

Lambeth Council's

Repairs Manual 2026

A place we can all call home

Lambeth

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Introduction

This Repairs Manual is for Lambeth Council tenants.

Tenant Management Organisations (TMOs) manage most responsive repairs separately and for more information on TMO repairs you should contact your TMO directly.

The Manual tells you which repairs are our responsibility, and which are yours. It outlines the different types of repairs and the timescales for completing them and what is available for those who may need a bit of support.

It explains the Right to Repair scheme and rechargeable repairs. It also gives advice on how to avoid problems and 'top tips' such as how to clear a blocked pipe or reduce condensation.

Our Contractors

We have divided the borough into two areas, north and south, each with its own contactors. Here are the repair contractors who work in each area:

North

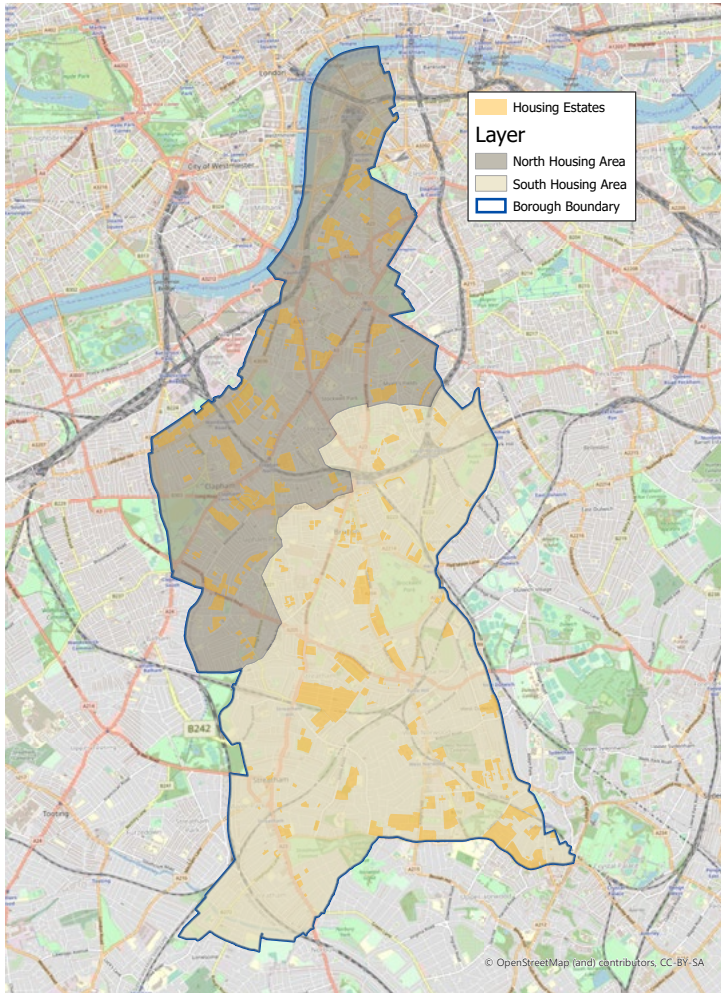
Contractor	Responsibility
Wates Property Services Ltd	Responsive repairs and voids
T Brown Group Ltd	Communal Gas and Water Systems, and Domestic Gas Works
OCO	Domestic Gas Works
Sureserve	Domestic Gas Works
NRT Group	Communal Electrical Works
RJ Lift Services	Lift Maintenance

South

Contractor	Responsibility
Wates Property Services Ltd	Responsive repairs and voids
OCO	Communal Gas and Water Systems
T Brown Group Ltd.	Domestic Gas Works
OpenView Security Solutions Ltd	Communal Electrical Works
Amalgamated Lifts Ltd	Lift Maintenance

Community Works

Community works is Lambeth Council's in-house repairs service with all staff employed by us. They carry out communal repairs and aids and adaptations across the whole borough.



How to report a repair

Online

Lambeth has an online repairs portal to report and track your repairs. There is an easy to use visual guide for raising repairs. You can click on pictures to properly identify the repair which is required, and we make sure that the correct repair is raised.

Please see the example below under “Online visual guide for raising repairs”.

You can access the online repairs portal via our website https://myhousing.lambeth.gov.uk

If you need to raise an **emergency repair**, please contact the call centre in the first instance.

Call Centre

You can also contact us via the call centre. You will need to do this for repairs which are considered an emergency.

020 7926 6000

You can contact us from
Monday – Friday 8am to 8pm or
Saturday 8am to 1pm.

If you have **an emergency** outside these hours please call us on

020 7926 6666

Repairs Surgeries

We also hold drop in surgeries where you can report repairs requests. Details about when the surgeries take place are on estate noticeboards and in estate newsletters.

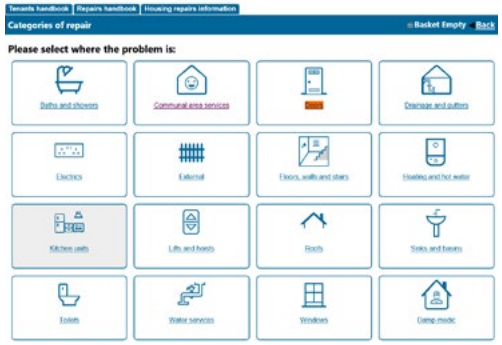
Create a housing online account today

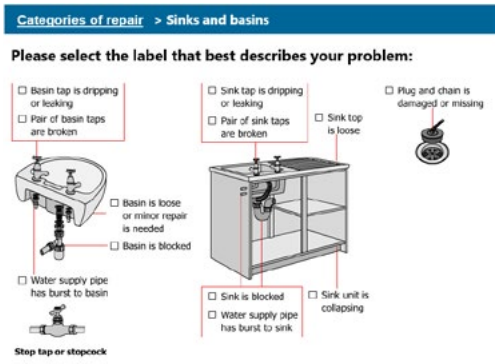
If you don’t already have an account it is very easy to set one up.
Go to https://myhousing.lambeth.gov.uk

Or scan this QR code

If you have a problem registering or logging into your account, please contact us on 020 7926 8790 so we can help you.

