

Tenants' handbook

Welcome to your new home



NORWICH
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This handbook gives you important information about your tenancy with Norwich City Council. Please keep it in a safe place. **It contains a copy of the tenancy agreement, which tells you what you can expect from us as your landlord and what we expect from you as a tenant. It also contains information about housing services, and other useful contact details. Where more detailed information is available about a specific topic, upon request, we have indicated this.**

Council tenancies

The council offers introductory tenancies to all new tenants. Introductory tenants have fewer rights than secure tenants but when they have successfully completed their first year they will become secure tenants.

Most council tenants have a secure tenancy. This means they have important rights such as the right to exchange and the right to buy.

Being a good neighbour

We are committed to making tenancies as trouble free and enjoyable as possible so please play your part by keeping to your tenancy agreement and being a good neighbour. Keeping individual gardens and communal areas tidy benefits all residents, while thoughtful parking and responsible pet ownership shows consideration to others.

Loud music, rowdy behaviour and noisy DIY can sometimes amount to antisocial behaviour, so please make sure that members of your household or visitors do not cause a nuisance to your neighbours.

Last but not least

We hope that you enjoy your home and your tenancy with Norwich City Council. If you do have any problems please contact your neighbourhood housing officer through the customer contact team on **0344 980 3333**.



If you require this leaflet in another language or format eg large print, CD, audio cassette or Braille please contact:
t: 0344 980 3333
e: info@norwich.gov.uk

Tenants' handbook

Council services

Equality and diversity



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Norwich City Council is committed to promoting equal opportunities in delivering services and in employment practices. We believe in fairness in the treatment of service users and our staff in providing full access to services. We value and celebrate the diversity that exists among both the citizens of Norwich and our workforce. As a council we want to ensure that everyone can fully participate in the social, cultural, political and economic life of the city.

At Norwich City Council our duties regarding equality ensure we uphold a citizen's right to protection from direct and indirect discrimination, and that we encourage good relations between groups.

- We have signed up to the Hate Free Norfolk pledge against hate crimes or incidents, where we work alongside partnership agencies (including the Police, Norfolk County Council and National Health Service) to tackle discrimination and provide support to victims of hate crimes or prejudice.

- We also recognise that some people might face more barriers to accessing services, therefore we try to ensure that the needs of individuals and communities are taken into account when delivering these services.

Our information leaflets can be provided in other formats, including large print, or other languages.

If you need an interpreter we can arrange this in advance so that someone is available to help you, either face-to-face or by telephone.

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t: 0344 980 3333

e: info@norwich.gov.uk



Your tenancy, your home

Tenant involvement

A guide for tenants



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What is tenant involvement?

Norwich City Council prides itself on putting its tenants at the heart of housing matters. We want you to have the opportunity to get involved and work with us to shape the housing services you receive.

There are a variety of ways you can be involved and you can find out about all of the opportunities on offer below and then choose what's best for you.

Tenant involvement panel (TIP)

This is a panel of tenants who consider housing policies, finance issues and publications. The panel makes recommendations to the council, for the benefit of all tenants. This ensures that housing services provided by the council are constantly being improved.

Tenant scrutiny panel (TSP)

This panel scrutinises housing performance, as well as monitoring complaints and customer satisfaction with housing services.

Recommendations are then made to the council, by the panel, which helps ensure that housing services are always improving.

Sheltered housing involvement panel (SHIP)

The SHIP replaces the sheltered housing tenants' forum. The panel reviews Norwich City Council's sheltered housing policies and publications and makes recommendations regarding sheltered housing finance. In addition the panel represents sheltered housing tenants at both local and national events. The panel makes sure that the sheltered housing services provided by the council are constantly being improved.



Note: The three tenant panels are each made up of seven tenant representatives that have been through a detailed training programme. Panel members work hard on your behalf at a strategic level. Places are in high demand for this area of tenant involvement. However, it is possible to join the waiting list, so if you are interested please get in touch with the tenant involvement team.

Materials advisory group (MAG)

The MAG is a group of tenants that meet with our technical experts, contractors and suppliers every six weeks and give their views on materials and fittings that are used in council homes across the city. These include, amongst other things, items such as floor and wall coverings, lights, taps and bathroom fittings. The group aims to make sure that materials used in our repairs and upgrades are value for money and in-line with what tenants want.

Tenants' and residents' associations (TRAs)

A tenants' and residents' association (TRA) is an organisation formed by people who live in the same area, such as an estate or tower block.

A TRA acts as a collective voice and ensures the views of tenants and residents in a particular neighbourhood are represented and known to the council. TRAs are run by volunteers and everyone over the age of 16, who lives in the area the TRA covers, is welcome to join. By joining a TRA you get to work with other local people to help make your neighbourhood a better place to live.

The council is happy to work and consult with TRAs, which are formally recognised by the council and receive annual funding. The groups always welcome new members and if there isn't already a group in your area, your neighbourhood housing officer can help you set one up.

Sheltered housing - tenant involvement opportunities

General meetings

Regular meetings are held for all sheltered housing tenants. These meetings are always attended by a sheltered housing officer but tenants are encouraged to chair the meetings and take an active role.

The meetings are designed to:

- engage tenants
- inform them of relevant council activities
- discuss local issues which may only affect tenants of the particular sheltered housing scheme
- discuss wider issues.

Health and Safety inspections

Tenants are also encouraged to attend health and safety inspections with their sheltered housing officers.

If you would like to be more actively involved in general meetings or health and safety inspections please discuss with your sheltered housing officer.

Norwich leaseholders' association (NLA)

The NLA is run by leaseholders and meets to discuss issues that affect Norwich City Council leaseholders, such as: services charges, improvements, maintenance and painting contracts.

The NLA committee holds a public meeting once a year. It also meets with Norwich City Council officers on a regular basis, known as Partnership Action Group meetings, to discuss issues which affect leaseholders.

For further information about the NLA please contact the homeownership team on **01603 213144** or email homeownership@norwich.gov.uk



Attend a local event

We hold local events such as community fundays, throughout the year. These events are run

in partnership with our contractors and other housing providers in the area. They give you the opportunity to chat informally with the council staff that serve your local community, and get specialist expert advice on key topics.

We also take part in community events such as the Lord Mayor's procession and the annual Norwich Pride celebrations. Keep an eye out for posters and information on the council's website.

Join a local patch panel

You can help your local community to grow and give your views on what really matters to you by meeting informally with your neighbourhood housing officer, and other tenants, to discuss local issues.

Become a tenant service reviewer

There are three tenant service reviewer roles. These are:

- Mystery shopper
- Norwich Standard inspector
- Estate auditor

Tenant service reviewers are recruited to:

- Monitor the housing services provided by the council
- Collect information about the customer experience of using housing services
- Provide feedback on how housing services might be improved.

Mystery shoppers act as customers and assess the quality of our services and identify areas which could be improved. For example, mystery shoppers may be asked to contact the council with a routine enquiry to see if set procedures are followed.

Norwich Standard inspectors get feedback from tenants on the quality of recent major improvement work carried out to their council homes, such as the installation of a new bathroom or kitchen.

Estate auditors accompany service development officers on estate visits to see if there are any issues - such as graffiti, fly tipping or repairs required to communal areas - that

need to be addressed. They also report on the standard of caretaking and grounds maintenance observed at each of the estates visited.

Note: The tenant service reviewer roles (mystery shopper, Norwich Standard inspector, estate auditor) require dedicated people who will receive intensive training before they get started. These roles are in high demand but please contact the involvement team if you would like to know more.

Join the TalkBack panel

Over the past three years 1,000 tenants and 200 leaseholders have taken part in our TalkBack consultation panel. It's an excellent opportunity for you to share your views on a wide range of housing topics and take part in activities, such as surveys and focus groups. As a member of the Talkback panel you can play a valuable role in improving our housing service.

Please contact the involvement team if you would like more information or would like to join the TalkBack panel.



Join our tenant readers' panel

The role of the tenant readers' panel is to review and comment on materials we produce to provide information on our housing services. The panel will be asked for their views on whether a document is clear, relevant and understandable. Interaction is generally carried out by email but we are happy to accommodate tenants with other communication preferences, should they wish to be involved.

The annual report focus group, made up of council officers and tenants, meets throughout the year to discuss the style of the annual report to tenants and decide the content. Please contact the tenant involvement team if you are interested in getting involved.

Tenant Training for Norwich (TTfN)

TTfN is a modular training course designed to give tenants the confidence, knowledge and skills to effectively participate in influencing housing decisions.

TTfN was set up, designed and tested by our current involved tenants. The sessions are delivered by an independent trainer.

All training courses are completely free of charge and transport is available to and from the training sessions.

Training is available to cover a range of subjects including:

- communication skills
- presentation and public speaking
- understanding Norwich City Council
- tenant involvement

Please contact the tenant involvement team if you would like find out more or sign up for the next round of training.

Questionnaires

You can share your views and help us to gather information on levels of tenant satisfaction by completing questionnaires by post and online.

Workshops and briefings

We occasionally run workshops or hold public briefings to get your views on important issues such as annual rent setting.

If this is something you would like to be involved in please contact the tenant involvement team.

Tenant summits

A tenant summit is a meeting or event organised for all tenants working with the council, via our Tenant Involvement structure, to meet and compare notes on the activities that they are engaged in.

Contact us

For more information on any of the ways you can be involved, or to register your interest, contact the tenant involvement team:

t: **0344 980 3333**

e: involvement@norwich.gov.uk

Your tenancy, your home

Decoration allowance scheme

A guide for tenants



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This leaflet gives you information about the decoration allowance scheme, who qualifies for it and how it is calculated.

Who qualifies for a decoration allowance?

Anyone who has accepted an offer of a council tenancy and signed a tenancy agreement, with the following exceptions:

- Non-secure tenancies that are pending a homelessness investigation
- Where an individual(s) has a licence agreement to occupy a council home.

Please note: If your tenancy has been assigned to you following a succession or you have moved through a mutual exchange you are not entitled to a decoration allowance.

How much will I get?

An allowance of £25 will be paid for each room that needs redecorating.

How will I receive my allowance?

When you decide to accept a property you will be told the value of any decoration

allowance. This is when you will need to choose which supplier you would like to spend this allowance with.

In most cases, you will be given a card which will be credited with the £25 per room allowance to be spent with the supplier you have chosen.

Please note that you cannot use this card at more than one supplier.

What if I cannot do my own decorating?

If tenants are unable to decorate their own property due to disability, and have no able members of the household to help them, an additional payment of £50 will be provided per room to employ someone to carry out the decorating works. Only in exceptional circumstances will Norwich City Council carry out decoration works to those rooms assessed for a decorating allowance.

If you are entitled to additional payments for decorating, as explained opposite, you will be notified at this stage. Payment will be made into your account via a bank transfer.

Where can I spend my allowance?

You may choose from one of the following suppliers:

Homebase

Hall Road
Norwich NR4 6DH
t: **08456 407176**
www.homebase.co.uk

Homebase

Roundtree Way
Norwich NR7 8SH
t: **08456 407059**
www.homebase.co.uk

B&Q Warehouse

Boundary Road
Hellesdon
Norwich NR6 5JS
t: **01603 269000**
www.diy.com

B&Q Warehouse

5 Neatmarket
Hall Road
Norwich NR4 6FB
t: **01603 455378**
www.diy.com

R E Thorns and Co

22 Exchange Street
Norwich NR2 1AT
t: **01603 622891**

What can I spend the allowance on?

The allowance can only be used to buy decorating materials for use at your new property. It is not transferable and cannot be exchanged for other goods.

A full list of the decorating materials you can buy is provided at sign-up.

These include:

- interior paints
- woodcare and varnishes
- non-powered decorating tools
- wallpaper and pastes
- sandpaper
- filler and sealants.

Your tenancy, your home

Caretakers

A guide for tenants



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If you are a tenant or leaseholder living in a tower block, or in one of the council's maisonette blocks with communal or shared areas, you may have services provided by a caretaker.

This leaflet describes the services and lists the blocks which have a caretaker.

Does my block of flats have a caretaker?

All sites listed below have the services of a caretaker:

Central area

- Heathgate:
Mobile **07769 883521**
- Winchester Tower and Johnson Place:
Mobile **07769 883526**
- Suffolk Square:
Mobile **07507 771441**
- Normandie Tower and Music House Lane:
Mobile **07507 896364**

East Norwich

- Heartsease Towers:
Mobile **07507 868541**

Mile Cross

- Mile Cross Towers, Lefroy Road (9-103 odds) and Bowers Avenue (50-80 evens):
Mobile **07507 896191**

Do I pay for this service?

The cost is shown as a separate service charge. Leaseholders are charged for the services through their annual service charges.

What services are provided?

The following services apply to all blocks:

- Cleaning lifts, stairs and landings.
- Maintaining refuse disposal systems (chutes and bin rooms, for example).
- Removing and reporting graffiti.
- Clearing drains, gullies and paths.
- Removing litter.
- Reporting vandalism and antisocial behaviour (ASB).
- Reporting repairs to communal areas.

- Security and emergencies.
- Monitoring estate services (ie refuse collection).
- Cleaning of some communal windows and monitoring the communal window cleaning contract.

What are my responsibilities as a tenant?

The caretaker only looks after the communal areas of the blocks. You are responsible for your own flat.

You can help everyone living in the block by:

- leaving communal areas clear to prevent fire hazards
- reporting any problems which affect communal areas in the block to the caretaker or the customer contact team on **0344 980 3333**
- putting refuse in the places allocated eg down refuse chutes
- refrain from putting large items, like carpets and cardboard boxes, down refuse chutes

- not contacting a caretaker outside of duty hours except in an emergency.

Does the caretaker have a key to my flat?

The caretaker does not hold keys to individual flats.

In an emergency (such as a flood) council staff or contractors may have to enter an empty flat. In these cases the caretaker or a police officer will normally be present.



What about repairs and maintenance?

To your own flat

The council is responsible for the repair and maintenance of the outside of your flat (leaseholders are responsible for their own repairs inside the flat). You are responsible for all internal decoration and cleaning including windows.

Report any repairs to the customer contact team on **0344 980 3333**.

For emergency repairs only (out of hours) call **01603 412180**.

To communal areas

During duty hours report repairs to your caretaker (mobile telephone number can be found in the foyer of your block) or phone the customer contact team.

For emergency repairs only (out of hours) call **01603 412180**.

To lifts

Report the repair immediately to your caretaker.

The contact number for the lift engineer can be found in the lift or on the outside of the lift.

If a person/s is trapped in the lift, you may have to call the fire service if no other help is available.

Caretakers are not allowed to try and release people trapped in lifts.

What do I do if I have a problem with the service I get from the caretaker?

Talk to your caretaker first. If you are still not satisfied the council has a complaints procedure for anyone who is not happy with the service they receive.

For further information about the complaints procedure or to report a complaint, contact the customer contact team on **0344 980 3333** or look at the relevant pages on the council's website **www.norwich.gov.uk**

When are the caretakers on duty?

Monday to Friday
8am–4.25pm

Your tenancy, your home

Reinstating gas and arranging electricity supplies

A guide for tenants



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On moving into your new home you will need to make arrangements for your gas and electricity supplies. Please see the following guidance for further information.

- Locate the gas and electricity meters in your new property. For each meter take a reading and check the type of meter eg a pre-payment card meter or quarterly billing.
- If you have a card meter find out if there is any outstanding debt on it by contacting the current energy provider*. If there is a debt it is not your responsibility to pay it off but you will need to ask the gas or electricity supplier to reset the meter.
- You must contact the current gas provider*, before contacting Gasway, to arrange for gas to be supplied to your council home in your name and to ensure that the meter is clear of debt. If Gasway attend to reinstate the gas supply to your property but are unable to do so, because you did not contact the gas supplier first, you will be charged a callout fee.
- You must contact the current electricity provider* to ensure that the electricity meter is clear of debt and to arrange for electricity to be supplied to the property in your name.

* see opposite

It is also your responsibility to get a meter installed by the supplier if it has been removed.

To find out which company currently supplies energy (gas/electricity) to your new home:

- Have your new address and postcode ready as you will be asked for it.
- Contact the gas and electricity supplier/s (by phoning the helpline numbers below) and giving them your details and meter readings.

Gas supplier helpline

t: 0870 6081524

Electricity supplier helpline

t: 0845 6015467

- After you have contacted the energy providers, and given them the necessary information, it is your responsibility to contact Gasway on **01603 258617** to arrange for the gas supply to your new property to be reinstated.

Please note: It can take up to two working days from the time you contact

Gasway to getting the gas supply to your new home re-connected.

Please do not:

- contact our emergency out of hours service for gas reinstatement to your property, as this can only be done by Gasway
- contact Gasway regarding the electricity supply – it is your responsibility to arrange this with the current electricity provider.

Please note: if you arrange an appointment through Gasway for an engineer to attend and reinstate the gas supply to the property and you have not contacted the gas supplier first, with your details and the current meter readings, then Gasway will be unable to reinstate the supply to the property. You may be recharged £39.29 for the cost of the callout fee.

Once energy supplies to your new home have been reinstated you can arrange to change gas/electricity providers if you wish.

Your tenancy, your home

Dealing with antisocial behaviour

A guide



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This leaflet tells you what to do if you experience antisocial behaviour. It also explains how we deal with reports of antisocial behaviour.

It is aimed at tenants, leaseholders and people who have purchased homes once owned by the council ie through the Right To Buy scheme.

It may apply to you if you do not fall into one of the above categories but are affected by the behaviour of someone who does.

What is antisocial behaviour?

This is behaviour that causes, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to one or more people not of the same household as the person responsible. It is behaviour that unreasonably interferes with other people's rights to use and enjoy their home and community.



This may include things such as:

- noise
- intimidation or harassment
- aggressive and threatening language or behaviour
- vandalism
- nuisance caused by vehicles – such as where they are parked or the way repairs are being carried out
- nuisance caused by pets – for example barking or fouling
- hate related abuse or harassment (see page 6).

The council also regards certain other behaviour by its tenants as antisocial including failure to maintain or inappropriate use of gardens, misuse of common areas and using accommodation for unlawful purposes.

Our approach to antisocial behaviour

Norwich City Council does not tolerate antisocial behaviour.

Initially we will look at dealing with reports of antisocial behaviour through prevention such as mediation (see page 7). When appropriate we will take action to enforce breaches of tenancy conditions and we work with a number of other partner agencies, including the police, to use the full range of tools and powers available to reduce the impact of antisocial behaviour in your neighbourhood.

We can also arrange support for people who seek to change behaviour that is having an impact on the lives of others and if they face the risk of eviction as a result.

Your responsibilities

Everyone is entitled to enjoy their home in peace. There are things that you can do to keep good relations with your neighbours.

- Be considerate towards your neighbours when you are doing something noisy. Let them know before you start and try to avoid making noise when people are likely to be sleeping.
- Consider the position of your sound system, how loud your television is and the effect of walking around on uncarpeted floors, as noise carries easily through walls, floors and doors.
- Co-operate if a neighbour asks you to reduce noise.

- Try to be tolerant to your neighbours if they have a different lifestyle from yours.
- Don't use your property for illegal purposes such as drug dealing.
- Don't harass people in any way.
- Don't use violent or abusive language or behave in such a way.

Your tenancy agreement, lease or deed of covenant will set out certain obligations. Please refer to these for further information.

If you report antisocial behaviour to us, please keep in contact with us while we investigate your complaint. If the antisocial behaviour is ongoing we may ask you to complete log sheets. These will enable us to assess the severity of the problem and they may also be used as evidence if legal action becomes necessary.

We have joined forces with Norfolk Constabulary to form the operational partnership team (OPT) to tackle and reduce antisocial behaviour in Norwich. The OPT consists of 14 staff from the police's antisocial behaviour unit and the council's antisocial behaviour and tenancy enforcement team (ABATE). The joint working of the two teams combines skills and enables joined-up problem solving, as well as enhanced tactical working relationships.

