



Section F

Living in your home

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Looking after your home

Health and safety checks

Before you move into your accommodation, checks will be carried out on the gas and electrical appliances to ensure they are safe. If at any time are worried that these are unsafe, please report this to staff.

Staff will carry out regular health and safety checks in shared accommodation and in the communal areas of flats. By law we are also required to carry out regular inspections and servicing of gas appliances and any fire-fighting equipment or alarms we provide.



Insurance

Transform has insured the actual building and fittings in your home, but not your personal contents. We would strongly encourage you to take out a **home contents insurance policy** to cover your personal belongings in case they are damaged by fire, flood or if they are stolen. If you would like more information about contents insurance, please speak to your keyworker. Please avoid leaving personal possessions in communal areas of properties, but instead keep them safe in your own flat or bedroom.

Smoking

It is illegal to smoke in any public place. Public places are those which are used by more than one person and so include corridors and communal areas of shared houses. The reason for this is to protect people from breathing in second hand smoke.

Shared houses

If you live in a shared house, the communal areas such as lounge, kitchen and bathroom are considered public places and so you cannot smoke in these areas. You will be able to smoke in your bedroom, although your door will need to be shut and you need to be very aware of the risks of fire (please see **Preventing a fire** on **page 28**). You can also smoke outside your house in the garden, but please be considerate of your neighbours, keep levels of noise down and dispose of cigarette ends responsibly.

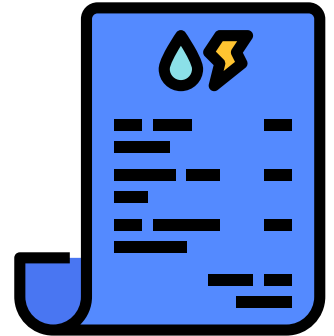
Self-contained accommodation

In flats you will not be able to smoke in any communal corridors or stairwells, but you will be able to smoke in your own flat. To protect Transform staff from breathing in second-hand smoke, please do not smoke in your flat for an hour before a staff visit and please do not smoke while staff are in your home.

Reducing your bills

Below are some practical tips on how to reduce your bills, save energy and help the environment:

- ✓ Switch off your TV and other appliances at the mains when you go to bed.
- ✓ Turn off the lights when you leave a room and use energy efficient bulbs.
- ✓ Wait until you have a full load before using your washing machine.
- ✓ When cooking, use lids on pans to retain heat.
- ✓ Close curtains at dusk to stop heat escaping.
- ✓ Don't boil a full kettle every time – only boil what you need.
- ✓ A shower uses 60% less hot water than a bath.
- ✓ Do not let water run when cleaning your teeth.
- ✓ Use a price comparison site to check that what you are paying for gas and electricity is competitive. If you think it's too expensive consider changing energy supplier or your tariffs with your current energy supplier.
- ✓ Check if you qualify for the **Winter Fuel Payment, Cold Weather Payment** and **Warm Home Discount**.

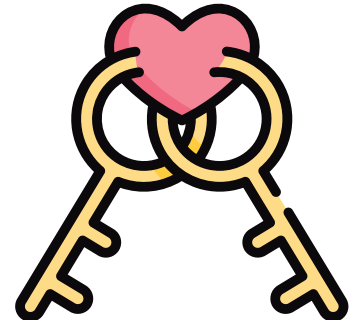


Other things to note

Keys

If you live in a shared house you will be given keys to the front door and to your own room. Please do not lend your keys to anyone else as this would threaten the security of everyone living in the property. If you live in a self-contained flat you will be given your own set of keys to your property.

The keys you will be given are your responsibility. Please keep them safe as, if you lose them, you will need to pay for replacements. Don't forget – we can provide you with a keyring so that any key can be returned to Transform if lost.



Pets

Transform has a **Pet policy** which has been drawn up in consultation with clients. If you are interested in having a pet, you should first speak to a member of staff. In some cases you may be allowed to keep a pet, but a senior manager ultimately makes this decision. Please be aware it is unlikely that permission will be granted for keeping a pet in shared accommodation. **If you get a pet without permission, you will most likely be asked to find it another home.**



“ Transform has literally given me my life back – if I hadn’t come here, I would be dead. ”

Emily

Keeping your home free from condensation, damp and mould

This section tells you about condensation, damp and mould and explains what you can do to stop this being a problem in your home.

