Resident Handbook

Repairs and maintenance
Welcome to the Radian Resident Handbook. This is one of several booklets that make up your handbook, which provides useful information about our services.

Our handbook is designed to give you general advice, so if you can’t find the information you need, please give us a call. Radian Direct, our customer services team are there to help you. Alternatively you can look on our website, or you can fill in and return the freepost postcard enclosed with your handbook pack.

Repairs service – answering your questions
This booklet will answer most of your questions about the ongoing repair and maintenance of your home. If you do not find the answers you need, please call us.

For advice on what to do in an emergency, please turn to the inside back cover.

This handbook is for guidance only and does not form part of your tenancy agreement, which is a legal document covering the terms of your tenancy.

Contact details
Radian Direct: 0300 123 1567
Opening times: Monday – Friday 8.30am – 5pm (Thursday until 7pm). Please note that we are closed between 10am – 12.30pm on the first Wednesday of the month. Out-of-hours: 0800 783 8937
Text phone number: 07764 309062
www.radian.co.uk
Full details of all Radian offices are in the General Information booklet.

If you do not have some of the information referred to in this booklet and would like to receive a copy, you can fill in and return the freepost postcard enclosed with your handbook pack, call Radian Direct, or visit our website www.radian.co.uk

For information about having this or any of our documents translated, please contact us. We also use language line for telephone translations. On request we can also provide you with a version in large type or on audio tape.

About residents’ photos
Some of the photos published in this booklet are entries from our Radian Residents Photo Competition.

Photographer: Luna Trimming

Where people flourish
Repairs

How to report a repair

Ring – 0300 123 1567 during office hours.
If out-of-hours, call 0800 783 8937
Emergency repairs must be reported by phone.

Online – at www.radian.co.uk
• Sign up to ‘My Radian’ to report and track your repair
• contact us in office hours through ‘web chat’

Text – non-urgent repairs to 07764 309062

In writing – to Radian, Collins House, Bishopstoke Road, Eastleigh SO50 6AD

In person – at your local office (see office details in the General Information booklet).

Tell us – report it to any member of staff if they are visiting you or are in the area.

• Repairs responsibility - find out if you or we are responsible. Full repair responsibilities are on our website or please contact us. General details are shown on page 7 of this booklet.

Vulnerable residents repairs policy
We give top priority to work for vulnerable residents. Contact Radian Direct for more information.

Before you report a repair, have a look at the ‘Your Guide to Repairs Reporting’ booklet included in your welcome pack. If you would like another copy, please contact us.

How to arrange an emergency repair

An emergency is something that could cause danger to a person’s health and safety, or serious damage to property.

Examples include severe roof leaks, burst pipes, blocked drains, loss of electrical power and loss of heating where no other form of heating is available.

• for emergency repairs outside office hours, phone the out-of-hours service. Make sure we have access to your home so we can deal with the emergency
• if you call out our contractors for a repair that is not an emergency, we will charge you for the cost of the work (work outside normal working hours is charged at a higher rate).

Emergency call-out contractors will normally make the fault safe. We will then make a full repair during normal working hours, or when the necessary parts are available.

Will an inspection be done before the work?
Where practical, we try not to spend extra time inspecting the problem before doing repairs. However, with some jobs, we have to inspect the problem first. After we have inspected, we will send you a repairs order showing the work proposed and the deadline for completing it.

Ask for identification
Radian Services carry out most of our repairs although we do sometimes use other contractors.

• all our approved contractors carry identity cards
• they will introduce themselves, but ensure you ask for proof of identity on arrival
• please check this proof carefully before letting them into your home
• if you have any concerns, contact us straight away.
Repairs

We will charge you for a repair that would usually be our responsibility:
• if you, a member of your household or a visitor or a third party causes damage or neglect to your home, we will charge you the full cost of the repair
• if any damage is deliberate, we may take legal action against you.

Other charges

We will charge you for:
• gaining entry or changing locks after you have been locked out or have lost your keys
• broken windows and glass doors, or damage to internal doors or kitchen cupboard doors
• repair and replacement of fixtures or fittings damaged by you, your family or any visitors, including clearing toilet drains or waste pipes
• repairs you should have reported, where the damage has become worse because you failed to let us know about it
• special cleaning needed because you have neglected your home, allowing it to become dirty or attract vermin
• decoration needed because you have not kept your home in reasonable condition
• deliberately and repeatedly missing appointments or misusing the out-of-hours service.

