



LOOKING AFTER YOUR HOME

# Furnishing Your Home

Candidate Name:

SCN:

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## Furnishing a property

Various organization through the country will offer support and help to those who require help to furnish a property.

If you are moving into a new home whether you were homeless or moving into your first home there are organizations that will assist, the various charitable organizations will either supply the furniture or point you in the right direction.

### Funding;

If you are in receipt of Jobseekers allowance (or low income i.e. income support) and are moving **house** you may apply for funding or assistance.

You can apply for a community care grant after you have been released from prison, by filling in the crisis and community care grant form.

If you qualify for the grant you **do not** need to repay this **if you qualify**.

Places where you may be able to purchase affordable furniture with your limited funds.

**British Heart foundation charity shop**, (all household goods, furnishings and electrical)

**Oxfam**, (household furnishings and clothing)

**Accord Hospice**, (a full range of furniture)

**Destiny Charity Superstore**, (a full range of furniture)

There will be more charities within your area that are willing to help you with your new home, you'll be able to find them in the local paper

## Frost precautions

Burst pipes can cause serious damage to your home and are normally caused by water in the pipe freezing. When water freezes it expands, and that is what causes fractures to the pipes. By following a few simple precautions you can hopefully avoid getting frozen pipes.

## Frozen pipes

To avoid frozen pipes you should:

- check the severe weather reports
- keep your home reasonably warm day and night
- never leave a tap dripping
- reduce draughts wherever possible
- leave your loft hatch open a little in really cold weather

If you leave your home empty for a few days during the winter it is important that you:

- leave your central heating on at the frost setting
- leave a key with someone you trust who can keep an eye on the house

If you get frozen pipes:

- thaw the pipes by applying gentle heat - a hairdryer or hot water bottle but **do not use a naked flame**
- raise the temperature in your house but **do not** switch on the immersion or central heating
- when the water begins to run at all taps and the WC cistern, it is safe to use the immersion or central heating

## Burst pipes

If you get burst pipes:

Turn off the water at the main stopcock immediately - this can save a lot of time, damage and expense. **The main stopcock is usually found under the sink.** If the Council has recently fitted a new kitchen you will have a Sure Stop valve that, once activated, will shut off the water supply. **Check now where your stopcock is located.**

- turn on all taps and flush the WC
- switch off the electricity supply if water comes into contact with fittings or wiring
- attempt to contain the leak in a bowl or other container
- contact the Council's Repair Service
- warn any neighbours who may be affected

## **Frozen drains**

Blocked drains in sinks and baths can easily become frozen making it impossible for water to pass through the pipes. If this happens, try pouring some salt down the waste outlet or drain, then leave for 15 minutes before repeating. If this doesn't work, try pouring hot but not boiling water directly into the waste pipe after the salt has had two or three failed attempts

## **Frozen taps**

Do not apply too much heat to a frozen tap or you will risk damaging the washer within the tap. Again, a hairdryer set to moderate heat can be used if safe to do so.

## **Frozen condensate pipes**

During periods of very cold weather, we receive enquiries from tenants whose boilers do not appear to be working. This can be due to the plastic condensate discharge pipe outside of your property freezing, preventing the boiler from operating. This can also cause water to appear as though it is leaking from your boiler. Your boiler is likely to stop working and it may show a fault sign if it has a digital display.

Check if the plastic pipe that runs from your boiler to the outside is frozen. If it is, you may be able to thaw the plastic pipe as long as it is at ground level, accessible and safe for you to do so. To thaw the pipe you can:

- hold a hot water bottle or warmed heat wrap around the condensate pipe
- try pouring warm but not boiling water on the condensate pipe

Once thawed, the boiler must be reset. If you are uncertain how to do this, perhaps a neighbour, friend or family member can assist you but if you have any doubts contact the Council's Repair Service or landlord.

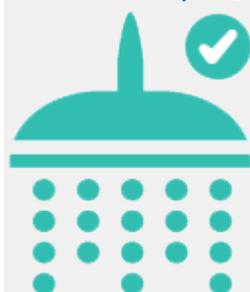
In extreme cold weather conditions our repairs service can experience a high volume of calls for heating and hot water repair requests. We prioritise reports of no heating or hot water for our elderly, disabled and vulnerable tenants. Please help by trying to thaw out pipes yourself if you think this is the cause of your problem and it is safe to do so.