In 2010 the Home Office introduced a national framework for identifying the most vulnerable victims of antisocial behaviour. This now forms part of our processes and in each case we carry out a risk assessment at first point of contact. This helps us to prioritise service delivery to high risk victims, speed up action and focus on a joined-up partnership response.

If you do not stay in contact with us, we may stop investigating your complaint and close the case.

Reporting antisocial behaviour

If you are suffering from antisocial behaviour and know who is causing the problem, try to talk to them (or, if the person is under 18 talk to their parent/s). Often a friendly chat can quickly resolve any problems you may be experiencing. Some examples of low level neighbour nuisance this may apply to are loud music or TV, door banging, pets, DIY, inconsiderate use of common areas.

Most problems can be solved amicably. While you may feel nervous about approaching your neighbour, they may genuinely be unaware they are causing a problem. They may be embarrassed and more considerate in the future.

Before you approach your neighbour, prepare what you are going to say to them. Stay calm and remain pleasant about the matter and they will be more likely to respond well to your complaint.

Avoid getting into an argument. If they will not be reasonable, stop the discussion and walk away.

Try to avoid approaching your neighbour when the nuisance is actually occurring as you are more likely to have an argument.

Give your neighbours a reasonable period of time to change their behaviour, then let them know if things haven't improved.

It is important to consider your personal safety. If you are worried or intimidated by their behaviour then approaching them may not be the best option for you. In this instance, or if you have not been able to resolve the problem by talking to your neighbour, you may wish to contact the council.



You can report antisocial behaviour:

- by contacting the council on 0344 980 3333 (24 hour phone line)
- in person at City Hall
- by writing to us at Antisocial behaviour, City Hall, Norwich, NR2 1NH
- by emailing us at asb@norwich.gov.uk

You could also get advice from The Citizens Advice Bureau or a solicitor.

If you have been threatened or assaulted dial 999 and report it to the police immediately.

Hate crimes and incidents

A hate incident is any incident that is perceived by the victim, or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hatred towards a person because of their:

- cultural, ethnic, national or racial origin
- religion
- sexual orientation
- gender or gender identity
- age
- disability.

A hate crime is any hate incident that constitutes a criminal offence.

For more information please see our leaflet *Dealing with hate crime and incidents*.



The action we can take

We will:

- contact you to discuss the matter in full and gather as much information as possible
- contact the person who is causing the problem, if you give us your permission to do so. If you ask us not to contact you or the person causing the problem, we may not be able to deal with the problem
- keep your details confidential at this stage, so the person who you have reported will not know it was you who complained
- keep you updated and let you know the outcome of the meeting or discussion we have with the person causing the problem. Hopefully this will resolve the situation.



If we feel that the problem is a personal dispute between you and your neighbour, we may not take any action except suggest that you both consider mediation in order to resolve the matter.

If further action is necessary, we will usually consider a combination of methods to deal with the problem before resorting to legal action. These include:

- mediation – a voluntary agreement reached by two or more parties in dispute with the help of a trained mediator
- referring to a support agency who may be able to help the person causing the problem change their behaviour
- working with partner agencies such as the police to address the issue
- writing a warning letter to the person responsible
- an Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC) – a voluntary contract between the person responsible, the council and the police to agree not to behave in a certain way in the future.

If the antisocial behaviour continues, the case may be referred to the antisocial behaviour and tenancy enforcement (ABATE) team to consider whether legal action is necessary.

Legal action can depend on having evidence that a problem is happening and you may be asked to personally give evidence in court. We will also consider whether we can use sound recording equipment to support the case as additional evidence.

Legal action could include a combination of the list below.

- Possession Order (against council tenants) – a judge listens to the evidence and decides whether to give the council possession of the responsible person's property and evict them.
- Demotion Order – a legal order that removes council tenant security and rights for 12 months. If the order is breached it is likely that the council will be granted possession.

- Injunction – a court order that requires someone to do or stop doing something. Breaking an injunction is contempt of court and can result in a fine or prison sentence.

Witness support

When you report antisocial behaviour to us we will agree with you how we can support you through the process.

Support we can offer includes:

- regular contact with you at agreed times
- arranging warden patrols in your area and/or making the police aware of the situation
- the use of sound recording equipment to capture evidence to support your case
- the use of injunctions in very serious cases

- the use of an emergency alarm ([Linkline](#)) in very serious cases.

There is a separate leaflet called *Antisocial behaviour – The court process*, a guide that explains what support we can give you if you have to attend court.

Closing cases

We will stop investigating a case when the problem has been sorted out and you are happy for us to close it.

Sometimes we will close a case even if you are not happy for us to do so. We will do this if we are satisfied that we have done everything we can that is reasonable and proportionate to the complaint to sort it out.

We will not close a case without telling you and when we do close the case we will contact you and explain the reason.



	What you should do	What we will do
<p>Antisocial behaviour incidents (ASB) requiring an immediate response</p>	<p>In some cases of ASB an immediate response may be required. If this is the case, you should call the council on 0344 980 3333 (24 hour phone line) and describe the issue or incident as well as you can.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When you call the council, we will discuss with you whether immediate action is needed and if it is more appropriate for this to be from police or neighbourhood wardens. • Neighbourhood wardens work until 10pm every day, except Sundays when they finish at 8pm. If you call after these times a response will not be provided until after midday on the following day, when neighbourhood wardens start their duties. If you require an earlier response you should phone the police on 101 (for non emergencies) or on 999 if it is an emergency. • Incidents involving serious risk of injury or loss of property and crimes in progress should be referred to 999. • Calls requiring use of police powers such as enforcement of the street drinking ban, use of drugs and minor crime (such as criminal damage) should be made to 101 – the non-emergency telephone number for the police.

What we may ask you to do	Action we can take
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depending on the type of incident you are reporting, where you are calling from or whether an immediate response is needed, we may suggest that you should contact the police. • We will still take any appropriate follow up action afterwards. 	<p>As a housing landlord the council is not required to provide an immediate response to incidents but where possible we will respond as quickly as we can.</p> <p>We will always advise you of the response we are able to provide, when you call.</p>

	What you should do	What we will do
<p>General ASB or nuisance in or around your home eg neighbours, garden, stairwells and common areas including unlawful use of property</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider speaking to the person responsible (see page 5). • Contact the council on 0344 980 3333 (24 hour phone line). • If you are threatened or assaulted, phone the police 999. • Seek advice from the Citizens Advice Bureau. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An officer from the council will contact you and discuss your problem. • With your agreement the officer will contact the person causing the problem.
<p>ASB or nuisance in the community eg gangs or vandalism</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the council on 0344 980 3333 (24 hour phone line) or the police. • If you are threatened or assaulted phone the police 999. 	<p>An officer will contact you and discuss your problem.</p>
<p>Hate related incidents (see page 6)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the council on 0344 980 3333 (24 hour phone line). 	<p>An officer from our specialist antisocial behaviour and tenancy enforcement (ABATE) team will contact you and discuss your problem. This information will be shared with the police.</p>

What we may ask you to do	Action we can take
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to take appropriate action we need you to work with us. We will discuss the possible solutions to the problem and the evidence or support we will need from you. We will also be as realistic as possible about the actions we can take which must be in proportion to the behaviour. • If the problem continues we may ask you to keep a record of the ASB/nuisance and keep in contact with us. We will not reveal your identity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a problem cannot be resolved by speaking to those responsible the following may happen: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Your neighbourhood housing officer will write telling the person to stop causing the nuisance and warning them of the consequences if they don't. – If the problem continues we will provide support and consider a range of solutions including mediation (see page 7). – A last resort legal action may be taken and we may ask you to be a witness in court (see page 8). – Ultimately a tenant causing ASB/ nuisance may lose their home. This only occurs in exceptional circumstances.
<p>If the problem continues we may ask you to keep a record of the ASB or nuisance and keep in contact with us.</p>	<p>We will work with our partners such as the police, children's services and other council departments to try to resolve issues in the wider neighbourhood.</p>
<p>If the problem continues we will ask you to keep a record of the hate incidents and keep in contact with us.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a problem cannot be resolved by speaking to those responsible you may be invited to a case conference involving other agencies to agree a way forward. • As a last resort, legal action may be taken and we may ask you to be a witness in court (see page 8). <p>While this would only happen in exceptional circumstances, a tenant responsible for hate related behaviour may lose their home.</p>

	What you should do	What we will do
Statutory noise nuisance eg loud music, noise from machinery or barking dogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact the council on 0344 980 3333 (24 hour phone line). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An officer will contact you and discuss your problem. <p>The officer will contact the person causing the problem to ensure that they are aware of the complaint against them. It may be necessary for the council to monitor continuing excessive noise within your home.</p>
Dog related issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report through the city council's website. Log on to www.norwich.gov.uk, search for 'dogs' under A-Z of services and complete an online reporting form. Alternatively, you can contact the customer contact team with the following information: <p>Name</p> <p>Address</p> <p>Details of dog problem including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – nature of complaint (dog fouling, dog off lead, barking dog etc) – exact location of problem – a full description of the problem. Be as accurate as possible and Include details of the actual dog and, if applicable, any individuals involved. 	<p>An officer will contact you and discuss the problem if necessary.</p> <p>NB with regard to barking dogs please see entry in this table headed 'statutory noise nuisance'.</p>

What we may ask you to do	Action we can take
<p>If the problem continues we will ask you to keep a record of the nuisance and keep in contact with us.</p>	<p>If the council is satisfied that a statutory nuisance exists, an abatement notice will be served on the person responsible.</p> <p>Further legal action could result in seizure of equipment, fines or prosecution.</p>
<p>Depending on the type of incident you are reporting, where you are calling from or whether an immediate response is needed, we may suggest that you contact the police.</p> <p>Dangerous dogs – If a dog is thought to be dangerously out of control, please contact the Police on 999.</p> <p>Dog welfare – For concerns about cruelty and the welfare of dogs please contact the RSPCA on 0870 5555 999.</p>	<p>Dog fouling – authorised council officers can issue fixed penalty notices to individuals who fail to clear up after their dogs in public places (eg street, park etc).</p> <p>Stray dogs – the council employs a contractor to collect stray dogs within the city council boundary. The stray dog service operates during normal office hours – Monday to Friday 8am to 5pm (except bank holidays and other public holidays).</p>

	What you should do	What we will do
<p>Flytipping</p> <p>This is the leaving of rubbish in an unauthorised place. (In the case of bins left out on the wrong days or untidy communal areas, please contact your neighbourhood housing officer.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report through the city council's website. Log on to www.norwich.gov.uk, search for flytipping under A-Z of services and complete an online reporting form. Alternatively you can contact the customer contact team with the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> name address fly tipping details including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – exact location (type of property/land and if it is in a public or highly visible area) – what rubbish has been tipped – if the rubbish poses an immediate threat to the public – if you saw anyone dumping the rubbish – date and time of the incident – if the rubbish was dumped from a vehicle – if you would be prepared to be a witness in court, should the council decide to prosecute. 	<p>All reports of flytipping will be investigated where there is material evidence or there are witnesses to the event.</p> <p>We will remove fly tipping where there is no evidence within two working days.</p>

What we may ask you to do	Action we can take
	<p>Flytipping is a criminal offence under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. There are several enforcement options available ranging from formal written warnings to prosecution. The maximum penalties for flytipping on summary conviction are a £50,000 fine and/or twelve months' imprisonment. All action will be taken in accordance with the council's enforcement policy.</p>

	What you should do	What we will do
<p>Graffiti and fly posting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report through the city council's website. Log on to www.norwich.gov.uk, search for graffiti or fly posting under A-Z of services and complete an online reporting form. Alternatively you can contact the customer contact team with the following information: • When reporting graffiti or fly posting please give details of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> name address graffiti/fly posting details: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – exact location (type of property/land and if it is in a public or highly visible area) – what material has been used for the graffiti – if you saw anyone carrying out this act – date and time of the incident – if you would be prepared to be a witness in court should the council decide to prosecute – if the content of the graffiti or fly posting is offensive. 	<p>We will remove offensive graffiti and fly posters within 24 hours of receiving a report and all other graffiti and fly posters within 14 working days.</p> <p>This is a free service where incidents occur on council owned land and buildings, public areas and highways.</p> <p>Privately owned structures are the responsibility of the land owner and a chargeable removal service may be provided.</p>

What we may ask you to do	Action we can take
	<p>Anyone caught carrying out acts of graffiti or flyposting will be issued with a fixed penalty notice that carries a penalty of £80 (reduced to £60 for early payment).</p>

	What you should do	What we will do
<p>Abandoned vehicles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the customer contact team online or by telephone. (Online reporting form available). • When reporting details of an abandoned vehicle please give details of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – where it is – please give as much detail as possible, for example the name of the street plus the nearest house number, business or lamp post number – the make, model and colour of the car – the registration number. 	<p>On the day the abandoned vehicle is reported, details will be passed to citywide services. Over the following days the vehicle will be investigated by making a site visit, checking details with DVLA and possibly talking to the police. If the vehicle is believed to be abandoned a notice will be issued and if, for any reason, we cannot deal with the vehicle as an abandoned vehicle you will be notified.</p>

What we may ask you to do	Action we can take
	<p>If the vehicle is on the highway or public land and appears to be unroadworthy, a warning notice will be fixed to it stating that if it is not claimed after 24 hours it will be removed.</p> <p>If the vehicle appears roadworthy and is found to be abandoned it will be removed after seven days. If the vehicle is on private land the occupier of the land has 15 days to remove or claim the vehicle before the council can act.</p>

Your tenancy, your home

Parking

A guide for tenants



NORWICH
City Council

As a council tenant and Norwich resident there could be a number of parking options available to you.

Off-street parking

Depending where you live, you may be entitled to an off-street parking permit. Please speak to your neighbourhood housing officer for further information on specific arrangements in your local area or visit 'My Norwich' on the homepage of www.norwich.gov.uk where you will be able to find details of any schemes in your area. Alternatively call the customer contact centre on **0344 980 3333** for further advice.

Garages and lockable parking bays

The council has garages located throughout Norwich and a small number of lockable parking bays.

Anyone can apply to rent a council garage or parking space with a lockable post providing you hold a full UK driving licence and are free from arrears on all current and former city council tenancies.

Council tenants are given priority and preferential rates ranging from approximately £17 a month for a lockable bay to approximately £33 a month for a garage in a high demand area.

A list of all garages and bays currently available are advertised every fortnight on the council's website www.norwich.gov.uk/garages. A printed list is also available from City Hall.

Please note that you may only apply for those currently being advertised and applications must be received by the deadline date quoted. No other applications will be considered.

Further information and details on how to apply are available on the council's website or from the customer contact centre.

On-street parking

Parking permits are available to residents of eligible properties in permit parking areas.

On-street parking permit charges for residents are based on vehicle length. This is to reflect the amount of space a car takes up within a parking zone.

There are three categories of permit:

Short

Vehicles under 3.92m

Medium

Vehicles between 3.92m and 4.45m

Long

Vehicles over 4.45m

When you apply for or renew your permit you will be asked for your vehicle make and model so we can determine which category permit you need.

You can find out your vehicle size and the associated permit prices by visiting www.norwich.gov.uk/permits or calling our customer contact team on **0344 980 3333**.

Parking permits can be bought for any period of time between one and 18 months.

Visitor permits

Eligible residents can also apply to use the visitor permit scheme. You can buy a four-hour 'short-stay' visitor permit and up to 60 'all day' scratch card permits.

A free on-street short-stay visitor permit (one per household) is available to residents who live in eligible properties in permit zones and who receive the following means tested benefits:

- Council tax reduction scheme issued by Norwich City Council (formerly known as council tax benefit).
- Employment and support allowance (income related).
- Housing benefit.
- Income support.
- Jobseeker's allowance (income based).
- Pension credit.
- Working tax credit.

To find out more about eligibility and the visitor and resident permit scheme, please visit www.norwich.gov.uk/permits or call **0344 980 3333**.

Your tenancy, your home

If belongings are left in council properties

A guide for tenants



NORWICH
City Council

Tenant
approved

This leaflet explains what will happen if you leave belongings in a council property after the tenancy has ended.

In this leaflet:

'Property' means:

- Any residential dwelling, including garden, loft space, shed, bin-store or garage let with the dwelling.
- Common areas, such as the stairwell and common gardens.
- Any garage, rented separately from the council.

'Value' means the monetary value of any item if sold on the open market.

'Belongings' mean any furniture, clothes, animals, equipment or other personal property.

The general rule is that we will dispose of belongings left in any of our properties at the end of a tenancy. It is only in exceptional circumstances, looked at on a case by case basis, that we will store belongings and that you will be able to get them back.

For introductory and secure tenancies, see paragraph 16.5 of the tenancy agreement.

Things to consider:

- Removal of belongings is very expensive and will include a charge for the use of the property until arrangements can be made for them to be removed.
- If you do not pay this charge, the council will pass your debt onto a debt collection agency and/or will ask the court for a money judgement. Records of county court judgments are kept for six years unless you pay the full amount within one month.

A judgment can make it difficult for you to get credit, like loans, a mortgage or a credit card.

- If you apply to join the housing register, any money you owe from your tenancy, including removal and storage costs, will be taken

into account when assessing your application. Owing money to the council may affect your chances of being re-housed in the future.

- All belongings left in a property will be considered the property of the former tenant. If anybody else leaves belongings behind after a tenancy has ended, the council can only deal with the former tenant, or the former tenant's representative.

What happens when a tenant gives the council notice to end the tenancy

The council will:

1. remove all remaining belongings
2. make a charge for doing so
3. not take an inventory or store any belongings.

If you clear your belongings from your residential property

you may qualify for a 'Leave it Tidy' payment. Please see our website for more details.

What happens when the tenant has died and the property has to be given back to the council

The council will:

4. carry out the steps listed above if the property is not left free of belongings
5. investigate how much money is left in the deceased's estate
6. ask for a charge to be placed on the estate for the removal costs if there is money left in the estate. This means that the money owed to the council will be paid before any bequests are paid to the deceased's heirs.

If you leave a residential property free of all belongings, a 'Leave it Tidy' payment may be made to the deceased's estate.

You have left your tenancy without giving notice

The council will:

7. take photographs and an inventory of remaining belongings
8. arrange immediate removal and disposal of anything perishable eg food in the fridge
9. arrange immediate removal and disposal of anything that is hazardous
10. contact the RSPCA about any animals left behind
11. not open any bags, boxes or other containers as they will be considered rubbish and thrown away
12. dispose of anything else we think has no obvious value straight away, such as clothes, furniture and children's toys. Items such as paintings and ornaments will be considered by us to have no obvious value.
13. If belongings left in a property are valued as being worth less than it would cost to remove/store them and pay off any outstanding housing debts (such as rent, court costs or repair charges), they will be disposed of immediately.
See worked example in Table A opposite.
14. If belongings left in a property are valued as being worth more than it would cost to remove/store them and pay off any outstanding housing debts, the items will be stored for one month. You will, however, be charged removal and storage costs.
See worked example in Table B opposite. If you do not collect your belongings within the month, ownership will pass to the council and you will not qualify for a 'Leave it Tidy' Payment.

Table A: (relates to point 13)

The calculation = value of goods, minus removal/storage costs and any housing debts. For example:

value of goods	£2,000
removal and storage costs	£1,200
outstanding housing debts	£1,000
TOTAL	= (-£ 200) Removal and disposal

Table B: (relates to point 14)

The calculation = value of goods, minus removal/storage costs and any housing debts. For example:

value of goods	£4,000
removal and storage costs	£1,200
outstanding housing debts	£1,000
TOTAL	= £1,800 Stored for one month

You have an eviction date

The council will (in addition to steps 7 to 14 listed previously):

15. allow you to return to the property, if you are evicted, to collect essential items for a period of one hour within two days of the eviction taking place. This is strictly by appointment.

