

Winter Advisory 2023/2024



As Autumn is upon us 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 Estates Team. If you find one empty please let the office know ASAP.

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 we all need to play a part. Recycling information can be found on the local council websites. Rats 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 any bird feeders are high level and are a no spill type only. Please ensure any 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 for Autumn/Winter to cut down on your central heating costs. May we respectfully remind you to only ever use dry seasoned wood, as damp wood damages the stove and the chimney liner and increases the chance of a chimney fire. I will send a HETAS guide shortly for all properties with a means of fuel burning. Please take a read of the guide which will help you maintain it correctly.

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 are thinking of purchasing one do please make us aware so that we can check that it is stored safely to comply with our Landlord insurance.



FIRE SAFETY

It is a good time of year to double check that ALL of your smoke/heat and CO2 detectors have batteries, if applicable, and to test ALL detectors regularly. It is a Tenant obligation to change batteries (if you do not have hardwired detectors in place). This is especially important as we start to use our fires and log burners more from the Autumn. Please DO NOT tamper with, or remove any detectors. If you are not sure, please contact us first.

FTS have recently carried out a six monthly check 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 will be the time to have a final mow of grass and de-weed before the garden goes into snooze mode for Winter. Throughout Autumn and Winter please remove all leaf debris regularly to keep any lawn and patio areas as dry as possible and prevent slips, and your drains from getting blocked up.

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

Septic tanks

We have had several issues with blockages of septic tanks this year, necessitating call outs. Please ensure that you follow the guidance that was issued, carefully, and take great care with what is flushed down the toilet or put down the sink as sewage systems and tanks are very susceptible to blockages from food and cooking fat particularly.

We are aware that the finances of some of our tenants may be impacted by the rising cost of fuel and many other consumables. 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 main stopcock, leave your heating on a low temperature, and open your loft hatch (if applicable) to allow air to circulate freely to prevent any pipes in the attic 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 quickly in an empty property.

Please report all faults with your heating or hot water system to us in a timely manner so that we can action a repair as soon as possible and ensure that an appropriate engineer can be made available.

Please note that we aim to attend within 24-48 hrs where possible. Please call 01539 721626.



EMERGENCY?

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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 through 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.

With **thanks**

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