

Resident Handbook



Later living that makes
the most of every moment

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Welcome to Brunelcare

Welcome to Brunelcare and to your new home! We are a Bristol-based charity providing high-quality housing, care and support to guide you through every stage of later life.

For more than 80 years Brunelcare has supported people in the community to make the most of every moment. As a charity, any surplus we make is reinvested back into the services we provide so we can continue to support more than 2,000 adults across Bristol, South Gloucestershire and Somerset every week.

Our History

Brunelcare originally started life under a different name - the Old People's Welfare Committee - and was founded in October 1941 during World War Two. In its early years, the organisation's priority was to support Bristol's older people in the aftermath of the War 'to keep them warm, keep them fed, keep them alive'.

Over the decades, the organisation expanded significantly, and its focus changed to incorporate a range of sheltered housing and, later, care homes. It was renamed Bristol Age Care in the 1970s before eventually assuming the Brunelcare name in 1993.

Our Mission

To provide person-centred care, housing, support and community living for later life.

Our Vision

Later living that makes the most of every moment.

Our Strategy

Brunelcare's Board of Trustees has approved the charity's new Strategic Plan for 2024-2030. Our Plan allows us to be ambitious about our future, and has been developed alongside Brunelcare residents, relatives and colleagues. They asked us to concentrate on:

- ✓ Transforming our customer services
- ✓ Improving our homes so they are fit for the future
- ✓ Supporting residents to get the right care and support they need.
- ✓ Providing a good quality of life in the community

We have set out more detail on how we will achieve these in the full plan, which is available on Brunelcare's website (www.brunelcare.org.uk) and each year we will report back on how we have done.



Our Services

Brunelcare offers a range of different services. Whether you're looking for care in your own home, at one of our specialist care homes or reablement facilities, independent living or Extra Care Housing, we'll help you find the right service to suit your needs and remain as independent as possible for as long as possible.

Sheltered Housing

Brunelcare has 30 sheltered housing sites, mostly in and around the Bristol area. Our properties are available to people aged 55 and over and are mostly studio, one-bed or two-bed flats or bungalows. We pride ourselves on providing high-quality and safe housing, and our sites allow you to become part of a community with communal areas and gardens.

Our sheltered housing sites are supported by a Housing and Property team, whether that be through carrying out repairs to your home or helping with queries you may have about your rent or service charges.

We also have three shared ownership housing schemes within Bristol offering different services. Our shared ownership homes are ideal for those who want to share the ownership of a retirement flat, offering a cross between buying and renting. You own a share and then rent part at a reduced rate, with the possibility of increasing your percentage.

Finally, we have a small number of leasehold properties which are designed for older people, who wish to have a stake in ownership of their home. These homes are for those who choose to lease a retirement flat and are happy to live independently without regular support from our Housing Team.

Extra Care Housing (ECH)

Live independently, with extra support when you need it.

Our ECH is designed with later life in mind. Suited to those who want to live independently but need a helping hand with day-to-day living, you will be supported by a 24/7 on-site care team while enjoying the freedom that comes with having your own home. Care needs are assessed on an individual basis and detailed within each person's care package.

All our accommodation comes with its own front door, kitchen, bathroom, heating, one or two bedrooms, and pull-cord system. It is available to older people who require a minimum of five hours of care per week.

We have three ECH sites:

- Colliers Gardens in Fishponds
- Waverley Gardens in Bishopsworth
- ABC Centre in Whitchurch

All sites offer a restaurant service, providing two nutritious meals a day.

Other Brunelcare services

We also offer:

Retirement Living - *Retire in comfort*

We have one retirement village: Woodland Court in Downend.

Community Care - *Maintain your independence with care at home*

We run two domiciliary care services in Somerset and South Gloucestershire, providing care and support in people's own homes.

Care Homes - *Maintain dignity and choice in our care homes*

Brunelcare has six care homes, mainly located in Bristol and South Gloucestershire, as well as our Glastonbury care home in Somerset.

Help When You Need It (HWYNI).

This service provides confidential, free support to people over the age of 55 living in the Bristol City Council area. The team can support people to sustain their tenancy or accommodation, manage their physical and mental health and wellbeing, access available benefits, manage their debts, find paid work, and assess their eligibility for grants.



How to contact Brunelcare

The initial point of contact for all enquiries is the **Customer Service Team**. The team is available from:

**Monday to Friday
between 8.30 am and
4.30 pm**

To contact them within these times please either call or email using the below information.