Missed appointments

If you miss an appointment, we may charge you for the time wasted. We charge you rather than pass the cost on to other residents. Every missed appointment affects people who are waiting for repairs on their own homes.

If you miss an appointment:
• we will leave a card to let you know we have called and have cancelled the job
• you need to contact us to make a new appointment.

Missed gas service and legal action

Gas checks are a legal requirement and are part of your tenancy agreement - for your and your neighbour’s safety. Sadly, on a few occasions we have needed to take legal action for access - resulting in someone losing money and/or their home.

We write to you when your annual gas safety check is due. There is no charge for this service as the cost is included in your rent payments.

Your repair responsibilities

You are responsible for some repairs and maintenance of your home. This includes:
• internal decorations, including filling minor cracks in plaster. (Please do not remove radiators when decorating, to avoid potential water-leak damage and loss of water pressure)
• washing lines (except in communal drying areas)
• repairing and replacing everyday items such as keys, sink plugs, floor coverings, light bulbs, fluorescent tubes and starters, and replacing batteries for smoke detectors and door-bells
• maintaining the garden (including sheds, dustbins and your own refuse areas) – grass cutting, trimming hedges and shrubs, removing rubbish etc
• any repairs caused by neglect, deliberate damage and forced entry if you get locked out
• changing locks if your keys are lost or stolen
• repairing or removing any damage due to vandalism
• keeping the sink and drains free from blockages
• any fitting, appliance or alteration you have installed or made without appropriate consent
• keeping your home free from vermin (wasps, mice, etc)
• broken glass
• curtain rails and TV aerials.

A full list of repair responsibilities is on our website or contact us for a copy.

Photographer: Jackie Barrow
Reparations

Checking our work
To maintain high standards of quality:
• we inspect a proportion of jobs when they are complete
• we may contact you when a job has been completed to carry out a satisfaction survey. We appreciate your feedback!

Matching your home’s colours and fittings
When we do repairs outside our planned maintenance programme, we will always try to match the existing fittings. However, we cannot always guarantee a match where ranges or colours are discontinued.

What standard of service can I expect?

We are committed to delivering repairs and improvements to a high standard – promptly, efficiently and with minimal disruption to you and your neighbours.

‘Right to Repair’ – what does it mean?
The Right to Repair applies to ‘qualifying repairs’ that cost under £500 and are essential to your health, safety or security. These include:
• total or partial loss of electric power
• total or partial loss of water
• unsafe power, lighting socket or electrical fitting
• total or partial loss of gas supply
• total or partial loss of space heating
• total or partial loss of water heating
• blocked flue to open fire or boiler
• toilet not flushing, where there is no other toilet in the house
• taps that cannot be turned
• blocked or leaking foul drain, soil stack or toilet pan (if there is no other toilet in the house)
• leaking from water or heating pipe, tank or cistern
• leaking roof
• insecure external window, door or lock
• loose or detached banister or hand rail
• rotten timber flooring or stair tread
• mechanical extractor fan in internal kitchen or bathroom not working
• door entry phone not working.

We will pay compensation if we fail to satisfactorily complete qualifying repairs on time after you have made two requests. We will only pay if you also made reasonable access arrangements for us.
Planned improvements

Replacing your kitchen, bathroom, boiler, windows etc

For planned improvements, we will:
- consult you in advance
- give you a say in how and when the work is done
- give you a choice of colours, styles, fittings and finishes.

To find out when work is planned for your home, please contact us. If you feel your home needs important work that we have not planned for, please let us know.

Gas safety

To protect you and to abide by the law, we MUST check every gas appliance in every one of our homes each year.

If you have gas, even if you don’t use it, we need to visit you every year to service all gas appliances we have provided and at the same time visually check your own gas appliances (e.g. cooker). Regular servicing keeps appliances working and makes boilers and heating more efficient, greener and cheaper to run.

Key points for gas checks:
- you must provide access to carry out these checks
- the service is free and usually takes an hour or less per appliance
- you will receive a copy of the safety certificate (CP12) within 28 days of your gas check
- as a new resident, you will receive a certificate (CP12) when you move in
- we will write and let you know when we need to carry out the service and safety check.