You will not qualify for a 'Leave it Tidy' payment.

Getting belongings out of storage

You will need to:

16. pay any costs the council has incurred removing and storing belongings
17. contact the council to arrange a time to collect them that is convenient to you and the council
18. allow a council officer to be present while you remove belongings
19. sign an updated inventory.

What else will the council do?

- Give you advice about disposing or recycling unwanted belongings.
- Serve a statutory notice that lasts for one month if we store any belongings.

The notice will describe, as best we can, what we have stored.

- Provide the notice, whenever possible, in other languages or formats if required.
- If we have your permission, try to contact somebody who can help you, such as a family member, support agency or advocate.
- Make a reasonable charge for removing and storing belongings. That charge will be the cost to the council for this service.
- Allow access at a mutually convenient time for you to collect belongings provided the removal and storage costs have been paid. A council officer will be present while you collect belongings.

- Sell, donate to charity or dispose of any belongings not collected after one month. If the belongings are sold, we will pay you any money left over after all removal, storage and other housing debts to the council are settled.
- If somebody cannot be traced, return important documents, if found, such as passports or driving licences, to the issuing office.
- Report immediately to the relevant authority any evidence of crime eg illegal drug use, receiving stolen goods or benefit fraud.

What else can you do?

- Provide the council with contact details and an address.
- Have your post re-directed. This is your responsibility and not the council's.
- Dispose of belongings that you no longer want responsibly, recycling when possible.

The process

We dispose of (or recycle) any rubbish or goods which have no value.

If there are goods of value (which in total are worth more than any money owed to the council) we make an inventory/take photographs and move into storage.

We serve a legal notice giving you one calendar month to collect your stored belongings.

Disposal of belongings

If you do not collect your belongings within the month they automatically become the property of the council. We will either sell them, donate them to charity or dispose of them. If we sell them we will give you any money left over after your debts to the council have been settled.

Recharging costs

We will send you a bill covering any costs we incur. This may include:

- a charge for use of the property until arrangements could be made for goods to be stored
- removing rubbish and/or goods from the property
- storing the goods for one calendar month
- disposing of the rubbish and or/goods
- an administration fee.

Recovering costs

We will chase unpaid bills by using a collection agency and through legal action in the courts.



Thinking of buying?

Your right to buy
your council home



NORWICH
City Council

Tenant
approved

Buying your home is probably the biggest financial decision you will ever make so it's important to consider whether it is the right choice for you. **You might find it helpful to visit our website on www.norwich.gov.uk/righttobuyyourhome.aspx** – The site has links to all government and council booklets regarding the Right to Buy plus other useful information and downloadable forms.

When buying a **house** or bungalow, you will purchase the freehold and own the property outright.

When buying a **flat** or maisonette, it is usual to purchase the leasehold. This allows you and your successors to live in the property for a fixed period, usually 125 years. The council will still own the block.

Any land let together with your home (for example, gardens and garages) will normally be treated as part of your home.

Who has the right to buy?

A secure tenant has the right to buy after a qualifying period totalling three years as a public sector tenant and/or a tenant of armed forces accommodation.

You may be able to buy your home with members of your family who have lived with you for the past 12 months, or someone who is a joint tenant with you.

The main reasons that you cannot buy your home are:

- if a court makes a possession order which says that you must leave your home
- if you are an undischarged bankrupt
- if you have a bankruptcy petition pending against you
- if you have made an arrangement with creditors (people you owe money to) and you still owe them money
- if your home is particularly suitable for occupation by elderly people
- if you are living in sheltered housing for the elderly, the physically disabled, the mentally ill or the mentally disabled.

Further information is available in the leaflet '*Your right to buy your home*' which is produced by the Department of Communities & Local Government. You can get a copy from City Hall, from **www.norwich.gov.uk** or from **www.righttobuy.communities.gov.uk**

Applying to buy your home

If you wish to buy your home you need to get an application form from the council which you must complete and return. Be wary of accepting application forms from other sources. The application form is an important legal document so it is a good idea to return it by recorded delivery or to deliver by hand and obtain a receipt. You should keep a copy of the completed form for yourself.

Costs of buying

There are many costs associated with buying a property. As well as finding the purchase price (upfront in cash or with a loan), you will also have to maintain the property. If you buy a property with a leasehold you will have to pay additional service charges (see page 8).

Norwich City Council and the District Valuer (see page 9) won't make any charges for processing your application to buy your home.

Mortgage

Unless you are going to buy your home with cash, you will need a mortgage (a loan to buy property). There are various kinds of mortgage which a bank, building society or an independent adviser can tell you about.

You may have to pay for the cost of arranging the mortgage and will also have to pay a valuation fee.

If you cannot keep up the repayments on your mortgage, the lender may go to court and ask to take over your home. **The council does not have to give**

you another tenancy if you lose your home in this way.

If you lose your income through unemployment, you will need to get information from Job Centre Plus about claiming income support against your mortgage.

Legal advice

You should employ a solicitor or a licensed conveyancer to look after the legal side of buying your home. The Citizens Advice Bureau can advise on local firms, and your local public library should have a list of the solicitors in your area and the type of work they do. Before employing anyone, always ask how much their advice will cost.

Survey

You should have a survey of your home carried out after you receive notice from the council informing you of the sale price and conditions of sale. Make sure you find out the cost before you go ahead with the survey. You should consider either:

- a Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Home Buyers' Survey and Valuation. This is a report and valuation in a standardised format outlining all significant defects
- a building survey. This involves a detailed examination of all the visible parts of the property. It is a good idea to undertake such a survey if the property is old, obviously in need of repair, or if you are considering making alterations. This type of survey may not be available if your home is a flat.

You can obtain more information about both of these surveys from the [Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors](http://www.rics.org), telephone **0870 333 1600**, or you can visit their website at www.rics.org.

Registering ownership

When a sale is completed, you must pay the land registry to register you as the new owner, this will cost around £40.

Stamp duty

For properties over £125,000 you will have to pay stamp duty. This is a tax based on a percentage of the price you pay for the property.

Other regular costs of home ownership

- **Council tax**

This is a separate charge billed directly to you by the council whether you are a tenant or home owner. A small amount of tenants pay council tax as part of their rent. In these cases council tax will be paid as a separate bill when you buy your home.

- **Water charges**

You may pay water charges as part of your rent, but if you buy your home you will have to pay these separately, straight to the water services company.

- **Gas/electricity charges**

You may pay gas or electric charges as part of your rent. If you buy a house, you will have to pay these separately, straight to the services company.

If you buy a flat, you will also have to pay a share of the cost of services supplied to communal areas

and a share of the cost of using any shared heating scheme. Your share of the cost will be charged to you in the form of service charges.

Insurance

You will need to consider taking out insurance cover for your home and mortgage. There are four main types:

- **Buildings insurance.** This is essential, as it covers the full cost of rebuilding your home if it is destroyed by fire or some other incident. In the case of flats, the council arranges this insurance and you will make a contribution. If you need a mortgage to help buy your home, the lender will insist that you have buildings insurance.
- **Contents insurance.** You should insure the contents of your home against theft and other risks.
- **Life assurance.** This will pay off your mortgage if you die before the end of the mortgage period. It means that your family is not left with the heavy burden of mortgage debt.
- **Mortgage payment protection insurance.** You need to think seriously about how you would meet your mortgage repayments if you lost your income, for example, through unemployment or ill health. In many cases, mortgage payment protection insurance will give you the security that you need.

There are various insurance policies offering cover against these risks. The terms, level of cover and costs vary. You should therefore shop around for policies that best suit your needs.

Flat or maisonette owners (leaseholders)

The council is responsible for the upkeep of the building as a whole and any communal areas and facilities. All leaseholders have to pay a share of the council's costs for this work; known as service charges. Your share is based on the number of flats or maisonettes in the block.

Service charges can be several hundred pounds each year, or much more if the block needs major repairs or maintenance, such as a new roof or new windows, and improvements. To get a rough idea of your service charges it is worth asking an existing leaseholder from your block, or you could contact your local residents' or leaseholders' association.

Your service charges can include charges for two different kinds of work:

- **annual charges** for day-to-day maintenance and building services
- **major works** service charges, payable as a lump sum when large-scale repair or refurbishment work is needed.

As a leaseholder, you have to pay the council a nominal rent (known as a **ground rent**) of £10 a year, which is included in the annual service charges.

If you decide you want to buy, the council must give you an estimate of any service charges payable during the first five years of your lease. The council cannot charge you more than the estimated 'major works' service charges during the first five years of your lease, except to take account of inflation.

However, the annual charge can change during the first five years.

There is no limit on charges for repairs and improvements carried out after the first five years. Remember that you will have to pay **major works** service charges whenever your block is repaired. Ask the council about schemes to help you with this.

Further information is available in the leaflet *'Thinking of buying a council flat'* which is produced by the Department of Communities & Local Government. You can get a copy from City Hall, from www.norwich.gov.uk or from www.righttobuy.communities.gov.uk

House owners (freeholders)

You will be responsible for the costs of all repairs and maintenance, regardless of the condition of the property when you bought it. Some freeholders may also have to pay service charges for the repair and maintenance of shared communal areas on an estate, for example, pathways, play areas and gardens.

Internal maintenance

You will be responsible for keeping the inside of your home in good repair.

The right to buy process

Once you have applied to buy your home and the council has agreed, the property will be valued by the council. If you disagree with the valuation you may ask for the District Valuer to carry out a revaluation. This office is separate from the council and their decision is final. If the District Valuer's valuation is higher than the

original council's valuation, you will have to accept it or withdraw your application to buy.

You will receive a discount on the value of the property, based on the length of your tenancy. This will be a percentage of the property value, up to a maximum amount. In April 2015 the maximum discount was £77,900.

This figure increases annually by a percentage equal to the percentage change in the consumer price index (rounded down to the nearest £100) so may have increased at the point you submit an application.

The council will send you an offer notice that provides:

- a description of the property
- the price the council thinks you should pay for the property. This is determined by calculating how much your home was worth at the date on which you submitted your application form and then subtracting your discount. Any improvements you have made will not affect the price. If your discount is reduced because of the maximum allowed, the notice must say so
- estimates of the service charges or improvement costs you will have to pay during the first five years if you buy a flat or maisonette
- descriptions of any structural defects that the council knows about
- the terms and conditions that apply to the sale.

If you are happy with the council's terms for selling your home to you and have arranged to raise the

money, you are ready to go ahead and buy. You should inform the council that you want to proceed, and ask your solicitor for advice on the legal documents and making your payment. It may take a couple of months before you become the owner of your home.

You can take the time you reasonably need to obtain a mortgage or legal advice. You can also take time to discuss the terms of the sale with the council.

You should aim to let the council know as soon as you are ready to go ahead and buy as there are set timescales to complete the process. **If the council doesn't hear from you it may send warning notices, after three months, requesting you complete your purchase. If you still do not complete, your application will be cancelled.** It will help things to go smoothly if, throughout the process, you or your solicitor keeps the council informed on your circumstances, such as how you are progressing with raising the money, or any other issues that may delay the purchase.

Most sales go through quickly, but sometimes there are problems or delays. If you consider that the council is not keeping to the legal timescales, you have the right to challenge the council and should get further details from them.

Resale

If you sell your property within five years of buying your home from us, you will normally have to pay the council a percentage of the resale value.

This valuation does not include the value of any improvements that you made after you purchased the property from us. The amount that you will have to

repay will be determined by the discount you received when you bought your property, expressed as a percentage of the value on which the sale was based.

For example, if the right to buy valuation was £150,000 and the discount was £60,000, the discount expressed as a percentage of the value is 40 per cent. If you sell your property within the first year for a price of £175,000 (without the price being increased by improvements), the maximum that the council can require you to repay is 40 per cent of that amount, being £70,000.

After every full year you own your home, the amount of discount you must repay decreases by one-fifth.

So if in the above example you were selling your property three years after purchase, the amount of discount you would be expected to repay would be two-fifths of 40 per cent, or 16 per cent of £175,000 (£28,000).

The value of your home can go down as well as up.

For each complete year which has elapsed after the sale, the maximum amount you will have to repay is reduced by one-fifth. For example four-fifths in the second year, three-fifths in the third year, two-fifths in the fourth year and one-fifth in the fifth year.



If you would like this information in another language or format such as large print, CD, audio cassette or Braille please email info@norwich.gov.uk or call 0344 980 3333

Paying your way

Your rent and other charges

A guide for tenants



NORWICH
City Council

Tenant
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This leaflet explains your rent and what to do if you have problems paying it.

Norwich City Council collects its rent by direct debit.

How your rent is set

We work out your council rent using a formula set by the government, taking into account various factors, including:

- **The average manual wages in your local area** – A comparison is made between the average wage in your region and the national average wage.
- **The value of your home** – A comparison is made between the value of your home and the national average council property value. The value is based on a formula supplied by central government.
- **The number of bedrooms in your home** – The more bedrooms in your home, the higher your rent will be.

Could my rent be different to my neighbours?

Yes. If you have more bedrooms than your neighbours, or if your

property is valued higher because, for example, it has a garden, you could have a higher rent than your neighbours.

The rent may be different for near identical homes if they are in different locations, as location is a factor in estimating the value of a property.

If you recently moved into your home the rent charge may have been set higher than the rent paid by long-standing tenants for similar properties because of rent restructuring. If you would like more information about this please contact the rents team on **0344 980 3333**.



Other charges

As well as the basic charge for the accommodation your rent may include other services and charges as explained below. We will write to you at least four weeks before the beginning of each financial year (the first Monday in April) to tell you about your rent for that year. If we need to review your rent during a financial year we will give you at least four weeks notice of any changes.

What you pay

Inclusive charge

The amount you pay for your council home is called an inclusive charge because in many cases it includes the water rates for the property. If there is no charge for water rates your water will be metered and the water company will bill you separately. The inclusive charge can cover other payments such as heating or household insurance.

Charges for services

If you have additional services such as a caretaker service or window cleaning of communal areas you will pay for these as part of your rent.

Support services

These are the services provided to tenants in sheltered housing and good neighbour schemes and to tenants who are connected to the Norwich Community Alarm Service (NCAS).

You will have been told which of these charges apply to you and how much they are when you received an offer of accommodation and when you signed for your tenancy. If you have a query or are unsure about what you are being charged for contact the customer contact team on **0344 980 3333**.

If you rent a council garage this will be charged separately. Council tax is a separate charge for your property – for queries about council tax and council tax benefit contact **0344 980 3333**.

When you pay

Your rent is payable for 50 weeks of the year (or 51 in some financial years). This is because we do not charge rent over the Christmas period. If you pay by direct debit or calendar monthly, this is taken into account in the calculation of payments.


The rent year runs from the first Monday in April of the current year to the first Monday in April of the following year. The week runs from Monday to Sunday.

You may be entitled to housing benefit for all or part of your rent but this will not cover charges such as water rates, heating or insurance. Housing benefit is not payable for the two rent-free weeks at Christmas.

It costs nothing to make a claim. Contact housing benefit on **0344 980 3333** for advice.

How you pay

Direct debit



The council would prefer tenants to pay by direct debit or standing order. This is where payments are taken directly from your bank or building society account and paid into your rent account. You can choose to pay on the 7th, 17th or 27th of each month. If your account is in arrears you will need to discuss this with an income officer. Call the Direct Debit hotline (**01603 212399**) to set up over the phone, a direct debit to pay your rent or to request a paper form. Direct debit forms

can also be downloaded from **www.norwich.gov.uk**

How instalments are calculated

Direct debit payments are divided into 12 instalments over the financial year.

We will write to you to inform you of the instalment amounts and the debit dates.

The Direct Debit Guarantee covers you if a mistake is made. You also have the right to cancel your direct debit at any time.

Instalments will be automatically adjusted if there are any changes to the amount you need to pay, for example if your housing benefit entitlement changes. We will write to inform you of the new amounts.

If you decide to pay by direct debit part way through the year we will calculate the rent due for the number of weeks left in the financial year, add on any balance outstanding, and divide this amount into monthly instalments for the remaining months in the financial year.

Missed payment

If the bank rejects your direct debit payment we will contact you. Some banks will charge

you for a rejected payment. Please contact an income officer if you have missed a payment.

What if I don't have a bank account?

Anyone can open a basic bank account unless they are an undischarged bankrupt or have history of fraud or bad debts. Some bank accounts make charges for unpaid direct debits but others do not. A leaflet on basic bank accounts is available from The Money Advice Service. Visit their website at **www.themoneyadviceservice.org.uk**

If you do not have a direct debit in operation, it is your responsibility to make sure that your rent is paid for each week that it is due.



Payment by telephone

Call **0344 980 3333** and have your debit or credit card handy. There is an additional charge if you pay using a credit card.



Payment by internet

Log on to: **www.norwich.gov.uk** to pay by debit or credit

card. Click Pay online, select the link 'Make online payment' and then follow the instructions. There is an additional charge if you pay using a credit card.

Payment in person

You can pay your rent and some other charges (eg rechargeable repairs and garage) by using a payment card. A colour coded payment card will be sent to you for each different type of payment required.

You can pay using a card at:



- Any post office in the UK by cash or cheque. Cheques should be made payable to Post Office Ltd.



- Any PayPoint outlet in the UK by cash.

Please see the map for location of local post offices and PayPoint outlets.

Contact the customer contact team on **0344 980 3333** if you want to order a card.

Standing order



If you want to pay by standing order please contact the housing income team.

If you pay by standing order you will need to set this up with your bank or building society and make sure that your payments cover the rent due and that amounts are adjusted to take account of any change in rent or housing benefit entitlement.

Rent arrears

Paying the rent can be difficult if you are on a low income or have money problems.

However, you may be entitled to housing benefit or it may be that your claim is still being processed.

If you have been asked to provide information for your housing benefit claim and have not done so your benefit cannot be calculated and paid.

If we have written to you about rent arrears or if you are worried about not being able to pay your rent contact the housing income team on **0344 980 3333**.

An income officer will talk over the problem with you. It is often possible to make an arrangement to pay off your arrears by instalments. If you keep to the agreed arrangement, in most cases, we will not take any further action.

Money and budgeting advice

The council is committed to helping tenants and their families stay in their homes and has a specialist team of money and budgeting advisers who can help you to sort out your finances. If you would like to find out more about the advice available, or be referred to a money or budgeting adviser, contact the customer contact team on **0344 980 3333** or email **moneyadvisers@norwich.gov.uk**

Legal action

The vast majority of tenants pay their rent on time and without problems and the council may be able to help

tenants who are experiencing difficulties paying the rent.

The housing advice team may be able to advise you on your options, telephone **0344 980 3333** to make an appointment.

In some cases, however, it may become necessary to take legal action to recover non-payment of rent and this can, in extreme cases, eventually lead to eviction.

If you are sent rent arrears letters, it is important you do not ignore these or break an agreed arrangement for paying off your arrears or you could risk losing your home.

Although eviction is very serious, the council does evict tenants when there are persistent rent arrears, without good reason, or arrangements are broken.

Making payments



Call the Direct Debit hotline (**01603 212399**) to set up, over the phone, a Direct Debit to pay your rent or to request a paper form. Alternatively, Direct Debit forms for rent and other services can be downloaded from **www.norwich.gov.uk**



If you have a Norwich City Council **payment card** you can pay your rent, council tax and bills for other council services at any **Post Office** or **PayPoint** outlet. Call 0344 980 3333 for details of your nearest outlet, or visit www.allpay.net for details.



Have your **debit or credit* card** and your rent account reference number ready and call 0344 980 3333 (24 hours).