0117 914 4257
info@brunelcare.org.uk

If you call, you will be given two options:

Option 1:

General enquiries and logging a new repair

Option 2:

Updates on existing repairs

Out of Hours

**Between the hours
of 4.30 pm and 8.30 am
on weekdays, on
weekends and bank
holidays**

You can contact our out of hours service by using our main number

0117 914 4257 (OPTION 3)

You can also find all the key contact details by visiting our website:

www.brunelcare.org.uk



Scan

to visit the
Brunelcare website

Complaints

If you want to make a complaint, pay Brunelcare a compliment or give us feedback, please refer to pages 28 and 29 of this Tenant Handbook for more information.





Welcome to your new home

When you receive the keys to your new home, you can expect to find that we will have:

General

- ✓ Checked that there is a smoke alarm on each floor.
- ✓ Checked the property for asbestos and checked it does not pose a hazard.
- ✓ Cleaned the property, paying particular attention to the kitchen and bathroom to remove any grease and grime.

Decorating

- ✓ Left existing decorations in good condition.
- ✓ Offered you a decorating voucher – a money allowance to help you towards the cost of decorating materials for the rooms that have been stripped.

Living room

- ✓ Tidied up loose wires.
- ✓ Redecorated the living room, if required.

Kitchen

- ✓ Redecorated the kitchen, if required.
- ✓ Installed a gas or electric cooker point, not necessarily both, and left a 600mm space for a cooker.
- ✓ Checked that the sink is clean, plugs are attached and the splash-back is in good condition.
- ✓ Checked the units and worktops are in good working order.
- ✓ Checked the plumbing to ensure it is not blocked or leaking.
- ✓ Ensured that the vents and extractor fans are clean and working.
- ✓ Checked the floor covering is clean and in good condition.

Bathroom

- ✓ Decorated the bathroom, if required.
- ✓ Made sure the shower, sink and toilet are white, as well as free from stains and holes.
- ✓ Checked that the shower and basin are clean, the plug is attached and the tiles are in good condition.
- ✓ Checked over-bath showers are safe and suitable ventilation is fitted.
- ✓ Ensured the floor covering is slip-resistant.



Heating and energy supply

- ✓ Made sure there is one form of heating present at the property.
- ✓ Tested the gas (if appropriate) and electrics to ensure that the heating and hot water system, wiring and appliances are safe for you to use.

Ceilings and walls

- ✓ Checked that the property is free from damp, and treated any areas of black mould.
- ✓ Checked for bulging or visibly crumbling plaster. If found, we will repair either by plastering (patch repair or total) or lining the walls.
- ✓ Painted ceilings if in bad condition or when they have been plastered.

Floors

- ✓ Provided vinyl floor covering in the kitchen and bathroom.
- ✓ Left carpets or floor covering from the previous tenant if in good condition

Windows

- ✓ Repaired any cracked, missing or failed glazing.
- ✓ Fitted restrictors on windows above the ground floor.
- ✓ Fitted curtain battens above the windows. However, we will not provide curtains, blinds or nets in any room.

Doors

- ✓ Checked that all doors are in good condition and that they open, close and lock easily (where a lock is provided).
- ✓ Supplied you with a minimum of two sets of keys, and one key or fob (if applicable) for the communal main door.
- ✓ Ensured that there is a working letterbox and house/flat number fitted on or around the front door.

If any of the tasks above have not been completed when you move into your home, please contact the Customer Service team, who will help to ensure they are resolved as soon as possible.



Decorations and Improvement

Decorating your home

We want you to enjoy your new property and feel proud to call it home. You are welcome to repaint walls in your home to make it your own, however we do not permit residents to apply wallpaper. Please refer to your tenancy agreement for further information on decorating your home.

Improvements

Residents should get written permission before making alterations to their home, for example replacing a kitchen or bathroom.

Permission must be granted before any work begins so we can approve any plans and ensure residents have sought all relevant permissions including Planning and Building Regulations approval etc.

We will not unreasonably withhold consent when a request is received to carry out improvement or alterations. If consent is provided, residents will become responsible for any subsequent repairs, maintenance or replacement of the improvement/alteration.

Any gas related work must be undertaken by a Gas Safe registered contractor and electrical works must be carried out by an NICEIC (or equivalent) registered contractor.

Original certificate(s) must be provided to us upon completion of any improvement work. Furthermore, a surveyor will carry out a post inspection of the work to ensure it has been completed to a satisfactory standard.

Household goods

All our properties come unfurnished and so you will need to provide your own furniture and appliances.