Online visual guide for raising repairs - example screens





Repair Service Standards

Customer care

The council has six general customer service standards which our contractors must also work to:

- We make it easy for you to access services and take responsibility to keep you informed.
- We resolve your queries at the first point of contact and keep you updated if it takes longer.
- We say sorry if we get things wrong and put it right quickly.
- We listen to your feedback and take it into account when making improvements to our service.
- We will only collect relevant material from you, store it safely and use it appropriately.
- We are an accessible and transparent council.

How repairs are prioritised

The following repair priorities are used to decide how urgent a repair is and how long it can take to fix. These priorities comply with the Right to Repair regulations (see page 14).

For R1-3 repairs, the response time starts the day after you report the repair to us. You will be offered options of repair appointment times depending on the priority of the repair. For example, for a when you report an R2 repair you will be offered future appointment slots from seven days up to 28 days from your initial call.

Type of repair	Response time (working days)	Our priority code
Urgent Emergency	Attend two hours - Fix 24 hours	EM0
Emergency	Fix within one day	EM1
Routine	Fix within seven days (or three days for certain qualifying repairs under the Right to Repair regulations)	R1
Routine	Fix within 28 days	R2
Planned	Complete within 90 days	R3

Repair priority codes

EM0: Urgent Emergency	EM1: Emergency	R1: Routine repairs	R2: Routine repair	R3: Planned repair
Attend two hours - Fix 24 hours	Fix within one working day	Fix within seven working days (or three days for certain qualifying repairs under the right to repair regulations)	Fix within 28 working days	Complete within 90 working days

Examples of typical routine repairs and the usual times (working days) we will offer appointments to carry out the repair

A repair is an emergency when the problem could cause serious health and safety problems or severe damage if not fixed or made safe quickly. The same applies to repairs reported out of hours. Emergencies include; ▶ lift breakdown ▶ toilet not working (if there is no other working toilet in the home) ▶ total loss of electrical power ▶ total loss of mains water supply ▶ faults with smoke, heat or carbon monoxide alarms.		Between one and three days; ▶ repairing a front door lock ▶ securing a loose or broken handrail ▶ tap which can't be turned ▶ blocked sink, bath or basin. Between one and seven days; ▶ repairing estate lighting ▶ repairing a leaking bath ▶ repairing a manhole cover ▶ extractor fan not working.	Between seven days and 28 days; ▶ repairing your ceiling ▶ pram sheds.	Between 28 days up to 90 days: ▶ clearing gutters ▶ plaster work after repairs have been carried out ▶ non-urgent work to prevent problems arising in the future.

Please note – we may not meet our timescales if we need access to another property to fix a repair but cannot get in (for example, if water is dripping through your ceiling we will need to trace and get access to the flat causing the leak to fix the leak). However, depending on the circumstances we can force our way in if necessary.

Appointment times

Our contractors work Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm, and Saturday mornings, except public holidays. We will try our best to give you an appointment that suits you; however, please try to be flexible so we can complete the repair within the target time.

The appointment slots are Monday - Friday:

Time		
08:00 to 13:00	13:00 to 18:00	18:00 to 20:00
10:00 to 14:00		

We will offer you a morning, afternoon or evening appointment. This means the contractor may arrive any time within the appointment period.

On Saturday appointments are available in the morning:

08:00 to 13:00

Tracking your repair

When you make the appointment, you can ask us to keep you up to date via text message. If you request this service, we will send you a reminder the day before the appointment, and another message when the contractor is on the way. A text message is also sent when you raise a repair confirming the appointment details.

From October 2021, when the repairs module goes live, you will also be able to track what repairs have been ordered on your estate and block by logging into your tenant account.

Keeping in touch

If for any reason you need to change the appointment, please let us know as soon as possible. You can do this via the portal or by calling the customer service centre. Please try to give at least three days' notice if possible and quote your repairs order number.

How to identify our workers

Our staff and contractors all carry ID cards.

If a staff member or contractor cannot show their ID card, do not let them into your property. Report the incident to us on 020 7926 6000 or to the police.

Repair Responsibilities

As outlined in the Lambeth Tenancy Agreement we will:

- maintain the structure and outside of your property
- maintain your property's drains, stack pipes, gutters and outside pipes
- keep in proper working order any fittings for supplying water, gas or electricity, toilet facilities and water heating inside your property. If we decide the repair is not possible then we will replace the fittings.

Electricity and gas meters
The utility provider is responsible for maintaining the electricity and gas meters. You should contact the utility provider if maintenance is required to the meter or if the meter needs to be moved. The council as your landlord is not responsible for this and will not be able to arrange this.

The council is also responsible for carrying out repairs and maintenance to parts of the external fabric of our housing blocks and estates. This includes including communal equipment and areas you share with your neighbours like shared fire protection measures, shared staircases, balconies and walkways and other shared services like lifts and door entry systems.

Recharges

Recharges will occur when tenants and leaseholders cause wilful damage to their property or where we undertake a repair which is the responsibility of the occupant. Tenants and leaseholders are responsible for the conduct of all persons in their household, including any visitors, inside their property and communal areas or on the estate.

Accidental damage arising from reasonable behaviour will not be penalised.

