us:
0151 290 7000 /
0800 561 0007 (Freephone)



Email us:
contactcentre@livvhousinggroup.com

Moving out

If you wish to end your tenancy with us you would normally give us 4 weeks written notice. Our Customer Services team will take you through ending your tenancy.

Before you leave your home, you'll need to:

- leave it clean and tidy with no damage
- ensure no belongings (including furniture, curtains, carpets, laminate flooring, light fittings) or rubbish are left in the house or garden, lofts or outbuildings
- tell the utility companies (gas, water, electric) you are moving
- tell your local Council's benefits team you're moving and give a forwarding address if you claim benefits
- request the Post Office redirect your mail to your new address
- ensure you've paid your rent and any other charges before you move
- ensure your property is empty and no one is living there
- give us your forwarding address
- return all the keys you were given when you first moved in

Please note: If you leave the property in need of any rubbish removals or with damage caused by you, a household member or visitor, we'll require a payment plan for the remedial works and this may affect any future housing applications.

If in doubt, contact Customer Services on **0151 290 7000**



Repairs & maintenance

Our comprehensive customer repair service ensures properties remain in excellent condition.



Completing repairs

Please note, it's your responsibility as a customer to inform Livv if you need a repair completing.

Emergencies

Normally completed in 24 hours (e.g. mains water bursts, serious leaks, complete or partial loss of power).

Routine

Normally completed in 28 days (e.g. leaking gutters, easing doors and windows).

Planned maintenance

When completing planned work to your home, we'll inform you 28 days in advance. For disruptive works (e.g. electrical rewiring), we aim to give as much notice as possible.

For further information visit:
livvhousinggroup.com

Cyclical repairs and maintenance

We also carry out regular repairs and maintenance in your home including:

- annual gas safety inspection if you have a domestic gas supply
- electrical test at a frequency determined by the previous electrical test
- external repair and painting programme on a rolling basis
- inspections of lifts, dry risers, water pumps and lightning conductors in high-rise blocks
- servicing all residential stair/ vertical lifts and ceiling track hoists twice a year
- we'll offer you an appointment for gas or electrical tests, or you can book one that's convenient to you. For regular repairs and maintenance work, we'll let you know in advance when we'll visit



Chargable 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, you may be charged. We'll charge for repairs when it:

- falls under tenant responsibility including gaining access due to lost keys, blockages to baths, basins and WC
- is a result of negligence or misuse caused by you, a family member or visitor
- is to return the property to its former state due to unsatisfactory or unauthorised improvements/alterations
- is to any overgrown or ill-maintained garden including rubbish removal from the home, outhouse or garden if your tenancy is ended

To save you time and money, follow these simple tips:

- keep a bin in the bathroom. Non-biodegradables such as baby wipes, sanitary products, nappies etc can cause blockages; put them in the bin, not the toilet.
- never put food scraps, fat or oil down the sink or toilet
- the only things that should be flushed are human waste and toilet paper

If you intend to carry out a minor repair yourself like changing light fittings or wall mounted bathroom units, please let us know in advance. We may need to assess the property to ensure the repair can be safely completed.

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	✓	
Lighting	✓	
Sockets	✓	
Immersion heater	✓	
Communal gardens and grassed areas	✓	

Type of repair	Responsibility	
	Livv	Customer
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	✓	
Insect/rodent infestation to individual property	✓	✓
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	✓	
Boundary fences & walls - where installed by Livv	✓	

Positive impact.
Flourishing communities.

www.livvhousinggroup.com



Independence & comfort

We're committed to meeting the needs of disabled and vulnerable residents. We aim to help residents and their families live independently in their homes for as long as possible. Responsibility for providing equipment and adaptations lies with Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council (KMBC). As your Landlord we have a social and moral duty to work with others to take care of vulnerable residents.

Partnership working

Our adaptation service is provided through a partnership with KMBC. KMBC provide Occupational Therapy services. Livv provide specialist contractors to carry out works with technical knowledge, guidance and supervision.

What's an adaptation?

Adaptations include equipment, extra fittings or minor alterations to your home. The purpose of an adaptation is to restore independence, confidence and dignity, giving you control of your life.

Equipment and adaptations include:

- ramps
- lever taps
- grab rails

Categories and timescales

The need for an adaptation is based on definitions contained within the Department of Health's 'Prioritising need in the context of Putting People First' document.

Assessment for adaptations

Most requests for adaptations are considered via the recommendation of a community or hospital Occupational Therapist or similar. This happens after we've carried out an assessment of needs using the Fair Access to Care model.

With minor adaptations, assessments can be carried out by our trained staff in our contact centre, in line with "Minor adaptations without delay" guidance published by the College of Occupational Therapists.

