

Tenant Responsibilities

Your landlord is accountable for certain repairs and maintenance tasks in your home.

However, as a tenant, you also have responsibilities in keeping the property well-maintained.

Below, we have outlined these responsibilities. If any repairs are needed due to damage or neglect caused by the tenant, the cost of these repairs will be charged accordingly.

As a tenant, you are responsible for some aspects of your home's upkeep and maintenance.

Inside Your Home:

Keep your home clean and in good condition.

Maintain and refresh internal décor, including managing condensation and mould caused by inadequate ventilation or heating.

Prevent blockages in waste pipes and toilets by regularly cleaning drains and avoiding flushing inappropriate items like wipes.

Take care of and replace small fixtures such as sink plugs, tap washers, toilet seats, and lids.

Replace lightbulbs (except for sealed units).

Change fuses as needed.

Provide access to our agents or approved contractors at reasonable times for necessary repairs and maintenance.

Perform basic heating maintenance, such as bleeding radiators and repressurising boilers.

Take steps to prevent pipes from freezing during cold weather.

Tenants are also required to regularly test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms and replace the batteries when necessary.

Outside Your Home:

Take care of any garden areas that are part of your tenancy agreement.

Ensure that gutters are clear of debris and are kept clear for proper drainage.

Maintain any boundary fences between your property and your neighbor's.

Insurance

Tenants are responsible for arranging home contents insurance to cover their own possessions proof of contents insurance is to be issued to the agent prior to key collection.

Inspections:

It is a condition of your tenancy that inspections are carried out at your property.

Inspections require us to visit the property in person, where we will take a photograph from each room's corner, along with additional images of any repairs or issues we observe. We kindly ask that you remove any personal items from view.

You are not required to be present during the inspection unless you prefer to be; we can access the property using the keys.

The inspection will typically take no longer than 15 minutes and can only be conducted during office hours.

Inspection Schedule:

6 Weeks – An initial inspection will be scheduled approximately 6 weeks after you move into the property.

6 Months – A physical inspection where we will attend in person.

9 Months – A physical inspection where we will attend in person.

Occasionally, we may need to conduct an inspection outside of the usual schedule.

After each inspection, a report is prepared and sent electronically to your landlord. If any concerns are raised by the landlord or our property manager, a follow-up inspection will be arranged for one month later.

If any repairs or issues are identified or reported, a work order will be created. In cases where repairs are required, we may need to revisit the property to assess the quality of the work done.

If you have had repairs completed and are dissatisfied with the results or if the reported issue hasn't been resolved, it is your responsibility as the tenant to notify the office promptly.

Emergencies and Out of Hours Repairs:

I want to report a repair. To report repairs, please call the office during office hours on 01606 663939 option 2. Repairs can also be reported via the maintenance reporting portal.

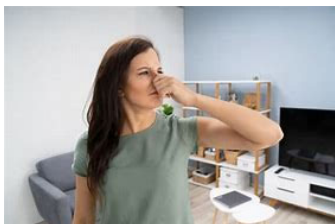
Our Out of Hours Emergency contact is *****.

This number is to be used **FOR EMERGENCIES ONLY OUTSIDE OFFICE HOURS** The Out of Hours emergency contact **IS NOT** to be used during office hours.

I can smell gas!

If you suspect you have a gas leak or you can smell gas call the National Gas Emergency Service on 0800 111 999.

Do not smoke or light matches and Do not turn electrical switches on. Open doors and windows and turn off the meter at the control handle if it is accessible.



I have no power!

If you suspect a power cut you can call the National Power Cut Helpline on 105 or visit www.nationalgrid.co.uk to see live updates on power cuts and to report your loss of power.

A simple way to check if you have a power cut is to look at the other houses in your street to see if their lights are on. If they are, check your consumer unit to see if your trip switch is on.



I have no water!

If you have lost your water supply call United Utilities Customer Helpline on 0345 672 3723.

You can check United Utilities website to see if there is any planned work to the water supply in your area [Up my street | United Utilities](#)



I have a water leak!

If you have a water leak in the property: Always know where your stopcock is; you always need it in an emergency, If you don't know, your task today is to go find out.

Turn off the water! No matter what the cause or where the leak is, let's ensure it gets no worse.

Where's the leak coming from? If it's being caused by your dishwasher or fridge, then the appliance is likely at fault. If it's a bigger leak from a water pipe, then you're going to need to contact us at the office in office hours or our emergency number if out of hours.