We will also apply recharges to contractors and agents working on Lambeth Council estates and third parties who cause damage.

Examples where we can apply a recharge for include:

- Correcting damage that resulted from wilful acts abuse, neglect or recklessness.
- To reimburse for works carried out which are the responsibility of the occupant (e.g. cutting back a tree in a tenant's garden or key replacement). Where the work is not an emergency the resident will be expected to pay upfront before any work is carried out.
- Correcting any work carried out by the resident that was substandard or unauthorised.
- Additional work undertaken as a direct result of the resident breaking their tenancy/lease agreement for example not leaving their home clean and tidy on departure.
- Costs associated with legal action and the cost of any damage if we have to force entry to your home to carry out a repair or for gas servicing.

If there has been criminal damage you would not be recharged but may be required to provide a crime reference number.

If you have been the victim of domestic abuse we will not recharge.



Our repair responsibilities

We are not responsible for all the repairs in your home. Below is a list of some of the most common repairs the council is responsible for:

- Aids and adaptations
- Baths
- Blockages (unless caused by you)
- Ceiling repairs
- Central Heating
- Communal repairs (including heating and hot water)
- Decoration (outside)
- Door entry system
- Doors (outside / front door)
- Electrical wiring
- Extractor fans
- Fences
- Floors (not floor coverings like carpet)
- Gas boilers
- Glazing (unless broken by you)
- Guttering
- Hot water
- Kitchen units (as part of planned replacement programme)
- Lifts
- Light switches
- Plaster finishing (except minor cracks)
- Radiators
- Roof
- Skirting boards
- Stair
- Stop cocks
- Taps (except washer replacement)
- Toilet pan and cistern
- Windows (frames, sills and vents, handles, locks, and restrictors to windows above ground floor)



Your repair responsibilities

You are responsible for keeping your home clean, internal decoration, repairing any damages caused by you or anyone living or visiting your homes, the upkeep of anything not provided by the council and for minor repairs including:

- Blockages. You must keep wastes and drains clear to prevent them becoming blocked, and also try to clear any blockages.
- Cookers, including installation or disconnection
- Curtain battens, poles or rails
- Doors (internal doors)
- Floor coverings such as carpets or vinyl you have laid yourself (to note laminate flooring is only allowed if there is no one living beneath you because it is noisy when walked on an can cause a nuisance to neighbours)
- Forced entry damage caused by police after criminal activity
- Garden maintenance including looking after any trees
- Glazing
- Key and fob replacements
- Kitchen units (door catches, handles and hinges)
- Locks
- Light bulbs
- Limescale removal
- Plug chains to baths, sinks and basins
- Sealants to bath
- Sheds in the garden
- Toilet seats
- Tiling or grouting
- Windows (draught excluders)

Decorations

You must keep the inside of your home reasonably well decorated. We are responsible for outside decoration. However, if you would like to do external decoration yourself, you must get our permission first and supply a written plan of how you are going to do the work.

We will repair any decorations that are damaged because of other work we have done, or we will (if we choose to) pay you a decoration allowance instead.

If you are elderly, vulnerable or have a disability, and there is no other member of your household or family who can help, we may be able to decorate certain rooms in your home under a planned programme.

Home improvements

If you are a secure tenant and you want to carry out alterations or improvements to your property or outside of your home, you must get written permission from us to do so. You may also need planning permission or building regulations approval. You are responsible for getting this permission and paying any resulting fees.

If you carry out improvements to your property (with our permission) and you later move, you may be entitled to compensation. This depends on how long ago you made the improvements and the type you made. You must get a valuation before and after the work is done so we know how much compensation is reasonable for us to pay.

What you need to do

Access to your home

You must make sure that either you or another responsible adult is present at the appointed time so what we can have access to your home to carry out the repair. If we cannot get in, we may charge you for our time or the contractor's time or both.

If you are out when we visit, we will leave a card and send you a text message to let you know that we have called. It is your responsibility to contact us and re-book the repair.

In an emergency, we may need to force entry if you fail to let us in after we have given you notice. We may recharge you for any repair or damage caused.

We may also need access to your property to inspect after the repair has been completed, to make sure the contractor has sorted out the problem. If you are out during this inspection visit, we will assume the repair is satisfactory, unless you tell us otherwise. Please allow us to make this inspection as it helps us to ensure we are providing a good service.

Gas servicing and maintenance

By law, we must check all our gas appliances and pipe work for leaks that could cause an explosion or carbon monoxide poisoning. We do this by carrying out a yearly safety check through a contractor on the Gas Safe Register.

After the safety check, you will be sent a copy of the gas certificate will be sent to you in the post. The contractor will offer an appointment when the annual service is due. They will make the appointment to suit you where possible, but please try to be flexible as well.

We may take legal action against you if you do not let us complete your annual gas safety check. This may mean a court order requiring you to let the contractor into your home or allowing us to force entry into your home to carry out the safety check.

To stop us taking legal action, you must let us know if you are going to be away due to holiday or sickness for any length of time.

Please note – you are responsible for safety checks on any gas appliances you own, such as a gas cooker.

We also maintain and service communal gas boilers.

Smoke/heat alarms

We fit smoke and heat alarms for your safety. They make a loud noise when there's signs of fire in your home giving time to escape. You should test them each week by pressing the 'test' button. The alarm will sound briefly if they are working correctly. If you hear the alarm at any other time, check for fire.

The alarms are usually connected to the mains electricity. If there is a power failure, or not enough money on your key meter, the battery back-up in the alarms will run out in around two days. The alarms will not work again until mains power comes back on and fully recharges the back-up batteries.