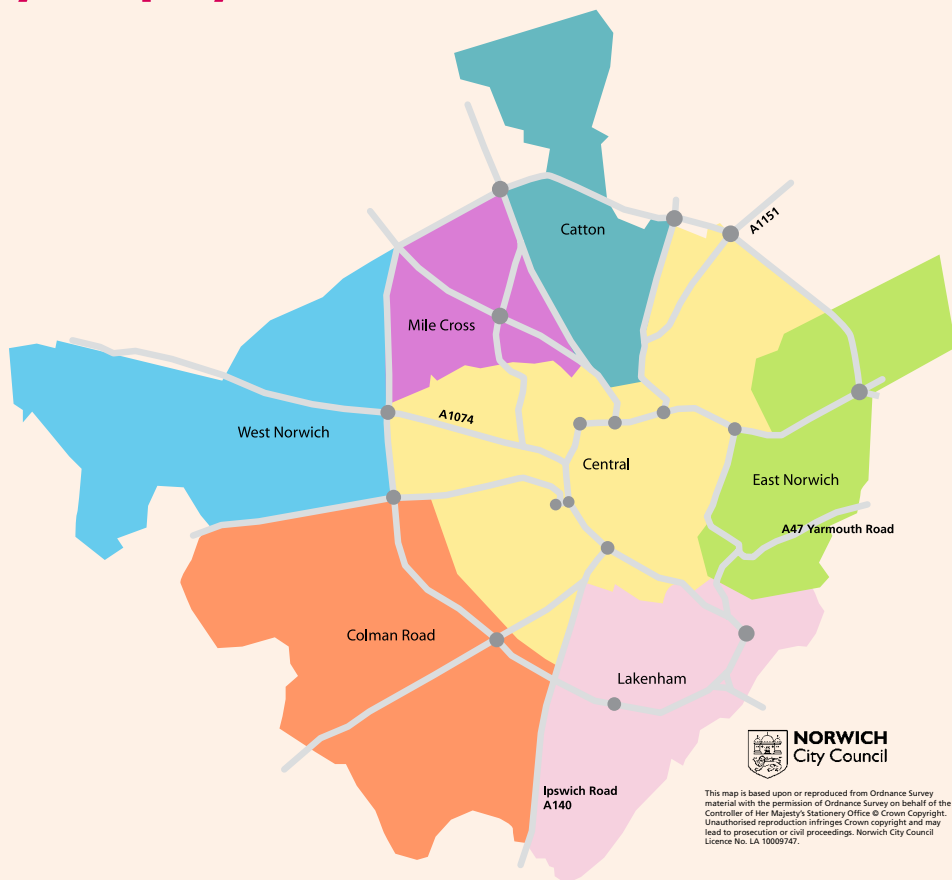


Go to www.norwich.gov.uk, click '**pay for it**' and then click '**housing rents**'. Payments can be made by debit or credit* card.

* please note that we have to charge a handling fee for credit card payments. You will be advised of the amount of the fee before your transactions can go ahead.



PayPoint outlets and post offices in Norwich where you can pay using your payment card



Catton

Paypoint

Angel Stores, Angel Road

Co-op, 3 Woodgrove Parade, Catton Grove

One Stop Stores, 146 Constitution Hill

One Stop Stores, Woodcock Road

Petrogas Filling Station, 162 Cromer Road

PJs, 119 Spencer Street

Premier, 282 St Faiths Road

Stop n Go, 1 Woodgrove Parade

Waterloo Food & Wine, 122 Waterloo Road

Post Office

Catton Grove

Fifers Lane

Central

Paypoint

City Convenience Store, 119 Magdalen St
Co-op, 50 Dereham Road

Co-op, Earlham House Shops, Earlham Rd

Co-op, 95 Unthank Road

Co-op, 154 Unthank Road

Heigham News, 268 Heigham Street

Londis, 28-29 Suffolk Square

McColls, 24 Anglia Square

Mr News, 11 Castle Meadow

M&M Store, 65 Wingfield Road

PW Sears, 139 Unthank Road

Spar, 6 St Augustines Gate

Taylor's Newsagent, 142 Dereham Rd

TEJ General Stores, 55-57 Magdalen Rd

Post Office

Castle Mall

Magdalen Street

Dereham Road

Silver Road

Earlham House

Vauxhall Street

Colman Road

Paypoint

Colman News, 141 Colman Road

Costcutter, 7-9 Parmenter Road

Co-op, 87 Lovelace Road

East of England Co-op, 131 Colman Road

McColls, 78 Colman Road

One Stop Stores, 35-37 Leopold Road

Post Office

Colman Road

University Plain

Eaton

Mile Cross

Paypoint

AB Newsagents, 150 Reepham Road

Co-op, 321 Aylsham Road

Co-op, 90-92 Middletons Road

Drayton Stores, 183 Drayton Road

HJ News, 175 Drayton Road

Norwich Food Centre, 110 Boundary Road

SB News, 100-108 Bowers Avenue

Woodland Store, 196 Middletons Lane

Post Office

Drayton Road

Mile Cross

Hellesdon

East Norwich

Paypoint

Caplan Stores, 170-172 Salhouse Road

Co-op, 169-171 Plumstead Road

Co-op, Norwich Station, Thorpe Road

Co-op, Witard Road

Londis News, 43 Cannerby Lane

Londis News, 160 Heathgate

Londis News, 47 South Hill Road

One Stop Stores, 3-5 Clancy Road

One Stop Stores, 106 Quebec Road

Rosary Road Stores, 106 Rosary Road

Watling Stores, Watling Road

Post Office

Thunder Lane

Yarmouth Road

Lakenham

Paypoint

BP garage, Hall Road

BP garage, Martineau Lane

Co-op, Friar Tuck Road

Co-op, Hall Road

Oasis, 63 Long John Hill

Post Office

Tuckswood

New Lakenham

West Norwich

Paypoint

Chet Store, 71 Hotblack Road

Cloverhill News, 20 Waldegrave

Co-op, 506a Dereham Road

Co-op, 200 Norwich Road

Fiveways Co-op, Earlham Green Lane

Kamajen News, 179 Earlham Green Lane

Knowland News, 69 Knowland Grove

L&K Lane Stores, 2c Larkman Lane

One Stop Stores, 94 Norwich Road

Open All Hours, 9-11 Earlham West Centre

Premier, 85-87 Cadge Road

West Earlham Store, 67 Wilberforce Rd

Post Office

Bowthorpe

Larkman Lane

Fiveways

North Earlham

Alternative payment methods to Norwich City Council

	Direct Debit	Post Office	PayPoint	Telephone	Internet	Standing order
Housing rent	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Garage rent	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Council tax	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Business rents	✓			✓	✓	✓
Community alarm invoices	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Leasehold service charges		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Housing benefit overpayments				✓		✓
Invoices for repairs				✓	✓	
Parking penalty charge notices				✓	✓	
Allotment rents				✓		
Parking permits				✓		
Pest control treatments				✓		
Stray dog payments				✓		

Are you paying too much for your water?

Did you know...

Latest figures from Anglian Water suggest that if you pay your water charges with your rent, it could be costing you more than it would on a meter!

Do you live in a small property, perhaps a flat or bungalow?
Do you live alone or with one other person?
Are your water rates included in your rent to Norwich City Council?

If **YES** then you could probably save money with a water meter
visit www.anglianwater.co.uk to find out or call
them direct on 03457 919155



NORWICH
City Council

Estimated costs for metered water

- one-person household **£5.50 per week**
- two-person household **£8.00 per week**
- three-person household **£9.50 per week**
- four-person household **£10.60 per week**

even less for below average water usage

Good reasons for choosing a meter:

- 1 Switching is easy and installation is free!
- 2 You can switch back to rateable value based charges at any time in the first two years! (certain rules apply to some of the special tariffs)
- 3 You can still pay weekly at any Post Office or PayZone outlet.
- 4 If you live in a home where a meter can't be fitted, (some tower blocks, for example), Anglian Water can estimate your water usage and you can still save money!

Like to know more or apply for a meter?

Visit www.anglianwater.co.uk

or call Anglian Water direct on **03457 91 91 55**.

Paying your way

Home contents insurance

A guide for tenants



NORWICH
City Council



Norwich City Council does not insure the contents of your home. Hence if the contents are destroyed or damaged and you do not have insurance cover you will have to pay to replace them.

Under a special scheme arranged by the council, with Allianz Insurance plc, it's easy for you to protect the contents of your home. The scheme, which is open to all our tenants, enables you to arrange insurance at a special affordable rate.

About the council's insurance scheme

- Most of your home contents (furniture, clothing, carpets and electrical items) will be insured. The cover automatically includes extended accidental damage and personal possessions cover. The insurance also covers the replacement of the contents of your freezer and, if your house keys are lost or stolen, replacement of external locks. There is no excess if you wish to make a claim under this policy. There is also cover for personal liability.
- You will be insured against fire, theft, flood, vandalism, water damage and other household risks.
- Insurance payments are payable weekly alongside your rent.
- The cost of insurance varies with the amount of cover you need. A typical amount of cover, £20,000, including the automatic extended accidental damage and cover for your personal possessions will currently cost £1.75 per week – that's just £91 per year!
- Cover from £9,000 - £35,000 is available for tenants aged under 60 and £6,000 - £35,000 for tenants aged 60 and over.

- All your home contents are covered by the policy on a 'new for old' basis, with the exception of linen and clothing. These items will be replaced at their current cost, less an amount for wear and tear.
- In addition to your standard contents cover, you have the option to add, at an extra cost: wheelchair cover, hearing aid cover, cover for the structure of garden sheds, greenhouses and garages.

Contact the customer service team on **0344 980 3333** or email **info@norwich.gov.uk** to request more information and/or an application form. Alternatively download the 'contents insurance for tenants' application form from the council's website **www.norwich.gov.uk**

Terms and conditions, limits and exclusions apply.
A copy of the policy wording is available on request.
Any premiums listed include Insurance Premium Tax at the current rate.

Paying your way

Budgeting and money advice

Exclusively for Norwich
City Council tenants



NORWICH
City Council

Tenant
approved

Whether you are a new or existing council tenant, moving home is an exciting and stressful time. It can also be very costly, with extra expenditure and new bills to consider and pay.

As your landlord, we want you to get off to the best possible start and the council is committed to providing services to help you achieve this. Our budgeting and money advice services are exclusively available to you, whether you are a new or existing Norwich City Council tenant.

Our friendly advisers offer a free and confidential service and are happy to talk to you about any financial concerns or worries you may have. They can speak to you on the telephone or meet face-to-face, either in your home or in a council office. We are here to help in a number of ways. For example, our budget advisers can help you sort out and manage your budget and our money advisers can offer you in-depth debt advice.

If you are struggling to pay your rent, or are worried that you may have problems which

could affect your rent payments, please contact us. For details of other organisations that can offer advice and support for a range of other reasons please see the 'Local services and other useful information' leaflet in Section 5 of this handbook.

Please note that in times of real emergency the budget and money advisers are authorised to issue Foodbank vouchers.

Budgeting advice - help and advice on everyday expenses

Challenge our budgeting advisers to save you a few pounds each week! From advice on running a household budget to saving money on everyday bills, a 'financial health check' will help you make the most of the money you have.

A budgeting adviser will typically go through your

income and expenses with you and make suggestions to help you stretch your money a little further.

However, there is no commitment involved and if you would just like to chat about energy switching, pay day loans, whether a water meter is for you, or anything money related then give us a call.

Contact

- Julie Bunn on
01603 212429
- Darren Leeder on
01603 213107
- email: **housingincome@norwich.gov.uk**

Money advice - dealing with debt

Over a third of UK households are living with serious debt. The causes of debt are varied and often complex. Reasons for falling into debt include:

- Changes and reductions in benefits – including sanctions and overpayments
- Income changes - reduction in salary/hours, sickness or unemployment

- Household changes – relationship breakdown, changes in residents

Once in debt, it is highly likely that you will have people chasing you for money, and in some cases, taking court action against you to recover their debts. It can seem like a never ending cycle with little hope of getting out of it.

Don't worry – help is at hand! Norwich City Council's money advice team is here to help you with a discreet service, exclusively for our tenants.

Your money adviser will work with you and offer a level of practical support based upon your individual circumstances and needs. Support includes:

- Negotiating with your creditors to take the immediate pressure off you.
- Working with you, and other organisations, to help improve your circumstances in both the short and long term.
- Looking at solutions that best suit your circumstances and then agreeing with you on how to implement these.

- Offering advice on benefit entitlements and how to apply; including how to appeal if refused/sanctioned.
- Boosting your confidence to help you budget and deal with your debts and creditors.
- Working on a realistic and sustainable budget.
- Being available to discuss any concerns you may have, even when the case is closed.

If you would like to make an appointment to see an adviser or get financial advice:

- Email the money advice team at **moneyadvice@norwich.gov.uk**
- Speak with your income officer or neighbourhood housing officer
- Telephone the customer contact team on **0344 980 3333**

Paying your way

Council rent

What if I can't pay?



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Your rent is payable for 50 weeks of the year (or 51 in some financial years). This is because we do not normally charge rent over the Christmas period. If, however, your account is in arrears, or you are subject to a court order, you will be expected to continue to make your agreed payments over this period.

Paying the rent can be difficult if you are on a low income or have money problems. **Do not panic, we could help.**

You could be entitled to housing benefit or waiting for your claim to be processed. If you have made a benefit claim and been asked to provide information for this and have not done so, your benefit cannot be calculated, and the claim may be cancelled.

If we have written to you about rent arrears or you are worried about not being able to pay your rent, contact the housing income team on **0344 980 3333** or email **housingincome@norwich.gov.uk**

An income officer will talk over the problem with you. It is often possible to arrange to pay your arrears by

instalments. If you keep to the agreed arrangement, in most cases, we will not take any further action.

Our money advice team may also be able to help, including assisting with budgeting or negotiating with creditors.

Money advice

The council is committed to helping tenants and their families stay in their home and has a team of budgeting advisers to help you manage everyday expenses and a specialist team of money advisers who can help support you if you have multiple debts.

If you would like to find out more about the free and confidential advice available, or be referred to an adviser, contact us on **0344 980 3333** or email **housingincome@norwich.gov.uk**

Legal action

Where there are persistent problems with arrears or we have not been contacted to make arrangements for clearing these, we may need to take legal action. **Do not ignore the rent arrears letters we send you or break an agreed arrangement for paying off your arrears or you could risk losing your home.**

If you do not make contact or payments to reduce the amount of arrears, we will serve a:

- Notice of Proceedings for Possession (NPP) – if you are an introductory tenant
- Notice of Seeking Possession (NSP) – if you are a secure tenant
- Notice to Quit (NTQ) – if you are a non-secure tenant.

These are legal documents and the first stage in an application to the court to repossess your home.

Notice of Proceedings for Possession (NPP)

This expires after 28 days. After this time legal action can be taken for up to 12 months or until your tenancy converts to a secure one. After service of the NPP you are entitled to request a review of the decision to serve the NPP on you, within 14 days.

If you request a review a council officer who has not previously been involved in your case will carry this out.

Notice of Seeking Possession (NSP)

This expires after 28 days. After this, and for up to 12 months, legal action can be taken.

Notice to Quit (NTQ)

The NTQ expires after 28 days. After this, and for up to 12 months, legal action can be taken.

If during the notice period you do not make and keep to an arrangement to pay, we will apply to the court for a possession hearing.

Possession hearing

At this stage you will usually have legal costs added to your debt. We will continue to try our best to contact you to agree an arrangement for you to pay off your arrears. It is still not too late to contact the income officer dealing with your case.

A date will be set for a court hearing and you will be informed of this. When you know the date of the hearing you should contact the housing income team beforehand and attend court on the day.

In court we will apply for a possession order.

Possession order

If you are an introductory or non-secure tenant the court will grant an order for possession – **this is never suspended**. This gives us the right to send a bailiff to evict you from your home.

If you are a secure tenant, the court may decide to suspend

the possession order if, for example, you make an offer to the court to pay by instalments.

If this is the case, a Suspended Possession Order will stay in force until all the arrears and court costs are paid.

If you miss any payments we can apply to the court for a Warrant for Possession, which means that a bailiff can evict you from your home. Even at this stage it isn't too late to prevent you from losing your home. Speak to us or one of the independent advice agencies on the following page.

If you are evicted, the council will still take action to recover the amount owed.

Although the council has some legal duties to help homeless people, the law may not cover you. Finding a home may be difficult and you may also find it hard to get credit.

The housing advice team may be able to advise you on your options, telephone **0344 980 3333** to make an appointment. Although eviction is very serious, the council does take this action with tenants when there are persistent rent arrears without good reason or arrangements are broken.

If you are facing court action there may still be time to prevent your eviction.

Please call us urgently on **0344 980 3333** or email **housingincome@norwich.gov.uk**

We really want to help you keep your home or alternatively you can contact the following agencies for independent advice:

Norfolk Community Law Service

**St Clement House
2-16 Pottergate
Norwich NR3 1BQ
www.ncls.co.uk**

Shelter

**Whitefriars House
50 Fishergate
Norwich NR3 1SE
t: 03445 151860**

Looking after your home

Asbestos

A guide for tenants



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Norwich City Council takes the potential risks posed by asbestos very seriously, while recognising that if left sealed and undisturbed it poses no risk to health.

Asbestos is a glassy rock which occurs naturally in different parts of the world. The rock is formed in strands or fibres which, when processed, can be split down in size until they are invisible without the aid of a microscope.

Because of the good heat and acid resistant qualities of asbestos materials, they have been used in lots of construction, engineering and manufacturing processes. In fact, anything that requires a material for fire protection, insulation and strength may have asbestos in, or around it.

In a domestic situation you are most likely to find asbestos in small concentrations in textured coatings such as Artex, textured paints, and in asbestos cement sheets used in panels and other sheet materials.

It is also possible that you might find asbestos in the following locations:

Heating appliances such as boilers or storage heaters, ceiling and wall board, bath panels, window sills, old plaited electric cables, fire blankets, bakelite fittings, garage and shed walls and roof panels, roofing felt, gutters and downpipes, lino and PVC vinyl floor tiles, textured coatings, mastics, paints and sealants, hair dryers, ovens, fridges, ironing boards, wall plugging compound, cold water tanks in the loft.

This is by no means a full list, but it does highlight the many ways in which asbestos has been used.

Materials containing asbestos are safe if sealed and left undisturbed and they should be left that way.

Everyone should take care when they are doing repair work or DIY around the home, especially if drilling or using power tools. If you come across any material you think may be asbestos, do not disturb it. The main danger from asbestos comes from breathing in the dust or fibres.

Anything that you think might contain asbestos should be checked for damage. If you find damaged or broken material that may contain asbestos then leave it alone, keep away from the area and call the customer contact team for advice.

Asbestos register

The council has set up an asbestos register for all its own buildings, with information from surveys carried out by specialist asbestos surveyors.

This register will help the council to alert tenants, contractors and people who work in or visit council buildings as to where there is asbestos.

Norwich City Council and its contractors involved in work which may bring them into contact with asbestos have been trained to recognise suspect materials and to know how to deal with them. Asbestos removal is only carried out by specialist contractors appointed by the council.

Any questions?

For asbestos in council housing contact:

Norwich housing

You can contact us with your housing enquiries by:

- ringing the customer contact team on **0344 980 3333**
- emailing info@norwich.gov.uk
- visiting the customer contact team at City Hall.

For out of hours emergencies (such as fire damage to asbestos) contact:

- Out of hours emergency number (24 hours)
01603 412180

For a full list of Norwich City Council services visit

www.norwich.gov.uk

Looking after your home

Gas/solid fuel safety inspections

A guide for tenants



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working with



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www.gasway-norwichcitycouncil.co.uk

This leaflet is intended as a guide only. For more information regarding your gas/solid fuel service, or your annual safety inspection, please contact Gasway on 01603 258617.

