
Tenants' responsibilities continued

If you have a garden, you need to keep it tidy. Make sure that no earth or rubbish is placed against any fence or wall, in particular above the damp proof course level.

During cold weather you should take action to prevent pipes freezing and bursting. This is especially so if you are away from your property.

You are also responsible for reporting repairs that need to be done that are our responsibility. You must allow us access to carry out repairs. In an emergency, we have the right to enter your home to carry out the necessary works. We will however take reasonable steps to contact you first.

Can you charge me for work you do?

If you let your home fall into disrepair through neglect, misuse or deliberate damage, we have the right to carry out the repairs and charge you. This applies whether the repairs are needed as a result of misuse by you, a member of your household, visitors, or guests. If you ask us to do jobs that are your responsibility, such as change locks, we will help if we can but may ask for payment before we do the work.

What about insurance?

We insure all our properties for their full replacement value and also hold an indemnity policy to protect us from third-party claims. We cannot cover the cost of damage to your own property. We strongly recommend that you arrange your own home contents insurance policy.

Can I do DIY in my home?

You may want to install a new kitchen, lay new flooring, a patio or some other improvement. Before you start any work you must tell us in writing what you want to do. You will need our written approval to carry out the improvement. In some cases you may also need the approval of others, such as your local Council. For example in the case of planning or building control permission.

If we do not give you consent, this is a breach of your tenancy agreement. Gas fires and other appliances must be fitted and maintained by a Gas Safe registered engineer only.

Do you have a long-term programme for maintenance and improvements?

For the properties that we own, we plan up to 30 years ahead. We have a programme of planned maintenance and improvements (electrical rewiring, central heating, etc) and cyclical maintenance (external painting, gas servicing, etc). Whenever your home is going to be affected by such programmes, we will consult you before the work begins. We will advise you 12 weeks before the work is due to start.

What should I do if I think I have asbestos in my home?

If you damage or suspect damaged asbestos is in your home please contact us immediately. We keep a register of all our properties where we believe there is asbestos present.

Building materials containing asbestos started being used in the early 1900s and was most widely used between the 1960s and 1980s. Houses and flats built or refurbished around that time may contain asbestos. It is not always easy to tell whether a product contains asbestos. Loft or cavity wall insulation does not contain asbestos.

In most cases, asbestos found in homes poses a very low risk. Do not disturb or damage asbestos that is in good condition. As long as it has not cracked, split or flaked, then it is best left alone. If you damage asbestos or suspect damaged asbestos is in your home contact us immediately. Do not attempt to remove asbestos yourself. This can result in asbestos fibres being released into the air. Always be careful if you are doing any DIY.

How do I know my gas boiler is safe?

We carry out a free annual service to make sure that gas appliances in your home are safe. It will take around an hour to complete. But if you smell gas or think there is a leak, don't wait for the service - phone the national gas emergency number **0800 111 999**.

You must allow us access to your home to carry out the annual service or other maintenance on gas appliances and flues. Even if you don't use gas, but have gas pipes in your property, these also have to be checked. We do this to prevent injury to you, your family, your neighbours and members of the public from carbon monoxide poisoning, fire and explosion.

An annual inspection is a legal requirement. If you refuse to allow us access we may have to gain forced access to or apply to the Courts for possession of your home. Any legal costs incurred will be your responsibility. You are also responsible for the maintenance and safety checks for any appliance that you own or have installed yourself. Servicing your gas appliances regularly will make sure they are efficient and safe to use.

What can I expect from workers?

AmicusHorizon has a code of conduct that all its contractors are required to sign. This sets out what we expect of them when they are carrying out work in your home. You'll find a summary in our Service Standards leaflet. If you would like to see a copy of the full code of conduct, please call us and we will send a copy to you.

Please let us know if any of our contractors fail to provide the service we expect of them.

Repairs and maintenance

This leaflet explains how to report a repair and sets out what repairs you and we are responsible for maintaining your home.



If you have difficulty in understanding this document or need it in another format, including Braille, large print, audiotape, interpretation, signed interpretation or translation into another language, please telephone **0800 121 60 60*** or **01795 434 606**** or email **contactus@amicushorizon.org.uk**

* Calls free from a BT landline, charges from mobiles and other networks may vary.