If a battery-operated alarm is installed in your home, it is your responsibility to replace the battery. When you change a battery, make sure it is the correct type and always use a new one. After you have changed the battery, test the alarm to make sure it is working – never assume it is. When a battery starts to run low, the alarm will make an occasional beeping sound to warn you that the battery needs to be replaced. The alarm will still operate if smoke is detected, but the longer

you take to change the battery, the weaker the alarm will become. If you do not change the battery, the alarm will eventually stop beeping and will not detect smoke in an emergency.

Do not try to remove a mains-operated alarm from the ceiling.

If a mains-operated alarm starts beeping randomly, it may be due to sudden changes in air temperature (draughts) dust insects smoke or steam.

If the alarm beeps, this does not mean it is faulty or will not go off. Dust your alarms regularly and vacuum them occasionally to remove dust or small insects.

Make sure you have working smoke/heat alarms installed and report any problems with them to Lambeth Council on 0207 926 6000.

Preparing for an appointment

Once you have a date and time for your repair, you should make the area ready for the contractor to come and do the repair. This may involve moving furniture, lifting your floor coverings, and clearing possessions away from the area. For example, please clear out items stored under the sink if there is a leak.

Contractors will not be able to clear an area or room before fixing the repair. We will not be responsible for any damage caused to items that have not been moved away from the area. The same applies for pre-repair inspections, particularly when we are trying to detect leaks.

If you are elderly, vulnerable or need extra help when someone comes to fix the repair (including preparing the area for the contractor) please let us know when you report your repair. We will pass the information to our contractors and they will be able to assist.

Supporting Vulnerable Tenants

As a caring social landlord, we aim to look after tenants who may need some extra support. Vulnerable tenants have their repairs prioritised for quicker action. They may also be supported by the council with certain repairs which would normally be a tenant's responsibility. We will consider the individual circumstances, including who else lives in the property, when deciding whether to carry out discretionary repairs. When you are contacting us to raise a repair, please let us know if you need extra support.

Where the vulnerability assessment determines additional support is needed, vulnerable tenants will have access to a comprehensive property inspection to identify necessary repairs and assess the need for property adaptations. Where necessary, cases will be referred to the Home Improvement Agency for specialist installations.

If things go wrong

We always aim to provide you with a good service and carry out regular surveys to monitor how well we are performing.

If you feel that we have not met your expectations, then please contact us. We may inspect the repair and if we decide that it has not been done properly, we can ask the contractor to do the repair again.

Right to repair

The Government has set target timescales for carrying out particular repairs. The Right to Repair scheme gives tenants a legal right to have these repairs done on time. If we do not meet the target times, you can ask us to get another contractor to do the work within the same length of time. If the work is still not done, you may be entitled to claim compensation. Alternatively, you can appoint your own contractor to do the work and we will pay for it. Qualifying repairs, and how long we have to do them is listed in the table below.

Repair type	Response time (working days)
Total loss of electric power	1
Partial loss of electric power	3
Unsafe power or lighting socket or electrical fitting	1
Total loss of water supply	1
Partial loss of water supply	3
Total or partial loss of gas supply	1
Blocked flue to open fire or boiler	1
Heating or hot water not working between 31 October and 1 May	1
Heating or hot water not working between 1 May and 31 October	3
Blocked/leaking foul drain, soil stack or toilet	1
Toilet not flushing (if there is only one toilet in the property)	1
Blocked sink, bath, or basin	3
Tap cannot be turned	3
Leak from a water pipe, tank, or cistern	1
Leaking roof	7
Insecure external window, door, or lock	1
Loose or detached banister or hand rail	3
Rotten timber flooring or stair tread	3
Door entry phone not working	7
Mechanical extractor fan not working	7

Temporary relocation

If you cannot stay in your property while a repair is being completed, we will discuss moving you to another property temporarily.

Making a complaint

We strive to deliver excellent customer care through our standards but sometimes things will go wrong. Should you need to raise a complaint, the easiest way to do this is online; please refer to Make a complaint | Lambeth Council

When you make a complaint please tell us as much as you can about what went wrong, when it happened, who you dealt with and how you would like the matter resolved.

If you want to talk to someone call us on 020 7926 9694.

If you'd prefer to put your complaint in writing, please email complaints@lambeth.gov.uk

Mediation

Landlords and tenants can have disagreements which sometimes end up in court. Mediation is the quickest way of reaching a fair resolution and may be offered and avoids the need to go to court.

Communal repairs

Communal repairs are repairs to shared parts of a building or estate, rather than to an individual home. Examples include repairs to lifts, external lights, shared front doors, communal boilers, extractor fans or cold water tanks.

Estate walkabouts and Estate Action Plan

We carry out regular estate walkabouts to identify communal repairs. We advertise these events widely. Resident representatives and local councillors often attend, and all residents are welcome to come with us.

Please also tell us if you notice that a communal repair is needed. We will want to know what the repair is and the exact location of it. For example, please tell us the nearest address, or give us the set of numbers that can be found on the nearest external light columns or lifts.

We work with residents to establish estate actions plans on larger estates. These cover local priorities. Please see https://eap.lambeth.gov.uk/ for details about any plans for your estate.

Leaks and overflows

While not strictly communal, leaks and overflows from a particular property can affect the structure of the building or other flats. Sometimes you may not be aware of a leak from your property that could be affecting others in the building. An overflow, where water runs down the outside of a building, can cause a lot of damage to the building.

In these circumstances we may need access to your flat, even if you are unaware of the problem. Please let us in, even if it may cause you some inconvenience. In an emergency we may have to force entry into your property to solve a problem affecting others. We will normally give you some warning but may need immediate access if we cannot contact you and the situation is critical.

