

Living in your home



Westcountry
Housing 

A member of Westward Housing Group

If you or someone you know would like to have this 'Living In Your Home' leaflet on CD or audio tape, in large print, in Braille or translated into another language, please contact our Communications Team on 01803 200300 or email: info@westcountryha.org.uk

Si vous, ou une personne que vous connaissez, souhaitez obtenir « Habiter dans votre logement » sur CD, cassette audio, en gros caractères, en braille ou traduit dans une autre langue, contactez notre directeur des communications au 01803 200300 ou par e-mail à info@westcountryha.org.uk.

倘若您或您結識的人需要此“住您自己的住房”小葉以 CD 或錄音帶、大字體、盲文格式提供，或翻譯成另外一種語言，請聯絡我們的公關部經理：01803 200300 或發送電郵至：info@westcountryha.org.uk

Se quiser ou conhecer alguma pessoa que precise deste folheto, intitulado “viver em sua casa”, em CD ou cassete áudio, em formato ampliado, em alfabeto Braille ou traduzido para outra língua, deve contactar o nosso responsável pela comunicação através do número 01803 200300 ou e-mail info@westcountryha.org.uk

Jeśli Ty albo ktoś kogo znaczn pragnąłby mieć „Mieszkanie w Swoim Domu” na płycie CD, na taśmie audio, dużym drukiem, pismem Braille'a albo przetłumaczonym w innym języku, proszę o kontakt z Managerem ds. Komunikacji pod numerem telefonu 01803 200300 albo drogą mailową info@westcountryha.org.uk

Westcountry Housing makes every effort to ensure that when you move into your home it is clean, tidy and meets high standards of energy efficiency, and affordability.

This booklet is to help you keep your home to the same high standards and to offer you advice around issues that may arise whilst living in your home.

If you have any queries or want more information please contact our Neighbourhoods Team, who will be happy to help.

Permission for Pets

We recognise the value to residents of pets and the link to health and wellbeing of residents who have pets, however some of our communities and properties unsuitable for pets.

You must get permission to keep any pets in your home or garden.

We will not unreasonably withhold permission. You can

keep pets so long as they are suitable for the type and size of home you live in, and the community you live in does not have a 'no pets' policy. Where we have a no pets policy, we have previously agreed that policy with residents to ensure the quiet enjoyment of everyone living in the community.

- If you want to keep a dog, you should consider how you are going to look after it and train it, and how it might affect your neighbours.
- You must not use your home to breed any animals for sale.
- You must clean up after your animals, including in your own garden. You can



be fined or taken to court if your pet fouls public areas or roams.

- You must not allow your animal to annoy or upset other people, for example, by barking continually inside or outside your home.
- We can stop you having pets if you are not a responsible owner. You must make sure that you keep them under control. Remember, what you do in your home can affect your neighbours, please be considerate. Westcountry will take action through its Anti-Social Behaviour Policy if you do not comply with these rules.

Permission for Improvements

Minor changes to your home
You can make minor changes such as putting up shelves or wall cupboards as long as you do not damage or remove anything or alter the property. When you leave the property

you may be asked to remove your minor changes and make good any fixing holes.

You must get our permission in writing if you want to change or alter your home. For more information regarding this please read our “Repairing, Maintaining and Improving Your Home” leaflet.

Major improvements to your home

You may carry out your own improvements but you must discuss your plans with us first. You should then write to your Neighbourhoods Team, giving full details of what you plan to do.

This includes:

- removing a wall or partitioning
- installing or removing a gas supply
- moving radiators or putting in your own heating system
- installing a shower
- changing kitchen or bathroom fittings

We will answer in writing. We have the right to insist that

work is done correctly, and to inspect it at certain stages. You should check with your local council whether you also need to get official planning permission and building regulations approval. You are responsible for applying for these.

Adaptations

We may be able to carry out certain adaptations to help you in your home (for example, handrails or bathroom adaptations), but sometimes you need to apply to your local council for funding. See our “Disabled Adaptations” leaflet for more. We expect you to be a good neighbour. Your tenancy agreement says that you and your family (including children, visitors and pets) must not cause nuisance to neighbours. See “Being a Good Neighbour” leaflet.

Fire arms and offensive weapons

We have a Firearms and Offensive Weapons Policy to

protect our residents and staff. Weapons and firearms of any kind are prohibited on these premises. If you are, or it is suspected that you are, in possession of a weapon, you will be asked to surrender the item.

Where firearms or offensive weapons are found, Police will be informed of their location.

Hazardous substances

For health and safety reasons you are not permitted to store any dangerous or flammable liquids, materials or appliances at this property or any other Westcountry premises other than those with prior permission.

Your garden

When you move in we will make sure that:

- The garden is free of rubbish and items left by previous tenants.
- Any grass will be no higher than 8cm.

You are responsible for:

- Keeping the garden tidy and free of rubbish.

- Trimming shrubs, hedges or trees to make sure they do not become a nuisance.
- Maintaining the fence dividing your garden from your neighbour.
- Maintaining garden features such as patios or terraces, and any fencing you have put up.

You may carry out any reasonable landscaping and planting, but you need our permission to:

- Excavate or build up grounds around your home – this may affect the structure of your home or cause damp and other problems.
- Install additional fences.
- Raise fence heights above the current level.
- Put up a garage, park a car, motorcycle, caravan or

trailer in the garden.