My CO Alarm is sounding!

Stop using appliances, switch them off and open doors and windows to ventilate your home. Check the battery. Call the National Gas Emergency Service on 0800 111 999 to report the incident or the Health & Safety Executive Gas Safety Advice Line on 0800 300 363.

Evacuate your home immediately. Don't go back into the property. Seek medical help if you feel unwell.



My Smoke Alarm is sounding!

Smoke detectors have one objective. They are supposed to detect smoke.

Smoke is typically symptomatic of a fire. However, the smoke detector can sound because of smoke, weak battery, power surge, pollution and malfunction.

Do you smell smoke? If so, exit the building **IMMEDIATELY** and call 999.

If the alarm beeps once every 30 to 60 seconds, it is because of a low or faulty battery. You need to replace the battery.

Even hard wired smoke detectors have a backup battery.

Other potential causes of intermittent beeping include a dusty sensor caused by pollution or dust. Use your vacuum extension to vacuum the unit to remove possible pollution.

Reporting a non urgent maintenance repair:

We understand how frustrating it can be when something breaks or malfunctions in your home, and we always aim to resolve issues as quickly as possible.

As you are on a managed tenancy, we will be your primary point of contact if anything goes wrong.

We want to encourage reporting repairs to maintain the high standards of our properties.

Non-urgent repairs can be reported during office hours by calling us at 01606 663939 Option 2 **ALL** maintenance though should be reported via the maintenance portal.

Our contractors spend considerable time visiting properties to carry out routine maintenance, which is typically the tenant's responsibility. If a contractor is sent to your property to address an issue that falls under your responsibility, the invoice for those services will be forwarded to you.

Self Help Guide:

We've created a helpful guide with step-by-step tips for resolving some of the most commonly reported issues.

This includes how to unblock a sink or toilet, what to check if you have no water or heating, how to bleed a radiator, what to do if there's a leak, and tips on preventing mould.

How to Unblock a Sink:

Why is the water backing up in my sink?

A blocked sink is a common issue caused by debris and food particles building up in the pipe beneath the sink, known as the "trap." In bathrooms, blockages may also result from soap and hair. Most blockages can be cleared with a plunger or a chemical drain cleaner.

How can I prevent sink blockages?

While blockages are inevitable from time to time, you can reduce their frequency by taking preventative measures.

Avoid disposing of oils, coffee grounds, or similar waste down the sink. Additionally, regularly rinsing the pipes with hot water and soda crystals, or even pouring a cup of white vinegar down the plughole, can help prevent clogs.



What is the best way to unblock a sink?

For minor blockages, the simplest method is to use a plunger or blaster cup. Place it over the plughole and cover the overflow with a damp cloth to create a tight seal. Then, gently pump the plunger up and down while keeping the overflow sealed. This should dislodge most small blockages.

If this doesn't resolve the issue, try using a liquid drain cleaner. Open a window for ventilation, and following the manufacturer's instructions, pour the cleaner down the plughole.

A fizzing reaction may occur as it breaks down the debris. Repeat the process if needed, then flush with hot water.

How to Unblock a Toilet:

If the water in your toilet bowl drains slowly, remains stagnant, or rises towards the rim, it indicates that your toilet is blocked.

It's important to address the blockage promptly before the toilet becomes unusable. Before contacting us to report the issue, it's worth trying some natural, eco-friendly methods to resolve most blockages.

Blocked drains are considered the tenant's responsibility. If the blockage is in the drain rather than inside the property, you should contact United Utilities at 0300 123 6780.



Why do toilets get blocked?

Toilet blockages can occur for a variety of reasons, such as toilet paper buildup, limescale, wet wipes, deodorant blocks, waste, or even children's toys.

Knowing what caused the blockage can help you choose the most effective method for fixing the issue.

How to prevent blockages:

Be cautious not to drop small items into the toilet bowl and always keep the lid closed when not in use, especially if there are shelves above.

Avoid flushing sanitary products, wet wipes, or construction waste (such as glue, plaster, or paint) down the toilet.

Regularly clean the bowl and ensure the waste outlet remains clear.

Identifying a blockage:

There are three common signs of a blockage:

Slow drainage: Water drains from the bowl very slowly, indicating an emerging blockage.
Empty bowl after flushing: The bowl remains almost empty, often due to air circulation issues in the waste pipes.

Rising water level: After flushing, the water level in the bowl rises but doesn't go down, indicating a complete blockage.