Making it easier for you:
- we can offer flexible times to suit you
- if you have a support worker, we can arrange to visit when they will be with you
- if English is not your first language, we will arrange translation for you
- we will try and meet any reasonable requests or requirements.

Allowing us access

Most residents allow us access without question and welcome the safety check. However, for the few who do not, please bear in mind the following:
- missing a gas servicing appointment or refusing to allow us access to your home is a breach of your tenancy conditions and puts you and your neighbours at serious risk
- if you miss two appointments and do not help us to carry out your safety check, we will take court action against you
- court action could cost you money and even result in you losing your home.
Gas safety

Carbon monoxide

You cannot see, smell or taste carbon monoxide – but it can kill you in minutes.

About 50 people die each year in the UK because of gas appliances that have not been fitted, maintained or ventilated properly.

Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are similar to flu and include headache, nausea, dizziness and sleepiness.

Warning signs include:
• yellow or orange flames rather than blue
• a pilot light that often goes out
• soot or yellow/brown staining around a gas appliance.

If you think carbon monoxide is leaking into your home, switch off the gas at the meter and call the National Gas Emergency Service on 0800 111 999 immediately.

If someone in your home is showing symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning:
• switch off your gas at the meter
• open all the windows
• get the person outside
• seek medical advice, and
• let us know.

How to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning:
• ensure you allow access and keep appointments for gas safety checks and servicing
• never block the air vents of your appliance
• never block the outside flue, grille or any air bricks
• never tamper with a gas appliance or attempt to repair it yourself
• never use a gas appliance you think is faulty. Ask us to check it straight away
• look out for yellow/orange flames, soot or staining
• always use a Gas Safe registered engineer to install or remove a gas cooker
• avoid sleeping in a room with old gas appliances. If you sleep in a room with a gas boiler or fire, you must let us know so that we can check it is safe and replace it if necessary
• fit a carbon monoxide sound alarm (this is not the same as a smoke detector). If your home has mains gas, we can fit one for free.

Making alterations to your home

Improvements, alterations and additions to your home
If you are making alterations to your home, you need to get our written consent and any other necessary approvals, such as planning permission and building control approval. We will only refuse consent if we have a good reason. But we will insist the work is done to a certain standard.

Some types of electrical work fall under building regulations, so you need to ask us before starting electrical alterations. Any electrical work must be done by a qualified, competent person.

Examples of alterations include:
• changes to your kitchen or bathroom fixtures and fittings
• knocking down walls inside your home or in your garden
• changing fixtures and fittings for water, gas or electricity
• erecting sheds, greenhouses or other structures in your garden
• making a dropped kerb and hardstanding
• putting up external aerials (such as CB, TV aerials or satellite dishes – although these may not be allowed on certain properties)
• fitting additional locks
• erecting conservatories or porches
• installation of wood burners and gas flues.

Compensation for alterations or improvements
We have a scheme to compensate you at the end of your tenancy for the costs of certain improvements. We will need to see all the bills and invoices for the work.

The amount of compensation depends on how long ago the alterations were made.
Maintaining shared outside spaces

Like you, we want to keep your surroundings looking their best. Our teams maintain the shared areas we own around your home to the highest possible standards. However, shared corridors outside flats in blocks may be the residents’ responsibility – please see your service standards. We also work with other agencies to keep any land we own clean and well maintained.

Help us keep our maintenance standards high

Tell us about any problems as soon as you notice them. And why not join us when we come to inspect your local area? If you are interested, please contact Radian Direct.

Adapting your home for independent living

If you or a member of your family has a disability or mobility problem, we will help you continue to live independently in your home by making adaptations.

• we have an annual budget for aids like grab rails and stairlifts.
• our normal spending limit per home is £1,500
• we operate a ‘Trusted Trades’ scheme and will send someone to see you within seven days of a request for minor adaptations, such as grab rails, half steps or lever taps
• for more complex adaptations, specialist staff need to assess and plan the work. You may be able to get a Disabled Facilities Grant from the council to fund this work – if you are interested, please contact Radian Direct about this.

For a copy of our Aids and Adaptations leaflet please contact Radian Direct or visit our website www.radian.co.uk, or fill in and return the freepost postcard enclosed with your handbook pack.

General information

Dampness and mould

Damp can cause mould and rot in your home and may increase the risk of respiratory illness.

