

Guide to reporting your repairs for sheltered tenants



Please read this booklet now for general guidance and use it when you report your repairs in the future.

If you need assistance with this booklet, help is available from the Translation Unit on 020 8583 2299.

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Useful telephone numbers

- Repairs Call Centre Freephone 0800 085 65 75
- Hounslow Council/
Hounslow Homes 020 8583 2222
Out of hours emergency
- Gas Emergency 0800 111 999
- Central Area 020 8583 4382
- East Area 020 8583 4220
- West Area 020 8583 4383
- Linkline 020 8583 4400
- Electricity
- Water Board
- Local Police Station
- Doctor
- Dentist

- Please note that all calls to the Repairs Call Centre are recorded
- Hounslow Homes is committed to providing a good housing service.
- Hounslow Homes repairs are carried out by appointment only, excluding emergency repairs, at customers convenience. We aim to keep all of our appointments.
- To do this we need your help by giving us as much information as possible. We hope this booklet will help you and us deal with repairs efficiently.

In consultation with all our customers we revised our standards. We promise to:

- answer your call within 20 seconds
- be polite and friendly to all customers
- tell you that you are through to Property Division
- let you know to whom you are talking
- arrange an appointment convenient to you
- give you the repair job number and the date by which the repair should be completed
- ring you if the operative cannot make the appointment by the morning of the appointment
- record your repairs accurately
- put things right when they go wrong

Gas problems can range from pilot lights in heating systems not staying on, to gas escapes. In the case of a pilot light which has gone out, most appliances will have instructions printed on them as to how you can try to relight it. If you are unable to do so, report your repair stating the type of appliance and if possible, the model name. Have you checked your key meter is in credit?

Gas escapes

Gas escapes are obviously very much more serious and require some immediate attention by you as the occupier. If you can smell gas, follow these simple steps:

1. Turn off the gas supply

The main gas on/off lever can be found next to your gas meter. You should locate this immediately and let other family members know where it is before you have a problem.

2. Open windows and doors

This will allow any gas which has built up in the house to disperse.

3. Do not turn on or off any lights/sockets or light any matches

When light switches, etc. are used, this can often generate sparks which could be enough to ignite any escaped gas in the air.

4. Ring Transco Immediately

5. Inform your Sheltered Unit warden

If they are not available contact Linkline by pulling the cord or pressing a pendant .

The council will not take responsibility for the repair or replacement of any installations, if the following applies:

- If the repair or replacement has become necessary through the fault of the tenant, their family or visitors.
- If the installation has not been fitted by Hounslow Homes.
- If we have to carry out repairs - for example, because of safety issues - the costs will be recharged to you.

You, the tenant, are responsible for the following type of repairs:

- The supplying and fixing of all plugs and chains to sinks and basins and WC pull chains.
- Fixtures and fittings e.g. curtain rails.
- Light bulbs, fluorescent tubes and starters, plugs connected to appliances.
- Glass in internal walls, doors or cupboards
Improvements, alterations and works carried out, or equipment provided voluntarily, by you or by previous tenants.
- Internal decorations (except in certain specific circumstances).
- Cookers, refrigerators

If you lose your key you will have to pay the full cost for fitting a new lock and the keys supplied.

If Hounslow Homes carries out repairs which are your responsibility, we will pass the charge on to you.

Your Sheltered Scheme Manager is there to provide you with advice, via your support plan, if you have difficulty with these responsibilities.

Please see the details of the Handyman Scheme on page 19.

We are responsible for...

Hounslow Homes is responsible for repairing the structure and outside of the building and the fixtures and fittings we have provided within the building (for fair wear and tear only).

How and where to report your repairs

Repairs Call Centre: Freephone 0800 085 65 75

e-mail: housing.repairs@hounslow.gov.uk

Minicom: 0800 389 9821

Language helpline: 0800 389 9830

If you report a repair, which is not Hounslow Homes' responsibility, you will be advised to arrange for the repair to be carried out yourself.

You can report any repairs that require attention by calling the Repairs Call Centre on 0800 085 65 75 between the hours 8am to 8pm Monday- Friday and Saturday 9am-12pm (please note that the Call Centre has a policy of recording all telephone calls). However where the repair is a communal repair please ask the Sheltered Scheme Manager to report it.

Whenever you report a repair or ask someone to report it on your behalf, please be ready to give the following information:

- your name and address
- a daytime telephone number where you may be contacted if necessary
- a time when someone will normally be at home to enable an inspection/repair to be carried out
- as much detailed information about the repair as possible
- any particular special needs or disabilities we should take into account

What happens next?

When you report a repair you will be given a job number and an appointment date to suit you. In some instances you will be given two dates. The first date will be for the operative to visit and specify the materials he will need to carry out the repair. The second date will be for him/her to complete the repair. You can have a choice of weekday morning or afternoon appointments. How soon we will be able to call will depend on the type of repair and the demand for the day and time you choose. Technical inspections are also available by appointment either AM or PM and these can be made by calling the Call Centre. A technical inspection is a visit to find out about a defect and how to fix it.

When the operative visits, or in some circumstances it may be a Technical Inspector, remember to check their identity. They should provide you with their Identity Card for you to check. If in any doubt do not let them in and immediately inform your Sheltered Scheme Manager or Linkline.

In the case of emergency orders, you must stay in. If you are out when the operative calls the order will be cancelled (you will be advised of this on the 'call card').

If you are unable to keep your appointment please inform the Call Centre immediately. If you do not inform the Call Centre and an operative calls to keep the appointment, they will leave a card informing you that the job is to be cancelled. You will then need to ring the Call Centre to have the job re-raised and arrange new appointment dates.

If you are unable to report the repair yourself, you can report your repair to your Sheltered Scheme Manager during their daily visit.