- Put up a shed or greenhouse.
- Cut down or remove any trees, or plant any trees or shrubs (for example, leylandii) that could damage the property or a neighbouring property.
- You must not burn rubbish or light a bonfire but you can have a barbecue as long as it does not annoy your neighbours.

Keep pests away

Do not leave out food or rubbish where it can attract pigeons, seagulls, squirrels, rats, foxes or mice.

If you are troubled by insects or wild animals in your area, contact your local council. See our “Problems With Pests” leaflet.



Security in your home

Whilst living in your home you need to consider how to look after yourself and family. You need to take a few basic precautions around your home to make sure your home is safe, secure and your family stay healthy.

Security

- If you have a door viewer (spy hole), check to see who is at the door before opening it.
- If you have a chain, keep it on when you open the door.
- Westcountry staff all carry photographic identification and will always show this when visiting you.
- If you don't know the caller, ask to see identification and check it carefully.
- If you are not sure, ask the caller to wait outside while you phone the organisation they claim to represent.
- When you go out in the evening, draw the curtains and leave a light on in a main room.

- When you go away, fit a timer to a living-room lamp to make it look as though someone is in.
- Let us know if you are going away and leaving your home empty for more than 28 days.

Communal areas

- Make sure the communal door closes behind you.
- Do not let people into the building who are not with you or visiting.
- Never leave the entrance door propped open.
- Do not leave items and belongings in communal areas, these could be a fire or tripping hazard.
- Do not block fire exits, corridors and stairways - this could prevent you and your family escaping quickly and safely in the event of a fire.
- Do not store items under stair areas.
- Always report damage or disrepair to Westcountry as quickly as possible on 0300 100 1010.



Door entry systems

- Door entry systems are installed to control entry into a building.

To maintain security:

- Make sure that the door locks behind you.
- Don't let people who do not live in the block, you do not know or are not visiting you to follow you in, even if they appear genuine; they should press the button for the flat they are visiting to be let in.
- Always report damage or disrepair to Westcountry as quickly as possible on 0300 100 10 10.

Keep watch in your neighbourhood

- If you are at all suspicious about anything happening in your area always ring the Police (eg: if you see vandalism, graffiti, cars broken into or being driven dangerously, or signs of a break in).

Emergencies: Police, Fire, Ambulance: 999 or 112
Non-emergency Police: 08452 777444.

- If you haven't seen a neighbour for a while and are worried that something may have happened to them, please contact us.
- Arrange with a friend or neighbour to keep an eye on each other's homes, particularly if you are planning to be away from home for a while.

Refuse

Your household rubbish will be collected by your council and in some areas they also collect garden waste. In blocks of flats there are usually shared bins or collection areas. You should take large items or large amounts of waste to a local household waste site (tip), or you can ask your council for a 'bulky item' collection. You should recycle as much of your waste as possible.

Running a business

You can run certain types of legal business from your home, provided you have our written permission. Your business must not disturb your neighbours and you must not receive customers at your home.

We will take action to end your tenancy if your home is being used for illegal or immoral purposes.

Living in a flat or a maisonette

If you live in a flat, a bedsit or a maisonette, respect your neighbours and look after shared areas.

Respecting your neighbours

- Keep the sound from music systems, TVs and radios at reasonable levels at all times.
- Do not allow anything to be thrown or dropped from balconies, windows, landings or corridors.
- Do not shake mats or carpets from windows or balconies.

- Children must not play on shared staircases or landings.
- Do not keep pets on shared staircases or landings, or allow them to wander.

Health and safety

Landings, drying areas and stairs must be kept clear. Don't leave anything outside your flat or in a shared area, such as pushchairs, furniture, plants or bicycles.

Fire doors

These must be kept clear of obstructions and must be closed at all times. Never wedge them open for any reason.

Shared areas Cleaning

In our blocks of flats and sheltered schemes the staircases, hallways and landings may be cleaned by estate staff or a contractor. However, residents are

Communal gardens

It is normal for the communal gardens to be maintained by contractors or estate staff.

However, residents are expected to help keep these areas tidy and let us know if there are any problems.

Parking

- Be considerate to your neighbours when parking.
- Make sure you do not block other cars. This also applies to your visitors.
- If you park in any communal or shared parking areas this is at your own risk.
- If your car gets damaged in these areas you will need to make a claim on your car insurance.
- You must only park in marked parking areas.
- No parking space can be reserved by a particular household unless we tell you that it goes with your address.
- We may agree how many spaces you can use. Make sure you and your visitors

expected to help keep these areas tidy and let us know if there are any problems.

Rubbish

Put all rubbish into the shared bins we provide, not just near them. Make sure you wrap up sharp, wet or rotting objects before putting them in the bins.

Repairs

We rely on residents to tell us about repairs or problems with lighting on our Repairs line 0300 100 1010.

do not use more than your allocated number of spaces.

- You must not use car-parking areas or the roadside to carry out extensive repairs to vehicles, or to run a business for repairing vehicles.
- You must not park a car, a motorcycle, a caravan, a boat or a trailer in your garden.

- If you want to park a trailer or caravan, or a commercial vehicle on your driveway, you must get our permission first.

We will take action to have your car removed if it is untaxed, unroadworthy, parked illegally on pavements, footpaths or verges, or if it is causing a danger or obstruction.



business to support people



business for neighbourhoods



Tenant Services Authority (TSA), the Regulator of Social Housing No.LH0945.
An exempt charity, registered under Industrial & Provident Soc.Act 1965 No. 30101R
A member of the National Housing Federation.