Several things can cause damp in the home. Condensation is the most common cause, but others may include:

• leaking pipes, wastes or overflows
• rain seeping through the roof where a tile or slate is missing
• rain spilling from a blocked gutter, through window frames or from cracked pipes
• rising damp due to a defective damp-course or no damp-course at all.

Leaks, rain and rising damp often leave a ‘tidemark’.

After a defect has been repaired, your home may still need a few weeks to dry out. A dehumidifier will speed up this process.

If you do not think the damp comes from any of these causes, then it is probably condensation.

Condensation

Condensation occurs when air cools and cannot hold as much moisture. This causes water droplets to form on colder surfaces. It often occurs when there is little movement of air and is worse during the winter when windows are closed and surfaces are colder.

To reduce the risk of condensation:

• cover pans and do not leave kettles boiling
• avoid using paraffin and portable bottled gas heaters, as they put a lot of moisture into the air
• dry washing outdoors, or put it in the bathroom with the door closed and window open
• vent any tumble dryer to the outside, unless it is the self-condensing type – DIY kits are available for installing vents
• in cold weather, keep low background heating on all day, even when there is no one at home
• keep trickle vents in windows open to allow air to circulate.

For more details on our service standards, please contact us.

Radian Direct: 0300 123 1567 Out-of-hours: 0800 783 8937
General information

Ventilate your home to remove the moisture:
- keep a small window or trickle ventilator open when someone is in the room
- ventilate kitchens and bathrooms when in use by opening the window or using the extractor fan if you have one
- close the kitchen and bathroom doors when these rooms are in use
- closed doors will help prevent moisture reaching other rooms.
- ventilate cupboards and wardrobes and don’t over-pack them
- cut a ventilation slot in the back of the wardrobe
- where possible, position wardrobes and furniture against internal walls
- if you block an old fireplace, fit a ventilation grille over it.

For certain modern heating systems being installed in new built homes, you may be advised not to ventilate the property by opening windows as this can affect the delicate balance of the system.

Do not:
- block permanent ventilators
- draught-proof rooms where there is condensation, mould or a cooker or gas heater
- draught-proof windows in the bathroom and kitchen.

How to get rid of mould

If you deal with the condensation, you can then sort out the mould:
- wipe down walls and window frames with a fungicidal wash
- dry-clean mildewed clothes and shampoo carpets
- take care – disturbing mould by brushing or vacuum cleaning can increase the risk of respiratory problems
- after treating the walls and window frames, redecorate using good-quality fungicidal paint to help prevent mould recurring.

The only lasting way of avoiding severe mould is to get rid of the cause of the dampness.

Contents insurance

Why do I need to be insured?
If there is a fire or flood in your home, can you afford to replace your household contents? If you have contents insurance this will help you cover the costs of replacements.

We insure the building you live in, but not the contents of your home.

Asbestos

What you need to know about asbestos

If your home was built before 1999, it could contain asbestos. Asbestos can seriously harm your lungs if you inhale the fibres.

If you think there is asbestos in your home, contact us before doing any DIY repairs to it. Do not try to remove it.

How we deal with asbestos

If we are going to do work in your home and we think there may be asbestos present, we will send specialist surveyors to investigate. They will take small samples, for laboratory analysis. Depending on their findings, we will employ specialist contractors to remove the asbestos or seal it so that it is safe.

We will tell you if we know about any asbestos-containing materials in your home. Please don’t panic – you are very unlikely to get health problems by living in a property that has some asbestos-containing materials in it. Just remember not to break, drill, sandpaper or damage any materials that contain asbestos, as this could release fibres into the air.
Energy advice

Easy ways to save energy, money and the planet:
• turn your thermostat down by 1°.
• do not leave appliances on standby
• unplug chargers – even if the appliance is fully charged, it still draws electricity
• when cooking, match the size of the ring to the saucepan.
• avoid leaving the fridge door open, and let warm food cool before putting it in the fridge or freezer
• defrost your fridge regularly to keep it running efficiently and cheaply.

Tips on saving water and money:
• wash vegetables in a bowl of water rather than under the tap. Use the leftover water for watering plants
• when heating water in kettles and saucepans, only heat the amount of water you need – this will save water and energy
• keep a bottle or jug of water in the fridge instead of running taps until the water is cold
• wait until you have a full load before using dishwashers and washing machines
• don’t leave the tap running while you brush your teeth, shave or wash your hands
• a five-minute shower uses around a third of the water needed for a bath
• put a ‘save-a-flush’ or ‘hippo’ in your toilet cistern to reduce the water used.