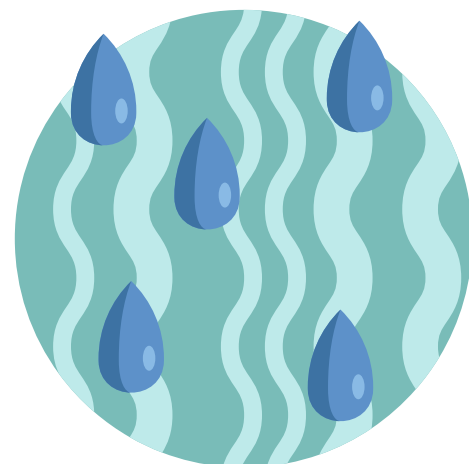
What is condensation?

There is always moisture in the air even if you can't see it. When the air gets colder, it can't hold it all and tiny drops of water appear – this is condensation. You may notice it when you see your breath on a cold day or when the mirror in the bathroom mists over when you have a bath or shower.

Condensation mainly occurs during cold weather regardless of whether it is raining or dry. It tends to appear on cold surfaces and places where there is little or no movement of air, in the corners of rooms near windows or behind cupboards and wardrobes.

Why is condensation a problem?

Every home gets a bit of condensation at some time, for example when you have a bath or shower or when you are cooking. The problem is if your home has lots of condensation, as this can lead to damp and mould. You might get mould on your windows, ceilings or walls, particularly behind your furniture.



What you can do to prevent condensation?

These simple steps will help:

Put less water into the air

- Put lids on saucepans when you are cooking.
- Dry your clothes outside where possible.
- Put a small amount of cold water in the bath before you turn on the hot tap.
- Do not run your shower for longer than needed.
- Mop up any condensation or water every day.
- Apply a mould spray to affected surfaces to help prevent mould returning.

Make sure your home is heated properly

- Make sure your home is warm enough.
- Heat your home more evenly – a low level of heating all day is better than quick blasts when necessary (this should also reduce your heating bills).
- Use thermostats to control your heating.

Stop water vapour spreading

When you are cooking:

- Shut your kitchen door.
- Use a cooker hood or extractor fan.
- Open a window.

When you have a bath or shower:

- Shut the bathroom door.
- Use an extractor fan if you have one or open a window.

Ventilate your home

- Keep a small window ajar to let air in.
- Keep trickle vents (small vents in your windows) open at all times.
- Ventilate kitchens and bathrooms when in use by opening windows or using extractor fans if you have them.
- Close kitchen and bathroom doors when cooking or bathing.
- Make sure other doors are closed, especially bedroom doors as bedrooms are normally slightly colder and will attract moisture.
- Ventilate cupboards and wardrobes and avoid putting too much in them, as this stops the air circulating.
- Do not put wardrobes against external walls
- Keep furniture away from walls to allow air to circulate.

If you have any mould in your home, please speak to a member of Transform staff or call the Maintenance team.

Repairs: how to report them

The Transform Maintenance team carry out most of the maintenance and repairs to our properties. In some cases, though, we rent accommodation from other organisations which would be responsible for this work. When you move, a member of staff will let you know who to contact and the procedure to follow. Below is the Transform repairs procedure.

Shared accommodation – how to report repairs

If you live in a room in shared accommodation and have a maintenance issue, please tell Transform staff as soon as you can and they will pass this on to our Maintenance team. In an emergency outside of office hours, please contact us using the emergency out-of-hours on-call number.

Self-contained flats – how to report repairs

You may need to report repairs to Transform’s Maintenance Team directly or you may need to report them to support staff. Your tenancy agreement will detail what your responsibilities are, so if you are unsure, please ask a member of staff.

- If you are responsible for reporting repairs to support staff please tell them as soon as you can and they will pass this on to our Maintenance team. In an emergency outside of office hours, please contact us using the emergency out-of-hours on-call number.
- If you are responsible for reporting repairs to Transform’s Maintenance Team directly then please tell them as soon as you can.

The phone number for the team is on the fridge magnet that you were given when you moved in. This is a freephone number but some mobile providers may charge for these calls.

