

## **Looking after your JJH Home**

### **Gas safety**

Do not tamper with your gas supply. If you do smell gas or you suspect that you have carbon monoxide coming from any of your appliances call the National Gas Emergency line on 0800 111 999.

It doesn't matter what time of day or night you ring – they have trained operators working round-the-clock waiting to take your call. Carbon Monoxide is known as the “silent killer”. The gas has no taste, colour or smell and can kill without warning in a matter of hours. Symptoms of Carbon Monoxide poisoning can often be mistaken for flu, even by medical professionals, and can include headaches, dizziness, nausea and exhaustion.

Other signs of a carbon monoxide leak in the home are yellow or brown staining on or around gas appliances, rising condensation around windows and yellow-tinged pilot lights that frequently blow out.

If you have gas appliances you should arrange for these to be serviced annually by a Gas Safe registered contractor.

### **Electrical safety**

Do not carry out your own electrical repairs. Remove plugs from sockets of any appliances not in use. Regularly check that your plugs are in good order and are wired and fused. Do not run more than one appliance from the same socket and never run electrical fittings from a light fitting. Check the condition of flexes regularly. Follow the maker's instructions when using appliances.

### **Fire safety**

Make sure that open or radiant fires are properly guarded. Make sure cigarettes and matches are out before emptying ashtrays. Keep all matches, candles and lighters away from children. Do not dry clothes over heaters, cookers or fires. Close windows and internal doors at night to prevent spread of fire.

### **Smoke alarms**

It is in your interest to ensure that you have satisfactory alarms fitted. Where there is a battery alarm, ensure that you check the battery regularly, change the battery at least once a year and renew it immediately if the low battery ‘beep’ sounds. Smoke alarms should not be covered up.

### **Burst pipes**

During winter months take precautions to prevent burst pipes. Make sure that your home is heated. If you go away, leave the heating on, where you can, but turn the thermostat down to 10C. If you are unable to leave heating on, make sure that your water is turned off at the

stop tap and the hot water, cold water and heating systems are drained down. Damage caused to your contents and belongings will be your responsibility.

### **Energy saving**

There are many things that you can do in your own home to reduce the amount of energy you use. For example, remember to switch off lights when not required, try using low energy light bulbs and switch off domestic appliances – if you leave them on standby they are still using electricity.

### **Keys**

Always keep your keys in a safe place. Do not keep them with anything that has your address on it when you are out of the home.

In blocks of flats, keys are often part of a suited system. For security reasons you cannot get these cut without our written permission. If you lose your keys, you must pay for any replacements.

### **Condensation**

Condensation is a common problem particularly in new properties. Our top tips for combating condensation are:

After a bath or shower, try to ventilate the room to the outside air, rather than the rest of your home by opening the bathroom window and closing the door. If you have an interior bathroom without a window, make sure that the mechanical extractor fan is switched on to its highest setting and keep the door shut until all the steam has cleared.

Make sure all mechanical extractor units installed within your kitchen are on before you start cooking and/or open a window. Don't leave pans simmering uncovered – use a lid.

Dry your laundry outside, or in a room that is ventilated to the outside, with an open window. Your clothing may take longer to dry but less moisture will be absorbed into the air.

If you have a tumble drier, make sure that it is vented to the exterior.

Avoid overfilling cupboards and wardrobes. If possible use slatted shelves to allow air to circulate.

Avoid using paraffin heaters and bottled gas.

Leave trickle vents open and regularly air all rooms by opening windows for a short period.

### **Adaptations**

If you have a disability and you need adaptations in your home to enable you to remain independent, you may be entitled to a grant from your local authority. For further information contact your local authority for more information.

### **Burglars and Bogus Callers**

Burglars and Bogus Callers use a variety of stories to gain access to a person's home in order to steal. They may pose as official callers from a local authority or a utility company etc. They offer a plausible explanation for needing to enter your home.

Rogue traders are people who pretend to be builders needing to carry out urgent repairs or sales people offering bargain products. They often pressurise householders to pay in advance for materials or do poor work at highly inflated prices.

A common factor is that both bogus callers and rogue traders often prey on vulnerable older or disabled people. They often succeed because they sound believable. Don't be fooled!

Some simple precautions may help you to remain safe in your home:

Think before you open the door – use a chain or spy hole if you have one or look out of the window to see if you recognise them.

Ask callers for proof of identification – Check these carefully and if you are unsure, telephone the company the caller claims to be representing using a number from a telephone directory and not a number that they may give you.

Be aware of callers who attempt to distract you by claiming that they have seen something untoward in your garden or somewhere which may encourage you to leave your home or to go into another room.

Do not leave notes outside your home for callers when you are out.

Ask strangers for proof of identity before letting them into your home or your building if you share an entrance with others

If you are not convinced of the identification of the caller – DO NOT LET THEM IN! Treat every stranger with caution and never open the door to somebody that you do not know. If you have suspicions about a caller, telephone the police.

Make sure you have secured all windows and locked doors whenever you go out.

At night, make sure ground floor windows, and the windows near to drainpipes and flat roofs are all secured. Do not leave keys under a mat or on a string behind the door.

