

In our own homes



A check list to help you look after the home you live in

**It is important to look after
your home.**

**This booklet will help
you if things go
wrong.**

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**Why is it
important to
look after your
own home?**

**You will feel better living in a home
that is properly looked after.**

**It will help to keep you warm, safe
and dry.**

Your home is worth a lot of money.

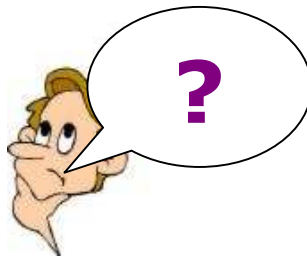
**If you get small repairs carried out it
will help to stop big repairs or
problems in the future.**



**What can I do
to help look
after my home?**

**Looking around your home regularly
will help you notice any repairs that
might need doing.**

**If you find it hard to get around your
home think about moving furniture.
Clutter in a home can be a risk to you
and your home. Put things away when
you have finished with them.**



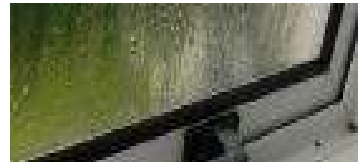
**If you find a problem and are not sure
how to fix it ask someone for advice.**

**This booklet will help show you things
that could go wrong in your home and
what you can do about them.**

What are the main things that could go wrong with my home?



Is your home damp and wet?



If your home is damp and wet and damp this can make you ill.

Look out for mould growing on the walls and ceiling.

What can you do to make your home drier?

- Keep your home warm.
- Open the windows sometimes. This will let damp, stale air out of your home.
- Keep the kitchen door closed when you are cooking. Open a kitchen window.
- Put extractor fans on.
- Keep the bathroom door closed.
- Open the window after you have had a bath or shower. This will let the steam out.
- Dry wet clothes in a room which has windows and open this sometimes.

What are the main things that could go wrong with my home?



Central Heating

Your boiler helps run your central heating and heats up your water. If it shows signs of leaking or is becoming very noisy ask for help.



Gas Fires

If you have a gas fire, make sure it is checked. If you see the flames are yellow or orange ask for help.



Drains

Blocked drains need to be cleared. If you are having trouble clearing your blocked drain call a builder.



On page 13 you will find help on how to unblock a toilet and page 14 gives advice on clearing blocked pipes.



Electricity

Flickering lights, fuses that keep blowing and broken or old sockets and switches may be signs that your wiring needs to be looked at. **Do not try to mend electrics yourself.** Only a registered electrician can do this.



What are the main things that could go wrong with my home?



Roof

If you have tiles missing from your roof or the roof is leaking or it looks like it is sagging you will need to get advice from a professional builder.



Your roof is very important. It protects your home from rain, cold and bad weather. If you do not carry out small repairs the cost of replacing a roof is expensive.



Gutters

Gutters collect the water that runs off your roof.



Look out for cracks, leaking joints, loose brackets and blockages. These are all signs that your guttering needs to be mended.



Insulation

Insulation keeps heat in your home. If you don't already have insulation ask for advice.



What are the main things that could go wrong with my home?



Paintwork

Regular upkeep of paintwork to the exterior of your property helps protect your home against all weather.



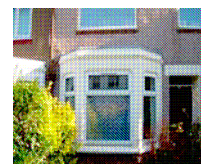
Walls

Walls hold your home together and support your roof. Look for cracks, leaning walls, crumbling bricks or If you see wet patches get advice.



Windows

Check your windows for draughts and rotten wood. Replace broken glass.



How do I pay for repairs to my home?

Insurance

Some repairs to your home may be covered by your home insurance. The insurance pay for repairs needed because of water leaks, floods, storms, burglary and accidental damage. Contact your insurance company for advice.

Pension Credit and Income Support

If you receive Pension Credit or Income Support and you have less than £1000 savings you may be able to claim a social fund loan or community care grant. These funds can pay for urgent repairs to your home.

Warm Front Grant

You may be able to get a Warm Front Grant if you get welfare benefits. This grant can pay for central heating and insulation in your home.