If the water is draining slowly, try flushing again to see if the blockage clears. If the water level remains high, avoid flushing again.

If the problem persists, you can try using one of the many chemical products available for unblocking toilets.

How to unblock a toilet with a plunger:

In order to unblock a toilet with a plunger, you'll need one specifically designed for this purpose. Toilet plungers have an extension on the cup which ensures they form a good seal in the pan. A plunger without this cup – known as a sink plunger or a cup plunger – is intended for unblocking sinks, showers, and baths.

1. Make sure there's water in the pan.
2. Place the plunger in the water. You should do this in such a way so that there is as little air in the plunger as possible. That's because you want to make sure the plunger is agitating the water. Any air inside will act as a cushion for the water and stop its movement from shifting the obstruction.

3. Place the plunger over the hole. Make sure that it forms a seal over the hole. If this is difficult, try dousing the cup of the plunger in hot water. This should make it more malleable.
4. Plunge carefully at first. Avoid the temptation to plunge as hard as you can at first. Any air inside the cup may cause a splash.
5. Plunge! A combination of small, sharp plunges and forceful, vigorous ones should get the water moving and the blockage on its way out.

How to repressurise your boiler:



If you're having problems with your boiler, like no heating or hot water, loss of water pressure might be to blame. The good news is low boiler pressure is relatively easy to spot – and you can often put it right yourself.

The first sign of a low-pressure boiler is if your heating or hot water isn't working properly. But to find out for sure, check the water pressure gauge on the front of your boiler.

If it reads less than 1 bar, your boiler pressure is too low and needs repressurising. What causes a boiler to drop in pressure?

There are two main reasons why your boiler is losing pressure

Firstly, leaks anywhere in the system can lead to a loss of water pressure – so look around your pipes, radiators and boiler for any damp patches. Similarly, bleeding your radiators can lead to a loss of boiler pressure, so it's important to repressurise your boiler afterwards.

Never look inside your boiler though – only a Gas Safe engineer should do this.

YouTube Tutorial:

For a visual walk through of how to repressurise your boiler, enter your boiler make and model into YouTube for a step-by-step guide. They also have handy visuals for bleeding radiators and other common maintenance issues.

How to repressurise your boiler:

Put simply, re-pressurising your boiler means allowing more water to enter the system. And most modern combi boilers rely on a filling loop to do this. While the vast majority of boilers and filling loops follow the same process, always check the manufacturer's booklet for your boiler before starting.

- Switch off the boiler and allow it to cool down.
- Find the filling loop – this is a flexible, silver pipe with a valve at either end. Double-check that it's securely attached to the boiler's pipes.
 - Open up both valves so that they're in line with the pipe to allow cold mains water into the system. You should be able to hear it.
- Wait for the water pressure to reach between 1 and 1.5 on the pressure gauge.
- Once it has, shut off both valves one after the other.
- Switch the boiler back on and, if needed, press the reset button.
- Undo both ends of the filling loop and remove from the pipes. Be careful to catch any water spillage and remember to keep the loop in a safe place.

What is Radiator Bleeding?

Bleeding a radiator is the process of releasing trapped air from the central heating system that has accumulated at the top of your radiator. Doing this regularly helps maintain the efficiency of your heating system, as trapped air reduces the effectiveness of heat transfer from your boiler to your home. You'll typically notice your radiator needs bleeding if you feel 'cold spots' on the surface, particularly near the top.

It's a simple task that you can do yourself. Even if you're not a DIY expert, you shouldn't have any trouble bleeding your radiators, as it only requires a single adjustment to the bleed valve. We've provided an easy, step-by-step guide to make the process as simple and seamless as possible.



How to Bleed a Radiator:

Step 1: Turn On Your Central Heating

Start by turning on your central heating system using the main control button on the front panel of your boiler. This will activate the pump and pressurize the system. When everything is functioning properly, the indicator light above the control panel will turn green.

Step 2: Check for Cold Spots on Each Radiator

Go around your home and inspect every radiator for cold spots. These are typically located at the top of the radiator, but if there's a significant amount of air in the system, the entire radiator may feel cold.

Step 3: Turn Off the Central Heating and Let the System Cool

Once you've identified the cold spots, turn off the heating and allow the water in the system to cool for at least 60 minutes. This is important to avoid scalding yourself if any hot air or water comes out of the bleed valve. It's not recommended to leave the heating on while bleeding, as hot steam and water could be released, causing burns. Always turn off the boiler and let the system cool before starting.

