THE TENANTS HANDBOOK
BY STRETTONS

HELPING YOU LOOK AFTER YOUR HOME

STRETTONS
EST 1931
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WELCOME TO YOUR NEW HOME!

STRETTONS WISH YOU EVERY SUCCESS AND HOPE YOU WILL BE VERY HAPPY THERE.

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR KEEPING YOUR HOME IN GOOD CONDITION AND THE INFORMATION IN THIS HANDBOOK IS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE YOU WITH ADVICE AND INFORMATION TO HELP YOU TO LOOK AFTER YOUR HOME.
Limescale can be removed from sinks, taps, shower heads, worktops and baths using a de-scaler product that can be obtained from any supermarket or DIY shop.

- When cleaning the bathroom pay particular attention to any extractor fan to remove dust build up which could prevent efficient removal of steam and encourage mould build up.

- Mould or mildew builds up in moist, warm environments and is prevalent in bathrooms. The most common causes are low circulation of air, poor or low lighting, warm environments, high humidity. To keep mould and mildew under control reduce the humidity by opening a window or putting on the bathroom fan, also keep the room well lit as growth is inhibited in well-lit areas. To remove mould and mildew scrub the surfaces with a cleaner available in most supermarkets and DIY shops and keep dry. A chlorine bleach mixed with water in a 50/50 solution will remove mould and mildew immediately. Be sure to wear gloves to protect your skin and eye protection in the event of splashes. Alternatively cleaning with vinegar not only removes the musty odour but also kills mould and mildew.

- Blockages in kitchen sink wastepipes from fat or grease build up can be prevented by regularly flushing hot water or a drain cleaning product available from any supermarket or DIY shop – if the blockage is caused by your misuse you may be charged for the cost of clearing it, therefore please try to clear any blockage first before calling your Strettons property manager.

- A blockage may be in the main soil stack or drain and should be cleared by one of our contractors.

- The filter on your kitchen extractor hood should be changed once a year to ensure it continues to work efficiently and prevent grease build up around the cooker.
MAINTENANCE OF FIXTURES

A. Washing Machines

If you find that mould is forming in your machine or it is beginning to smell damp please carry out a maintenance wash. You should use soda crystals for this which can be obtained in most supermarkets and are effective in removing mould or any soap scum build up.

The detergent drawer should be cleaned to remove any build-up of fabric softener or detergent. Please use the manufacturer’s instructions when removing the drawer from the tray.

There may be occasions when foreign objects block the pumps which causes problems with your machine such as not draining properly. Please refer to the manufacturer’s instructions to remedy this prior to calling your Strettons property manager as if an object damages the machine you may be liable for the cost of fixing or replacing the machine.

B. Bleeding a radiator

Bleeding your radiators will need to be done when the top half of the radiator is cold whilst the bottom half is warm. This is caused by air being trapped in the system. Bleeding the radiator releases the air and allows the hot water to circulate round the system.

Before bleeding a radiator ensure you have a rag and bowl to hand to catch any water that may escape. You will need to obtain a special key from DIY shops for this. Also ensure that the heating system is turned off so that you don’t trap more air in the system whilst carrying this work out. The bleed valve is the small square nut at the top end of the radiator. Place the key over the valve and gently turn until you hear a hiss – this is the air escaping. When the hissing stops and water starts to come through turn the key back to shut the valve off. Do not unscrew the valve completely as it will come off.

C. Changing light bulbs

It is your responsibility to change the light bulbs in your home. Bulbs can be purchased from most hardware shops and many supermarkets. Halogen bulbs come in two types – GU10 and G9. Both have two pins, however the GU10 screws into the base and the G9 pushes in.

Before changing the bulbs ensure the light is turned off at the switch and to be safe switch off the lights’ circuit on your fuse box. Make sure the bulb is cool before trying to remove it. When replacing a GU10 bulb use a soft cloth to hold firmly around the bulb and turn in an anti-clockwise direction to unscrew the bulb.

Put the new bulb in and screw in a clockwise direction until it is securely in place. The G9 bi-pin bulbs should just pull out, do not twist. The new bulb will be fitted by aligning the pins in the slots and pushing down.

D. Changing smoke alarm batteries

It is your responsibility to change the batteries in smoke detectors in your home. Gently pry the cover off the smoke detector, use a step stool to reach the device if necessary. Dust the inside of the cover to ensure vents are clear, you will need a 9-volt battery.