If you have an emergency outside office hours such as a burst water tank or total electricity failure, you can report this by ringing: 020 8583 2222

Please note that work carried out as an emergency will normally only 'make safe' and restore essential services until a full repair can be carried out

We aim to answer calls to the Call Centre in 20 seconds and have updated our computer system to improve our performance in this area.

However please be aware:

- We use a 'queuing' system which means you will sometimes have to join a queue of callers
- We do staff the service to meet high demand times but you might wish to avoid mornings and especially Mondays if your call is not urgent
- Please hold on and we will answer your call as soon as possible
- If you put down the phone you will be at the end of the queue when you phone back

Remember the Call Centre is open 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 12 noon Saturday mornings.

You should ring 020 8583 2222 outside of these hours for emergency repairs.

Communal repairs should normally be reported to your Sheltered Scheme Manager and in their absence, emergency communal repairs should be reported to Linkline, who will take appropriate action.

Out of hours emergency repairs are often “make safe” only. Follow-on repairs are ordered on the next working day, and carried out according to the nature of the repair.

We consider the following work should be treated as an emergency:

1. Gas leaks - see page 5.
2. Burst pipes and other water supply failures which cannot be contained and are causing damage to the property.
3. Blocked drains causing flooding inside or outside your home or causing the toilet to overflow when flushed and no other WC is available in the property.
4. The roofing of your home has either failed or been damaged causing internal damage to your home so it is not habitable.
5. Fire or storm damage, which results in the property needing boarding up or other work to make it safe and wind and weather tight.
6. Missing or dangerous main drain covers.

7. If the electricity supply in your home has failed, you are advised to try and reset the trip switch/fuses with all appliances disconnected. Also, if you have a key meter, check it to ensure it is in credit. If the supply cannot be restored, contact the emergency number. A power cut which affects your home and adjoining properties is not classed as an emergency. Please check with your neighbours first before reporting the problem.

NOTE: If the failure is found to be due to your own appliance being faulty (i.e. fridge, cooker, electric kettle, etc.) you will be recharged with the cost of the call out.

8. Overheating electrical switches, sockets or light fittings but not plugs or appliances which should be disconnected and switched off.
9. If your heating system has failed completely during the period October to April we might supply alternative heating if we are unable to effect an immediate repair.
10. Complete failure of internal communal lighting to entrance halls, landings and staircases but not replacement of single bulbs or tubes.
11. Regaining entry where you have lost your key - the cost of this work will be rechargeable to you in full.

Whenever you report a repair you will be sent a repair receipt and this will tell you the date by which the repair must be completed. You may also be asked to complete a questionnaire and return it when the repair has been carried out. Your comments will help us to improve the service.

We will make an appointment for the operative to call. You can have a choice of weekday morning or afternoon appointments. How soon we will be able to call will depend on the type of repair and the demand for the day and time you choose.

If a repair has become necessary through your fault or that of your family or visitors we will recharge the cost to you. Your charge will include administration fees and VAT. It is possible to pay for recharged repairs by instalments. You might be able to claim back the cost of getting a rechargeable repair done through your personal Contents Insurance. It is up to you to check your policy details to find out whether you are covered for accidental damage.

Insurance

Hounslow strongly advises all tenants to take out Household Contents Insurance. Many Council tenants mistakenly believe that their furniture, belongings and decorations are automatically insured against theft or damage from fire or burst pipes.

THIS IS NOT THE CASE and unfortunately some people realise this only after the damage has been done. If you do not have Contents Insurance you should seriously consider getting some. Hounslow Council runs a scheme you might wish to choose. Payments can be made in your rent as a small weekly charge. If you would like to find out more ring 020 8583 3792.

As a Secure Tenant you have the right to repair under the Right to Repair Regulations 1994. Under these regulations if we do not carry out the repairs listed below within the prescribed number of working days you have the right to ask us to ask another contractor to carry out the work.

Please note a working day does not start until the morning after the repair was reported. Number of working days excludes weekends and bank holidays.

This contractor will have the same length of time to complete the work as the original contractor. If this contractor also fails to carry out the work within target you may have the right to compensation. This is subject to the value of the work being less than £250 and that you have allowed reasonable access for the work to be carried out. However we may offset any sums owed to us against any compensation payable under these regulations.

The regulations also take into account repairs which cannot be completed due to circumstances outside our control. (NB working days do not include week ends or public holidays and the working day starts the morning after the reported day).

Defect	Prescribed period (in working days)
Total loss of electric power	1
Partial loss of electric power	3
Unsafe power or lighting socket, or electrical fitting	1
Total loss of water supply	1
Partial loss of water supply	3
Total or partial loss of gas supply	1
Blocked flue to open fire or boiler	1
Total or partial loss of space or water heating between 31st October and 1st May	1
Total or partial loss of space or water heating between 30th April and 1st November	3
Blocked or leaking foul drain, soil stack, or (where there is no other working toilet in the dwelling-house) toilet pan	1
Toilet not flushing (where there is no other working toilet in the dwelling-house)	1
Blocked sink, bath or basin	3
Tap which cannot be turned	3
Leaking from water or heating pipe, tank or cistern	1
Leaking roof	7
Insecure external window, door or lock	1
Loose or detached banister or hand rail	3
Rotten timber flooring or stair tread	3
Door entry phone not working	7
Mechanical extractor fan in internal kitchen or bathroom not working	7

In certain circumstances other than the above, if we have failed to carry out a repair to your home you may be able to claim for compensation.

District heating - you can apply for a reduction of the charge if there is a breakdown in the heating service of three days or more. If you are not happy with the service you receive you can make further enquiries by contacting the Call Centre which is best placed to rectify quickly any problems. The Call Centre may be unaware of problems and their fast intervention can often resolve them.