Community Works

Lambeth's in-house repairs service, Community Works, is responsible for a range of communal repairs including:

- Paving / Block Paving / bollards / kerb edgings / pothole repairs
- Flooring to: Entrance Areas / Stairwells / Landings
- Carpentry repairs to: Entrance Area, Stairwell and Landings – doors, windows, handles, locks, glazing – not electronic door entry system
- Bin Chute Repairs / Replacement not blockages
- Plumbing – blockages to the communal stack, trace, and remedy leaks to communal areas
- Drainage – Blocked communal drains and sewers / replacement manhole / gully / grid covers
- Communal Gutters and Downpipes
- Communal Doors – intake cupboard doors / lift motor room doors / cold water storage room doors
- Finishes – paint repairs including vandalism / minor plaster / render repairs
- Communal Gates and Fencing.

Helpful information

Insurance

Building insurance

We have insured our properties against the following risks:

- fire
- lightning
- explosions
- aircraft crashes
- riot and public disturbances
- malicious damage by political organisations
- some other types of damage.

Home contents insurance

We will not insure the contents of your home. We strongly recommend that you take out home contents insurance. Insuring your belongings can save you a lot of money if they are stolen or damaged. For example, if your home is accidentally flooded from the flat above yours, you may be able to claim compensation from an insurance company. We would only have to pay if you could prove we had been careless in some way.

Look around for the best insurance policy and make sure it is with a reputable company. It is important to include third party cover in case anyone makes a claim against you, for example if you leave a tap running and flood your neighbour's home. We can arrange home contents insurance for tenants through a low-cost scheme.

Lambeth Council have teamed up with Thistle Tenant Risks and Allianz Insurance plc to offer our tenants and leaseholders the chance to insure their home contents and belongings through the Crystal Insurance Scheme at a competitive rate.

To find out more ask your housing officer for an application pack or call Crystal Insurance Scheme on 0345 450 7286 or visit www.crystal-insurance.co.uk, where you can request a call back.

Taking care with gas

Gas or fume leaks - what to do if you smell gas or believe you have a fumes leak.

If you smell gas, think you have a gas leak, or are worried that fumes containing carbon monoxide are escaping from a gas appliance, **call the free National Gas Emergency Services hotline immediately on 0800 111 999**.

You should also:

- **Open all doors and windows** to ventilate the property.
- **Do not use any electrical equipment**, including lighting and power switches or mobile phones.
- **Extinguish all naked flames**.
- **Stop smoking**, and do not strike matches or any other way of making fire.
- Open doors manually where there are any electrical security entry phones or locks.
- If you can turn off the gas supply, **do so at the main 'on' and 'off' lever**, which is next to the gas meter. Make sure you know where the 'on' and 'off' lever is before you need to use it.
- **Seek urgent medical attention** if you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning.

Never try to deal with any gas leaks or faults yourself – gas leaks can be dangerous. If you smell gas outside, call National Gas Emergency Services freephone on 0800 111 999 straight away. Don't wait for someone else to do it.

Carbon monoxide (CO) alarms

If the alarm sounds, **call the free 24-hour National Gas Emergency Services hotline on 0800 111 999**.

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a poisonous gas. You cannot see, taste or smell carbon monoxide but it can kill without warning in a short amount of time. Carbon monoxide can escape from gas appliances that are not working properly, are damaged or poorly maintained, or are not installed correctly.

We have a programme to install carbon monoxide detectors to all homes with individual gas boilers.

The detectors are usually connected to the mains electricity. If there is a power failure, or not enough money on your key meter, the battery back-up in the alarms will run out in around two days. The alarms will not work again until mains power comes back on and fully recharges the back-up batteries.

If you have a battery-operated alarm installed in your home, it is your responsibility to replace the battery. When you change a battery, make sure it is the correct type and always use a new one. After you have changed the battery, test the alarm to make sure it is working – never assume it is.

Make sure you test your CO alarm regularly and report any problems with it to Lambeth Council on 0207 926 6000.

Find out more about carbon monoxide poisoning https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/carbon-monoxide-poisoning.

Tips for dealing with gas

If you are having a gas appliance or equipment fitted, always use a Gas Safe registered engineer. You can find such an engineer by visiting www.gassaferegister.co.uk.

- You will be responsible for all charges.
- Do not try to deal with gas problems yourself.
- For your own safety, find out where the mains gas supply tap is. It is called an emergency control valve and is usually near the meter. Make sure you know how to turn it off. If the tap needs a key to operate it, the key must be fixed to the tap.
- If you use a communal gas supply, make sure you know where the emergency control valve is. It is usually in the kitchen or in a cupboard inside your home.
- Before you switch off the mains supply, turn off all gas appliances and pilot lights. Turn the mains gas tap to the 'off' position. This is when the notched line of the tap points across the pipe.
- Depending on why you turned the supply off, you may need a Gas Safe registered engineer to turn the supply back on. This is known as testing, purging, and commissioning, a recognised procedure used in the gas industry.
- If you do not need a Gas Safe registered engineer before you turn the mains supply back on, make sure all gas appliances and pilot lights are still turned off. Put the mains gas tap back to the 'on' position. It is on when the notched line lies along the pipe. Then light the pilot lights on appliances.
- If your mains tap is stiff and won't turn properly, don't force it. If you are not sure about any problems with gas, call us on 020 7926 6000.
- If while doing an annual gas safety check, a Gas Safe registered engineer finds that any gas appliance or equipment you installed is defective, they will turn it off. If you turn it back on and it causes an incident, you will be liable for the damage caused.
- Never turn on the gas to a cooker until you are ready to light the burner or water heater until the pilot is on.
- If you have a charge key or slot meter and the gas runs out, turn off all gas taps before you put money in the meter. When the gas comes on, check that all pilot lights are lit.
- Make sure there is plenty of ventilation around gas appliances and water heaters.
- The gas supplier is responsible for maintenance of the gas meter. You should contact the gas supplier if maintenance is required to the meter or if the meter needs to be moved. The council as your landlord is not responsible for this and will not be able to arrange this.