In an emergency outside of office hours, please contact us using the emergency out-of-hours number. Again, this is on the magnet. If you have not been provided with one, please speak to a member of staff.



Repairs: response times

Please note that not all repairs will be carried out immediately – it will depend on how urgent they are. Transform staff will let you know how long you may need to wait for your repair. Transform has four categories of response times and these are listed below.

Response	Description	Examples	
Emergency 1 day	Immediate risk to safety, security or health or where there is a risk to the building itself. Works will focus on making the situation safe.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Gas leak ■ Serious electrical faults ■ Flooding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Loss of heating in winter ■ Loss of hot water ■ Boarding up smashed window
Urgent 1 week	Issues which are likely to cause damage or difficulty if they are not dealt with.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Damage to fire safety equipment, (alarms etc.) ■ Blocked waste pipes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Repairs to toilets ■ Plumbing faults ■ Faulty washing machine
Essential 4 weeks	All repairs that are necessary but which are neither emergencies nor urgent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Plastering ■ Television repairs ■ Minor electrical repairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Seals around sinks or baths ■ Tiling ■ Floor coverings
Routine 6 weeks	Such as garden-related repairs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Dripping gutters ■ Ease sticking doors and windows ■ Paving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fencing ■ Garden walls and gates ■ Minor carpentry repairs

Repairs: charges and compensation

Damage caused by you

You have a responsibility to keep your room and any accommodation you share with other people in good condition. If you or one of your visitors causes damage and repairs have to be carried out, you will be charged for this work to be done.

Decorating

If you live in shared accommodation, then Transform will aim to carry out internal decorations every six years and external decorations to the property every eight years. We will consult with you on possible paint colours before we decorate.

If you live in a self-contained flat, redecoration of the internal communal areas and the exterior will be carried out every eight years.

Some Transform clients who live in their own flat will be responsible for decorating the interior of their flat. Responsibility for redecorations is explained in your tenancy agreement but if you are unclear, please ask a member of staff.

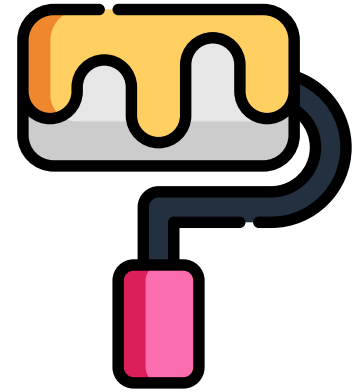
If you plan to decorate, please talk to staff before you start so that colours can be agreed. Very dark or unusual colours are unsuitable because they would have to be repainted before someone else moves in. Please remember that you should not paint light switches, sockets or radiators under any circumstances as this would need to be put right after you leave and you would be charged for this work.

Problems with repairs

If you have had to wait longer than you have been told for a repair to be carried out, or if you feel that the work has not been carried out satisfactorily, please speak to Transform staff who will look into the matter for you. If you are unhappy with the response you receive, you can use Transform's complaints procedure which is explained on [page 40](#).

Compensation

If you report a maintenance problem which affects your health, safety or security and Transform fails twice to make the repair within the set timescale, you may be entitled to compensation. There is a flat rate award of £10 plus £2 for each day the repair remains outstanding up to a maximum total of £50.



Moving on from Transform

When you are ready to move on, Transform staff will work with you to help find suitable accommodation. Transform does have some move-on accommodation, however this is very limited. Other options include renting in the private sector, housing through your local council or with another housing association.

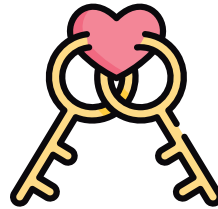
Leaving your home

Below are some key points to remember if you wish to move out of your home.



Notice

Please give staff 28 days' notice and agree a moving date.



Keys

Return all keys to staff on the day you leave.



Belongings

Make arrangements to remove all your belongings on the day you leave (unless you have a prior arrangement with staff). Anything left will be disposed of which you will be charged for.



Mail

You can ask for the Post Office to redirect your mail for a small fee. Alternatively, if you give staff your new address; we will redirect your mail for a short period of time.



Condition

Please leave your home in a clean and tidy condition.



