



Section D

Staying safe in your home

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Preventing a fire

Below are eight key points to help you prevent fires within your home. Please make sure you read and follow these at all times.

Ashtrays

Do not empty ashtrays into bins unless you are absolutely sure that the cigarette ends are not alight. In particular avoid emptying ashtrays into bins last thing at night, leave it until the morning. Do not smoke in the common areas of shared houses or flats.



Candles

Do not use candles in shared houses, including bedrooms as they are banned. We strongly advise you not to use candles if you live in a self-contained flat.



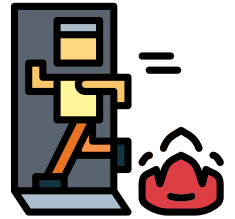
Sleeping

Do not smoke in bed or on a sofa if you are lying down as you may fall asleep and a lit cigarette can cause a fire.



Fire doors

Do not wedge fire doors open or, tamper with doors or devices that close the door.



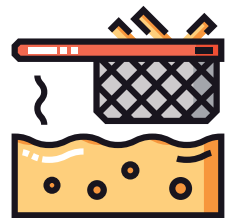
Ovens and saucepans

Never leave a saucepan on the heat if you get called away. Never leave your oven on when you leave your home.



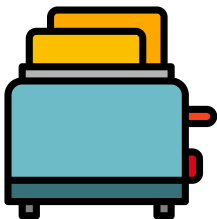
Chip pans and deep fat fryers

Do not use chip pans as the fat can easily ignite and cause a fire. Avoid using deep fat fryers. Think about using oven chips instead.



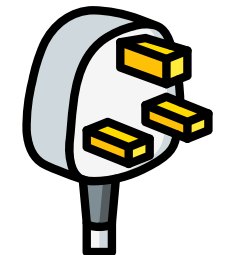
Toasters

If you have a toaster, keep it away from flammable materials (e.g. curtains or tea towels) and clean it out regularly.



Electrical cables

Do not let electrical cables go near the top of the cooker or expose them to heat. If an electrical cable is faulty, do not use the device. Never overload sockets by using adaptors to plug in lots of appliances.



What to do if there is a fire

If you discover a fire

- 1** ■ Raise the alarm by setting off the nearest manual fire call point or, if there is no alarm, shouting a warning to others.
 - If the fire is small and you feel confident you can put it out, do so.
 - Never use water on a fire in the kitchen. Water can make the fire much bigger and more dangerous.

- 2** Phone the fire brigade as soon as it is safe to do so:
 - Dial 999 – give your telephone number and ask for **FIRE**.
 - Give your address slowly and clearly.
 - Do not hang up until your details have been repeated.



- 3** Remember – the priority in the event of a fire is to get to safety. This may mean that you cannot call the fire brigade until you have left the building.



If you hear the fire alarm

- 1** Leave the building by the most direct route, closing doors behind you.
 - Do not stop to collect personal belongings.
 - Walk quickly but do not run.
 - Do not re-enter until you have been told it is safe to do so by the fire service or the scheme manager.

- 2** If your way out is blocked by fire or smoke, stay in your room with the door closed. Open the window and shout for help. Wait for the fire service to assist you – do not put yourself at risk by jumping out the window.

- 3** If you think there is a fire in the building and you are in a room with a closed door, feel the door with your hand. If it is hot, do not open it: go to the window, open it and shout for help. If smoke is coming from under your door, use clothes or towels to block the gap – if you can, add water to them first.

Remember

If you have a particular need or disability which might make it difficult for you to evacuate your building, please discuss this with a member of Transform staff. They will help you to complete a **Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)** which will provide a plan for you in the event of a fire.

How to use a fire blanket

If we supply fire blankets they are usually placed on the wall near cookers and ovens. They for small fires only, such as saucepan fires. When a fire blanket is placed over the fire, it stops oxygen getting to the flames and so puts the fire out. There are usually simple instructions printed on fire blankets, but the key steps in using a fire blanket are:

Step 1:

Pull the tabs and the blanket will come out.

Step 2:

Fold the corners of the blanket over your hands to shield them from the flames.

Step 3:

With the blanket held above your waist, approach the fire and **place the blanket over the flames**.

Step 4:

Leave the blanket for one hour, this will give it time to cool down.

Step 5:

When it's safe, **report the fire to Transform**. We will arrange for your fire blanket to be replaced.



Security in your home

We want you to feel safe, so security in your home is vital. Below are some important points to remember to help you make sure your home is kept secure.

Callers to your home

Most people who knock on your door are probably genuine, but some may not be. Sometimes burglars can pose as officials or workers so they can get into your home. **If someone official knocks on your door, ask to see their identification before talking to them or inviting them in.**

If Transform staff have not told you to expect someone, tell the person that you are going to check, then close your door and phone the office. Don't feel you have to let someone into your home if you weren't expecting them.



Do...