Damp and condensation mould growth

Condensation appears when warm moisture vapour meets a cold surface. You can see it as water droplets on the walls, ceilings and windows. This can lead to a spread of black mould if not cleared away.

Under new legal requirements, "Awaab's Law", which were introduced in October 2025, social housing landlords are required to make an assessment as to whether damp and mould represents an emergency or a significant hazard. An emergency hazard is one that poses 'an imminent and significant risk of harm' to the health or safety of the tenant in the social home. A significant hazard is one that poses a 'significant risk' to the health or safety to the tenant.

Lambeth has a matrix to work this out which considers the severity of the mould and any characteristics of the household which may make them more at risk from the effects of mould, such as certain medical conditions.

Any emergency hazards should be made safe within 24 hours. For significant hazards, we must investigate any potential significant hazards within **10 working days** of becoming aware of them.

We must undertake relevant safety work within **5 working days of the investigation concluding**, if the investigation identifies a significant hazard.

> Support and advice is available to help resolve problems with damp and mould. It's not your fault. We are here to help and work in partnership with you. The council has made a series of commitments to you which are in our Damp Charter – see details on page 21.

To help reduce the likelihood of condensation forming, it's helpful if you can consider the following steps:

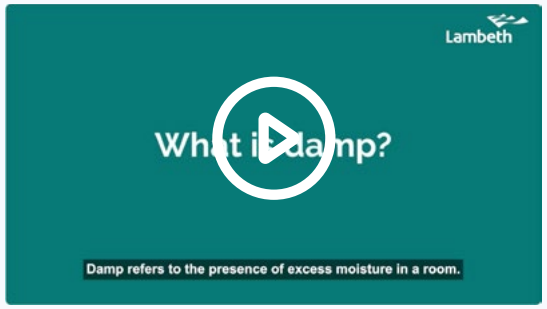
- Heating is a factor in helping in the prevention of condensation. Having the heating on at a low to moderate setting and not letting air temperature fall below 16 degrees during the day is helpful. Try to not obstruct radiators with belongings or furniture such as beds. We recognise that energy costs are high which can make heating a home difficult. Advice on support which may be available is on the Lambeth Council website in this link: https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/community-solutions/cost-living-money-debt
- Extractor fans can reduce humidity in your home. Try to keep kitchen and bathroom doors and windows closed when fans are in use and do not cover over air vents in any rooms.
- In the short term, you can wipe off condensation water from windows and cills every morning with a clean cloth.
- Try to cook with pan lids on and turn heat down once the water has boiled.
- If you use a tumble dryer, make sure it's vented from the outside if it doesn't have a condenser.
- When showering or cooking, always run an extractor fan or open a window, try to not do both as this will make the fan operation ineffective.
- Even with these precautions, try to keep bathroom and kitchen doors closed when humid air is being produced in the room and a fan is in use.

- Keep trickle vents on windows open at all times. Do not cover over or obstruct air vents in walls in any room.
- It can help to put cold water in the bath before adding hot water. Make sure you keep the bathroom door closed and that the extractor fan is switched on and operating.
- If wardrobes or other large items of furniture are placed near walls, try to put them against internal, rather than external walls.

Other forms of damp are caused by water leaking through walls and can indicate structural or weatherproofing issues.

Signs of damp caused by structural defects:

- Decorations such as wallpaper may be blistered by water and discoloured,
- Walls may be damp to the touch and feel cold,
- Damp will be more apparent after rainfall,
- Ceilings may look stained.



For more about avoiding and managing condensation, please see link to a video https://youtu.be/lJMJuLYDKLA

Reducing damp:

- Try to use bathmats to avoid saturating bathroom floors.
- Try to ensure ventilation in wardrobes or cupboards by leaving a space between possessions.
- Try to move furniture away from walls to allow air to circulate.

You can also get advice through the 'Damp Medic' on your housing portal. Please contact us if you can't remove black mould or damp after taking this advice.

If you think you have any kind of damp, please call the Lambeth Contact Centre, which is available between 8am and 8pm from Monday to Friday, and from 8am to 1pm on Saturday. The Lambeth Contact Centre can be reached on 020 7926 6000.

One of our call agents may then arrange an inspection of your home to establish if there is damp or condensation.

In an emergency you can contact the council outside of these hours on the same number.

Damp Charter

In 2022, we agreed Lambeth's Damp Charter. This outlines our commitments to tenants affected by damp and condensation.

Everyone should live in a warm and dry home.

Damp and condensation are still a problem for too many of our tenants. There are lots of factors that can cause damp and condensation, which can be challenging to manage. We are determined to overcome these challenges and make the following commitments:

1. **It's not your fault**. The council is committed to resolving issues in partnership with you and will communicate with you in a sympathetic way.
2. **Quick diagnosis**. We will quickly diagnose the damp in your home. By prioritising inspections based on your individual circumstances we can attend on an emergency or urgent basis when needed.
3. **Remedy**. We will agree an action plan with you to resolve the damp, that will include timeframes and send it to you within three days of the inspection.
4. **Ongoing support**. We will check in with you three months after the work is completed to make sure that the damp treatment has been effective.
5. **Prevention**. We have surveyed 19,000 of our homes to help identify which ones are prone to damp (most of our homes are over 50 years old). This is informing more regular and targeted maintenance of residents' homes, and better communication about proposed work.
6. **Technology**. We are investing in technology to help resolve damp issues.
7. **Resources**. The council is committed to prioritising resources to tackle damp issues with dedicated neighbourhood teams. We also have a rapid-response mould removal and treatment service that we can quickly deploy to remove mould ahead of any preventative or remedial work/action.
8. **Delivering the Charter**. The delivery and effectiveness of these commitments will be reviewed every year.