Third party agencies

Often we need to contact other agencies or organisations on your behalf. If you need support in your home call **0151 290 7000**.

Applying for adaptations

Call:
0151 290 7000 / 0800 561 0007
(Freephone)

Email us:
contactcentre@livvhousinggroup.com

Want to chat? Try our Live Chat service online:
livvhousinggroup.com

You can also apply via Knowsley Council's Access team on **0151 443 2600** or through organisations such as the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB), SAFFA or Age Concern.

Find out more:
completecareshop.co.uk

Safety in your home

Gas safety

We have a legal duty to do an annual check in your home, even if you don't have a live gas supply. This is essential for you and your family's health and safety. We need to access your home to carry this out.

Gas safety checks

When your gas safety check's due, you'll get an appointment letter from us. If you need to re-arrange, call: **0800 561 0007**. The inspection takes about 45 minutes, is not intrusive and it's free. Evening and Saturday appointments are also available.

Allowing access to your home

It's vital you let our staff into your home to carry out these checks. Our staff always carry identification which you can request to see before they enter your property.

If you don't let us in, you'll be breaching your tenancy agreement, and endangering the safety of you, your family and others.

If you persistently deny us access for these checks, we can take legal action, which could result in you losing your home and any legal costs will be charged to you.

It's in your best interests to let us in. If you cannot make an appointment at short notice, please contact us straight away to rearrange: **0800 561 0007**.

What to do in an emergency

If you smell gas or suspect there is a leak, you should immediately:

- turn off the gas supply at the meter
- put out naked flames
- not smoke or strike matches
- open doors and windows to ventilate the room
- not operate electrical equipment or use electrical switches
- immediately contact the National Grid Gas Emergency Freephone: **0800 111 999**
- contact Livv: **0800 561 0007**

Electricity safety

We're responsible for maintaining electrical circuits in your home. For your safety, we must carry out periodic safety checks every 5 years and need to access your home.

What will the electrical safety check involve?

The engineer will:

- check for any faults to the fixed wiring system in your house
- test the wiring for safety
- check fuses or circuit breakers fitted in the fuse board are the correct type and size and that circuits are labelled correctly
- check and test that the earthing is correct and conforms to the current regulations

Preparing for an electrical engineer's visit

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

It's helpful and means a shorter visit if you take the following steps before the service:

- ensure access to sockets in all rooms
- ensure access to the fuse boards, especially if they are in cupboards

If you need to rearrange, call **0800 561 0007**
Find out more: [livvhousinggroup.com](https://www.livvhousinggroup.com)

Fire safety

We work with Fire and Rescue Services in all our blocks to ensure we do all we can to keep our customers safe.

What does Livv do to manage and reduce the risks of fire in your home?

We undertake measures to ensure your home is safe and protected from risks associated with fire including:

- inspections of communal areas in blocks to identify any potential breaches in fire safety
- robust monitoring of fire alarm systems where fitted. If the system detects heat/smoke, the monitoring station will call the fire service who'll attend
- routine maintenance of fire detection and alarm systems, emergency lights, smoke ventilation systems and dry risers
- undertaking a Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) on all our common areas

Lifts

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

Passenger Lifts

Passenger lifts are serviced monthly by an Approved Qualified Lift Contractor, to ensure continual operation of the lift.

Assisted Living Lifts (including stairlifts)

Assisted Lifting Lifts are serviced every 6 months by an Approved Qualified Lift Contractor, to ensure continual operation of the lift.

For full details visit: [livvhousinggroup.com](https://www.livvhousinggroup.com)

What can you do as a tenant to reduce the risks of fire in your home?

Most fires can be avoided by following these simple rules:

- 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 material
- only ever use candles in a stable holder, never leave candles unattended
- keep matches and lighters out of reach of children
- never overload plug 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 **0151 290 7000**
- if your own electrical items have exposed wires, stop using them and arrange for them to be repaired or replaced

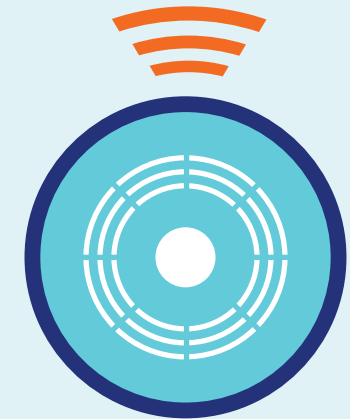
- communal areas must be kept clear at all times. Items in these areas may catch fire or obstruct escape routes and may hinder emergency services
- doors are designed to be self-closing to slow down the spread of fire. Don't wedge open under any circumstances. Don't remove self-closing devices. We may charge to refit if removed
- if you live in an apartment, don't smoke in any communal areas including landings, lifts, stairs and foyers. It's the law, and is for everyone's safety
- maintain your smoke alarm, testing it regularly (ideally once a week)

Testing your smoke alarm

- 1 Once a week, press test button in centre and release



- 2 The alarm will emit a loud noise and stop automatically



Maintaining your smoke alarm

- 1 Remove dust every 3 months with a vacuum cleaner with a soft brush



- 2 Do not use solvents or cleaners and do not paint the alarm





If there's a fire, never assume someone else has called 999 - make the call yourself.