What is my responsibility as a tenant?

As a tenant you must allow us access to your home to carry out maintenance or safety checks on appliances and/or flues that we provide for your use.

In addition to carrying out a full gas service, we also need to check properties to ensure that they are safe. This includes checking any liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) units, electric heaters including storage heating, solid fuel appliances including open fires, district heating, tenants own installations and any other form of heating system you may be using. We will also check any gas pipe work throughout the property to ensure it is safe.

Failure to provide access is a breach of your tenancy agreement and may result in legal action to obtain access

and/or possession of your home. Costs incurred to obtain access will become your responsibility. This includes any legal costs, and costs incurred as a result of failed appointments.

Who is responsible for the annual gas/solid fuel safety inspection?

As your landlord, Norwich City Council is required to annually inspect/sweep all council-owned appliances, including solid fuel appliances and open fires, in your property to make sure they are safe to use. The service includes gas appliances, open fires, flues and pipe work, and checks for unsafe emissions and leaks.

After the safety inspection you are provided with a gas or solid fuel safety record, certifying a registered GAS Safe or HETAS registered engineer has

completed the inspection and that the appliances are safe.

Any appliances that are found to be potentially dangerous will be labelled as such, and the appropriate warning notice issued.

It is important to allow our engineers access to carry out the safety inspection. The annual safety check on gas and solid fuel appliances carried out by an approved engineer, on behalf of Norwich City Council, is a legal requirement. Always ask for a GAS Safe REGISTER ID card, or a Heating Equipment Testing and Approval Scheme (HETAS) registered ID card, before allowing someone to check or fit gas or solid fuel appliances.

What happens when I move in?

You should arrange your own gas supply (see gas reinstatement leaflet). We would recommend that you take a meter reading as soon as possible after

moving in, to provide to your chosen supplier.

When you move into your property you will be provided with a copy of the latest safety check record. Norwich City Council's approved contractor Gasway will carry out a further safety inspection if it attends the property to reconnect your gas supply.

How is the annual safety inspection carried out?

All our safety inspections and maintenance work is carried out by our approved contractor, Gasway, or an approved subcontractor.

You will receive written notification in advance of the engineer attending to carry out your inspection. Please follow the instructions in the letter.

If the appointment is not convenient please call **01603 258617** to rebook a date and specify whether you would like your visit in the morning or afternoon. Our contractor Gasway can also offer a limited number of evening and weekend appointments subject to availability.

Engineers all carry appropriate identification, which they should show before entering your property. They will carry out a full safety inspection and the certificate will be posted to you within 28 days.

If any appliance fails the inspection and is not safe to use, the engineer is legally required to disconnect it and make it safe, and issue a warning advice notice.

If it is not possible to carry out the repair on the same visit the engineer will provide you with temporary heating and, wherever possible, temporary hot water facilities.

What if I have installed my own gas or solid fuel appliance?

If you have your own gas or solid fuel appliances in your property, such as a gas fire or cooker, the engineer is required to visually check that these are safe to use. However, Norwich City Council is not obliged to carry out any repairs to these appliances.

If the appliance fails the visual inspection, the engineer is

legally required to disconnect the gas supply to the appliance or turn the appliance off at the switch. We will write to you to advise you of the fault and to confirm the action that has been taken. The engineer will issue a warning advice notice and the appliance will be labelled as unsafe to use.

Please note: you must obtain Norwich City Council's written permission before installing any heating appliances and a GAS Safe or HETAS registered engineer must carry out the installation. This includes opening up any fireplace within your property. Norwich City Council will not normally grant permission to install heating appliances, or open up fireplaces, due to the potential health and safety risks if this work is not carried out properly by a registered engineer, and because of potential future maintenance costs.

It is your responsibility to ensure that any gas or solid fuel appliances you own or have installed yourself are checked on an annual basis by a GAS Safe or HETAS registered engineer. This includes any Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) appliances.

If you own any LPG appliance please refer to section 8 of your tenancy handbook which states:

8.8 You may only use bottled gas appliances in accordance with paragraph 8.7. In particular, you may only do so if the condition of your home and the lay-out of your home and neighbouring properties render it safe to do so and bottles are stored outside. Such appliances are not generally suitable for flats.

LPG appliances can be very dangerous if used and stored incorrectly. Using and storing any LPG appliance incorrectly and not in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions

is a breach of your tenancy agreement.

What if my heating or hot water breaks down?

Gasway is employed to repair breakdowns of Norwich City Council-owned appliances. Please contact us on **0344 980 3333** (24 hours).

You can contact us, report non-urgent heating repairs online, find helpful advice and tips, and request a call-back at

www.gasway-norwichcitycouncil.co.uk

If your breakdown occurs outside office hours and is an emergency, an engineer will try and repair the fault. If it is not possible to sort out the problem we may need to provide temporary heating and hot water until the repair can be carried out.

What if I smell gas?

If you smell gas or think there is a leak you must phone the National Grid on **0800 111 999** immediately. It should respond to your call straight away.

Do not:

- smoke
- ignite any flames
- touch, or do anything, which may spark and ignite gas (this includes light switches, lighters, and cooker ignitions)
- use mobile phones near the leak.

It is important you telephone the National Grid if you think you smell gas; the leak may not be inside your property but could be coming from a neighbouring property or the street.

National Grid engineers will identify the source of the problem and carry out any repairs they may be responsible for, or turn off the gas supply and notify the council of any repairs that may be required (depending on the location of the problem).

Why is it important to check that gas and heating appliances are safe to use?

Most gas and solid fuel appliances need a chimney or flue to remove the fumes and to ensure that the fumes from

the appliance are not mixed with the fresh air you need to breathe. Gas and solid fuel appliances need air to burn safely. With enough air, these appliances produce carbon dioxide and water in safe amounts, which are normally taken away by a chimney or flue. A gas or solid fuel appliance will produce carbon monoxide if there is too little air, or the chimney, flue or gas vent is blocked.

What is carbon monoxide gas?

Carbon monoxide gas is highly poisonous to both people and animals. It is difficult to recognise because it has no colour, smell or taste. The danger signs are stains, soot or discolouring around the top of a gas fire or at the top of a gas water heater or boiler. A conventional gas appliance should have a normal blue flame – not yellow or orange.

The symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are similar to those caused by other illnesses, such as colds or flu. However, if you suffer from unexplained headaches, chest

pains, muscular weakness, sickness, diarrhoea, stomach pains, sudden dizziness when standing up, or general lethargy after using a gas or solid fuel appliance, or when burning fuel on an open fire, stop using it, report it to Norwich City Council and go and see your doctor.

The risk of dying from carbon monoxide poisoning caused by a faulty solid fuel appliance or

open fire (either through poor installation or lack of maintenance) is estimated to be up to 10 times higher than dying from carbon monoxide produced by a faulty gas appliance.

If you think there is a gas leak call the National Grid immediately on freephone 0800 111 999.

This leaflet is intended as a guide only.

For more information about your gas/solid fuel safety inspection or if you have any questions or need to report a fault, see the contact details below:

To contact Norwich City Council:

t: 0344 980 3333
e: info@norwich.gov.uk
visit: the customer contact team at City Hall

If you smell gas or think there could be a gas or carbon monoxide leak call

the National Grid immediately:
t: 0800 111 999

There are many gas suppliers, here are just two:

e.on enquiries:
t: 0800 052 0346

British Gas enquiries:
t: 0845 955 5200

Contact us online at **www.gasway-norwichcitycouncil.co.uk** for heating advice and to report your non-urgent heating repairs.



working with



NORWICH
City Council

Gasway and Norwich City Council have created a brand new website:

www.gasway-norwichcitycouncil.co.uk

What's on the website?

Customer feedback

This is your opportunity to let us know what you think of our service. Once you have done this, you will be entered into a free prize draw to win a £50 voucher.

Report a repair

You are able to report a repair if you need a visit from Gasway. There's a simple online form to fill in for an appointment request. However, if you prefer, you can still contact us by phone.



Tenants

This section is to advise tenants on the legal requirements of gas safety inspections on all appliances. Norwich City Council has a duty as the landlord to ensure your homes are safe. Therefore, Gasway will write to tenants and arrange a visit to carry out a gas service when your home is due to be checked.

Leaseholders

The website contains information about gas safety regulations if you are a leaseholder or live in a leasehold property. There's also special offers on gas servicing and cover plans for leaseholders.

Advice and general information

This page is full of simple and effective ways to save energy on bills. For example:

- turn radiators down in rooms which you only use occasionally
- turning your thermostat down by 1°C could cut your heating bills by up to 10 per cent and save you around £100 a year
- is your water too hot? Your cylinder thermostat shouldn't need to be set any higher than 60°C/140°F.

Contact us

You can contact Gasway or Norwich City Council on the details below:

Gasway

t: 01603 258617

e: info@gasway.co.uk

Norwich City Council

t: 0344 980 3333

e: info@norwich.gov.uk



Looking after your home

Repairs to council homes

A guide for tenants



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This leaflet describes the council's repairs service and tells you about the kind of maintenance work that is carried out. It also explains responsibilities for repairs and any works which you may be charged for.

Our agreement with you

As your landlord we are responsible for many, but not all, repairs to your council home. Your tenancy agreement sets out the rights and obligations of the council and its tenants, and section eight of the agreement deals with repairs to and maintenance of your home.

Where a repair is not considered normal wear and tear, for example if damage has been caused by you, members of your household or visitors there is likely to be a charge. In most cases any charge would be payable in advance of the work being ordered but if the repair is an emergency or in the home of a particularly vulnerable person we will make arrangements for you to pay after the work has been carried out.

Insurance

We strongly recommend that you take out insurance for your personal property such as your furniture, clothes and other belongings for which the council is not responsible. For example, if you live in a flat a leak from the flat above could cause damage in your home and this could be covered by insurance, but will generally not be covered by Norwich City Council. The council offers an insurance scheme which lets you pay in instalments with your rent. Ask the customer contact team for details.

Reporting a repair

Report online for non-emergency repairs.

This service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week so that



you can report non-urgent housing or heating repairs whenever it suits you, so no more waiting in queues!

Reporting a repair online is simple:

- log on and connect to www.norwich.gov.uk
- select 'do it online' at top of website, click on 'tell us about it' 
- select either 'report a housing repair (tenants)' or 'report a heating repair (for tenants and leaseholders)', whichever is appropriate
- fill in the online 'report a repair' form
- submit your completed form.

We aim to get back to you within 48 hours.

Reporting a repair by telephone:

- call 0344 980 3333 (and press option 4) to log your repair.

Outside office hours

Call **0344 980 3333**, between 5pm and 8am and your call will be directed to our out-of-hours team. Please note: **between these hours this number is only for emergencies.** If it is not an emergency please telephone between 8am and 5pm.

e: **info@norwich.gov.uk**

Write to: Customer contact team, Norwich City Council, City Hall, St Peters Street, Norwich NR2 1NH.

Our service standard is to reply to emails and letters within ten working days.

Visit the customer centre at City Hall. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 8.45am to 5pm and Wednesday, 1pm to 5pm.

Our service standard is to aim to see you within 10 minutes when you visit the customer centre.

Repairs ordering and appointments

When you report a non-emergency repair you will be offered a convenient

appointment. If we need to change this appointment we will try to give you 24 hours notice. We also offer a number of appointments in the evenings and on Saturday mornings. Our online repairs reporting service for all non-emergency repairs is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

If you need to rearrange an appointment please try to let us know as soon as possible so that we can reschedule it.

For all repairs you will be asked for your name, address, and up-to-date contact telephone number and a full description of the problem.

Emergency repairs

Our service target is to attend within 24 hours **for repairs reported during office hours**. A repair reported out of hours as an emergency will be prioritised and dealt with as soon as possible. However, if it turns out not to be a genuine emergency you may be recharged for the cost of the callout.

Some repairs may be assessed as not being emergencies but, for your safety and security, will need to be completed either on the day that the repair was

reported or the following morning. For example, loss of power to electrical sockets rather than a total loss of power.

More urgent emergencies will include problems like burst pipes or total electrical failures, and these will be attended to in order of priority. If you use the emergency service for a repair which is not a genuine emergency, for example a problem with a toilet flush, and an engineer attends, you could get a bill for the cost of the call-out. You must ensure that someone is available at the property until your contractor has attended the emergency repair. Please be aware that the problem may not always be fixed at this point.

Loss of heating/ hot water

The loss of heating or hot water is generally only considered to be an emergency between 31 October and 1 May. However, throughout the year, our contractor will usually attend heating/hot water problems within 24 hours during normal working hours (Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm). However if you call us out-of-

hours (evenings between 5pm-8am, at weekends and during bank holidays) each case will be assessed individually. We will usually only arrange for an engineer to attend outside of normal working hours where a person's health/wellbeing is at risk.

Access

Section 11 of your tenancy agreement explains that you must allow us and our contractors access to your home, both for inspection and repairs. This is particularly important in the case of gas servicing. In exceptional situations we may have to break into your home in an emergency (for example, if there is a smell of gas).

We will aim to ensure that you always have adequate heating, lighting, cooking, hygiene and hot water facilities in emergencies or other circumstances. Where you have had to use temporary facilities we will aim to ensure this is for a maximum of five working days.

Our operatives will also look to identify any additional repairs when visiting your home except when the repair is an emergency

outside normal working hours, a routine gas service or to the outside of the property.

Right to repair

Some repairs which may affect your health and safety are covered by the *Right to Repair* legislation which means they must be completed within the specified time. If the repair is not completed on time you can ask the council to get another contractor to do the work and give you a new date for completion. If it is still not completed you may be able to claim compensation.

Repair details and customer satisfaction survey

For most repairs you will be offered an appointment either at the point of logging the repair or we will contact you and arrange an appointment once your repair has been prioritised.

In certain instances an appointment may have been scheduled for you without prior arrangement, such as

when work required has been reported through the contractor or for gas servicing.

You will be notified of the appointment through letter, email or text as you prefer.

Following completion of a repair you may be asked to complete a customer satisfaction survey.

Gas appliances

We are legally required to service all council owned gas and solid fuel appliances in your property every 12 months, including any open fires, flues and pipe work. In addition, we will carry out a regular gas safety check to all properties that are part of a district heating scheme, properties that contain electric heating, and properties where tenants have installed their own heating to ensure that these properties remain gas safe. If you do not provide the council's contractors access so that they can carry out the servicing and inspections then legal action will be taken against you.



Gas leaks should be reported direct to the National Grid immediately on **0800 111 999**. Please also inform the council on 0344 980 3333.

- First turn off the gas supply.
- Do not make a flame or spark or operate any electrical appliances including turning light switches on or off.
- Leave the property.
- **Call National Grid from outside the property if using a mobile phone.**

Community alarm equipment

It is the council's responsibility to repair any community alarm equipment (such as warden call or pendants) provided by the Norwich Community Alarm Service (NCAS). If the equipment is faulty please call NCAS on **01603 213700** – NCAS can be contacted 24 hours a day. If you live in sheltered housing and

you have a speech module, pullcords and pendant the equipment should not be removed from the property or tampered with as this could affect other people in your area. Any issues or concerns regarding the equipment should be reported to NCAS on **01603 213700**.

There are a number of properties across Norwich which previously had community alarm equipment installed. This equipment was decommissioned as from 1 November 2012 and is no longer active. Should you live in a property with this old equipment we confirm that it is no longer functional and you are able to remove and dispose of the equipment should you wish to do so. If you have any queries regarding the old equipment please call NCAS on **01603 213700**.

Carrying out the work

Always ask to see the identification card of anyone who calls to inspect or repair anything at your home. If no card is shown you are advised to refuse entry.

It is your responsibility to clear a space for the work to be done.

The operative will use dust sheets where required and generally aim to keep mess and disturbance to a minimum and tidy up afterwards. In some cases it may be necessary to remove wall or floor coverings in order to fix the problem. The council does not redecorate after repairs unless there are exceptional circumstances. In some instances tenants may be offered decoration vouchers. Where there is accidental damage caused as a direct result of the operative carrying out the repair, this should be reported directly to the contractor.

It may be possible for the operative to carry out other repairs without making a new appointment but they can advise you of this at the time.

Improvement programmes and major repairs

Improvements are carried out as programmed works and include:

- alterations
- changes or additions to kitchens and bathrooms



- electrical upgrades
- heating and boiler replacement
- installation of PVCu windows and associated roofing work
- external painting.

The council has no liability to make good any damage caused to internal decorations resulting from improvements made to your home.

When we carry out improvements and major repairs we will send you advance notice letters telling you when your home is included in a programme of work and giving information on what will be involved.

The first letter will be at the beginning of the financial year to let you know that your home is to be included in the coming year's programme.

The second will be no later than one month before the work is due to start and explain in detail what will be involved, the standards to expect and who you can contact for more information.

We will always try to do work by agreement and by appointment and keep you informed of any changes to the work at least seven days in advance.

We will ensure that our contractors liaise with you over any designs or choices that are available and keep you up-to-date as the work progresses. We will aim to ensure that you always have adequate heating, lighting, cooking and hot water facilities by the end of any day and aim to never leave you with temporary facilities for longer than five working days. We will also request that our contractors be polite, courteous, show identification and respect your home at all times. For council policy on redecoration please see the previous section ***Carrying out the work.***

If you buy your council house you become responsible for all the repairs and maintenance work needed on



the property. If you buy a flat some of this work will be covered by the leasehold agreement and included in your service charges. Other work may be charged for separately.

Making your own improvements

As it states in your tenancy agreement, you must get written permission from the council before you carry out any improvements or alterations to your home. This applies if you plan to change, for example, standard fittings or floor surfaces, as well as undertaking more major works. We will consider safety, the impact on neighbours and future maintenance. You may need other permission too, for example planning or building regulation consents.

A few examples where you would need permission would be before installing:

- kitchen units
- a conservatory
- a satellite dish.

This is not a complete list so please ask for advice before you start work. Please see leaflet *Tenants' own improvements* for more information.

Moving home

We expect you to give us the full four weeks written notice as set out in the conditions of tenancy section 14, unless in exceptional cases we agree otherwise. The customer contact team can provide you with the correct form. We will then arrange to visit your home, by appointment, to explain to you what you need to do and to inspect for any visible repairs that need to be done before you move.

If we have to clean or clear your home (which includes your loft, garden, any sheds and garages) after you have left, or do any repairs that are not reasonable wear and tear you will be charged for these. Section 16 of your tenancy agreement deals with the conditions around handing your property back to us.

Responsibilities for repairs

Council responsibilities

The council is responsible for keeping in repair:

- the structure and exterior of the property (including drains, gutters and external pipes).

We are also responsible for keeping in repair and proper working order the installations for:

- the supply of water, gas and electricity;
- sanitation (for example basins, sinks, baths and toilets); and
- heating; (both space and water heating).

We must carry out those repairs provided:

- the damage has not been caused by you;
- we know about the damage; and
- we have your co-operation over access to your home for our staff and contractors.

Your responsibilities

The table opposite gives some examples of items in and around your home that you are responsible for maintaining.

This is not a full list but is provided to give you some examples.

When you report a repair we will inform you whether it is our responsibility and something that we will cover the cost of, or if it is your responsibility. We will only carry out the repair if it is a health and safety issue and report back to you the recharge amount payable. If the council carries out repairs that are your responsibility, you will be charged. When you contact us we will tell you what the charge will be and how you can pay for it if the council does the work for you.

Please note that sheltered housing or good neighbour scheme tenants must use the council contractor for any lock changes to their home so that we can continue to manage individual properties effectively within these schemes.