Asbestos

Asbestos is the commercial name given to a group of naturally occurring mineral rocks. Large amounts of asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) were used for a wide range of construction purposes in new and refurbished buildings until 1999 when all use of asbestos was banned. This extensive use means that there are still many buildings which contain asbestos. Where asbestos materials are in good condition and unlikely to be disturbed, they don't present a risk. However, where the materials are in poor condition or are disturbed or damaged, asbestos fibres are released into the air, which, if breathed in, can cause serious lung diseases, including cancers.

Any building built pre 2000 could contain asbestos.

Where is asbestos usually found in the home?

This list is not exhaustive:

- **exterior of building**: roof sheets and tiles, fascia boards, exterior cladding, guttering and drain pipes.
- **boiler**: some interior workings of boilers, boiler flue pipes and storage radiators.
- **interior surfaces**: textured wall and ceiling coatings eg Artex, duct panels (access to pipe work), panel behind radiators / heaters, floor tiles, underside of stairs and cupboard door facing. Infill panels (above, below or adjacent to doorways or windows).
- **other items**: bath panels, fireplace panels, water tank, pipe lagging, garages, outhouses and shed roofs.

Asbestos is dangerous and should not be disturbed.

Am I at risk?

Current scientific advice tells us that if asbestos containing materials are in good condition and unlikely to be disturbed, then the risk presented is minimal.

DIY activities such as sanding or drilling may disturb and possibly damage products containing asbestos and release fibres into the air, which could put you and others at risk.

Breathing in air containing asbestos fibres can lead to asbestos related diseases, which can affect the lungs.

Lambeth Council homes

Lambeth Council housing tenants whose homes contain known or presumed asbestos will be provided with Asbestos survey information about their property at sign up stage.

Some of the homes owned by the council have textured decorative coatings on the ceiling or walls which may contain asbestos. This is commonly known by the trade name 'Artex'. Further information about textured decorative coatings is available in the leaflet (PDF format): Guide to textured decorative coatings (commonly known as Artex) in your home

See also further information in the Lambeth Council website section on Asbestos:
https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/housing/housing-repairs/asbestos

If you have concerns about asbestos in your home, you can contact Lambeth housing repairs team on 020 7926 6000.

Lambeth housing tenants should contact Lambeth housing repairs team for emergency repairs on 020 7926 6000, Monday–Friday 8.00am–8.00pm and Saturday 8.00am-1.00pm.

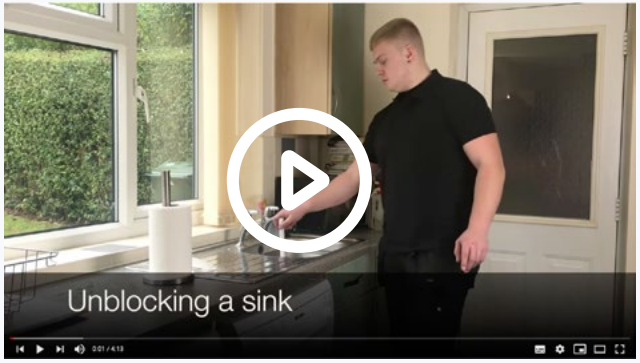
To report emergencies outside our working hours and on bank holidays, call us on 020 7926 6666.

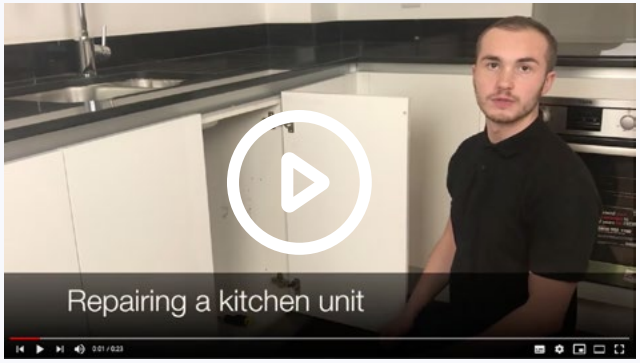
For asbestos concerns related to Lambeth Housing communal areas please contact: hmasbestossafety@lambeth.gov.uk

‘How to’ videos

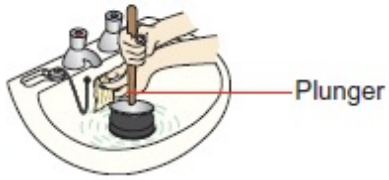
One of our contractors has produced a series of videos giving you advice on how to carry out simple DIY tasks such as how to bleed a radiator, unblock a sink and repair a kitchen unit.



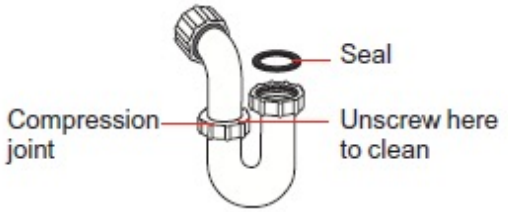




Clearing a blocked waste pipe



Unblocking a basin or sink



'P' trap



Bottle trap



Plunger



Unblocking a toilet



Toilet brush

Avoiding toilet blockages

Air fresheners that attach to the rim of the toilet pan should be fastened securely so they do not fall in and cause a blockage. Blockages are usually caused by objects such as:

- nappies
- toys
- sanitary towels
- wipes.