# Energy Efficiency

## Energy saving tips

### Cut Down

#### Cut down open/close

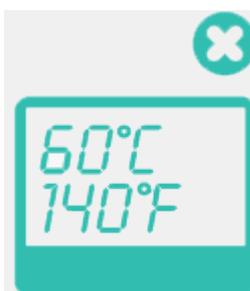


**Lights:** Could you get into the habit of turning lights off when you leave a room? A family could save between £50 and £90 a year just by remembering to turn things off, if they don't already do this. (Source: Energy Savings Trust, October 2013).

**Showers:** How about replacing a soak in the bath with a shower once a week? You'll be surprised how much energy you could save this way.

**Washing machines:** Check out your washing machine's settings, see if there's a 'half load' option for small amounts of clothes. With modern washing powders, you can usually choose a lower temperature on your washing machine too

### Turn Down



**Water temperature:** Check the thermostat on your boiler, see what the temperature settings are for hot water and think about turning it down just a couple of degrees. That will make a difference to the amount of energy you're using.

**Heating:** Turn down your general thermostat settings too: 21°C should be plenty. You may be used to having your house much warmer than this, so if your thermostat's set at 24 or 25°C, turn it down one degree at a time over a couple of weeks. And just remember: every

degree that you turn it down could save you around £65 a year on your heating bill! (Source: Energy Saving Trust, October 2013).

**Radiators:** Switch off radiators in the rooms you're not using regularly and keep internal doors shut. Otherwise, draughts and poorly insulated windows will mean you're burning energy un-necessarily.

## Shut Down

### [Shut down open/close](#)



**Electrical goods:** When you leave mobile phones, laptops and iPod chargers on standby, they could still be using energy. Switching them off and unplugging them once they're fully charged is a great way to be more energy efficient. And remember – if your charger has an LED to show it's in use, it's still using energy until you switch it off at the wall.

**Appliances:** Do you use a dishwasher? Wait until it's fully loaded before starting it, and remember that – if you run it overnight – it'll be using energy until you switch it off in the morning. Why not invest in a timer plug and run it automatically for a shorter period of time instead?

### [What else can you do to make a difference? open/close](#)

#### Climate control? It's easy

- Curtains: Closed curtains prevent warm air escaping from the windows at night, and that helps keep your house warmer for longer
- Radiators: Do make sure your radiators aren't blocked by curtains or furniture – it's good to make the best of the heat you're paying for!
- Don't forget: Also, if the sun warms some rooms but not others, leave internal doors open to let the warm air circulate throughout your home.

#### Fit a jacket to your hot water tank

- Treat your boiler to a new insulation jacket - it'll keep your water hotter for longer and that will reduce your energy bills

- If you already have a hot water tank jacket, check it's the recommended thickness of 75mm
- If not, a new one is easy to fit yourself - the materials will only cost you around £25 and you could save around £60 a year!
- With those savings, it could pay for itself in just a few months. (Source: Energy Savings Trust, October 2013).

### **Track how much energy you're using**

- Energy monitors help you track how much energy you're using
- They also pinpoint wasteful, inefficient appliances
- A monitor will cost somewhere around £50 to £100, but if you spot ways to save energy quickly, this could pay for itself within a year
- Energy monitors can be great to help educate your family on energy saving habits, keeping your bills down.

### **Buy draught excluders**

- Draught excluders are great for keeping out the chilly draughts that sneak in around your windows and doors
- Thermal or heavy curtains help during the winter, as do letter box covers and key hole covers – keeping the cold chills out and the warm air in.

### **Use energy efficient light bulbs**

- A new, energy-efficient light bulb uses much less electricity than an old-fashioned bulb
- When you swap your old bulbs for new energy-efficient version, you could be saving up to £50 each time over the lifetime of the bulb. (Source: Energy Savings Trust, October 2013)

Remember: the savings you can achieve will depend on what you're currently doing and how many changes you choose to make.

#### **What's watt?**

Like all energy companies, we measure how much energy you've used in kilowatt hours (kWh). When you use 1000 watts of energy for 1 hour, that's a kilowatt-hour. To make life easier, we've worked out the kWh measurements for some everyday examples so you can see how much energy you're using.