Some items that you are responsible for:

	Repair
Clearance and disposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal and disposal from gardens, sheds and garages of all items belonging to you, members of your household or your visitors at the end of your tenancy • To keep all gardens that form part of your tenancy in a well maintained state, during and at the end of your tenancy. This includes the cutting back and removal of any ivy, and the maintenance and cutting back of shrubs and other vegetation within your boundary
Windows glass and glazing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All glass whether cracked or broken, except where damage has been caused by a third party eg through criminal damage or vandalism
PVCu windows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow maintenance instructions • Tenants will be charged for any window repairs to PVCu that are from not carrying out appropriate care and maintenance
Doors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal door latches, door fittings and door chain • Altering internal doors to fit over carpets • Refitting internal doors if they are missing when you leave • Replacing your locks when you have lost or misplaced your keys or fob • Replacing your locks if your keys are stolen • Replacing and/or obtaining additional door keys or fobs • Door knockers and bells (except door entry to a block of flats) • Individual door number or name plate

	Repair
Kitchen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installing, disconnecting and repairing your own appliances such as cookers and washing machines, including waste and supply pipes • Plumbing in washing machines • Replacing handles, hinges, catches, drawers and drawer fronts to any extra kitchen units you have installed
Bathroom/ water services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bath panels, showers and extra tiles you have fitted yourself • Replacing broken toilet seats, covers or tightening a loose toilet seat • WC chains, handles or push buttons • Replacing sink or bath plugs and chains • Unblocking sinks or baths • Accidental damage to bathroom fittings
Electrical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electrical appliances provided by you including cables, plugs, fuses etc. • All electrical fittings not supplied with the property • Changing fuses and resetting trip switches • Replacing light bulbs, plugs, fuses and bathroom light pull cords • Individual TV aerials
Gardens, sheds, fences and vegetation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are responsible for all sheds and fencing that is not council owned. This includes any storage or scooter sheds • You are responsible for maintaining your garden, including the removal of any ivy from walls or other vegetation within your boundary

	Repair
Gas installations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible connectors to appliances supplied and fitted by you • Ensuring airbricks, vents etc are free from obstruction or blockage • Annual servicing of appliances supplied and fitted by you
Solid fuel installations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sweeping of flues over and above the annual service • Annual servicing/sweeping of appliances supplied and fitted by you (where you were given permission to install them)
Internal fittings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curtain rails and battens • Clothes dryers and airers • Roller blinds and fixings • Shelves • Hat and coat racks/hooks.
Water meter installation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repairs and alterations where it is your choice to have a water meter installed
Smoke detectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaning council fitted smoke detectors, except in sheltered housing schemes. (A soft brush vacuum is recommended)
Extractor fans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaning extractor fans

Gas safety/solid fuel inspection

Failure to provide access for our contractor to carry out your annual gas safety/solid fuel inspection is a breach of your tenancy agreement and will result in legal action to obtain access and/or legal possession of your home. Any costs incurred to gain access will be your responsibility, for example costs of any lock change or the cost of obtaining a warrant.

You will also be charged if you fail to meet three successive appointments.

If you are a new tenant and have just moved into your property you need to make sure that you have arranged your gas and electricity suppliers and that these services are available before calling in our contractor to reinstate the gas to your appliances. If you request a call before setting up these arrangements, the gas engineer will be unable to reinstate the gas supply and you will be charged the cost of the call out.

Similarly, if we attend your property to repair your

heating/hot water and find that the reason for the fault is that there is no credit on your payment card gas/electric meter, then you will be recharged in every instance for this service as it is your responsibility to maintain your payments with the supplier.

Tenants opting to do the repair themselves

You will continue to have the option of employing your own tradesperson to carry out repairs for which you are responsible. If the repair involves gas or electricity, for example, working on an appliance you have had permission to install, the work must be completed by a NICEIC qualified electrician or GAS Safe registered engineer. You must provide a copy of any relevant completion certificates. If the repair is classed as an emergency the council will always carry out



the repair to ensure your safety but you may be recharged if you are responsible for the fault.

Charges and payment

For repairs that are your responsibility, known as rechargeable repairs, you will either be required to make payment when you report the repair or be notified of the amount you will be charged and sent an invoice. This will depend on the type of repair you are reporting. All costs relating to rechargeable repairs will be recorded against your rent account.

Rechargeable repairs will normally be charged at a standard fixed rate. However, there are some exceptions to this – please see table on page 16. We will explain the charge when you report the fault.

If a completed repair costs over £250 you will be charged for the actual cost of the repair. You will also be asked to pay the standard fixed cost when

the repair is ordered. After the repair has been completed you will be sent a bill showing the outstanding balance owed ie the full amount of repair minus the fixed cost which has been paid in advance.

You can pay your bill by:

- cash or cheque – at a post office using a repair payment card
- cash, cheque or card at a PayPoint – using a repair payment card
- by phone if you pay by credit or debit card. If paying by credit card, there will be an additional charge, which you will be advised of when paying.

If you cannot pay the bill in full the customer contact team will discuss with you how you may be able to pay in instalments.

Repair – recharge fees

NB the charges shown are subject to change but correct at time of publication

Repair details	Amount charged	Contractor
Standard fixed cost of responsive maintenance chargeable repairs	£75.94	Norse
Gas safety inspection – single gas engineer’s charge (third failed appointment, forced entry, final visit for safety inspection only)	£37.00	Gasway
Gas and heating chargeable repairs	£39.29	Gasway
Clearance and disposal:		
Clear and dispose of all items in garden shed/store	£121.88	Norse
Clear and dispose of all items in garage	£341.25	
Clear and dispose of all items in house	£999.38	
Clear and dispose of all rubbish items in garden	£1,023.75	
Clear and dispose of overgrown vegetation in garden	£731.25	
Carry out damp inspection – no damp found	£268.13	
Remove existing door and frame and install new composite door and frame	£405.48	Norse

Repair – recharge fees

NB the charges shown are subject to change but correct at time of publication

Repair details	Amount charged	Contractor
Remove existing door and frame and install new composite fire door and frame	£797.51	Norse
Remove existing bath and install new bath, complete with taps and all fittings. Dispose of old pipework and connections	£349.90	Norse
All responsive/heating chargeable repairs over £250.00	Full amount of repair	Norse/ Gasway
Chargeable void property works	Full amount of repair/works	Norse
Digital TV repairs/service calls	£75.00	Stanley Blick

Looking after your home

Tenants' own improvements to council homes

A guide for tenants



NORWICH
City Council

Tenant
approved

As the tenant of a council property you have the right to carry out some types of home improvement at your own expense, but you must get the written agreement of the council before you start work.

Improving your home

If you are a council tenant you have the right to make some types of home improvement at your own expense. You must get written agreement from the council before you make any alteration or addition to the property.

Improvements you will need permission for include:

- erecting any external satellite, microwave, telephone, radio, TV or CB receiver
- installing new flooring e.g. fitting a laminate floor
- changing kitchen or bathroom fittings like sinks, baths or toilets
- installing central heating
- erecting a garage, car port or conservatory
- knocking down walls
- putting in double glazing

- anything which affects the gas, electricity or water supply to your home
- any work which needs planning permission or building control approval (see below).

Any communal areas around your home such as gardens, drying areas, stairs and landings must not be altered, enclosed or partitioned. You may be charged if you do this.

The council has an improvement programme. You should check to see whether your home is included in this before you decide to do the work yourself.

Call **0344 980 3333** to find out more.



Getting permission

You must get written permission from Norwich City Council before carrying out work. We will only refuse permission with good reason, such as if the work:

- would interfere with any maintenance to the property
- may reduce the value of the property
- may cause a potential health and safety risk
- would breach any regulatory requirements
- may result in any additional cost to the council
- is to remove any amenities within the property that the council provided to make the property suitable for occupants with a specific medical need (such as a level access shower)
- may adversely affect the wall or boundary between this property and the next door neighbour's property
- is to install a solid fuel heating appliance, or to open up a fireplace.

The council can lay down reasonable conditions before giving permission for the work to start. For example, ensuring that the work will be carried out by a qualified and approved contractor and perhaps asking for drawings and/or plans.

We may ask you to provide the name of the contractor and their public liability insurance number before giving permission for the work to go ahead. You may also be asked to return to the council any appliances, fixtures or fittings removed as part of the work.

You must not arrange for any work to start before you have received written permission from the council. If you carry out work without our written permission and do not comply with any conditions imposed you will be charged for putting the work right and/or for removing any unapproved appliances, such as a solid fuel appliance. You may also be charged for any other associated costs.

Planning permission

Some types of improvement may also need planning permission – porches, garages, sheds, extensions, satellite dishes and even fencing might need permission. Extra planning restrictions apply if you live in a conservation area. The customer contact team and property services team will give you advice but it is your responsibility to establish if planning permission is required before any work takes place. If planning permission is needed, you will have to make a separate application and pay a fee. If you are not sure, contact the council's planning department.

Building regulations

Improvements may need building control approval, whether planning permission is needed or not. This is to ensure good construction standards. Please ask building control for advice

as it is your responsibility to establish if building regulation approval is required before any work takes place. If you are not sure, ask first.

Party Wall Act

Work on party walls and boundaries may be subject to the Party Wall Act.

Use a competent contractor

Any work you undertake is done at your own risk. Make sure that you use a competent contractor with adequate insurance cover. You will be expected to put right any work that has not been done properly and without the relevant permissions. If you use a contractor who is not properly qualified you are putting yourself and any visitors to your home at risk. In addition, if the council has to rectify any work for health and safety reasons (for example any gas or electrical work) you will be charged.

If you do improvement work without permission you may have to pay a charge to the council. You will also be charged if the work causes damage to

the property, if work is left unfinished or if the council's standards of work are not met.

When the work is finished

You must contact the property services team (tel: 0344 980 3333) when the work has been completed. You will then be contacted by one of our building surveyors who will if necessary arrange a mutually convenient time to call and inspect the work.

The cost of improvements

Improving your home can be expensive. As well as the materials and the work, there may be running costs. Don't forget to increase your home contents insurance to cover the value of new fittings and to give you protection if there is any damage to a neighbour's property (for example, if your new central heating leaks).

As long as you have written agreement from the council for your improvement the council will repair and maintain some new equipment, such as

boilers (after the guarantee expires), if these are things it has a duty to maintain as part of its normal repairs service.

You must keep your written agreement.

Your rent will not change if you make improvements to your council home and it may not change if someone succeeds to your tenancy, for example, if a member of your family takes over the tenancy in the future.

When you leave

If you give up your tenancy you must leave behind anything you have installed or fitted. If you want to take something, which is moveable, you must restore things to how they were before and re-decorate to the council's standards.

You will be charged for any restoration work the council has to do. Secure tenants have a right to claim compensation for some improvements made at their own expense, after 1 April 1994. Compensation is

payable only when you end your tenancy and is based on the original cost and age of the improvement. Ask the customer contact team for details of qualifying improvements before you make your claim.

You must claim no more than 28 days before or 14 days after your tenancy ends. You will need to provide invoices for the work done.

Compensation for improvements made before April 1994 is paid at the council's discretion.

Remember

- Write to NPS Norwich (at City Hall, Norwich NR2 1NH) providing as much detail as possible about the work you want to do. If appropriate, include drawings showing any extensions or changes to the layout of the property.
- Check whether planning permission is needed by contacting the council's planning services t: **0344 980 3333**.
- Check whether building control approval is needed by contacting the CNC Building Control Consultancy on **01603 430100**.
- Check whether you need to serve a Party Wall Notice as part of the consultation with your neighbours.
- Check that the tradesmen you intend to use to do the work are properly qualified.
- Let the council know when the work is completed. A project surveyor may want to call and inspect the work.

Make sure the work complies with all conditions and be considerate to your neighbours when doing the work.



Looking after your home

Planned upgrades to council homes

A guide for tenants



NORWICH
City Council

Tenant
approved

We are committed to improving the condition of our properties.

NPS Norwich Ltd (Norwich City Council's joint venture company) carries out a five year rolling programme of condition surveys of all our homes. These stock condition surveys give us:

- an overall picture of housing stock condition in each neighbourhood
- an assessment of the energy efficiency of our housing stock
- an assessment of the funding required to modernise and upgrade homes.

The results of these surveys help us plan what work is required in your homes and neighbourhoods. Improvement and upgrade work we carry out as a result of these surveys includes:

- new kitchens
- new bathrooms
- new central heating systems
- cavity wall insulation
- external cladding
- electrical rewires
- water mains renewal
- re-pointing work
- structural work
- UPVC windows
- rainwater goods
- fascias and soffits
- composite front and rear doors.

These surveys provide us with up-to-date information which is used to develop housing policies; allocate resources to combat disrepair and other stock condition issues; and ensure that our properties meet the Norwich Standard.

What is the Norwich Standard?

The council has a 30 year programme of investment into council homes. The Norwich Standard is:

- No kitchen is over 20 years old
- No bathroom is over 30 years old
- No boiler is over 15 years old

We also improve electrical installations, roofing and entrance doors. When appliances need replacing, we fit new energy efficient, eco-friendly versions in their place.

How the work is programmed

Surveyors, from NPS Norwich Ltd, visit all council properties every five years. They record information about the condition of different elements within a property, such as the kitchen, bathroom, windows,

doors, roof etc. This information is then fed into a database, so that we can accurately identify and prioritise future work programmes and ensure that money is spent in a timely and cost effective manner.

Not all properties will require upgrading, but all properties will be surveyed to identify what improvement work is required. A survey is not a guarantee that any work will be carried out, as decisions are not made until the end of the year when all relevant data has been gathered.

It is very important that you allow us access to your home in order for these surveys to be conducted. We cannot determine if your home would benefit from improvement work without an up-to-date assessment of the condition of your property.

If your home is included in a programme of improvement work we will write to you at

the start of the financial year. It will not be possible at that time to tell you exactly when the work will be completed. All improvement work planned during a financial year is carried out between 1 April and 31 March of the following year. The work is generally carried out in a phased, area-based manner. The contractor carrying out the work will contact you closer to the time to arrange a convenient start date.

Do I have to have the work done?

Section 10 of your tenancy agreement covers improvements and alterations to your home. We carry out these improvements for the long-term benefit of our properties. Generally, you can choose whether to get the improvement work done. However, in certain instances, we may insist that the work is done. For example, if the work is being carried out for health and safety reasons or if it is for

the overall benefit of the neighbourhood.

Please remember this is an opportunity to get your home improved and updated. If you choose to refuse work when planned improvements are taking place in your neighbourhood and then change your mind, this work will not be programmed in again until the following financial year. This is because the majority of our programmes of work are phased and carried out on an area basis.

If you refuse any element of improvement work you will be asked to sign a refusal form by the contractor.

Will my rent change?

Your rent will not increase as soon as the work is completed but the improvements will affect the valuation of the property. Future rent calculations will be made on the basis of the value of your council home.

Do I stay in my home during programmed improvement work?

The answer is usually yes. However, in exceptional circumstances - such as if remaining in your home whilst the work is carried out would be detrimental to your personal health or safety, or if the proposed work is extensive and would affect many rooms within your home at the same time - you may be offered temporary accommodation while the work is carried out. At the end of every working day you will be left with washing and cooking facilities, although these may be temporary until the work is complete.

Further information

If you have any questions or would like more information about our improvement programmes, such as when your property is due to be considered for improvement work, please get in touch with our customer contact team:

t: 0344 980 3333

e: info@norwich.gov.uk

Looking after your home

Disabled adaptations to council homes

A guide for tenants



NORWICH
City Council

Tenant
approved

This leaflet explains what disabled adaptations are and outlines how a Norwich City Council tenant with a disability can apply to get their council home adapted in order to make it more safe and useable.

If you have a disability, we can help you remain independent by providing specialist equipment and by adapting your home to suit your particular needs.

What is a disabled adaptation?

Adaptations make it easier and safer for a disabled person to stay in their home. They vary according to the needs of the individual and range from minor work, such as installing handrails, to major work, such as converting a bathroom into a level-access shower/wet room.

How to apply for a disabled adaptation

You will first need to contact Norfolk County Council, either via their website or by telephone, so that your personal details and a brief summary of your condition and how it affects your everyday life can be recorded.

Your details will be passed on to their occupational therapy team.

You will then be contacted by telephone and an assessment of your needs will be carried out (either over the phone or by an occupational therapist in your home). Any problem areas you may have in everyday life - such as washing, eating, dressing or moving about – will be highlighted and practical solutions to overcome them will be identified. Different techniques, new equipment and changes to your environment can help you regain or improve your independence.

If you meet the eligibility criteria and would benefit from major adaptations to your home (such as installing a wet room, widening doors, putting in ramps) a recommendation will be sent to Norwich City Council.

Applications for disabled adaptations should be made to Norfolk County Council

through the following page of their website: <http://online.norfolk.gov.uk/socialcareenquiry/>

Select option: 'To find out about equipment or adjustments at home.'

Answer the on-screen questions and then submit your enquiry.

This on-line form should be used wherever possible. If you, or someone acting on your behalf, is unable to access the internet to complete the form please phone **0344 800 8020**.

Norwich City Council will generally not consider any requests for major disabled adaptations without a completed referral from Norfolk County Council, so it is very important you contact the county council first to find out if you are eligible for assistance.

Minor adaptations

Requests for some minor adaptations (such as small handrails, lever taps and door handles) can be made direct to Norwich City Council.

However, if you require both major and minor adaptations to be made to your home you should contact Norfolk County Council, in the first instance.

Who qualifies?

An individual will normally be considered for aids and adaptations to their home if:

- they are a Norwich City Council tenant, the partner of a tenant or a close relative of a tenant (for example a child) who lives permanently within the household;
- **and** they have an impairment which significantly or seriously affects their long-term ability to:
 - carry out normal day-to-day activities in and around their home and
 - access essential facilities within their home.

Adaptation work for other members of the household, such as lodgers, will only be carried out in exceptional circumstances and then only if they have been a resident with the tenant for more than 12 months.

An individual not named on the tenancy agreement must be registered as living at the property for council tax purposes and, if aged over 18 years, should be registered on the electoral role for that address. Individuals who have no recourse to public funds (cannot access mainstream benefits and housing assistance) will not be eligible for assistance under the terms of this policy.

In cases where a child is disabled and the parents are separated, adaptation works will usually only be completed at the property of principal residence (where the child lives most of the time. Generally this is the home of the parent who is in receipt of child benefit for that child).

Adaptations will only be considered if the property is the main residence of the individual and they do not hold another tenancy or own another property.

Major adaptations will not normally be approved for individuals experiencing temporary mobility problems who are waiting for medical procedures to improve their mobility long term. However,

temporary or minor adaptations may be considered during this interim period.

Adaptations will be considered where the applicant is waiting to be discharged from hospital and requires their home to be altered.

Generally adaptations will only be carried out where a secure tenancy is held by the tenant.

Requests for major adaptations will not normally be approved where a 'Right to Buy' application has been received by Norwich City Council. Following completion of a Right to Buy sale, adaptations could be considered under the council's private sector financial assistance policy (available to read on the council website www.norwich.gov.uk) by way of a Disabled Facilities Grant.

All applicants seeking a transfer or mutual exchange will be considered on their individual merit. If an applicant is leaving a suitably adapted property this will be taken into consideration. It is expected that an incoming tenant, to an adapted property, will have a

significant disability and a need for the adaptations that are in place.

The council is committed to facilitating the provision of aids and adaptations to properties and will endeavour to deal with requests for assistance as quickly, effectively and sensitively as possible. In most circumstances people will be dealt with according to the date order in which we receive their application. Any exceptions to this will need approval from the head of housing services.