Remove the old battery by pulling it out of its clip, plug in the new battery making sure it is firmly in the battery clip and the positive terminal is lined up with the positive tab of the battery.

Replace the cover, push firmly to ensure it is on securely. Test the smoke detector by pressing in the test button in the centre of the cover. You should test the smoke detector every month.
Condensation occurs when there is an excessive build-up of moisture in the air. Additional moisture is created in homes by cooking or boiling water, using baths or showers and drying clothes inside.

Warm air holds more moisture than cold air and so when warm air cools it releases the moisture. This happens when the air touches a cool surface such as outside walls, mirrors, windows or wall tiles.

Condensation is often worse when it is cold outside.

Mould occurs as a result of condensation where it cannot dry out effectively and forms on walls, window sills and so on and should therefore be treated immediately.

There are a number of things you can do in order to prevent condensation and the build-up of mould:

• Wipe down all windows affected by condensation regularly. If mould has formed you can clean this off using diluted bleach or cleaning product obtained from DIY stores.

• Try to reduce the amount of moisture produced by covering pans when cooking, switching off kettles when boiling and drying clothes outside.

• Keep rooms ventilated to let moisture escape by opening bathroom and kitchen windows or use extractor fans where possible.

• Keep your home warm. Keep the heating on for longer but on a lower temperature to ensure a consistent temperature in the room. This need not increase your heating bills.
PEST CONTROL

Pest control will be your responsibility to deal with. You can obtain traps and bait from DIY stores or alternatively contact a professional pest control company. There may be instances when your landlord will carry out certain works such as pigeon spikes on balconies or blocking holes which may be a point of entry for rodents or other pests.

A. Rodents

Mice and rats are very common pests in London and it can be very difficult to exclude them from buildings as they can squeeze into the smallest of gaps in a building. You can try to discourage mice and rats from entering your home by ensuring food is stored in sealed containers or in cupboards, food crumbs are cleaned away and waste is in closed bins and regularly removed from the property.

B. Cockroaches

Cockroaches are a high risk pest and can carry a range of illnesses. They are nocturnal and hide in any number of cracks and crevices, under appliances and so on. In order to discourage cockroaches you need to deny them a food and water source, therefore deal with food as with mice previously, do not leave liquids in sinks or baths overnight, keep clutter to a minimum, keeps areas around sinks, washers and dryers clean and dry and fix all leaks.

C. Moths

Most clothes moths are found in wardrobes and dark places and do not like natural light. Florescent light is a good way of discouraging moths, place one outside your home and one in the wardrobe to prevent them. You can obtain products from DIY shops to kill moths. Spray this into nooks and crannies in your home and they will start to die off. Most moths plant their larvae in fabrics. By ironing your clothes you kill the larvae before they hatch and therefore preventing further moths developing.

D. Bedbugs

Bedbugs are light brown, flat shaped insects that live in small dark places. They feed off the blood of humans at night. A thorough examination of headboards should always be conducted to ensure no signs of bedbugs. Bedbugs are a serious problem and it is advisable to instruct a pest company to administer treatments to eradicate them. Heat is the best way to remove bedbugs from clothes or bedding. Wash them and place in a hot drier for a few hours.
An emergency is an event that is unforeseen and which could cause serious damage to your home or injury to an occupant. If a contractor is called out as an emergency when an emergency call out is not justified you may be liable for the cost of the call out.

A. Leaking or frozen pipes

In the event you have a leaking or frozen pipe please contact your Strettons property manager who will instruct a contractor to attend. When a pipe leaks place a bowl underneath the leak and place towels or newspaper down to absorb any dampness. If possible pull the carpet back away from the leak to prevent damage to the carpet. If a pipe has burst turn off the water at the main stopcock and switch off any water heaters. Open all taps to drain water from the system. If it can be isolated you can use this to stop the water supply. If electrics are affected turn off the electricity at the consumer unit. If going on holiday in the winter months or if the property will be unoccupied for any period of time ensure that the heating is kept on constantly at a low temperature to prevent pipes from freezing in your absence.

B. Fire

In the event of a fire dial 999. Ensure everyone is out of your home and do not go back for any reason. At no time should you put your own life at risk. Please call your Strettons property manager.