Step 4: Find the Bleed Valve at the Top of the Radiator

Go to the first radiator you want to bleed and locate the bleed valve at the top. You'll see a small pin inside a circular or angular surround, which fits your radiator key. If you have several radiators to bleed, start with the one closest to the boiler on the lower floor and then move upstairs.

Step 5: Place a Container or Towel Beneath the Valve

This step is optional, but it can help catch any water that may spill out when you open the bleed valve. Place a container or towel beneath the valve to catch any water that escapes.

Step 6: Open the Bleed Valve Using the Radiator Key (Turn Anti-Clockwise)

Using your radiator key, turn the valve anti-clockwise a quarter turn to begin releasing the air. For modern radiators, a flathead screwdriver can also work.

Step 7: Listen for the Hissing Sound of Air Escaping

You should hear a hissing sound as air is released from the radiator. Continue until the hissing stops or water starts to come out of the valve. Be prepared for the hissing to stop suddenly, at which point water will start to leak. It should take about 30-60 seconds to fully release the air, but this may vary depending on how much air is in the system. Wait for the water to reach the valve before stopping.

Step 8: Close the Bleed Valve (Turn Clockwise)

Once the hissing stops or water starts to leak out, quickly turn the radiator key clockwise to close the valve and stop any water from spilling onto the towel.

Step 9: Repeat for Other Cold Radiators

Repeat steps 4-8 for each cold radiator in your home to bleed the entire central heating system.

Step 10: Check the Boiler Pressure

After releasing air and water from the system, the boiler pressure may have decreased. It's a good idea to check the pressure and increase it back to the correct level using the filling loop if necessary.

Why Should You Bleed Your Radiators?

Bleeding your radiators is important for keeping your heating system running efficiently. Trapped air in your radiators forces the boiler to use more energy to heat the radiators to the desired temperature, which can increase your energy bills.

How Often Should You Bleed Your Radiators?

You should bleed your radiators 2-3 times a year as part of routine maintenance. However, it's recommended to bleed them whenever you notice signs of trapped air, such as cold spots or strange noises like rattling.

Frozen Condensate Pipe:

When a cold snap hits, the last thing anyone wants is for their heating to stop working. However, even the most reliable boiler can struggle in the chilliest conditions. A common reason for this is a frozen condensate pipe, a problem that can easily occur on icy winter days.

Identifying Your Condensate Pipe:

To find your condensate pipe, look for a plastic pipe. Unlike the copper or steel pipes typically used for other boiler functions, condensate pipes are made of plastic because the water (or condensate) they carry is mildly acidic. This acidity could corrode metal pipes, so plastic is used to prevent damage.

Condensate pipes often run outside the house and connect to an external drain, or sometimes into an unheated room like a garage.



Why Do Condensate Pipes Freeze?

Condensate pipes are particularly vulnerable to freezing because they're usually located outside, exposed to the elements. In freezing temperatures, the water inside the pipe can freeze, blocking it.

How to Tell If Your Condensate Pipe Is Frozen:

There are three common signs that indicate your condensate pipe may be frozen:

Your heating isn't working.

Your boiler is making a gurgling or slurping sound.

An error code on your boiler display points to a condensate pipe issue. (Check the next page for common error codes related to frozen condensate pipes.)

If your boiler was functioning well until the weather turned cold, it's a strong indicator that your condensate pipe might be frozen.

The following page will walk you through a step-by-step guide on how to defrost your frozen condensate pipe.

How to Thaw Your Frozen Condensate Pipe:

If you've determined that your condensate pipe is frozen, here's a step-by-step guide to help you thaw it out:

Locate the Frozen Section

Start by identifying the part of the pipe that's frozen. If your pipe runs outside, it's most likely the exposed section that's affected. Feel along the pipe— the area that's cold to the touch is likely where the blockage is.

Boil Some Water

Boil a kettle and then let it cool for 10-15 minutes to ensure it's not too hot.

Apply the Warm Water

Pour the warm water over the frozen section of the pipe. If you're unsure where the blockage is, pour the water along the entire exposed pipe. If you can pinpoint the blockage, focus on that area. The warmth should begin to melt the ice. You could also try placing a hot water bottle on the frozen section to help thaw it out.

Once you've applied the warm water, reset your boiler to check if the problem is resolved. If the heating starts working, you've successfully thawed the pipe. If it doesn't work immediately, try again. If the issue persists after several attempts, it's time to contact us.