Assessment of applications

Once we have received a referral from Norfolk County Council and/or established that an applicant is eligible for assistance, we will establish the overall suitability of the property for the recommended works by considering:

- the age and structural condition of the property (to determine whether the adaptations can be carried out safely without adversely affecting the fabric of the property)
- the suitability of the property for number of occupants (as defined by the council's allocations policy)
- whether there are any competing needs of family members that need to be met within that particular property
- whether there is suitable alternative accommodation available, particularly in cases where major adaptations are required
- the availability of the applicant's existing support network and carers
- the applicant's intentions regarding the long-term use of the property
- whether the adaptations will meet the long-term needs of the applicant
- whether external adaptations, such as ramping, would adversely affect the area for other residents.

Where alternative accommodation is being considered, the likely impact of moving house will be assessed in relation to the applicant's health, condition

and individual circumstances to ensure that a move will not have a serious negative effect on them. This will be done in consultation with the applicant.

Where adaptations are requested to a first floor or higher level flat that is not served by a lift, consideration will be given to any additional works that are likely to be necessary.

For example, where a request has been made to remove a bath and install a level access shower/wet room, then an assessment will be made of the access and internal circulation space, and staircases, and whether the applicant will be able to manage these areas safely in the medium to long term. If it is established that the applicant is likely to have access and mobility difficulties then suitable alternatives will be explored in consultation with the applicant. It is the council's policy not to install stair lifts in the communal areas of a property.

Cost of adaptations

Adaptations that are carried out by the council will normally be funded up to a maximum of £25,000.

Where the cost of the required work is more than £25,000 the council will consider, whether to fund or part-fund cases on a case-by-case basis. In the event of the council deciding not to provide funding exceeding £25,000, the applicant will have to part-fund the cost of the adaptation work. The council will however help the applicant explore all available self-funding options.

Where another organisation has agreed to part-fund the cost of works, this must be done in agreement with the council and the occupational therapist. Policies and procedures from all parties will apply.

Full information on Norwich City Council's policy for the provision of disabled adaptations can be found on our website www.norwich.gov.uk or by contacting us on **0344 980 3333**.

Useful contacts

Norfolk County Council

Applications for disabled adaptations should be made to Norfolk County Council through the internet at:

<http://online.norfolk.gov.uk/socialcareenquiry/>

Select option: [To find out about equipment or adjustments at home](#)

Answer the on-screen questions and then submit your enquiry

The on-line form should be used wherever possible. If you, or someone acting on your behalf, is unable to access the internet to complete the form please phone **0344 800 8020**.

Visit the website:

www.norfolk.gov.uk

Norfolk City Council

Use the online 'contact us' form via www.norwich.gov.uk

Telephone **0344 980 3333** between 8am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.

If you are hearing impaired, call our minicom phone line on **01603 212587** between 8am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.

Write to: Norwich City Council
City Hall Norwich, NR2 1NH.

Visit the customer centre in City Hall on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday between 8.45am and 5pm, or on Wednesday between 1pm and 5pm (it is closed from 8.45am to 1pm every Wednesday).

Looking after your home

Carbon Monoxide

**DON'T LET A
SILENT KILLER
INTO YOUR HOME**



NORWICH
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Every year people die or become ill due to carbon monoxide poisoning, because gas appliances, solid fuel appliances and chimney flues have not been properly maintained.

You can't see it. You can't taste it. You can't smell it, but carbon monoxide can kill without warning in just a few hours.

You and your family are most at risk when you are asleep. Carbon monoxide poisoning is often confused with flu because the symptoms include:

- Severe headaches
- Chest or stomach pains
- Drowsiness
- Confusion
- Nausea
- Dizziness
- Feeling very tired
- Loss of memory

Carbon monoxide kills

Norwich City Council will service all Norwich City Council owned gas appliances, solid fuel appliances, and open fires every year. When we contact you, please make sure you keep your appointments so you and your family are not at risk.

To make sure your home is safe:

- DO NOT install your own gas or solid fuel appliances, or open up any previously blocked open fireplace, without written permission from the council*.

*We will not generally give permission to install these appliances due to the potential health and safety risks if they are installed incorrectly and not properly/regularly maintained.

If you have permission, always make sure your gas and solid fuel appliances are installed by a GAS Safe or HETAS registered person. It will be your responsibility to ensure that these appliances are regularly maintained/swept.

- DO NOT block vents as these are needed to allow enough fresh air into the room.
- DO NOT block gas flues, vents, airbricks or chimneys as these take away burnt gases and dangerous fumes from the appliances.

What are the warning signs?

- Soot or staining around the appliance
- The pilot light goes out frequently
- Condensation forms in the room where the appliance is installed.
- You can usually tell if your appliance is working properly by checking the flame (see below for images).

An unhealthy gas flame will be uneven and yellow/orange in colour.

This may indicate that carbon monoxide is present.



A flame that is blue, crisp and lively is healthy.



If you think there is a gas leak or carbon monoxide problem

- TURN OFF the appliance where possible
- TURN OFF the gas at the meter
- OPEN ALL doors and windows
- DO NOT use electrical switches
- DO NOT smoke
- DO NOT light matches or lighters
- DO NOT use a mobile phone
- CALL National Grid immediately on: **FREEPHONE 0800 111 999**
- Call Norwich City Council on **0844 980 3333**

Looking after your home

Electronic security system

Instruction for use of
fobs and handset



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If you live in a flat and it is in a security-controlled block, you will have been issued with fobs that allow access into your block. Other than during pre-set trade times, only holders of fobs may gain access into your block. Other callers must use the intercom next to the front door to buzz up to a particular flat.

Using your fobs

- Place a fob against the key symbol on the panel next to the main door into your block.
- The door will release for several seconds to allow entry and will then lock again.
- If your block has additional entrance doors, these will have a similar panel with the key symbol on it and work in the same way.
- Sheltered housing tenants are issued with door entry fobs to gain access to the communal areas of the scheme.

Using the telephone handset in your flat

Visitors may use the intercom set into the panel by the main door to your block to call up to

you in your flat. The handset installed in your flat will sound and you may speak to the visitor via the handset.

- **To release the door**

Press the door release button. The red door open indicator will flash to confirm that the door is being released for your visitor.

- **Door open warning**

If the entrance door remains open (eg because of an obstruction) the red door open indicator will stay lit until it is closed.

- **To set telephone privacy**

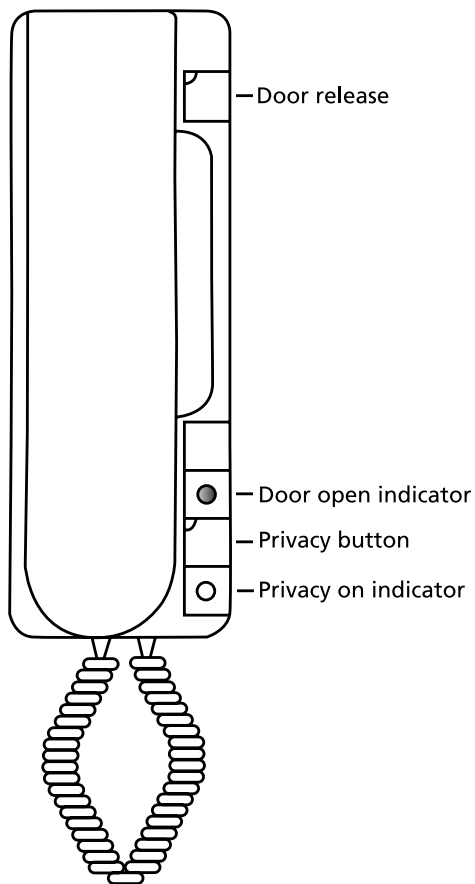
If you do not wish to be disturbed by callers for a time, you may press the privacy button. This will stop all incoming calls and the green privacy on indicator will light. You can cancel this at any time

by pressing the privacy button again. The green privacy on indicator will go out and callers will once again be able to buzz up to your flat using the intercom.

To maintain the security offered by this system it is important that:

- you report the loss of any fobs immediately to your area office
- you do not give your fob to anyone else for them to use
- you do not wedge open any of the entrance doors
- you make sure you know who you are letting in.

Example of electronic security system



Looking after your home

Controlling condensation and mould in your home

A guide for tenants



NORWICH
City Council

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There are three main causes of condensation

- Moisture produced by everyday activities.
- Not enough ventilation.
- Cool temperatures.







Cooking, drying clothes, showering – even breathing – add to the moisture in the air. If this moisture is allowed to build up it can cause damp. This can increase the risk of respiratory illness and cause black mould growth on walls, ceilings, furniture and clothing.



▲ Walls with black mould growth

Some people do not realise that this mould growth is often caused by condensation from normal activities, mistakenly thinking these are signs of damp caused by problems with the property itself. This leaflet gives helpful advice on how to treat condensation in the home.

How much moisture can be produced in your home in a day?

Two people active for one day		3 pints
Cooking and boiling a kettle		6 pints
Having a bath or shower		2 pints
Washing clothes		1 pint
Drying clothes		9 pints
Using a paraffin or bottled gas heater		3 pints
Total amount of moisture that can be produced in your home in one day		24 pints

There are three main ways to tackle the problem

- Stop moisture building up.
- Ventilate, or air, the home.
- Keep your home warm.

Stop moisture building up

- Wipe down surfaces where moisture settles.
- Cover boiling pans when cooking.
- When cooking, bathing or washing and drying clothes, close kitchen and bathroom doors to prevent steam going into colder rooms, even after you have finished.
- Cover fish tanks to stop the water evaporating into the air.
- Dry clothes outside where possible. Washing lines cannot be put up in internal areas.
- Make sure tumble dryers are vented to the outside.
- Avoid using bottled gas or paraffin heaters as these produce a lot of moisture and can also be a health and safety risk if not used and stored appropriately.

Ventilate, or air, the home

- When cooking or washing, open windows or use extractors.
- Where drying clothes inside is necessary, do so in a small room with windows open, doors closed and any extractor fan turned on.
- Open windows for a while each day or use the trickle/night vents.
- Do not block air vents – this is also important where gas and heating appliances are concerned as they need a supply of oxygen to work effectively and allow gases, such as carbon monoxide, to escape.
- Allow air to circulate around furniture and in cupboards – you can do this by making sure cupboards and wardrobes aren't overfilled and there is space between the furniture and the wall.

The extractor fans fitted in Norwich City Council homes are extremely energy efficient and have low running costs of just a few pence per day. It is very important that you leave these fans turned on and do not attempt to disable them by removing the fuses.

The fans are designed to remove moisture from the air and many of them have a 'boost' function which comes into operation when the moisture in the air is at its highest - such as after bathing or cooking. Turning off extractor fans means that moisture is not easily removed from inside your home which can lead to the formation of mould. This mould can damage your home, possessions and even your health.

Keep your home warm

- Draught proofing will keep your home warmer – and help reduce fuel bills. When the whole house is warmer, condensation is less likely to form.
- Insulating your loft and walls will help. If yours are not insulated, contact us on **0344 980 3333** for details of work planned for your area or advice on energy efficiency.
- Maintain a low heat when the weather is cold or wet – this is more effective than short bursts of high heat.

Important things to remember

- Do not block permanent ventilators.
- Do not turn off or remove fuses from any extractor fans installed in your home.
- Never block a chimney opening.
- Do not draught proof:
 - rooms where there is condensation or mould growth
 - rooms where there is a gas cooker or a fuel-burning heater, for example a gas fire
 - windows in the bathroom or kitchen.
- Do not put furniture against cold external walls.

What to do if your home already has mould

The tips set out should help prevent mould, but what if you already have the problem? How do you get rid of it?

- Do not disturb mould by brushing or vacuum cleaning. This can increase the risk of respiratory problems.

- Mould is a living organism and needs killing to get rid of it. To do this, wipe down affected areas with a fungicidal wash – one which carries a Health and Safety Executive approved number – making sure you follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Do not use bleach or washing up liquid.

- Treat any mould you may already have in your home then do what you can to reduce condensation. This will restrict new mould growth.
- Clothes that have mould growing on them should be dry cleaned and carpets with mould on them should be shampooed.
- After treatment, redecorate using a good quality fungicidal paint to help prevent mould recurring. **This paint is not effective if overlaid with ordinary paints or wallpaper.**

I have followed the advice in this leaflet, what do I do next?

If you have followed the advice given in this leaflet, then you should begin to notice a considerable improvement within a few weeks (around four to six weeks). If the problem persists, it may be due to another cause of damp. There are four main causes of damp.

- **Condensation** – as discussed in this leaflet
- **Rising damp** – this is rare as a damp proof course prevents this but can usually be seen by a tide mark above the skirting board.



▲ Rising damp

- **Penetrating damp** – caused by a problem with the fabric of the building which means rainwater is able to get through the walls, roof, windows or doors.



▲ Penetrating damp becomes more noticeable when it rains



▲ Internal penetrating damp

- **Plumbing faults or broken leaking pipes**

Rising damp and penetrating damp can usually be easily identified at the early stages. A leaking pipe can be more difficult to identify, and if you suspect you may have a leaking pipe then this should be reported to the customer contact team on **0344 980 3333** as soon as possible.

If you have not seen obvious improvement after following our advice, or you suspect a more serious cause of damp, please contact us on **0344 980 3333** and a damp inspection order will be raised.

Looking after your home

Housing compensation

A guide for tenants
and leaseholders



NORWICH
City Council

Tenant
approved

Why do we pay compensation?

Norwich City Council is committed to providing high quality services to our residents. Very occasionally our high service standards fall down, often due to circumstances beyond our control.

If this happens, we will try to put things right and make sure that it doesn't happen again. In some circumstances we accept that if we have failed to deliver our promised commitment, some form of compensation may be the appropriate way to give our apology.

This leaflet outlines some circumstances where you may be able to apply for compensation, as well as times where we may wish to make discretionary payments or goodwill gestures. The leaflet also explains how we will deal with and respond to any claims we receive.

The information in this leaflet is intended as a guide and is not exhaustive. For a full copy of Norwich City Council's housing compensation policy,

please contact us on **0344 980 3333**, or you can write to us or email using the contact information shown on the back cover of this handbook. The policy is also available online at **www.norwich.gov.uk**

When will we pay compensation?

The table opposite shows the main circumstances for which we may consider a compensation claim and the amounts that may be appropriate. This list is intended as a guide, and is not exhaustive. Each claim would be considered on its own merit, following a full investigation.

Norwich City Council would require supporting information to consider each claim. For example, claims for damage to belongings would need to be supported with the appropriate receipts.

Some complaints may result in a goodwill gesture for such incidents where monetary compensation would not be appropriate.

Situation	Payment amount
Loss of amenity such as water, gas, electricity, sanitation, heating or hot water (where Norwich City Council is responsible for provision or was the cause of the loss)	£5-£10 per day dependent on the circumstances and if alternate means are provided
Failure to provide a service you have paid for	A direct refund of any charges for the period, or a goodwill gesture for all those affected
Failure to carry out certain qualifying emergency repairs that fall within the Right to Repair scheme	£10, plus an additional £2 for each day's delay after the expiry of the second period the repair was due to be completed in, up to a maximum of £50 compensation as set out in statute
Major avoidable delay in completing a repair within the stated/agreed timescales	Dependent on any loss suffered and circumstance
*Damage to your belongings, if Norwich City Council is liable, that are not covered by your home contents insurance that covers accidental damage	*Goodwill payment dependent on circumstances and production of relevant receipts
*Damage caused by a contractor employed by Norwich City Council undertaking a repair and, after investigation, they (the contractor) are deemed liable	* Goodwill payment dependent on circumstances and production of relevant receipts
A contribution towards electricity costs for heavy duty items used as part of a repair, eg dehumidifiers, or heaters used when heating has failed	Compensation dependent on circumstances and production of relevant receipts
The cost (depreciated) of certain qualifying improvements you have made to your home which qualify for reimbursement on leaving the property	This is calculated using a standard formula in accordance with set guidelines and the Citizen's Charter Scheme

Situation	Payment amount
The loss of the use of your home or a room within your home (except for situations involving modernisation/ planned works programmes, fire or flood)	Compensation dependent on circumstances. Room loss payments are calculated using a set standard formula
You being moved from your home, either on a permanent or temporary basis – in some circumstances you will be entitled to a Home Loss Payment which compensates for the permanent loss of the home due to redevelopment, improvement or major repair work	This payment is statutorily set by the government

* Where damage to goods or personal injury has occurred due to alleged negligence on behalf of Norwich City Council, the customer can submit a claim to our risk and insurance manager:
 FAO Risk and insurance manager
 Norwich City Council
 St Peters Street
 Norwich NR2 1NH

In these cases, the person making the claim must provide evidence to support their claim. Goodwill payments will not be awarded while an insurance claim is in progress.

How do I claim for compensation?

If you would like to claim for compensation, please send a

letter or email. This helps us collect all the relevant information, and deal with your claim quickly and efficiently. Please include full details of why you think you are entitled to claim compensation, including any additional information, such as copies of letters, receipts or relevant photographs, to support your request.

Letters should be sent to:
 Housing compensation claims
 Norwich City Council
 City Hall
 St Peters Street
 Norwich NR2 1NH

Emails should be sent to:
info@norwich.gov.uk

Please use the subject heading 'housing compensation claim' for your email.

If you need help writing a letter or an email please ask a Norwich City Council officer (such as your neighbourhood housing officer) for help.

You may also be able to get help and support from an independent advisor such as the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), which provides free information and advice on legal, money, and other problems.

Accepting an offer

Once your claim has been investigated, we will write to you with the outcome. If we offer monetary compensation, the details of the offer will be in writing, along with a Payment Acceptance Form and a pre-paid envelope. If you accept the offer you must return this form to us before we will pay you.

By signing and returning the form you are accepting the offer made to you in full and final settlement of your claim.

Payment method

All compensation payments will be made directly to your bank/ building society account.

The only exceptions are if you are in rent arrears or have any other debt(s) owed to Norwich City Council (such as charges for repairs, or failed gas safety inspection appointments), where the payment will be credited to your account, or if you do not have a bank/ building society account where an alternative method of payment will be arranged.

Right of appeal

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your compensation claim then you can appeal through our corporate complaints policy and procedure. An appeal must be made within 21 days of the compensation decision.

In the case of home loss and disturbance compensation payments, tenants also have the right to appeal under the Land Compensation Act 1973, by contacting:

The Lands Tribunal
48/49 Chancery Lane
London
WC2A 1JR
t: 020 7936 7200



NORWICH
City Council

Customer service standards

Norwich City Council has service standards so every tenant or possible customer is clear about the level of service they can expect to receive from us. The customer care service standards are a general guide to how you will be treated when accessing the council's services.

Our responsibilities to you

Whenever and however you contact us, we will:

- listen
- treat you the way we would like to be treated – with dignity, courtesy and respect for your confidentiality
- provide information when you need it and in a way you understand
- identify ourselves and give you our names
- tell you what we are doing and why, when something will happen and when it will not
- train our staff to provide the best possible service at all times, taking the time to get it right first time, every time.



Web

We aim for our website, **www.norwich.gov.uk**, to be accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

If we know there is a problem, we will let you know.

Telephone

We aim to answer your call within 20 seconds.

We aim to give you a full response when you call. If the person who answers cannot help, they will take responsibility to forward your query onto someone who can.

Letter and email

We aim to answer all letters within 10 working days, and emails within five working days.

Successfully received emails will be acknowledged straight away.

Visit us

We aim for you to be seen by someone within 10 minutes.

If you wish to speak to someone privately, we provide an interview room or appointment within five working days.

Visit you

If you request a home visit, we aim to see you within five working days.

We will show you council identification when visiting your home or premises.

Complaints

We aim to acknowledge your complaint within five working days.

We aim to give you a full response within 15 working days.

If we cannot, we will contact you to give you a new date for our response.

Customer responsibilities

To enable our staff to help, you must:

- Provide us with the information we need and inform us if it changes
- Let us know if you cannot attend an appointment
- Show us respect and courtesy.



NORWICH
City Council

We are listening

Tell us what you think of our service



Norwich City Council is continually looking to improve the services it offers its customers, so if you've had particularly good or bad service or would like to make a comment, we'd like to hear from you.