Need energy advice?
Our energy advisors can help you:
• get the best deal from your energy providers
• have manageable fuel and water bills
• receive fuel/water grants you may be entitled to.

Contact us to see how you can save money!

General guidance

Advice on electricity
To avoid electrical problems in your home, do not:
• overload sockets by plugging in too many appliances
• use adaptors or extension cables
• take any electrical appliances into your bathroom
• plug electrical items into light fittings.

Always:
• disconnect or switch off plugs in sockets when not in use
• replace any damaged flexes
• use the right fuse for the appliance.

www.radian.co.uk

Photographer: Mollie Clothier

Radian Direct: 0300 123 1567    Out-of-hours: 0800 783 8937
Protecting yourself and your property

You can help protect your home by:
- locking your doors and windows when you go out
- keeping valuables out of sight
- asking for identification if you do not know callers. We always carry identification cards when we visit you
- getting a free booklet called ‘Protect your Home’ from your local police station
- finding out if there is a Neighbourhood Watch scheme in your area, and joining it.

Plumbing advice

If your home is unoccupied in cold weather for more than a day, you can help to prevent the pipes freezing by:
- leaving your central heating on low
- turning off the main stopcock and immersion heater. Then run all taps until the water stops (this will not drain the radiator system).

Remember to turn the stopcock back on before you use your boiler or immersion heater for hot water.

Fire safety

Fire risks

You can reduce the risk of fire by:
- making sure an open fire is safe – drying anything nearby is very dangerous. This includes drying on a fireguard, which will get hot. Please take care when using one
- keeping matches and lighters out of children’s reach
- never leaving candles or cooking (especially chip pans) unattended
- closing internal doors at night
- checking your smoke detector regularly and replace batteries.

If there is a fire

• if a fire breaks out in your home, remain calm, act quickly and get everyone out
• close doors and windows if you have time
• raise the alarm using the nearest call point if there is one
• call the Fire Service (999).
• go to the nearest assembly point or safe place
• wait for instructions from the Fire and Rescue Service
• do not re-enter the building unless the fire officer tells you it is safe to do so
• do not return for valuables or to investigate the fire
• let us know later if there has been a fire at your home.

A fire safety leaflet is included with your welcome pack. If you would like an extra copy, please contact us.
**Fire safety in high-rise flats**

Buildings are designed to allow time for escape in the event of a fire. However, a few minutes thinking about fire safety can keep you and your family extra safe.

**Plan your escape route in much the same way as for homes at ground level, but with some key differences:**

- you won’t be able to use the lift if there’s a fire, so plan an escape route that uses stairs instead
- keep door and window keys handy and tell your household members where they are
- it is easy to get confused in the dark! Keep a torch readily available

- make sure communal areas are clear of obstructions and fire doors are never locked
- choose a safe room, ideally with a window that opens and a phone (for if you cannot get out by your escape route).

If you’d like help with planning an escape route or have any fire safety questions, please contact us.

**In an emergency**

**Gas leaks**

If you smell gas or suspect a gas leak:
- put out cigarettes or naked flames and do not strike matches
- do not operate electrical switches, mobile phones or door bells, as they can cause sparks
- turn off the gas supply at the meter (it is a good idea when you move into your new home to find out where the meter is)
- open all doors and windows to ventilate the affected rooms
- keep people away from the affected area
- immediately contact the National Gas Emergency Service on **0800 111 999** – do not make the call inside your house or flat
- tell us about the leak.

**Electricity**

If fittings or appliances spark or give off shocks:
- turn the mains switch on the consumer unit (fuse box) to OFF
- contact us via Radian Direct.

**No electricity supply**

If you have a power cut, call the emergency number given in your BT phone book.

**Water**

**Burst pipe, flooding or no water:**
- flooding: turn the mains stop tap to the right (clockwise) or press the Surestop switch
- to shut off water to a toilet, bath, shower or basin, use the isolation valve on the pipe leading to it (if one is fitted)
- if you have no water, phone your local water company – listed in the BT phone book or on your water bill. Longwood Park residents living in Byron or Linden House should contact their local office on **01753 590995**.

**Photographer:** Sue Conway