- ✓ lock all doors and close windows at night
- ✓ mark your valuables with an ultraviolet pen using your postcode
- ✓ get any bike or moped stamped by the local police
- ✓ switch on a light at the door if you get a caller at night
- ✓ report any damaged locks on doors or windows
- ✓ be aware of strangers
- ✓ regularly check for and collect your post
- ✓ if in danger, shout for help.

Don't...

- ✗ leave your door unlocked when you are out
- ✗ leave valuable property in communal areas
- ✗ keep large amounts of money on your person or in your home
- ✗ leave your post on the doorstep
- ✗ give your keys to strangers or friends
- ✗ stop or tackle a suspicious person.

Anti-social behaviour and harassment

What is anti-social behaviour?

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) is acting in a way that harasses, alarms or distresses someone, particularly if the behaviour is persistent. Examples of ASB may include:

- all hate crime
- harassment on the grounds of a person's disability, sexuality, religion, gender or age
- regular noise nuisance
- negative behaviour caused by the use of drugs or alcohol
- violence and abusive or threatening language or behaviour.



What to do if you experience anti-social behaviour

If you experience anti-social behaviour, you should follow this process:

- Raise a complaint with a member of staff.
- Provide staff with full details of the problem you are experiencing.
- We may ask you to gather evidence by completing an **Incident reporting log**, where you can keep a record of any problems.

What action we can take

When we receive a complaint of ASB we will investigate. We will then assess any evidence and decide on a suitable course of action. This can include:

Mediation: we can meet with all parties to try and find the best way forward.

Issue warnings: if the person who is committing ASB is a Transform client we might issue a verbal or formal written warning.

Loss of tenancy: in very serious cases the person who is responsible for the ASB could be served notice to leave their property – however, this would be a last resort.

Contacting the Police: If we think the ASB is serious (for example if it involves a crime) we will inform the Police or support you to do so.



“ I didn't have a reason to change before but thanks to Transform, now I do.

”
Jon

Staying safe online

Transform has developed a training module to help you stay safe online. It covers a wide range of topics including:

- looking after your mental health and wellbeing online
- using social media safely
- email: spam, scams and phishing
- shopping and banking online
- identity theft and passwords
- online dating.



You can find a full copy of the module on Transform's website:

www.transformhousing.org.uk/training-modules

Alternatively speak to a member of Transform staff who can provide you with a printed version.

Below are a few helpful pointers on how you can stay safe online, but don't forget to check out the training module if you would like more detailed information.

Protecting your mental health and wellbeing when using social media:

- Limit how much you use social media each day.
- Social networking can be positive, but make sure it doesn't replace meeting people face-to-face and socialising.
- Remember that it isn't a popularity contest – try and avoid comparing yourself with others.
- Be careful who you accept invitations from or send invitations to on social networking sites - do not accept friendship requests from complete strangers.
- Remember that whatever you do or say online might remain there permanently – think before you post anything.
- Make absolutely sure your profile is not open to the public; only friends and family should be able to see your profiles.
- Do not post any personal information online such as your address, email, mobile number or date of birth.
- If you think your use of social media is having a negative impact on your mental health speak to your keyworker or a trusted friend or family member.

Using email safely:

- If you are not sure if an email is genuine then contact the person or organisation concerned directly to find out. Do not use the contact details provided in the email but use another source.
- Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown sources.
- Reputable companies will not email you directly and ask you to disclose personal details or passwords. If they do, it is probably a scam.
- If something in an email makes you feel threatened, like **'your account will be blocked unless you click on this link straight away'**, be very careful as this may be a scam.

Staying safe when banking or shopping online:

Banking:

- Never login to your bank website through a link in an email.
- When creating your login password for your bank, make sure it is strong (please see section right on creating strong passwords).
- Do not click on any pop ups which might appear when you are banking online.
- Never disclose your bank login details whether via email or phone. You should never be asked to do this by a genuine bank.

Shopping:

- Use online retailers that are familiar to you.
- Before you enter payment details into a website, make sure it is secure. You can tell if a site is secure because the address will begin **https** (with the 's' meaning secure) and there will be a padlock symbol in your browser window.
- Check your bank statements regularly to make sure you were charged the correct amount for the item purchased.
- **Know your rights!** The Consumer Contracts Regulations gives you rights when shopping online or by phone. The regulations describe what information you should be given when buying something online as well as your right to return the item up to 14 days following receipt. For more details on your rights, visit:

www.which.co.uk/consumer-rights/regulation/consumer-contracts-regulations

Creating strong passwords:

There are many ways to create secure passwords, but one useful system is described below:

1. Start off by using three random words that aren't related to each other, so that the password is a minimum of 12 characters long (e.g. **redhousemonkeys**).
2. Next, add numbers and symbols (e.g. **3redhousemonkEys27!**)
3. Use at least one lower-case letter, one capital letter, one number, one symbol (i.e. **a special character**).