Simple fire safety checks:

- close internal doors. If a fire does breakout, this will help contain it
- unplug electrical items (but not fridges and freezers)
- check your cooker is off and don't leave washing machines or tumble dryers on overnight
- leave door keys in a convenient place near the door, but away from the reach of burglars
- check doors to the outside are clear and free from obstructions
- if you smoke, put cigarettes out properly and don't smoke in bed or while sleepy

What to do in the event of a fire breaking out in your home

Some advice from Merseyside Fire and Rescue Services:

- make sure you're familiar with emergency evacuation procedures
- make an escape plan so that you and your family know what to do if there's a fire
- practice this plan, make sure everyone understands it and knows where the door key is
- if it's too dangerous to follow your planned escape route because stairs and hallways are full of smoke, ring 999 and stay in the safest room. Keep doors closed and use towels or bedding to block the smoke at the bottom of the door
- if you live in a high rise building, a block of flats, an extra care or sheltered scheme, there may be specific fire procedures for that building these will be displayed in the building

Important

- try to remain calm and don't panic
- alert everyone else in your property to the fire
- check doors with the back of your hand before opening them - if they're warm don't open them, fire may be on the other side
- if you have a balcony, never use this to escape from unless it's part of an official escape route
- never go back into the building until the Fire Service have advised that it's safe to do so

Condensation

Condensation occurs when warm air meets a cold surface. Water is formed where it hits, just as a bathroom mirror steams up when you have a hot bath.

You can reduce the problems caused by condensation and dampness:

- never block air bricks or vents in walls, door or windows. If you have a gas boiler, vents may provide oxygen for the operation of your heating system and it's dangerous to block these vents off
- when taking a bath or shower, open a window or use an extractor fan if fitted
- when cooking, keep the door closed but open a window for steam to escape. If you have no windows leave the extractor fan running for a while
- reduce moisture in the air by not drying clothes on radiators or storage heaters
- don't let kettles and pans boil for longer than necessary
- if you have an extractor fan, please use it
- avoid using portable gas heaters as they produce high levels of water vapour
- ensure tumble driers are vented to the outside



Water safety

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 at handover stage.

What is Legionella and Legionnaire's disease?

Legionella is bacteria that lives in water supply systems. It's not a major risk in homes but can be a risk to health in some places like little-used water outlets.

Is there any risk to Livv properties?

The risk posed by Legionella in our properties water supplies is minimal. To date there have been no reported incidents of Legionella, however, we want to make customers aware of the risks.

What you can do to prevent Legionnaire's disease

There are easy steps you can take to help reduce the risk of being exposed to Legionella bacteria and ensure that your water supply is fresh and safe:

- if you go on holiday or leave your property empty for more than two weeks, run all taps/showers for approximately two minutes to freshen your system before using the water. It's also useful to descale the showerhead 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) to ensure the boiler is working efficiently

Asbestos safety

Asbestos is a mineral made of small fibres; it was added to materials to strengthen them, make them more fireproof or for noise insulation.

Asbestos can be found in most homes in the UK that were built before the year 2000. Most asbestos in housing is low risk. If it's in good condition it is unlikely to harm your health.

Where can asbestos be found?

- insulation around pipes
- textured finishes e.g. Artex
- ceiling tiles and vinyl floor tiles
- service ducts
- bath panels
- heating appliances and domestic equipment
- fire-break materials used in lofts
- panelling around steelwork
- insulation boards and riser panels in bathrooms or ducts
- cement sheets (flat and corrugated) used as roofing, wall cladding and guttering

Further information

If asbestos fibres are inhaled they can cause serious health problems in later life. If there is any asbestos in your home, it's locked inside the product it's used in. There's only risk if these products get damaged or disturbed, for example during DIY. Asbestos-containing materials in good condition won't release asbestos fibres.

If you suspect asbestos do not touch it or try to clean it up. Contact us straightaway at and we'll arrange for someone to come out to inspect it.