A kilowatt hour gives you:



9 uses of a kettle



4 hours watching T.V.



24 hours gaming



286 hours mobile phone charging



27 mins ironing



31 hours on a laptop



1-2 cycles in  
Washing machine



80 minutes using  
a microwave

... so, choose your appliances carefully.

Some appliances use more energy in an hour than others. The more energy they use, the more they cost to run.

Tests by [Which?](#) – the consumer group – in October 2013 showed that the fridge freezer using the fewest kWh costs just £14 per year to run. But other freezers could cost up to £102 per year to run. Even models with the same energy-efficiency rating can have very different annual running costs. Their tests found two A++ rated washing machines with difference over 30% - that's £130 – over a five year period. For further information on how energy efficient appliances can help you save money in the long-run. (Source: Which?, October 2013).

## Fittings and Fixtures

It is really important that you keep your fixtures and fittings in a good state to ensure you get good use out of them and don't have to spend money on repairs or replacements. Some examples of Fixtures are cupboards, floor boards, electricity (anything that is 'fixed' to the property). Some examples of fittings are Washing Machines, hair dryers, toaster, TV (anything that is an extra).

The Council outlines your responsibility as a tenant to maintain the fixtures to protect your health and safety as you could be held responsible for any accidents/injury that occur as a result.

General maintenance of any fixtures and fittings is simple;

- Ensure it is kept clean and free from debris (dust, dirt)

- Ensure any airways are kept clear to allow the air to space through (this is important for hair dryers, laptops as they can over heat)
- Has it changed in appearance?
- Is it damaged that could cause an injury?
- Are there burn marks or is there a smell when you use it?

If you live in a council house, Renfrewshire Council has a Housing Repairs Policy that outlines what is expected of you, what you are responsible for and the help they give if/when you need a repair:

Your responsibilities:

- repairing any minor fixtures and fittings such as curtain rails, light bulbs and plugs
- small repairs like replacing keys and fitting extra locks
- maintaining internal decoration
- maintaining / replacing floor coverings supplied in kitchens and bathrooms
- maintaining / replacing shower curtains supplied in bathrooms
- television aerials and reception equipment (except in multi storey flats and sheltered housing complexes)

The Policy states clearly that;

***You are responsible for any damage that you, your family or any visitors to your home have caused. If the Council carry out a repair for such damage, you will be asked to pay for it. They will give you an estimate for the repair, including an administration charge. If you cannot afford to pay it at once, they can arrange for it to be paid in instalments.***

For more information see

[http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/media/1816/Housing-Repairs-Policy-May-2013/pdf/Housing\\_Repairs\\_Policy\\_May\\_2013.pdf](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/media/1816/Housing-Repairs-Policy-May-2013/pdf/Housing_Repairs_Policy_May_2013.pdf)

# Recycling

## Recycling centres within Renfrewshire

(Other regions will have their disposal site and should be check with the local authority for locations)

### Recycling Centre Locations

- **Erskine:** Barrhill Road, Erskine PA8 6BU
- **Johnstone:** Miller Street, Johnstone PA5 8HP
- **Linwood:** Middleton Road, Linwood PA3 3DP
- **Paisley:** Underwood Road, Paisley PA3 1TL
- **Renfrew:** Haining Road, Renfrew PA4 0AJ

There are also over 40 **Household Waste Recycling Points** at various locations such as supermarket car parks across Dumfries and Galloway which can be a useful and convenient alternative for disposing of certain recyclable household waste.

Recycling points can be a useful and convenient alternative to the larger **Household Waste Recycling Centres** in the region which are staffed facilities offering a variety of recycling services.

### Recycling Point Locations

#### **Bishopton**

Community Centre

#### **Elderslie**

The Village Hall

#### **Lochwinnoch**

The Annex, Lochlip Road

#### **Houston & Crosslee**

Crosslee Shopping Centre

You will also find larger recycling bins and collection points at most supermarkets.