If you are unhappy with the response from the Call Centre you have a number of options:

- Speak to your Sheltered Scheme Manager and ask them to take your enquiries forward
- Contact Hounslow Homes Complaints Line on 020 8583 3737. Further guidance about making a complaint is in the Complaints leaflet
- Raise your concerns at an Estate Surgery with the EMO or contact them via the General Enquiries Number for your Area Office (See the useful telephone numbers above)

External painting

We are responsible for decorating the outside of your home and have a target time of every five years providing the money is available.

You will be contacted when these works are due to find out what colour choice you prefer.

If you want to do your own external painting, you must get written permission from us.

Internal decoration

You are responsible for decorating the inside of your home, but if there is nobody at home who can help you and:

you are an older person

or

registered physically disabled

we may decorate two of your rooms, or the hall and staircase, every six years. This again, depends on the money available.

Before the painting work is expected to be carried out you should be sent a form. If you need any assistance speak to your Sheltered Scheme Manager who will help you fill in the form and return it to us.

Communal areas

Hounslow Homes is normally responsible for the redecoration of the communal areas of estates.

Communal repairs are either:

- Repairs to rectify defects
- Maintenance required because of fair wear and tear to bring the internal communal areas or the external fabric of the building up to a good standard.

This is work that is required and it is Hounslow Homes' responsibility to ensure the living environment in Sheltered Housing is maintained in good order.

There are two types of communal repair:

- **Emergency** - to be completed in one working day
- **Other communal repair** - to be completed in 10 working days

All communal repairs should be reported to the Sheltered Scheme Manager (or relief Sheltered Scheme Manager) who will contact the Call Centre. When the Sheltered Scheme Manager is not available, tenants should **contact Linkline in an emergency**. There are a number of repairs, which will take longer, either because they require major works, such as repair to a roof, and can only be done in particular weather or require specialist contractors to carry out the work. Please see the section on "Keeping you informed about improvements to your scheme".

Improvements to sheltered housing

Sometimes adaptations or improvements to the access to your sheltered scheme may be required. “Access” means making sure that if you have a mobility, physical or sensory impairment we design the sheltered environment to meet your needs.

If you think that the living environment needs improving, e.g. you have a visual impairment and need better lighting, you should let your Sheltered Scheme Manager know. Hounslow Homes may need to involve a variety of professionals to make sure that appropriate changes are made.

Other major improvements, are identified in consultation meetings with tenants, and considered for feasibility, subject to sufficient finance.

Keeping you informed about improvements to your scheme environment

Firstly, do contact your Sheltered Scheme Manager if you have any queries regarding improvements to your scheme. You will also get a regular update from the Tenancy Estate Manager at monthly surgeries held in schemes. The Tenancy Estate Manager relies on the Estate Monitoring Officer who monitors the quality of estates to provide up to date information. Flyers containing progress reports can also be produced at resident’s request, displayed on scheme notice boards and delivered individually to residents. You can also contact the Tenant Liaison Officer about major repairs/improvements to your scheme e.g. lift refurbishment, for an update on progress. The Major Improvement Plan, which includes works in sheltered housing, is reported annually in Hounslow Homes Newsletter.

Are there any community services to help older people maintain their homes?

Yes, a Handy Man Scheme is run by Hounslow Volunteer Agency, for older and disabled people living in the Borough, to help them remain independent.

What can it do for you?

The Handy Man Scheme organises volunteers to do those jobs that you cannot manage yourself. So, if you need some help with small DIY jobs around the home, the Handy Man scheme may be able to help. Plumbing and electrical work cannot be undertaken on this scheme.

How much does it cost?

Their charges are £20 per day or £10 per half-day plus the cost of materials.

How to apply?

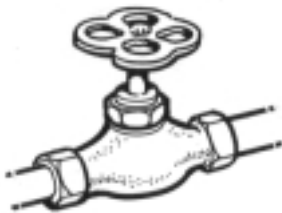
Telephone the Volunteer Agency on 020 8583 2626 and your request will be taken, then a volunteer will be contacted and your request, if suitable, will be met.

Water services

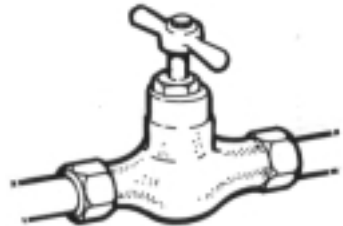
Please tell us

- Do you know where the stopcock is (should you need to turn it off)?
- If you have a leak, exactly where is it (e.g. a supply or waste pipe) and which item of equipment is affected?
- How serious is any leak and, if it is on a supply pipe, is it the hot or cold supply?
- Are your electrics affected?
- Have you any damage?
- If your water supply has been shut off it may be important to turn off any heating appliances. If you are not sure about this contact the Sheltered Scheme Manager or Linkline as soon as possible.