Should You Use Boiling, Hot, or Warm Water?

It's important to wait for 10-15 minutes after boiling the water before pouring it on the condensate pipe. Alternatively, you can use water from the hot tap or a hot water bottle.

Never pour boiling water directly onto the pipe, as it could crack the pipe and cause further damage. Always ensure the water is warm or hot, but not boiling.

Frozen Condensate Pipe Error Codes

Here's a helpful guide to error codes from some common boiler brands that indicate your boiler has a frozen condensate pipe.

Make Of Boiler	Error Code
Baxi	E133,E28
Glow Worm	F1, F4, F28, F29
Ideal	LF, F2, L2
Valliant	F28, F29
Viessmann	F4EE
Vokera	92,93,95
Worcester Bosch	EA229, D5

Mould:

If moisture is left unchecked, condensation can form, leading to potential mould growth, particularly in dusty environments.

To tackle mould, use a mould remover spray to clean the affected area, followed by vacuuming and thoroughly drying the space.

Regularly cleaning dust and dirt will help stop mould from forming and can also reduce the risk of respiratory issues like asthma or coughing.

Mould can also be caused by water leaks or rising damp.

Condensation isn't the sole cause of dampness.

Penetrating damp occurs when moisture enters the home due to leaking or cracked pipes, a damaged roof, blocked gutters, gaps around window frames, or issues with cracked or faulty rendering and brickwork. These problems are all fixable.

Rising damp happens when there is a faulty or missing damp-proof course, often leaving a visible 'tide mark' around a metre above the floor.



How to Remove Mould:

If mould has already formed on your walls and ceilings, it's important to clean it thoroughly. A two-step approach is effective:

Start by cleaning the mould with a bleach-based spray. This will help eliminate the staining caused by persistent mould. Let it dry overnight.

After drying, spray the affected area with an anti-fungal solution and allow it to dry as well.

Always follow the instructions on the product label and consider wearing a face mask while spraying.

Additional Useful Equipment

To catch condensation dripping from windows, you can use condensation channels and sponge strips, which are available at most DIY stores.

Wiping down windows and sills in the morning can also help, but be sure to wring out the cloth rather than drying it on a radiator. In more severe cases, you may want to consider investing in a dehumidifier

Time to Say Goodbye!

Saying goodbye can be tough... but it doesn't have to be! Here's a simple guide to help make your end of tenancy process as smooth as possible.

Giving Notice:

We require a minimum of one month's notice. This should be provided in writing, either by letter or email to either your property manager or to lettings@vincentjamesestateagents.co.uk . Once you've given notice, we'll send you an email with details of the next steps.

If you need to amend your move-out date, please contact us immediately.

Locate Your Inventory or Check-In Report:

At the start of your tenancy, you should have received an inventory report. This document lists all the fixtures, fittings, and furnishings in each room.

For example:

Furniture and appliances

Flooring, curtains, and walls

Kitchen and bathroom fittings

The inventory also records the age, condition, and cleanliness of each item, serving as an accurate reflection of the property's condition when you moved in.

Preparing for the Check-Out Inspection

A check-out inspection is conducted to highlight any issues that could affect the return of your full deposit at the end of your tenancy. Here's what you need to do:

Replace any missing or damaged items

Replace any non working light bulbs

Repair any damage you may have caused

Ensure the property is cleaned to the same standard it was when you moved in.

Please provide any receipts for cleaning/carpet cleaning/window cleaning. Chimney sweep (where applicable)

If you've removed a washing machine, ensure the water outlet pipe has a stopper or bung

Ensure the garden is left in the same condition as when you moved in

Dispose of any extra rubbish that doesn't fit into your wheelie bins, please ensure that the correct bins are used for waste.

Please remove all personal belongings.

Review your inventory or check-in report and return the property in a similar condition

Utilities

Contact your utility providers before leaving the property to inform them of your moving date.

Ensure all utility bills are paid in full.

Take photos of the meter readings on the day you move out, so you have a record in case any issues arise later. The meters will be photographed where access is enabled during the check-out inspection.

Redirection of Mail

Please ensure that your post goes to your new address by using Royal Mail's postal redirection service.

[Redirect your mail | Royal Mail Group Ltd](#)

Deposits

Your deposit is registered with the Tenancy Deposit Scheme (TDS) unless otherwise advised and outlined in your signed tenancy agreement.

[Tenancy Deposit Scheme - Offering government backed deposit protection services across the UK](#)

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