# Household Waste Collection Service

## Waste Collection Service for Households

Residents can recycle the following materials:

- Glass bottles and jars
- Plastic bottles
- metal tins and cans
- Paper and cardboard
- Textiles and
- Food waste

Households are supplied with a set of new containers for different types of recyclable materials. There are two clearly marked black boxes, one for paper and cardboard; the other for glass, metal and plastic bottles; plus a third black box which can be used for overflow of these materials. These will be collected every two weeks.

Each household will also receive a new food waste recycling service consisting of a small kitchen food caddy and liners for using inside the home and a bigger external food caddy, which will be collected weekly.

The current wheeled bin or council refuse sack collection service will still be used for normal household rubbish that cannot be recycled using the containers and will be collected every two weeks when the new service comes into effect.

### **Why is this new waste collection service being introduced?**

### **Presentations and Display Events**

Our Council will be attending a wide range of events over the next few years to provide more information on the new waste collection service. These **presentations and displays** will allow residents can find out more about the changes to the new household waste and recycling service.

### **Who can use this Household Waste Recycling Centre?**

- Household Waste Recycling Centres are for household waste and are not licensed to accept waste generated from any commercial or industrial activity.
- CCTV and Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras are in operation at this centre to monitor non-household users

## What can be accepted at most Recycling Centres?

Cans	Car batteries	Electrical goods
Engine oil	Fire extinguishers	Fluorescent tubes
Food and drinks cartons	Gas canisters	Glass
Green waste	Household batteries	Mixed plastics
Non-recyclable waste	Paper and cardboard	Plasterboard
Rubble	Scrap metal	Storage heaters
Textiles and clothes	White goods	Woods
Furniture		

The above items are diverted from landfill where possible by either recycling, composting, reuse or as energy from waste, except for the items put in the banks marked 'Large non-recyclable waste', small non-recyclable waste and 'Asbestos'. Large non-recyclable waste and asbestos is currently landfilled, if alternative waste management options are not available. Small non-recyclable waste is sent to the Ecodeco plant when possible to recover resources from the waste.

# Refuse Disposal

## Household Waste Collection

Household waste in wheeled bins and Council refuse sacks is collected weekly and processed for recovery

### How do you store the waste produced from my household

The Council provide and collect different types of receptacle for household waste:

- **Wheeled Bins**
  - The standard sized wheeled bin (240 litres) is provided to all properties which are rated for Council Tax.
  - Households of 6 or more people may request an additional wheeled bin (240 litres).
  - Single person properties can be provided with a smaller wheeled bin (120 litres).

Where a wheeled bin is considered inappropriate due to location such as terraced housing, flats and farms, the following alternative receptacles may be provided by Dumfries and Galloway Council:

- **Council Refuse Sacks**

2 Council supplied refuse sacks per week - please contact your local services office for more information if you feel a wheeled bin is unsuitable for your location.
- **Communal Bins**

Where appropriate, communal wheeled bins are provided for use by households in certain areas.

### How can I make sure that my waste is collected?

Your waste should be put out on the kerbside by 7:30am on your allocated collection day using the wheeled bin or refuse sacks supplied by our Council.

Our Council recognises some certain residents may experience difficulty in handling their wheeled bin or Council refuse sacks and can provide an **assisted pull out service** to eligible residents.

Wheeled bin lids must be closed flat when placed out for collection or they will not be emptied. If you have more waste than will fit in your bin it must be either placed out in the Council refuse sacks which are available to purchase from Customer Service Centres and Libraries, taken to **Household Waste Recycling Centre** or a **bulky uplift** arranged with the Council. Any side waste placed out for collection which is loose or in non-Council refuse sacks will not be uplifted.

Please also note that you must not put hazardous items such as concrete-bonded asbestos, engine oil or vehicle batteries in your bins or sacks because they need special disposal. These types of items are accepted at Centres. If you have additional waste which can't be put out for collection in your wheeled bin or standard allowance of Council refuse sacks then there are a number of options:

### **Council Refuse Sacks**

Council refuse sacks can be purchased at **Customer Service Centres** or **Libraries** at a cost of 50p each.

## **Fault Reporting** in your home

(Most housing associations will have a similar policy)

### **Getting your repairs done**

#### **How to report your repair**

If your home needs to be repaired you should report the repair to the Customer Service Centre on **0300 300 0300**. If you need an emergency repair and it is after 7pm or at the weekend you should telephone the emergency repair service on the same Customer Service Centre number. You can also email us at

[www.renfrewshire.gov.uk](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk)

- this address is only manned during our office hours.