Gate Valve

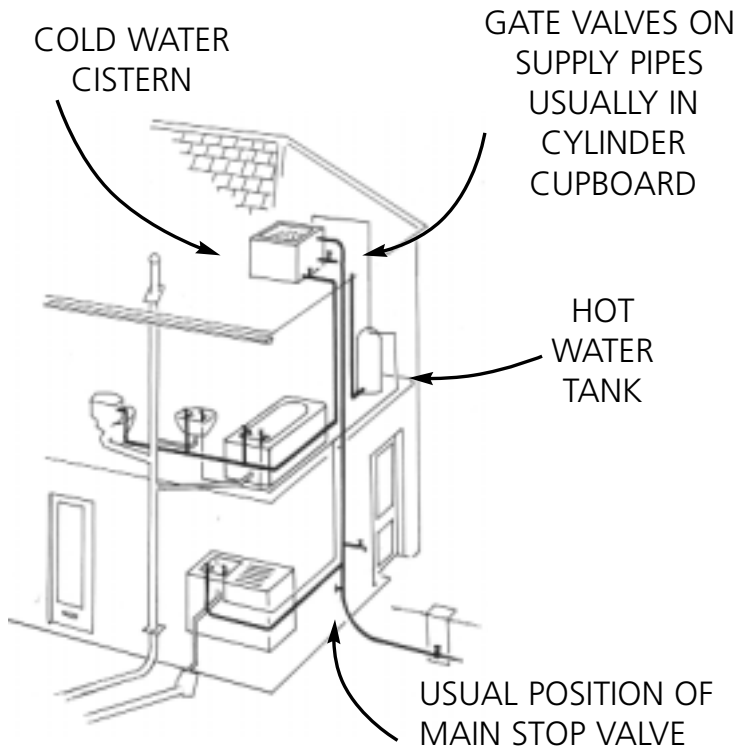


Stop Valve



It may be necessary to turn off your main STOPCOCK
You should know where this is situated and it is wise to test it twice a year. To do this, first shut it off and then open it fully. Then close it slightly by turning it back towards 'off' by half a turn.

Water services



Some items of equipment may have their own ISOLATION VALVES, so that the water supply can be turned off without affecting the rest of the supply. If this is not the case, you may be able to turn the relevant supply pipe off at the GATE VALVES on the pipes coming out of the cold water storage tank. This will leave you with some services, even though it might only be cold water to the kitchen tap.

Toilets

Please tell us

- If necessary can you turn the water off?
- Is your cistern at high or low level?
- If the toilet is broken, how did the damage occur?
- Is the toilet blocked?

There can be a problem within the CISTERN, causing it not to fill up

Can you lift the LID and see if this is the case?

WATER SUPPLY PIPE

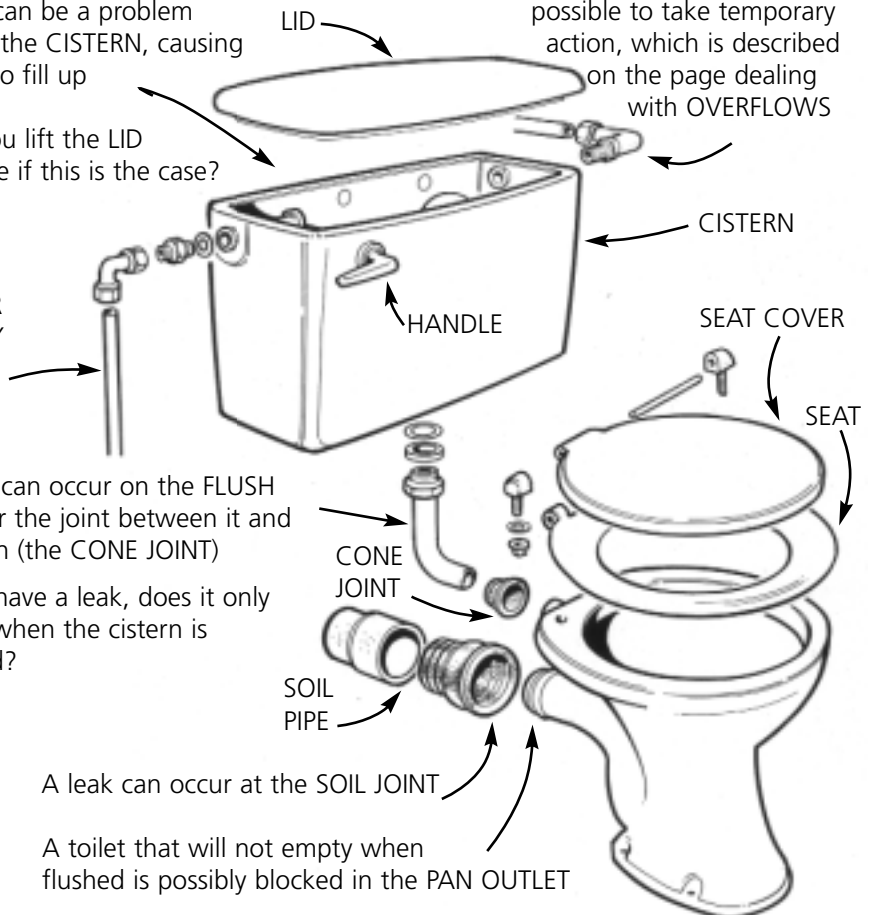
A leak can occur on the FLUSH PIPE, or the joint between it and the pan (the CONE JOINT)

If you have a leak, does it only occur when the cistern is flushed?

A leak can occur at the SOIL JOINT

A toilet that will not empty when flushed is possibly blocked in the PAN OUTLET

Sometimes a cistern will overflow. If it does it may be possible to take temporary action, which is described on the page dealing with OVERFLOWS

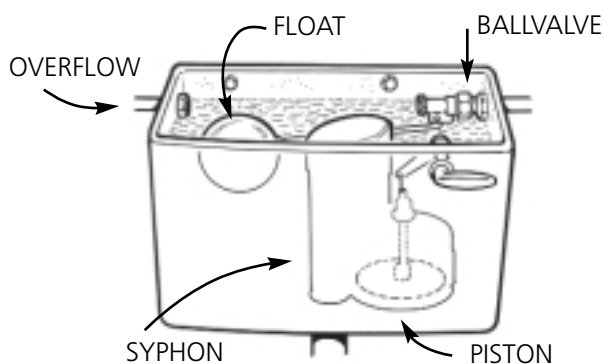


Overflows

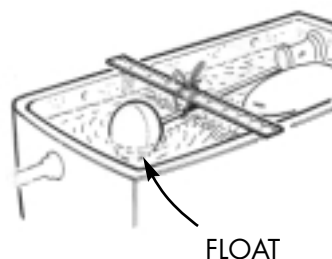
Please tell us

- Which overflow is causing the problem (e.g. from the toilet, cold water cistern, etc.)?
- Where does the overflow discharge (e.g. outside)?
- Is the water running continuously or not?