Do's and don'ts

Do

- treat asbestos-containing material respectfully and tell us if you think it's been damaged or has deteriorated
- contact us if you want to do any DIY that might affect any asbestos, or if you're not sure
- only a specialist contractor can remove and dispose of asbestos-containing materials

Don't

- don't worry – asbestos is only a problem if it gets disturbed
- don't drill, sand, cut or disturb an area that contains asbestos
- don't sweep, dust or vacuum disturbed asbestos

Making home improvements? Always check with us first. We'll help make sure everything is done correctly and there's no risk to you or your home. You'll need written approval from us before you start work. If we need to test samples for asbestos we'll arrange this and pay for it. If you're unsure about what you to do, call us for advice and we'll be happy to help.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) recommend we leave in place asbestos containing materials that are in good condition. It's safer to do this rather than disturb it.

For more information visit: [livvhousinggroup.com](https://www.livvhousinggroup.com)

Let us know

Compliments and complaints

We're committed to providing a quality, professional and efficient housing service. However, if our service doesn't meet those standards, we'd like to hear from you.

We welcome compliments, complaints, and suggestions and use your feedback to identify areas for improvement. We record all complaints and check them regularly to ensure we're dealing with them effectively and consistently.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is 'an expression of dissatisfaction with a standard of service, action or lack of action from Livv where a response is needed'. This could include a perceived service failure or a failure against local or national standards.

A formal complaint is not:

- a request for a service e.g. initial reporting of a repair
- a request for information on our policy
- an appeal for a review of a decision

We aim to resolve all complaints at the first point of contact and informally. However, if the action taken doesn't resolve your issue, a formal complaint will be logged and investigated in line with our process. For more information: [livvhousinggroup.com](https://www.livvhousinggroup.com)

Have your say

Through Livv's Customer Involvement team you can make a real difference to your community. Here's some ways to get involved:

Quality Assurance Panel

This panel is made up of customers who scrutinise services we provide. Including carrying out service reviews, reviewing policy and ensuring we meet regulations.

Focus groups

Held throughout the year, each one take a close look at a specific service. Focus groups provide a chance for you to give your opinions and hear views from other tenants.

Groups are small to give everyone a chance to be heard and usually last no more than two hours. If you're interested, we can arrange free transport to and from the meeting or reimburse any out of pocket expenses. Sometimes we'll also offer you an incentive for coming along!

Your help makes a real difference. We'll contact you after meetings to let you know what changes have been made as a result of your feedback.

Tenant and Resident Associations

Tenant and Resident Associations are run by the community. They are a great way of bringing people together; helping you influence and improve your local area.

If you want to set up a group, we can give you information to get you up and running. We'll also provide training to introduce members to their roles and responsibilities.

Contact us to check if there's already group in your area or if you are thinking about setting up a group.

Want to know more?

To find out more or register your interest, get in touch: [0151 290 7000](tel:01512907000)



Useful information

Useful contacts

Organisation	Telephone number
National Grid Gas Emergency (if you smell gas, call them immediately)	0800 111 999
Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service	0800 731 5958 (999 in an emergency)
Crime Stoppers	0800 555 111
Universal Credit full service	0800 328 5644
Women’s Aid	0151 548 3333
Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB)	0151 298 3222
Age Concern Knowsley	0151 480 4632
Knowsley Family Information Service	0151 296 5470
Kirkby Community Fire Station	0151 296 5505
Kirkby Community Fire Safety	0151 480 5325
Fire Service Direct (For a free home fire safety check or advice on an existing smoke alarm)	0800 731 5958

Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council (KMBC)

Department	Telephone number
General enquiries	0151 489 6000
Customer services	0151 443 4031
Knowsley emergency support scheme	0800 408 2014 or 0151 443 3200
Council tax 24-hour payment line	0151 443 4476
Housing benefits	0151 443 4042
Housing advice and homelessness	0800 694 0280
Financial Inclusion helpline	0151 443 3300
Environmental services (inc. bin collection and pest control)	0151 443 2400
Education	0151 443 3232
Home to school transport	0151 443 2500
Leisure	0151 443 2200

Visit www.knowsley.gov.uk where you can:

- **Pay for:** Council Tax, Business Rates, Fixed Penalty Notices, planning applications, building
- **Apply for:** Housing benefit or Council Tax control, housing act advances, housing benefit reduction, school places, replacement bins, overpayments and right to buy repayments planning applications and Emergency Support
- **Report it:** Abandoned vehicles, potholes, faulty street lighting missing/damaged street signs pest control, fly tipping, litter, missed bins, dog waste, and noise pollution
- **Book it:** Registrars’ appointments and taxi MOTs



Contact us

**Call us:**

0151 290 7000 / 0800 561 0007 (Freephone)

**Want to chat?** Try our Live Chat service online:

livvhousinggroup.com

**Email us:**

contactcentre@livvhousinggroup.com

**Write to us:**

Livv Housing Group, Lakeview,
Kings Business Park, Prescot,
Merseyside L34 1PJ

**We're open:**

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

Your way

At Livv, we're committed to providing excellent service to all our customers. If you would like this information in another language or format, please call **0800 561 0007**.