If a blockage happens as a result of these objects getting stuck, we may charge you for clearing it. You should try to unblock this yourself to avoid being recharged.

To unblock a toilet

- If the pan is already full, remove some of the water into a bucket using a scoop, for example a jug or a bowl.
- Push the plunger to the bottom of the pan.
- Pump it up and down vigorously about 10 times. This creates a pressure vacuum, which may shift the blockage.
- When the blockage has disappeared, pour water from a bucket into the pan and see if it clears. You may need to repeat this process several times before the toilet flushes normally. If there is no improvement after a couple of tries, you should contact us.

Thoroughly wash your hands and all equipment after you have finished.

Avoiding sink, basin or bath blockages

Blockages to a kitchen sink, basin or bath waste pipes are usually caused by a build-up of:

- Fat, tea leaves or food debris
- hair in the waste trap.

Note – use a suitable product available from most DIY stores to clear waste pipes and traps. Do not use caustic soda as it destroys modern plastic fittings.

The trap is under the bath, basin or sink. It always holds some water, which stops air and foul smells coming up the pipe. However, waste material can build up and cause a blockage.

To unblock a sink, basin or bath You will need:

- a bowl
- a jug or cup
- a rag or dishcloth
- a plunger
- rubber gloves.

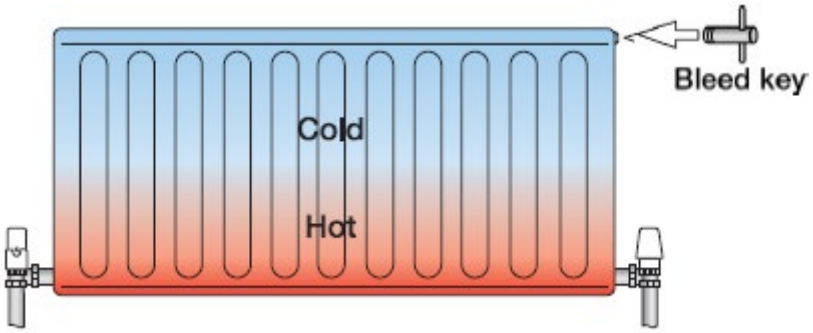
Then:

- remove most of the water, so the sink is half full
- wet the rag and hold it tightly over the overflow opening and place the plunger over the plug hole and pump up and down rapidly.
- If the sink, basin or bath is blocked, the blockage may be in the soil stack or main drain. We will need to clear this.

Heating – bleeding your radiators

Air in radiators can be a common fault in some heating systems, but it is easy to put right.

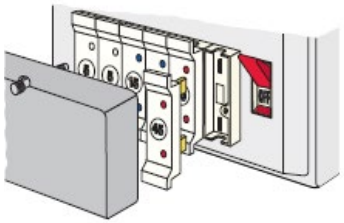
If the radiator is cold at the top and hot at the bottom, you will need to bleed it.



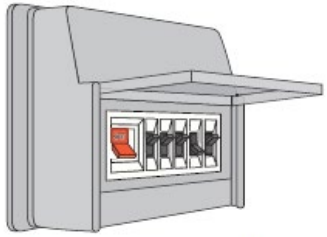
How to bleed your radiators

- Turn off the central heating.
- Insert a radiator bleed key into the radiator bleed vent
- Turn the key anti-clockwise to a maximum of one turn. You should hear a hiss as air escapes.
- As soon as water starts to appear at the bleed vent, turn off the vent by turning the key clockwise – do not over-tighten.
- Hold a cloth underneath the radiator bleed vent to catch any escaping water.
- Turn on the central heating and re-check the radiator.

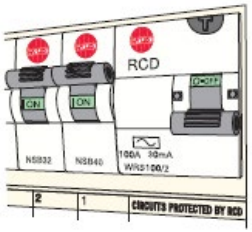
Fuse box



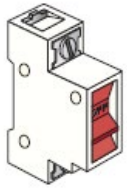
Fuse board



Consumer unit



Trip switches



Circuit breaker

Many homes are now installed with modern fuse boxes called 'consumer units', which contain circuit breakers or trip switches. If a fault occurs, these circuit breakers switch off to prevent injury and damage. If you do not have trip switches in your home and have fuses that can be rewired, please don't try to repair or replace them. Contact us to arrange an appointment.

Trip switches can operate for various reasons, including:

- an overloaded circuit – for instance, too many appliances being used at the same time
- faulty or misused appliances – for example, cookers and extension leads
- dirty cookers or toasters
- overfilled kettles
- faulty immersion heaters
- light bulbs blowing.

If your lighting circuit goes off, check that the trip switches marked 'lights' are switched on. If any are off, turn off the main switch (usually the red one at the end), reset the circuit breaker and turn the main switch back on. Check to see which lamp has 'blown'. If your sockets go off, unplug everything and turn off the main switch (this is usually the red one at the end), reset the circuit breaker and turn the main switch back on. Go around your property plugging appliances back in until you find the one with the fault. You may need to have the appliance replaced or repaired by a qualified electrician. If an appliance is faulty, do not put the plug back in.

> **Warning** – never tamper with the electricity company's fuse, meter or seals. You should contact your electricity supplier.
>
> The electricity supplier is responsible for maintenance of the electricity meter. You should contact the supplier if maintenance is required to the meter or if the meter needs to be moved. The council as your landlord is not responsible for this and will not be able to arrange this.



Lambeth.gov.uk

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A place we can all call home

Lambeth