A TYPICAL TOILET CISTERN

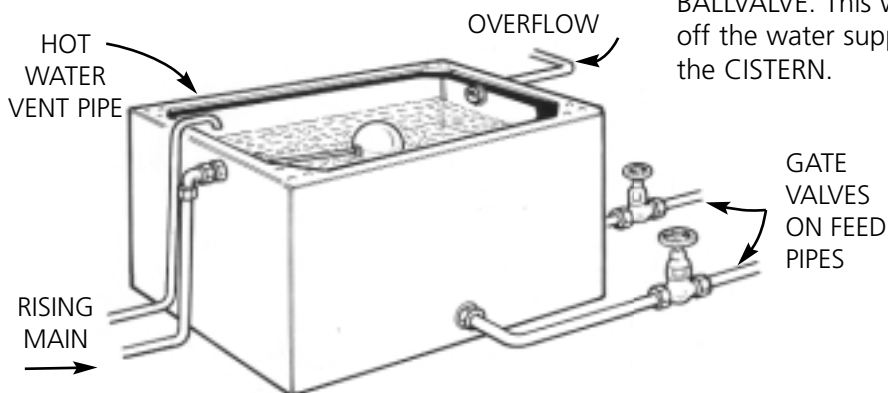


TEMPORARY ACTION



You can take temporary action whilst waiting for your overflow to be repaired, by tying the FLOAT in the 'up' position, thus closing the BALLVALVE. This will shut off the water supply to the CISTERN.

COLD WATER CISTERN



Baths

Please tell us

- If there is a leak, which pipe is it on?
- If there is a leak on a supply pipe, is it the hot or cold one?
- If there is a problem with an overflow pipe, where does it discharge?
- If splash back tiles are broken, how many tiles are affected and what is their colour and pattern?
- If the bath is damaged, what colour and pattern is it?
- Has the leak caused any damage in your home?

A damaged SEALANT between the bath and the splashback tiles will need attention to prevent water seeping through.

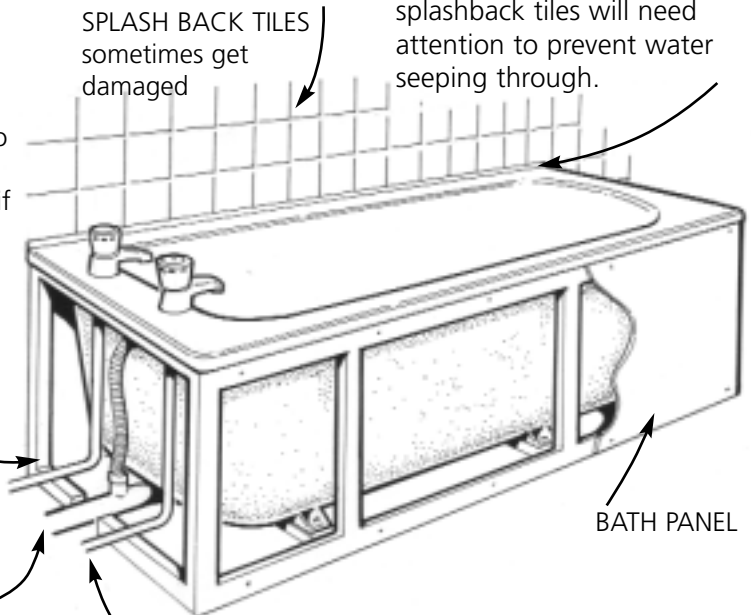
SPLASH BACK TILES sometimes get damaged

Leaks on an OVERFLOW PIPE are not common, however, if you do have one, it will only be apparent if the bath is overfilled

A leak on an OUTLET (WASTE) PIPE will only be evident when water is emptied from the bath

A leak on a SUPPLY PIPE will be evident all the time

BATH PANEL

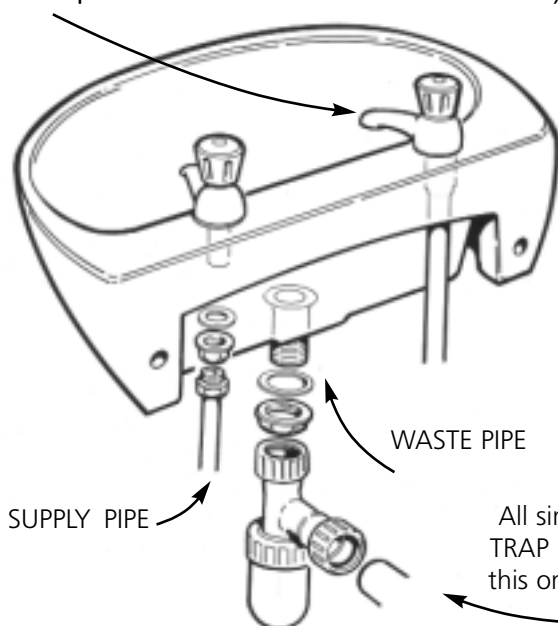


Sinks and Washbasins

Please tell us

- Is the problem with the sink (in the kitchen) or a washbasin (in the toilet or bathroom)?
- What exactly is the nature of the problem (e.g. a blockage, leak, crack etc.)?
- If there is a leak on a supply pipe, is it the hot or cold one?
- If the sink is blocked, what type of trap is it and have you made any attempts to clear it?
- How did any damage occur?
- If there is a problem with a tap, what type is it?