Thank you for taking the time to tell us what you think about our service.

Please use the form at the back of this leaflet to provide comments, compliments or to make a complaint.

Alternatively, you can contact us in the following ways:

t: 0344 980 3333

e: listening@norwich.gov.uk

minicom: 01603 212587 (for people who are hearing impaired)

in writing: Norwich City Council, City Hall, Norwich NR2 1NH.

Whichever way you choose to get in touch please make sure you provide your name and contact details, as well as information about your complaint and what you would like us to do to resolve it.

We are committed to making sure all services are tailored to meet the needs of everyone, taking into account age, gender, ethnicity and disability. All complaints are taken seriously and must be recorded and investigated according to our corporate procedure.

Norwich City Council, our partners and agencies working on our behalf, do not tolerate abusive and violent behaviour against our staff.

A member of the public cannot refuse to be dealt with by a member of staff on the grounds of their ethnicity, culture, faith, disability or sexuality.

If you wish to make a complaint, we strongly recommend you read the following guidance notes.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction about a service provided by the council, or someone acting on behalf of the council.

A complaint is usually about something specific, such as:

- the standard of service provided by the council
- failure by the council to respond to a request for a service
- failure by the council to provide an agreed service
- the council exceeding its powers
- the attitude or conduct of an officer has been unacceptable
- the council has not followed an agreed procedure
- maladministration by the council.

What is not a complaint?

The complaints procedure does not cover:

- requesting a service
- reporting a fault
- requesting information or explaining about a council policy or practice
- matters for which there is an existing right of appeal or legal remedy eg planning application appeals. These types of matters are dealt with according to the specific nature of the appeal.

The examples below are not dealt with under the complaints procedure, but have a specific appeals process and will be dealt with accordingly.

- Parking ticket disputes.
- Planning application appeals.
- Housing benefit appeals.

We will not be able to investigate complaints in the following instances (unless there are exceptional circumstances).

- The complaint has been reported more than one year after the incident occurred.
- The complaint has been reported, but 12 months or more have passed since the date of last correspondence.

If the issue you wish to raise is not covered by the complaints form, please email info@norwich.gov.uk or call 0344 980 3333.

What we will do to help resolve your complaint

If a full response cannot be provided within five working days, an acknowledgement letter will be sent informing the complainant which officer is dealing with their complaint.

A full response will be provided within 15 working days from the receipt of the complaint.

Unreasonably persistent complainants

Unreasonably persistent complainants are people who, because of the frequency and/or nature of their contact with us, hinder our consideration of other people's complaints.

If a complainant is deemed to be unreasonably persistent and he or she has been informed of that decision, all future correspondence will be read and placed on file, but not acknowledged.

Comments, compliments and complaints form

Please indicate the nature of the contact:

Comment Compliment Complaint

Are you completing this on behalf of someone else? Yes No

If yes, what is your relationship to them?
(please provide their contact details below)

If no, please provide your contact details below.

Contact details

Title Forename

Surname Company

Address

..... Postcode

Daytime telephone Evening telephone

Mobile telephone

Reason for contacting the council

Which area of the council is your contact related to?

.....
.....

Please give details (Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

.....
.....
.....
.....

What would you like us to do next? (Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

.....
.....
.....
.....

Monitoring

We believe everyone should have equal and fair access to services and facilities. We aim to prevent anyone being discriminated against. To help us monitor this, please complete the section below.

The information you provide will only be used for monitoring and is strictly confidential.

Date of birth: Male Female

Ethnic group

White

- British
- Irish
- Any other white background

Mixed

- White and black Caribbean
- White and black African
- Any other mixed background

Asian and Asian British

- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Any other Asian background

Black and black British

- Caribbean
- African
- Any other black background

Chinese

- Chinese

Gypsy/Traveller

- Romany Gypsy
- Traveller-Irish origin
- Traveller-other

Any other

Please specify

.....

Do you consider yourself as having a disability? Yes No

Data protection: the information you provide will be used by Norwich City Council for monitoring purposes only and will not be passed on to any other organisation.

Complaints about the conduct of members of the council (councillors)

If you think a councillor has broken the authority's code of conduct you can report this in writing to: The standards committee, democratic services manager, Norwich City Council, City Hall, Norwich NR2 1NH.

Complaining on behalf of others

Norwich City Council will ensure it complies with the Data Protection Act. If a member of the public is complaining on behalf of someone else, all correspondence relating to the complaint will be sent to the named customer. Correspondence can only be sent to a person other than the named customer if clear evidence is provided stating that this should be the case eg a power of attorney.

Data Protection Act 1998

Information you give us about yourself will be held on a computer or manual record which you have a right to see and check. Information may be shared with organisations we work with to provide services to you. Information may also be used in connection with prevention and detection of fraud.

Getting help to make a complaint

You may seek support to help you make a complaint eg your local councillor, Member of Parliament or advice organisation. Alternatively, you may prefer support from a friend or relative.

Please let us know if you need an interpreter or sign language interpreter or would like information translated into another language, in Braille, on audio tape or CD or in electronic format.

What we do with your information

Any personal information you give the council as part of your complaint will only be used by the council to:

- help address and resolve your concerns
- check whether our services and our complaints procedure are equally accessible to every member of the community
- improve our service and complaints procedure.

Freedom of Information Act 2000

The culture of the council is one of openness to the public based on a presumption that information it holds should be made available to the public unless such information is covered by a statutory exemption.

Useful contacts

Local services and other useful information

A guide for tenants



NORWICH
City Council

Tenant
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This leaflet provides you with contact details for local services and other useful information.

Agencies offering advice and support

- **Age UK Norwich**

60 London Street,
Norwich NR2 1JX
t: 01603 496333
www.ageuknorwich.org.uk

An independent charity working to improve the quality of life for all older people in Norwich.

- **Child benefit helpline**

t: 0300 200 3100 (Monday to Friday, 8am-8pm and Saturday 8am-4pm)

- **Norfolk Citizens Advice Bureau**

St Crispin's House, St George's Street, Norwich NR3 1PD
t: 0844 111 444 for the advice line.
www.norfolkcab.org

Norfolk Citizens Advice Bureau helps people resolve the difficulties they face in everyday life. It provides free information, advice and assistance on many subjects.

- **Disability living allowance helpline**

t: 0845 7123456

- **Equal lives**

t: 01508 491210

Equal Lives unites people who face disabling barriers to change things for the better and provides support to individuals to enable them to live more independently and have greater choice and control in their lives.

- **Job seekers allowance and income support helpline**

t: 0345 608 8535

- **Julian Support**

(Mental health)
1A Oak Street,
Norwich NR3 3AE
t: 01603 767718
www.juliansupport.org

Julian Support works in partnership with other organisations to help people with mental health problems lead an independent life.

- **Leeway**

(domestic abuse charity)

Helpline 0845 2412171
www.leewaysupport.org

Leeway offers advice, support and information to adults and children experiencing domestic violence.

- **Mancroft Advice Project**

The Risebrow Centre, Chantry Road, Norwich NR2 1RF
t: 01603 766994
www.map.uk.net

Free, independent information, advice and counselling for 11–25 year olds in and around Norwich.

- **Phoenix + Norcas**

Floor 2, St Vedast House, St Vedast Street. Norwich NR1 1BT
t: 01603 660070
www.phoenix-futures.org.uk

A charity working with people who have problems with alcohol, drugs or gambling.

- **Norfolk Community Law Service**

St Clements House, 2-16 Colegate, Norwich NR3 1BQ
t: 01603 496623
www.ncls.co.uk

Offers free legal advice, housing repossession support service, debt advice service,

and discrimination advice service.

- **Samaritans** (Norwich)

t: 08457 909090
www.samaritans.org

24 hour confidential emotional support for people who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair.

- **Shelter**

Whitefriars House, 50 Fishergate, Norwich NR3 1SE
t: 0344 515 1860
www.shelter.org.uk

Shelter gives free, confidential housing advice and helps people struggling with bad housing or homelessness.

- **Stonham Homestay**

5 Woolgate Court, St Benedicts, Norwich NR2 4AP
t: 0845 155 0390 (local rate)

For free and confidential housing support for people who are homeless, at risk of losing their home, or need help to settle into or set up a new home.

- **Tax credit helpline**

t: 0345 300 3900

- **The Matthew Project**

Nedeham House, 22 St Stephens Road, Norwich NR1 3QU

Adult service (Norfolk recovery partnership) t: 0300 7900 227

Young people's service (up to 19 years) t: 01603 216420

www.matthewproject.co.uk

Offering free and confidential advice to anyone affected by drugs and alcohol.

• **YMCA Norfolk**

35-37 Exchange Street,

Norwich NR2 1DP

t: 01603 621263

www.ymca-norfolk.org.uk

Provides housing, training, community health and fitness facilities to support young people and their families.

Buses

For timetable information contact Traveline on 0871 200 2233.

www.travelineeastanglia.co.uk

Community liaison

The council's community engagement team manages community development and safety services. People of all ages are encouraged to get more involved in their community and help is available to set up independent community groups. The team currently works with community

centres, young people's groups and organisations, food co-ops, credit unions, environmental groups, children's activities and faith and multicultural groups. Contact the community engagement team on 0344 980 3333.

Community centres

To find your local community centre, visit the 'community centres' page on the Norwich City Council website www.norwich.gov.uk or contact the council on 0344 980 3333.

Electoral registration

The council's elections office is responsible for registering electors, conducting elections and taking part in new initiatives to increase the number of people registering to vote. Contact them on 01603 212053.

Electricity

If your power supply is interrupted contact UK Power Networks on 0800 783 8866.

Fire service

For fire prevention and protection advice contact

Norfolk Fire Service on
01603 810351.
www.norfolkfireservice.gov.uk

Gas

If you smell gas or are worried about gas safety contact the National Gas Emergency Service on 0800 111 999 (24 hour).

General enquiries

(Norwich City Council Services)

For general enquiries about services provided by Norwich City Council call 0344 980 3333 and you will be directed to the service you need.

Hospital

Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital

Colney Lane
Norwich NR4 7UY
t: 01603 286286
www.nnuh.nhs.uk

Leisure centres

Riverside Swimming Centre

Wherry Road
Norwich NR1 1WX
t: 01603 671390

The Norman Centre

Bignold Road
Norwich NR3 2QZ
t: 01603 408140

Libraries

Earlham Library

Colman Road
Norwich NR4 7HG
t: 01603 454338

Mile Cross Library

Aylsham Road
Norwich NR3 2RJ
t: 01603 425906

Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library

The Forum
Millennium Plain
Norwich NR2 1AW
t: 01603 774774

Plumstead Road Library

Plumstead Road
Norwich NR1 4JS
t: 01603 433455

Tuckswood Library

Robin Hood Road
Norwich NR4 6BX
t: 01603 452038

West Earlham Library

17/18 Earlham West Centre
Norwich NR5 8AD
t: 01603 451881

Police

For non-emergency calls contact 101 (24 hours).
www.norfolk.police.uk

Recycling centres

Site	Mixed recycling*	Glass	Textiles	Shoes	Cooking oil
Brickmakers PH Sprowston Rd	✓	✓			
Bowthorpe Shopping Centre	✓	✓			
Enfield Road	✓	✓	✓		✓
Garden House PH Pembroke Rd		✓			
Morrisons	✓	✓	✓		✓
Sainsbury's Queens Road	✓	✓	✓		✓
St Saviours Car Park	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
The Cock PH Long John Hill		✓			
Tuckswood Shops	✓	✓	✓		✓
Waitrose Eaton	✓	✓	✓		✓
Westwick Street Car Park	✓	✓	✓	✓	

*Mixed recycling includes: • paper and cardboard • clean steel and aluminium food and drink cans • clean aluminium foil and food trays • empty aerosols • plastic bottles • clean plastic food pots, food tubs and food trays • food and drink cartons • Tetra Pak cartons

Recycling collection

We now accept a wide range of materials in our blue recycling wheelie bins, communal bins and blue sacks. These include paper, cardboard, plastic bottles, pots, tubs and trays, aluminium foil and foil trays, Tetra Pak cartons, aerosols and food and drink cans.

You can also recycle glass bottles and jars in wheelie bins and sacks and in the separate designed communal glass bins. Please rinse out

your recycling before you put it in the bin.

To find out more about recycling or waste collections call our customer contact team on 0344 980 3333 or visit www.norwich.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling

Bulky waste

Bulky waste can be taken to the household waste recycling centre in Swanton Road in Norwich. You can find out more about this at www.norfolk.gov.uk

It accepts:

- A limited amount of DIY waste
- Wood and green waste
- Electrical items
- Metal
- Batteries
- Cooking oil

If your bulky item is in good condition you may wish to donate it to a local charity or recycle it through www.uk.freecycle.org.

If you have items of bulky waste (like furniture, freezers or mattresses) to dispose of you can contact us on 0344 980 3333 to arrange a paid for special doorstep collection.

Don't dump your bulky items, it is fly-tipping which is a criminal offence costing Norwich City Council £200,000 a year. The maximum penalty is a £50,000 fine or five years in prison.

Registration of births, deaths, marriages and civil partnerships

Norwich Registry Office

Churchman House
71 Bethel Street
Norwich NR2 1NR
t: 01603 767600

Schools

Norfolk County Council is responsible for education and schools in the Norwich area. Contact them on 0344 800 8020 for information about:

- schools in Norwich
- how to register with a new school
- term times

Water

Contact the Anglian Water 24 hour emergency helpline on 08457 145 145 for any problems with water or wastewater services. If you spot a leak contact Anglian Water on 0800 771 881. www.anglianwater.co.uk

Useful contacts

Supporting services

Extra support
for tenants



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There are a variety of services that can provide help to people who may need extra support in maintaining their tenancy or looking after their home. This can range from a gardening service for people who are unable to maintain their own garden, to intensive work with families to manage routines or prevent antisocial behaviour or a mediation service to help resolve local disputes.

The following pages provide a summary of these services and if you would like more information about these services or a referral contact the customer contact team at our offices, on 0344 980 3333 or info@norwich.gov.uk, unless other contact details are provided.

Supported housing for older people

These homes are for people who want to live independently but with support services available when they need them.

- **Sheltered housing schemes**

Purpose built housing for people over the age of 60 who want to continue living independently, but feel safer knowing there is support available, 24 hours a day, in case they should need it.

Residents are supported by dedicated teams of support workers and sheltered housing officers. Support workers assess the needs of individuals, via a support plan, and arrange visits according to their specific needs. Sheltered housing officers manage all tenancy issues, including monitoring communal areas and buildings on the sheltered housing site.

All Norwich City Council sheltered housing properties are fitted with an alarm system

to enable residents to get help in an emergency.

To apply for sheltered housing please phone our home options team on **0344 980 3333**.

- **Norwich Community Alarm Service (NCAS) for the vulnerable**

This is a 24 hour monitoring and response service which operates every day of the year. It is used by a wide range of vulnerable people, including older people and those at risk of domestic violence, racial harassment or neighbourhood nuisance.

NCAS provides an alarm unit and personal trigger which enables the user to get help quickly. It is a chargeable service.

To find out more please call NCAS on **01603 213700** or email NCAS@norwich.gov.uk. A member of the NCAS team will be happy to talk to you about the services available and the costs involved.

NCAS works closely with Norfolk Community Services to provide products or services to help disabled or older people

retain their independence and continue living in their own home. NCAS also works in partnership with the Swift Support Service, which enables people to access urgent one-off help.

- **Swift Support Service**

This service is to provide solutions to one-off incidents, such as if you fall over and are unable to get up, are dealing with a traumatic event or are unwell and need help with a day-to-day task.

This service is available to those over 60 years old (or people aged over 50 if referred by a duty social worker or the emergency services).

You can contact the service direct at any time of the night and day on **0344 800 8020** and select option 1.

- **Housing with care**

These are made up of groups of flats within a complex offering 24 hr care support. The complex offers various facilities including a restaurant, shop and hairdressers.

To apply to live in one of these properties please call Norfolk community services on **0344 800 8020**.

You will also need to make a housing application to Norwich Home Options by calling 0344 980 3333.

- **Home care**

Norfolk County Council manages home care services to help people in their own home. Services include help with personal care, food and drink, simple treatments, personal assistance, domestic tasks and night care.

Contact Norfolk County Council on **0344 800 8020**.

Garden maintenance - for elderly and vulnerable



Mow & Grow is a gardening scheme available to council tenants who are unable to maintain their gardens due to physical or mental health issues, a disability or long term illness.

There is a small charge for this service. Contact the customer contact team for a referral on **0344 980 3333**.

Disabled adaptations

Disabled adaptations are improvements to enable access around your home and garden. Depending on your needs, these may include grab rails, stair lifts or a walk-in shower, to mention a few.

Contact Norfolk County Council's community services team on **0344 800 8020** and they will assess your needs.

If Norfolk County Council decides you are eligible for adaptations to your home a referral form will be completed and sent to Norwich City Council, who will then determine if the necessary work is possible.

Norfolk Trusted Trader - avoiding rogue traders

This is a free, Norfolk-wide service run by Norfolk County Council. It is aimed at helping all Norfolk residents avoid rogue traders by providing a directory of reputable, reliable and accredited providers.

Information on accredited providers of services such as electrical and gas-fitting, plumbing, handyperson, window cleaning and locksmiths is available online, over the phone and in a paper directory.

For more information on Norfolk Trusted Trader or to search the directory:

visit www.norfolk.gov.uk/trustedtrader

t: **0344 800 8020**

e: trustedtrader@norfolk.gov.uk

Family support

The Families' Unit is a family intervention project offering intensive whole family support through voluntary engagement.

The service is for families who live in the Norwich area and have at least one child under 18 years of age living permanently in the home.

The Families' Unit works alongside families with multiple problems. For example, a family may be struggling with debt and also need help to improve school attendance and to establish household routines.

You can phone us for more information on:

t: **01603 213611**, email thefamiliesunit@norwich.gov.uk or write to us:

The Families Unit,
Norwich City Council,
City Hall,
Norwich, NR2 1NH.

Mediation service - to help resolve neighbour disputes

Norfolk Community Mediation Service can help people who are finding it difficult to resolve a dispute with a neighbour. This can include problems with antisocial behaviour like noise or verbal abuse.

This is a confidential service designed to help people reach an agreement and improve relationships.

Contact us for a referral on **0344 980 3333**.



Support for homelessness or at risk of homelessness

Stonham HomeStay is a free and confidential service to Norwich residents who are living in temporary accommodation, homeless, or at risk of losing their home.

Stonham HomeStay offers a wide range of housing support, including:

- help to develop independent living skills
- budgeting and debt advice
- help to access community services
- Support during court, tribunal or appeal hearings.

Call them on **0845 155 0390** or apply online at www.stonhamhomestay.org.uk/norfolk

Sign up for extra support during a power cut

The UK Power Networks hold a list of people, who live in the areas that they operate (such as Norwich), who would be particularly vulnerable during a power cut. If you need extra support during a power cut or know someone else (maybe a relative, neighbour, patient, or friend) that would then apply to join the Priority Services Register.

Who can apply?

- Customers who are dependent on medical equipment
- Customers who are chronically sick
- Customers with a disability
- Customers who are blind or visually impaired
- Customers with young babies
- Elderly customers
- A nursing or residential home
- Other cases will also be considered.

What free support can you get?

- A priority phone number that you can call 24 hours a day if you have a power cut
- A welcome pack with useful advice about preparing for a power cut
- Regular text message or phone updates during a power cut
- Extra support from the British Red Cross to visit your home (if you agree)

Please note that going on the register does not mean that the power to your property will be restored any quicker than the power to other properties.

How to apply

- Call **0800 169 9970**
- Visit www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/priority and complete and submit the on-line form.