You can find many second-hand items online for free. Try Freecycle www.freecycle.org and Freegle www.ilovefreegle.org.

Several local furniture projects refurbish and recycle furniture and electrical goods, selling them at lower prices.

These include:

- The Sofa Project - www.sofaproject.org.uk
- Emmaus - www.emmausbristol.org.uk

Grants and loans

If you're on a low income, you may also be able to get help paying for furniture and white goods from:

- **The Local Crisis and Prevention Fund** - to apply, you must be living within the boundaries of Bristol City Council area. For more information visit: www.bristol.gov.uk/lcpf.



- **Some charities provide financial assistance** and other forms of support, depending on your particular background and circumstances. Visit www.turn2us.org.uk and click on 'Grant Search' to find grants available to you.



- **Budgeting Loans** are interest-free and can help pay for essential things like rent, furniture, clothes or hire purchase debts. The smallest amount you can borrow is £100. You normally have to repay the loan within two years. You can apply for a loan if you've been getting income-related benefits for at least 26 weeks. To apply, either fill in a form at your local Jobcentre Plus or visit www.gov.uk/budgeting-loans for a printable version.



Home contents insurance

Brunelcare does not insure your home contents (e.g. furniture, belongings, decorations) against theft, fire, vandalism or burst pipes. It is your responsibility to make sure that the sum insured is enough to cover all your household items and personal effects.

Tenants and leaseholders may also be responsible for damage caused to other properties as a result of flooding or fire. Therefore, we recommend that you take out household contents insurance.

CCTV security

Many blocks are fitted with CCTV cameras, where tenants have agreed to pay a weekly service charge. This is to deter crime and anti-social behaviour, and to support tenant safety. The cameras are not monitored 24 hours a day, they are only accessed by request of the police or when an incident is reported to us.



Shared laundries

Shared laundries are only for use by tenants living on your site. You must not allow other people to use your laundry or undertake washing for people who do not live on your site.

Time slots

In some flats, the laundry is operated by using allocated wash times. If your laundry is one of these, please speak with a member of the Housing Team when you move in to arrange a time slot. You should only use the laundry during your fixed time slot, weekends may be “first come, first served”.

Please do not overrun your time slot as this will leave other tenants without enough time to do their laundry. If you need additional time slots please speak to a member of the Housing Team to arrange this. Please leave the laundry clean and tidy at the end of your slot.

Use of the laundry

- ❌ **Do not prop the door open** - it is a fire risk and a breach of your tenancy conditions.
- ❌ **Do not load the machines with rugs or mats**, as it will cause them to break down.
- ❌ **Brunelcare will not accept responsibility for any loss or damage to any item** of laundry or personal belongings, no matter how it is caused.

Tenants in most of our properties are not permitted to install their own washing machines. However, residents living at our Waverley Gardens and Colliers Gardens extra care housing schemes can install a washing machine in their property if they wish to.





Your Rights and Responsibilities

Your Tenancy Agreement

Most of your rights and obligations as a tenant will be explained in your tenancy agreement which is a legally binding contract between you, as the tenant, and Brunelcare, as your landlord. Some of your occupancy rights will depend on the type of tenancy you have such as a starter tenancy, assured shorthold or assured tenancy. More information on your rights as a tenant of Brunelcare is set out on our website.

The tenancy agreement also confirms three important issues:

- 1 The **type of tenancy** you have: an introductory tenancy is offered first on a trial period of 12 months (we can extend this period if felt necessary). Providing there are no breaches in tenancy conditions this will become a secure tenancy. The rules will be slightly different depending on the tenancy you have.
- 2 **When the tenancy starts.**
- 3 **How many people** can live at the property.

You should also be clear about who is classed as the 'tenant(s)' as they are held responsible for the tenancy. Where only one person signs the agreement, they are called a '**sole tenant**'. However, two or more people signing the tenancy agreement become '**joint tenants**'. They will both be individually responsible for the tenancy.

It is important that you take time to read your tenancy agreement. If you breach the conditions in the agreement, it could lead to an order for repossession of your home or other legal action against you.

New Tenancy Visit

We aim to visit all new tenants within the first six weeks to find out how you are settling in. This is also a chance for you to raise any questions or concerns you may have. During the visit, we will:

- Check the right people have moved in.
- Make sure you understand your responsibilities as a tenant and are complying with your tenancy conditions.
- Identify any issues with the property.
- Find out if you need any extra support.

Allowing access to your property for things such as a new tenancy visit - as well as any repairs and maintenance - forms part of your tenancy agreement. You will receive a letter nearer the time letting you know the date and time of the appointment.