Various problems can occur with TAPS. (e.g. a slow drip indicating the possible need for a new washer etc.)



To clean a bottle trap, unscrew the base cap by hand and clean it out. Before unscrewing it, make sure both taps are turned off, a bucket or something similar, is placed underneath to catch water and debris and the sink or wash basin is empty.

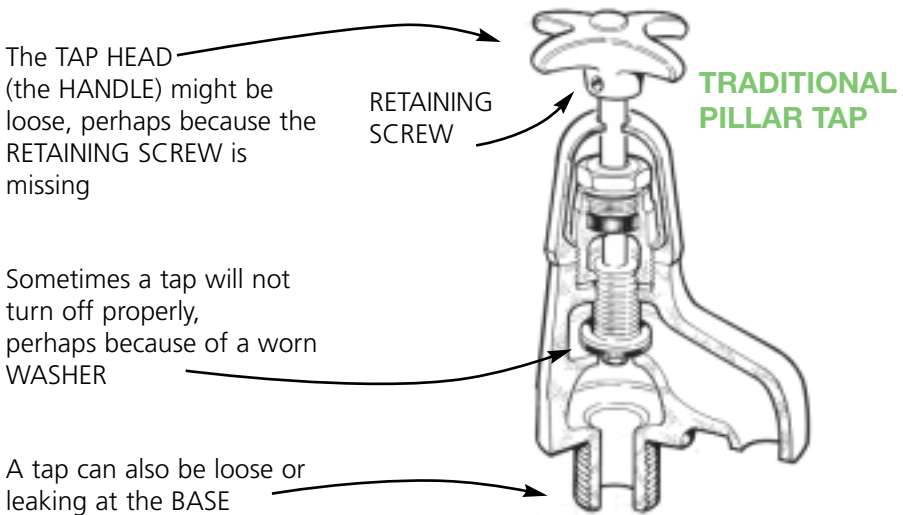
When replacing the cap ensure it is tightly fitted.

All sinks and basins are fitted with a TRAP Many have a BOTTLE TRAP like this one, which can easily be cleaned if a blockage occurs

Taps

Please tell us

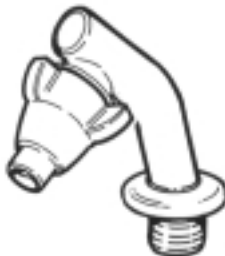
- What appliance is served by the tap (e.g. bath, sink, washbasin)?
- What type of tap is it?
- What is the exact problem (e.g. loose tap head, dripping tap etc.)?



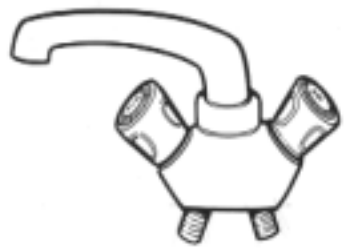
SOME TYPICAL TAP TYPES



SINGLE SINK TAP



SUPATAP

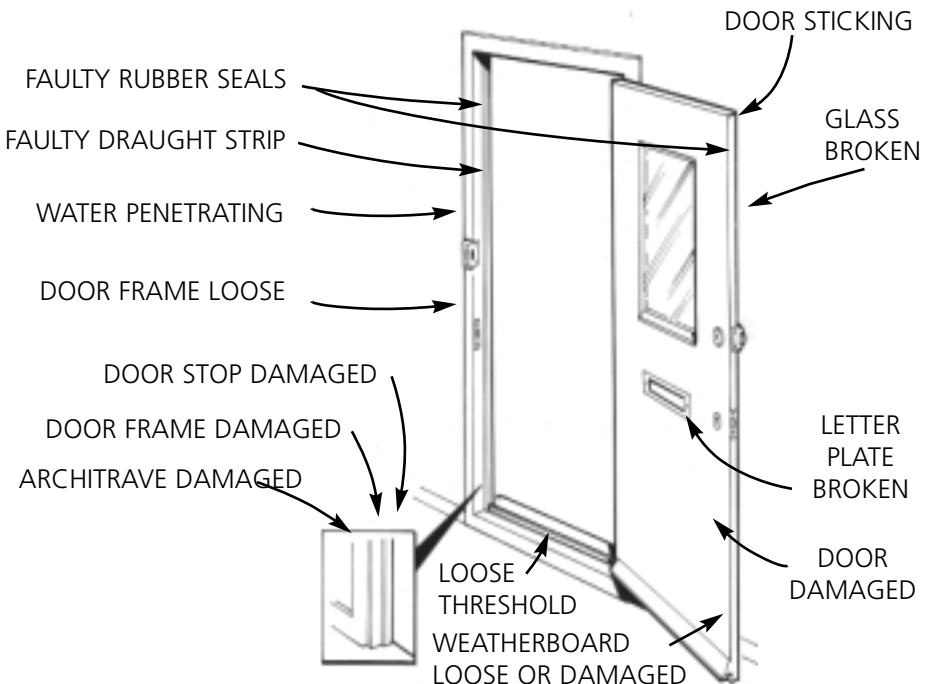


MIXER TAP

Doors

Please tell us

- What type of door is it: timber, metal or UPVC?
- Which door is affected?
- Have you a security system?
- Was the damage the result of a forced entry?
- If the door will not close properly, has it been recently painted or does it show signs of warping?
- Is there any damage to the frame, locks, etc.?
- If a glazed panel is broken, what is the type of glass and how was it broken?
- Can you secure the door?
- Do you have another door to use?



Locks

Please tell us

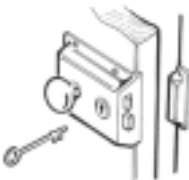
- Do you have a spare set of keys?
- Do any of your relatives or friends have a spare key for your home?
- How did you lose the keys?
- Which door is it?
- How many locks are there on the door?
- What type of lock is it?



