

Winter Advisory 2025/26



As winter is upon us all and the nights are now drawing in, please review safety issues in and around your property, and if you find any blocked gutters, potholes, or safety lighting not working, please report them to the office as soon as possible.

We recommend that you take all reasonable precautions to ensure that any steps or pathways to your properties are adequately cleared and gritted before there is any frost, ice or snow forecast and that all paths are kept clear of anything that may cause you, visitors, or neighbours, to slip or trip.

Please use the grit bins provided in the communal areas. These are available for Tenant use and will be kept topped up by the out Contractors. If you find one empty please let the office know ASAP as we keep a stock.

Please keep an eye on your refuse and recycling areas and ensure that all refuse is disposed of correctly – this is a communal problem, so you all need to play a part. Recycling information can be found on the local council websites. Rats and field mice search for nest sites close to a food source this time of year, so please limit their food sources by keeping all bin areas clean and tidy at all times and ensuring that ALL bird feeders are at a high level and are a no-spill type only. Please ensure ALL seed that does fall to the ground is cleared away immediately.



If you have an open fire or log burner in your property, you may be gearing up to start using it through Winter to cut down on your central heating costs. May we respectfully remind you to only ever use dry seasoned logs, as green wood damages stove pipes and the chimney liner and increases the chance of a chimney fire. Please refer to the attached HETAS guide, which will help you maintain it correctly in between sweeps.

E-Bikes

We are aware of some issues with E-bike chargers that do not meet safety standards and have caused fires in properties. Should you have an E-bike or be thinking of purchasing one, please make us aware so that we can check that it is stored safely to comply with our Landlord insurance. Under no circumstances are they to be kept inside the properties.



FIRE SAFETY

It is a good time of year to double-check that your smoke/heat and CO detectors have batteries, if applicable, and to test your detectors regularly. We recommend testing monthly. It is the Tenant's obligation to change batteries (if you do not have hardwired communal detection in place). This is especially important as we start to use our fires and log burners. Please DO NOT tamper with or remove any detectors. If you are not sure, please contact us first.

FTS carried out their six-monthly fire detection servicing in September on all sensors on communal systems at Singleton Park House, Stricklandgate, Birklands House and Croft House.



Garden areas

All tenants with a private garden space or patio, either front or back of the property, now is the time to de-weed before the garden goes into snooze mode for Winter. Throughout winter, please remove all leaf debris regularly to keep any lawn, path and patio areas as dry as possible and prevent slips and falls, and to prevent your drains from getting blocked up.

Our grounds contractors will be attending to the communal areas periodically through winter, but are not tasked with looking after specific property gardens or patio areas.



Rents and Bills

We are aware that the finances of some of our tenants may be impacted by the rising cost of fuel and many other consumables, especially with Christmas upon us imminently. If you are experiencing hardship, please speak to us in confidence. Our office door is open. We would rather work with you to find a solution and try to keep you in your home, than deal with rent arrears, when it may be too late to resolve the issue.

GOING AWAY?

If you will be away for more than a week during the winter, please turn off the water at the mains stopcock, leave your heating on a low temperature (around 12-16 degrees), and open your loft hatch (if you have one) to allow air to circulate freely to prevent any tank pipes in the attic from freezing up. Please also keep your ground drains clear of leaves and debris, as overflowing water will cause damp penetration and can be a cause of mould, which can build up very quickly.

Legionella

May we also take this opportunity to remind all tenants to regularly clean and disinfect your shower heads and hoses and keep taps clean. Where these items are in very regular use the risk to health is low, but if you are leaving the property for a week to go away on holiday or are unable to use your shower for a few days, please refer to the attached Legionella Advice sheet (appendix 1).

If you are not using your principal heating due to costs, please let us know ASAP, as inadequate heating will impact the condition of the property and may lead to mildew and condensation. It is essential during winter to adequately heat and ventilate your property to prevent issues. If you are struggling with bills, please let us know.

If you have a heating or hot water issue, please note that we aim to attend within 24-48 hrs where possible. Please call to book on 01539 721626.

EMERGENCY?

EMERGENCY? May we please remind you all that we have an out-of-hours emergency service, should an emergency arise out of our office hours, which can be accessed by calling the office on 01539 721626. After the message prompts, you will be diverted to a member of LRM Security personnel, who will assess and prioritise the call. PLEASE DO NOT use this service unless it is an absolute emergency that cannot wait until our offices are open. May we politely remind all tenants not to call my mobile to request assistance with maintenance issues, but to report all issues to Reception.

With thanks

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