Shared Ownership and Leaseholders

If you are a leaseholder or shared owner, please refer to the the terms and conditions in your lease.

Your Rent

Rent

The tenancy agreement that you sign when you first move in tells you how much rent you should pay.

Your tenancy agreement explains how your rent will be adjusted every year but not more than once in a 12 month period. You don't have to worry about unexpected rent increases, as we will tell you, in writing, at least four weeks before any rent change.

How is my rent set?

Registered providers are required to comply with the Regulator of Social Housing's Rent Standard. This standard sets the required outcomes for how registered providers set and increase rents for all their social housing stock in line with government policy.

Your Service Charges

How is my service charge set?

Some service charges are included in your overall charge, which pays for specific services that only some tenants may get. These include gardening and grounds maintenance, estate cleaning, security systems, estate lighting, lift, fire alarm, health and safety inspection, TV aerial, and communal pest control. Also, it will include personal living expenses such as heating and lighting.

We will always try to ensure that costs to you are reasonable and that the services and works undertaken are carried out to a good standard.

More information on service charge payments and whether they are eligible and ineligible, can be found on the Government website.



Difficulty paying Rent and Service Charges

It is an essential requirement of your tenancy to pay rent. If you have difficulties in paying rent or your circumstances have changed, it is vital that you contact a member of the Housing Team.

If you fall behind with your rent payments you are in breach of your tenancy agreement and may put your tenancy at risk. You will be sent correspondence making you aware of any arrears on your rent and service charge account and reminding you to pay.

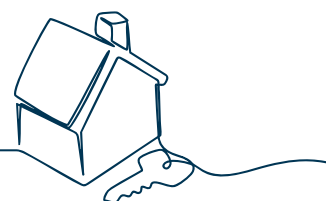
In the event of rent arrears, Brunelcare will seek to establish an arrangement to repay the outstanding rent. Normally, such arrangements can be discussed and agreed upon with your Housing Manager. However, if this arrangement is broken, Brunelcare will commence further debt recovery action, which could include the issue of a Notice Seeking Possession and further legal action may follow.

In such circumstances, Brunelcare may also apply for direct deductions from welfare benefits.

Court Action

If legal action has commenced, it may mean that:

- You can be evicted from your home;
- You will be responsible for all legal costs in addition to your arrears;
- You may have difficulty getting credit or a loan in the future;
- You may not be considered for rehousing by other Housing Associations;





General Housing Information

Communal Areas

In all communal areas, the tenant should cooperate with other residents to keep the common parts clean, tidy and free from obstruction. Where common parts are not maintained in a clean and tidy condition, Brunelcare will undertake this work and recover the cost with a service charge to the residents. Communal areas include corridors, lifts, bin stores and communal gardens.

Smoking in Brunelcare Buildings

All areas of Brunelcare premises, except a tenant's own apartment, are designated as smoke-free areas.

Energy and Water Conservation

Brunelcare is committed to reducing its carbon footprint through partnerships with residents, staff, and suppliers. All residents of Brunelcare properties are encouraged to switch off unnecessary lights, heaters, and other electric appliances. Residents are also asked to report dripping taps and shower heads and look out for water wastage.

Fire Alarms and Smoke Detectors

Please also see pages 22 and 23

Residents should take all necessary precautions to ensure they do not pose a risk of fire in the building and be vigilant

about naked flames such as cigarettes and candles. Care should also be taken to prevent the occurrence of unnecessary fire alarms caused by burning toast and leaving grill pans unattended.

If a fire alarm does sound in the building at any time, you should follow your site's fire safety procedure.

Bottled Gas

You are prohibited from storing bottled gas and paraffin appliances in your home and to do so would be breaching the conditions of your Tenancy Agreement.

Hoarding

Brunelcare requests that you do not have an excessive amount of clutter in your property, which may result in fire, structural damage, disease, injury, and infection.

Pets

Written permission must be obtained from Brunelcare before keeping a pet under the conditions of your Tenancy or Lease Agreement. You will not normally be given permission to keep a pet in your home. If you require a medical or support animal (for example, a guide dog) we will consider requests on a case-by-case basis. All residents will be held responsible for the behaviour of their pets or the pets of visitors.

Tenants must ensure that pets do not cause nuisance to neighbours, tenants, or visitors. If you are away from the property for a period of time, e.g., on holiday, during a hospital stay, etc., you should make arrangements for the care of the pet.