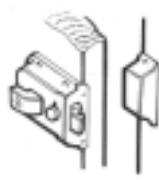
MORTICE LOCK AND LATCH



INTERNAL DOOR LATCH



RIM LOCK AND LATCH



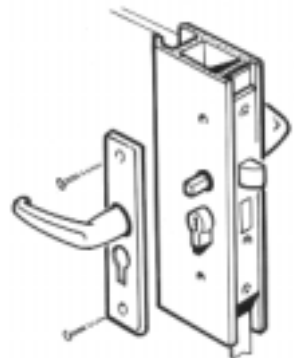
NIGHT LATCH



RIM DEADLOCK



MORTICE LOCK (FLUSH)



MULTIPOINT LOCK (uPVC)

Windows

Please tell us

If it is glass that is broken

- Is the window single or double glazed?
- Is it clear or obscure glass?
- How did the damage occur?
- The approximate size

If it is a problem with the window itself

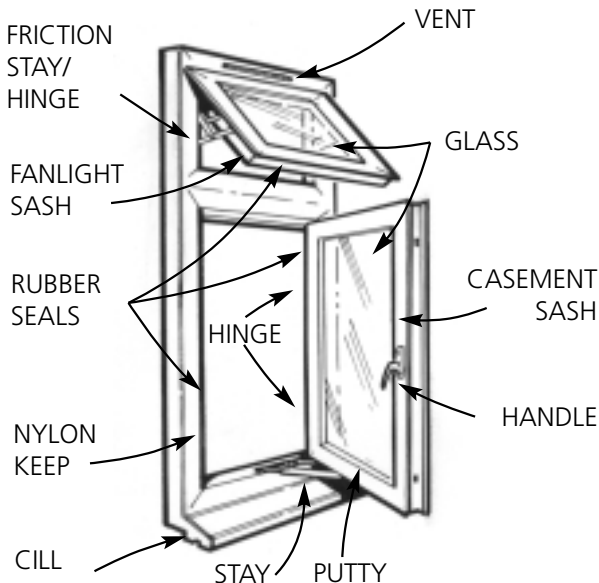
- What type of window is it and what is it made of (i.e. wood, metal, UPVC)?
- Which floor is it on?
- Are there any apparent problems, such as visible cracks or broken stays?
- If a tiled window sill is damaged how many tiles are needed and what type?
- If you have a problem closing the window has it been painted recently?



VERTICAL OR BOX SASH WINDOW



PIVOT WINDOW



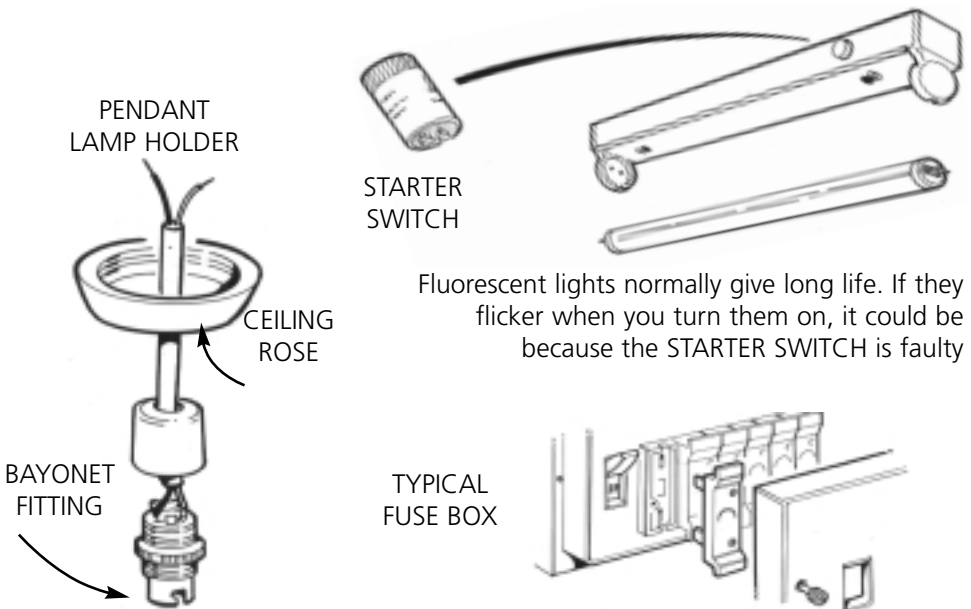
Electrical fittings

Please remember, care should always be taken with electrical equipment and fittings.

Problems, such as flickering lights and overheating sockets, should be reported without delay.

Please tell us

- What is the exact nature of the problem (e.g. sockets and/or lights not working, lights flickering, broken switch, etc.)?
- Have you, in the case of light failure, checked the bulb?
- Have you checked the power supply and fuse box?
- Does the problem just affect one room and, if so, which one?
- Were you using a particular appliance at the time of a power failure and, if so, have you checked the plug fuse?
- Have you received a notice from the electricity board that the supply is to be disconnected?



Heating systems

There are two types of heating systems in sheltered housing:

- District heating
- Individual gas central heating/hot water systems

If you have a heating or hot water problem and have District/Communal heating you should:

- contact the Call Centre on 0800 085 6575

If you have a heating or hot water problem and have individual gas central heating/hot water systems you should look at the side of the boiler and a sticker should be attached with the contractors name and number see below:

- Ring our contractor Planned Maintenance on 0207 924 1844 for area East & Central.
- Ring our contractor Quality Heating on 0845 658 6255 for area West.