#### **When you call, we need to know:**

- Your name, address and telephone number;
- All the repairs that need to be done;
- As much information as possible about the repairs. It helps us to order the correct work if you can tell us which room or part of the house needs to be repaired and how the problem happened; and
- Times when someone is usually at home (so that the workers can get access).

#### **What now?**

When you report your repair we will tell you:

- If it is our responsibility or yours. You can find a list of responsibilities that are yours as the tenant and ours as the landlord here;
- How long it will take to carry out;
- If we need to inspect the work, we will arrange an appointment for a Technical Inspector to attend. We will offer you a time within 3 working days or at a time that suits you;
- If there will be any delay in getting the repair carried out because of planned works or financial restraints; and
- Whether or not the repair is a qualifying repair under the right to repair legislation.

#### **How long will it take?**

The details of your repair are passed to our contractor as soon as you report it. If an officer needs to visit your home we won't order your repair until they have been.

### **For Routine repairs**

We will send you a receipt telling you:

- What the repair is;
- Your appointment time if applicable;
- When the repair will be done by; and
- We can also send you a text reminder to your mobile phone.
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### **Timescales**

Our repairs are split into two different types depending on how serious they are, emergency repairs and all other repairs:

#### **Emergency repairs:**

These are the repairs which could be a risk to your health and safety or could lead to serious structural damage to the property. We will make these safe in four hours. Examples of this kind of repair are loss of electric power; external door lock broken and house not secure; blocked toilet or a leaking pipe.

#### **All other repairs**

'All other repairs' is then split into a further three types of repairs depending on how serious the repair is:

#### **Urgent repairs:**

This repair doesn't warrant an immediate response but will affect the convenience or the comfort of living in your home. We will arrange to carry out the repair at a time that suits you but we would like the repair done within three working days. Examples of this kind of repair are light switch not working in kitchen or bathroom; loose kitchen unit; leaking shower where there is no alternative washing facility or a loose stair thread.

#### **Routine repairs:**

These are the repairs that can be put off for a short period of time without causing discomfort or inconvenience to you or your family. We will arrange to carry out the repair by appointment to suit you. We would like the repair to be done within 12 working days (or 15 working days if one of our Technical Inspectors has to pre-inspect). Examples of this kind of repair are dripping taps; easing of internal doors; repairs to plasterwork and replacing of broken light fitting in living room or bedroom.

#### **Non-routine repairs:**

These are the repairs that are more unusual jobs. Because of their nature, these jobs are given a longer timescale for Lovell to either obtain the materials to carry out the work or organise

specialist services. Our target time for these repairs is within 28 days. An example of this kind of repair is the replacement of external doors as they are made to measure.

## Your Right to Repair

### What is right to repair?

From 30th September 2002, under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, Scottish Secure Tenants and Short Scottish Secure Tenants have the right to have small urgent repairs carried out by their landlord within a given timescale. This scheme applies to all tenants of Local Authorities and Housing Associations.

The following table shows repairs that are covered by right to repair and the timescales for completions

Fault	Max days **
Unsafe power or lighting sockets or electrical fittings	1
Loss of electric power	1
Partial loss of electric power	3
Loss or partial loss of gas supply	1
Blocked flue to pen fire or boiler	1
External window, door lock not secure	1
Loss or partial loss of space or water heating where no alternative heating is available	1
Toilets which do not flush (where there are no other toilets in the house)	1
Blocked or leaking foul drains, soil stacks or toilet pans (where there is no other toilet in the house)	1
Blocked sink, bath or drain	1
Loss of water supply	1
Partial loss of water supply	3
Significant leaking from a water or heating pipe, tank or cistern	1
Unsafe timber flooring or stair treads	3
Unsafe access to a path or step	1
Loose or detached banisters or handrails	3
Mechanical extractor fan in internal kitchen or bathroom not working	7

\*\* Working days from day after date of notification of qualifying repair or inspection. Compensation is payable if the time in this column is exceeded. Please note that DGHP's own targets for these repairs aim to meet or better these targets.