C. Smell of gas

In the event of a gas leak open the doors and windows to get rid of the gas. Check the hob, oven or gas fire to see if the gas has been left on unlit or the pilot light has gone out. If so, turn the appliance off and do not attempt to relight it until the smell of gas has disappeared. If the leak cannot be stopped by turning off an appliance, or you are unsure whether it has stopped turn the main gas supply off at the meter and call the gas emergency service immediately – National Grid 0800 111 999. Please also call your Strettons property manager. Do not turn any electrical switches on or off, smoke, use matches or naked flame or use the door bell.

D. Loss of electricity

In the event you have no electricity check to see if this has also affected your neighbours and call your electricity board. The number will be on your electricity bill. If your neighbours are not affected check your fuse box to see if a switch has tripped or fuse blown. If none of the above apply and the problem persists please call your Strettons property manager.
You are responsible for payment of all electricity, gas, water, telephone, TV licence, Council tax, broadband and other charges arising from your occupation of the property. Utility meter readings will be taken and recorded upon moving into the property and also upon vacation.

Please do not change the utility or other supplier without first informing your Strettons property manager.
You are responsible for the general maintenance of the garden area. Please keep it clear of rubbish and tidy at all times. Grass should be cut and brambles and ivy should not be allowed to encroach and take over the other shrubbery and plants.

Japanese Knotweed is a destructive plant and early eradication is essential to prevent further contamination. The first signs are red and purple shoots appearing in the spring. These rapidly grow to form canes with green leaves. The plants are fully grown by early summer and mature canes are hollow with a purple speckle that grow up to 3m high.

The plant flowers in late summer and these consist of clusters of spiky stems covered in tiny creamy-white flowers. During the late autumn/winter the leaves fall and the canes die and turn brown. If you suspect you may have Japanese Knotweed please let your Strettons property manager know immediately.
Emergency contractors will attend to make the property safe but any subsequent repairs required will be undertaken during normal working hours. The out of hours team will not attend to an appliance out of hours or at weekends as this is not deemed an emergency.

If the appliance in question is less than a year old you may be able to contact the manufacturers under guarantee.

In the event of an emergency out of hours please contact Cunningham Lindsey on 0345 604 9731.
If you wish to report any repair or problem, please contact your Strettons property manager:

EAST & NORTH LONDON
Central House, 189-203 Hoe Street
London E17 3SZ

T: 020 8520 9911
E: property@strettons.co.uk

Please note if you report a repair or problem that turns out to be user error you may be liable for the cost of the call and repair required.
Whilst we strive to ensure you are happy in your home and receive the highest standard of service possible there may be occasions when this is not achieved. Should you have any complaints regarding the service received from your property manager, suppliers or contractors please request in writing the line manager details for the property manager who will endeavour to resolve the matter for you. Alternatively please request in writing a copy of our complaints procedure.

The complaint should be responded to in writing within 10 working days of receipt.
## Useful Contact Numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Phone Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Powergen</td>
<td>T: 0800 056 8090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Electric</td>
<td>T: 0845 770 8090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Electricity</td>
<td>T: 0800 028 0247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Gas</td>
<td>T: 0845 736 5100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thames Water</td>
<td>T: 0845 920 9000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDF Energy</td>
<td>T: 0800 096 9000 T: 0800 028 0247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eon</td>
<td>T: 0345 301 4905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Npower</td>
<td>T: 0808 156 0056</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Local Authorities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authority</th>
<th>Phone Numbers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Epping Forest District Council</td>
<td>T: 01992 564 000 E: <a href="mailto:contactus@eppingforestdc.gov.uk">contactus@eppingforestdc.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hackney Council</td>
<td>T: 020 8356 3000 T: 020 8356 3154 E: <a href="mailto:info@hackney.gov.uk">info@hackney.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newham Council</td>
<td>T: 020 8430 2000 E: <a href="mailto:Customer.services@newham.gov.uk">Customer.services@newham.gov.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets Council</td>
<td>T: 020 7364 5002 E: <a href="mailto:contactus@towerhamletshomes.org.uk">contactus@towerhamletshomes.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waltham Forest Council</td>
<td>T: 020 8496 3000 E: <a href="mailto:wfdirect@walthamforest.gov.uk">wfdirect@walthamforest.gov.uk</a></td>
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