Things to think about

- When did you last have heating or hot water?
- Does your heating system also provide hot water and, if so, are you without both services?
- Have you checked the heating controls are on, including the thermostat, timers and switches?
- Is loss of heating confined to one room, or is the whole system not working?
- Have you checked your gas/electric key meters are in credit?
- Has there been an interruption to the power or gas supply?
- Are there any elderly frail or disabled people in your household?



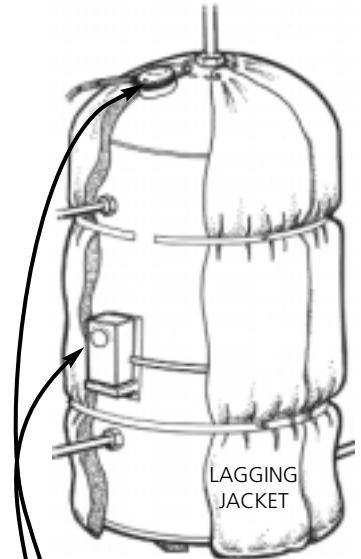
BOILER



TIMER/CLOCK



CONTROL



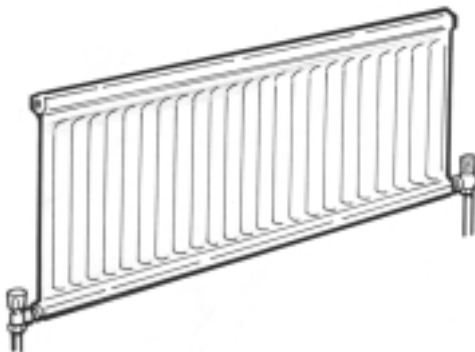
LAGGING JACKET

HOT WATER CYLINDER

There will often be a TEMPERATURE CONTROL SWITCH at the top of the immersion rod, or, alternatively, a CYLINDER THERMOSTAT might be fixed to the outside of the cylinder.

Radiator leaking....

- Where is the radiator?
- Where is it leaking: valve or radiator?
- Are electrical fittings getting wet?



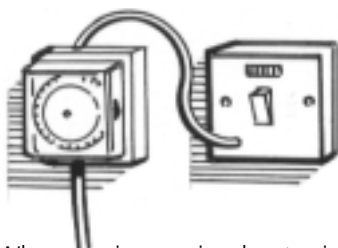
It is common for homes to have a HOT WATER CYLINDER. Water may be heated by an IMMERSION ELEMENT, protruding vertically downwards inside the cylinder.

However, it is also common for hot water to be fed to the cylinder from a boiler either independent of, or part of, a central heating system (see 'Heating' for details on reporting faults). There will often be a SWITCHED FUSE SPUR on the wall for immersion heater in the cupboard where the hot water cylinder is fitted.

Water heaters

Please tell us

- What type of heating system do you have and do you know the maker's name (it may be marked on it)?
- Do you have hot water at any time or not at all?
- Is the water cylinder hot, even when hot water is not coming through the taps?
- Do you have any other water supply problems?
- Have you received a notice from the electricity board that the supply is to be disconnected?



Where an immersion heater is fitted, there will be a nearby POWER SWITCH and perhaps a TIMER



You may have other types of heater in your home, such as a gas fired INSTANTANEOUS WATER HEATER

On the pages of this booklet a number of important items of equipment are mentioned.

It may be useful to you if you know the position of these items and you might like to note them here.

Item	position in house
Stop Valve	
Gas meter	
Gas tap	
Electricity meter	
Fusebox and Trip Switch	
Boiler	
Cold water Storage tank	
Hot water Cylinder	

Things you can do today at no cost to save money and energy:

- Turn off lights when you leave a room
- Teach everyone in the house to turn lights off in rooms not being used.
- Only boil the amount of water you need in your kettle
- Turn off televisions, videos, stereos and computers when they are not in use - they can use between 10 and 60% of the power they use when on
- Don't leave fridge doors open for longer than necessary, let food cool down fully before putting it in the fridge or freezer, defrost regularly and keep at the right temperature
- Close curtains at dusk to keep in heat and tuck them behind the radiator!
- Let your clothes dry naturally rather than using a tumble drier
- Turning down the thermostat for your heating by 1 degree could cut your heating bill by 10%
- Set your water thermostat for 60 degrees - this is plenty warm enough for bathing and washing and will save money too
- Use economy programmes on dishwashers or washing machines
- Where possible don't stand cookers and fridges/freezers next to each other
- Plug it: Always put the plug in your basin or sink. Leaving hot water taps running with it removed is basically washing money down the plug-hole

- Washing machine and tumble dryers: Always wash a full load and if you can't, use a half-load or economy programme if your machine has one. Always use the low temperature programme bearing in mind that modern washing powders will be just as effective at lower temperatures. And don't put really wet clothes into a tumble dryer; wring them out or spin-dry them first.
- Pots and pans: Choose the right size pan for the food and cooker (the base should just cover the cooking ring) and keep lids on when cooking. With gas, the flames only need to heat the bottom of the pan. If they lick up the side then you're wasting heat. And don't use more water than you need.
- Taps: In just one day, a dripping hot water tap can waste energy and enough water to fill a bath.

Keeping warm is a vital part of keeping well during the winter. Especially for older people and the very young.

- Try to keep a constant temperature of 21°C (70°F) in all rooms.
- If you can't afford that, keep one room warm. But you should preheat your bed and bedroom for several hours before going to bed.
- Make sure your home is well insulated.
- If you have problems with fuel bills, talk to your electricity or gas supplier straight away and let your Sheltered Scheme Manager know so they can give you help and advice to ensure you are receiving all benefits due.
- Have some hot food and drink every day.
- Always wrap up warmly before going out - wear a hat and gloves
- Take a little exercise every day
- Keep warm in bed every night



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