** If you are calling from a mobile, it may be cheaper for you to dial 01795 434 606.
Calls may be recorded and monitored quality and training purposes.

How do I report a repair?

You can report a repair to us by telephone, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Call us on **0800 121 60 60*** or **01795 434 606****

Calls may be recorded and monitored for quality and training purposes.

*Calls free from a BT landline, charges from mobiles and other networks may vary.

**If you are calling from a mobile, it may be cheaper for you to dial 01795 434 606.

Email: **contactus@amicushorizon.org.uk**

Postal address: **AmicusHorizon, PO BOX 322, SITTINGBOURNE ME9 8PQ**

Alternatively, if you have a non-urgent repair, you can use the special step-by-step reporting tool on our website. Just go to: **www.amicushorizon.org.uk** and click on "Reporting a Repair".

You can also track the progress of your reported repair on the website.

What do I do in an emergency?

In an emergency, call us. An emergency repair is anything which puts the health, safety or security of you or others at immediate risk. It can also badly affect the structure of the building. We aim to complete emergency repairs within 24 hours. If we cannot do this then the repair will be made safe. We will tell you when we will return to complete the work.

Important: If you think there is a gas leak, phone the gas emergency number **0800 111 999** (24 hour service).

Examples of emergency repairs include:

- Burst water main
- Total loss of water
- Dealing with the effects of flooding
- Severe storm damage
- Total loss of electricity supply (not caused by power cuts)
- Major fault with electricity supply
- Unsafe electrical fittings
- Breaches of security to outside doors and windows
- Total loss of gas supply
- Gas leak
- Blocked flue
- Blocked main drains, soil pipe or your only WC
- Heating loss for elderly/vulnerable tenants at all times and during the period 31 October to 1 May for others.

Who is responsible for repairs?

You must not neglect or damage your home. You are responsible for keeping it well-decorated. You also have to arrange some repairs for yourself. This leaflet sets out what repairs you – and we - are responsible for. However, your tenancy agreement may be slightly different. In case of any disputes, your own tenancy agreement will always come first.

AmicusHorizon responsibilities

Repairs

We will keep the structure and outside of your home in a reasonable state of repair and proper working order. This includes:

- Drains, gutters, outside pipes and the roof
- Outside walls, outside doors, window sills, window catches, sash cords and window frames, including necessary outside painting and decorating
- Inside walls, floors, ceilings, door frames, but **not** inside painting and decorating
- Chimneys, chimney stacks and flues, but **not** including chimney sweeping
- Front paths, steps or other access points we own
- Garages and stores that are part of the property
- Boundary walls and fences, but **not** those shared with neighbours.

Installations

We will keep in working order any installations we have provided for supplying water, gas or electricity, and for heating, hot water and sanitation. This includes:

- Basins, sinks, baths, toilets, flushing systems and waste pipes, but **not** plugs, chains or toilet seats
- Electric wiring, including sockets and switches
- Central heating systems, gas and water pipes, water heaters, showers and storage heaters, fireplaces, and fires that we have fitted.

Tenants' responsibilities

Maintenance

You are responsible for:

- Repairing damage caused by you, members of your household or visitors, including broken glass
- Replacing locks and lost keys
- Replacing door knobs, letter boxes and so on
- Replacing broken toilet seats
- Unblocking sinks, baths and toilets
- Replacing sink and bath plugs and chains
- Replacing electrical plugs and fuses
- Replacing light bulbs and fluorescent strips (except in shared areas like stairwells in blocks of flats)
- Filling minor cracks in plaster
- Repairing paths in back gardens
- Repairing existing fences which are shared with neighbours
- Replacing shared fences with an appropriate alternative when they cannot be repaired
- Sweeping chimneys
- Testing smoke alarms in line with manufacturers' instructions, and replacing their batteries
- Replacing clothes lines (unless they are shared)
- Repairing items you have installed yourself
- Repairing your own electrical appliances
- Repairing TV aerials (unless they are shared)
- Internal doors, handles, hinges, cupboard catches
- Fixtures or fittings provided by yourself, including additional security measures, alterations
- Maintaining your home in a good decorative order and not allow it to fall into disrepair by deliberate damage or neglect
- Taking reasonable care of all specialist adaptation equipment.

If you are not sure whether a repair is your responsibility, please contact us and we will be happy to advise you.