How do I pay for repairs to my home?

Home Improvement Agency

Home Improvement Agencies help people to repair or adapt their homes. They help homeowners and private tenants.

They help people find the money to pay the builders.

Some Home Improvement Agencies run a 'handy person' Scheme that provides help at a low cost for **small** repairs. They may mend doors, broken windows, leaking taps or toilets.

Some are called Care and Repair or Staying Put.

Ask someone to find out if your local home improvement agency can help you.

How do I pay for repairs to my home?

Charities and Trusts

If you have no money for repairs a charity may help you.

The Association of Charity Officers on 01707 651 777 give free advice.

Advice Agencies

Many advice agencies will make sure you are getting all the benefits you are entitled to. You will find their telephone numbers in the yellow pages.

Try looking for 'Citizen Advice Bureau.'



Information and Advice to help you and your home

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**Over the next few pages
you will find handy hints,
tips and advice on basic
repairs to your home**

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How do I clear a blocked toilet?

Clearing a blocked toilet

Before calling out a plumber try these easy steps to clear a blocked toilet in your home.

1



Lift up the lid of the toilet. With a jug get out as much water as you can . Put this into a bucket.

2



Put your plunger into the toilet to the bottom of the pan. Push up and down with the plunger to release the blockage.

3



Fill a bucket with cold water and pour the water into the toilet pan to check the blockage is cleared.

4



If it hasn't cleared do not use the toilet and call for a plumber or contact your local Home Improvement Agency.

Do not flush sanitary towels, nappies or any other objects down the toilet.

How do I clear a blocked waste pipe?

Clearing a blocked sink

Blocked waste pipes are usually caused by things like fat and hair going down your plug hole. Do not pour fats and grease down the kitchen sink. Cleaning your wastes pipes with soda crystals and hot water once a month will help to prevent your wastes from blocking up. You can buy soda crystals from any local supermarket or DIY store.

1

Remove most of the water from the sink or basin into a bucket.

2

Tightly hold a rag over the overflow opening in the sink, basin or bath and put the plunger over the plug hole.

3

Pump the plunger up and down to clear the blockage. Do this rapidly.



If more than one waste is blocked the problem could be with the main drain.

For this to be cleared you will need to call a plumber.

How to replace the battery in a smoke detector?

Replacing a battery in a smoke detector.

Your smoke detector will make a beeping sound when the battery is low.



Make sure you test your battery every week.

If your smoke detector still does not work your battery will need changing.

Most smoke detectors require a 9 volt battery.

1 Open the detector by taking off the cover.

2 Unclip the old battery from the detector and replace with your new battery.
Remember the (+) and (-) signs on the battery must match with the same signs on the detector connections.

3 Replace the cover and test the alarm by pressing the test button.

Useful Organisations, Telephone Numbers and Addresses



Foundations

To find your nearest Home Improvement Agency look on their website or call them on

Tel: 01457 891909

Website: wwwFOUNDATIONS.uk.com

Age Concern

To find your nearest Age Concern look on their website or call their information line on

Tel: 0800 0099 66

Website: www.ageconcern.org.uk

Citizen Advice Bureau(CAB)

To find your local CAB on 020 7833 2181 (this national call rate number gives local contact details only, not advice.)

Website: www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Useful Organisations, Telephone Numbers and Addresses



Disabled Living Foundation

They provide information about aids and equipment to help daily living. They have places where you can see these

Tel: 0845 130 9177 lo-call rate

Website: www.dlf.org.uk

Housing Options

Housing Options

Stanelaw House, Sutton Lane, Sutton, Witney
Oxfordshire, OX29 5RY

Tel: 0845 4561497

Email: enquiries@housingoptions.org.uk

Website: www.housingoptions.org.uk

Mencap

123 Golden Lane, London EC1Y 0RT

Tel: 020 7454 0454

Email: information@mencap.org.uk

Website: www.mencap.org.uk

Energy Efficiency Advice Centres

They give information and advice about insulation and energy in the home. Tel: 0800 512 012



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