Dogs should be kept on a lead at all times, particularly in communal areas such as gardens and corridors of the scheme. In the interest of hygiene, pets are not allowed on communal furniture, and owners must ensure any fouling is removed from the grounds.

Wildlife

We understand the enjoyment that feeding wildlife can bring and ask that this is done with due care and consideration. You should always feed wildlife in a way which does not create nuisance or vermin problems in your area. Residents must not use domestic food waste to feed the birds.

If feeding wildlife, only feed small amounts in a proper feeder and remove uneaten food in the evening.

Parking

Parking spaces are available in the majority of our housing schemes. However, the number of spaces may be limited and cannot be allocated to individual residents.

Commercial vehicles, caravans, untaxed vehicles and vehicles in an unroadworthy condition are prohibited under the Conditions of Tenancy.

In areas where we have provided disabled parking spaces, we request that permits be displayed.

Bins and Collections

Bristol City Council (BCC) is responsible for the provision of bins. In communal blocks where individual bins are provided, BCC will also collect the bins.

Refuse areas are provided in communal blocks, and your cooperation is required to keep them tidy at all times.

Large items can be moved by arrangement with BCC and should not be left about the property / grounds.

Medical refuse must be disposed of safely at all times in accordance with health and safety regulations on safe disposal.

BCC will be able to provide you with information on how often collections occur on your site / development.

Guest Rooms

Guest rooms are for the use of family and friends of Brunelcare tenants and are charged per night. Some of guest rooms are en-suite, and others will have neighbouring bathroom / shower facilities.

Continuous use of the Guest Room by the same guest(s) should normally be restricted to a maximum of 14 days.

Guest rooms are used on the understanding that the guest may be asked to vacate at short notice in an emergency, such as an ill tenant who requires friends or family to stay overnight.

Please speak with a member of the Housing Team to check availability and current charge.





Repairs and Maintenance

Getting repairs done

During your tenancy, the property will need repairs and maintenance to ensure it remains in good condition. This is a shared responsibility between you, as the tenant, and us, as your landlord. Your tenancy agreement will detail this.

Your responsibilities

It is a tenancy condition that you must let us know if any repair work is needed. This could be routine repairs such as leaks, blocked drains, electrical faults, or serious defects that could affect the safety, security, or structure of the property.

You must keep the property safe, in good condition and free from rubbish. If any item is damaged through misuse, neglect, carelessness, vandalism or accidental damage, you must make sure it is replaced or repaired safely.

Leaseholders

Brunelcare manages a number of leasehold properties, including shared ownership. The specific repair responsibility for each of these properties is contained in the lease agreement. Mainly, Brunelcare retains repair responsibilities for the structure of the building, communal areas, and any communal systems and installations within the property. The leaseholder is generally responsible for maintaining the interior of their property. However, it is important that the specific detail of each property is ascertained from the lease agreement. Before any repair or maintenance work is carried out on a leasehold property, consideration should be given to the anticipated total cost of the work, and whether consultation is required before the work can be undertaken.



Your responsibilities

You are also responsible for minor items of repair, maintenance and decoration. These include:

| General | Brunelcare | Tenant |
|--|------------|--------|
| Report all repairs in good time | | ✓ |
| Keep your home tidy and in good condition | | ✓ |
| Replace lost keys | | ✓ |
| Make sure your home is adequately heated and ventilated to improve air quality and reduce the risk of condensation and mould | | ✓ |
| Investigate and resolve damp, mould and condensation issues | ✓ | |
| Repair any damage caused by yourself, family or guests | | ✓ |
| Cleaning extractor fans, cooker hoods and descale shower heads | | ✓ |
| Contents insurance | | ✓ |
| Building insurance | ✓ | |
| TV and internet subscriptions | | ✓ |
| Your personal garden area | | ✓ |
| Minor and major adaptations following assessment | ✓ | |

| External and Communal | Brunelcare | Tenant |
|--|------------|--------|
| Brunelcare are responsible for all communal and external repairs | ✓ | |



| Internal | Brunelcare | Tenant |
|--|------------|--------|
| Soft furnishings, carpets, other flooring, curtains and poles | | ✓ |
| Non slip flooring in wet areas (kitchen and bathroom) | ✓ | |
| All internal decorations | | ✓ |
| Shelves, hooks and rails | | ✓ |
| Pests in your home such as fleas, ants, wasps nests (Not bees nests), flies, and moths | ✓ | ✓ |
| Plastering to walls and ceilings | ✓ | |
| Repair small cracks in ceilings or walls not exceeding 0.5 cm width | | ✓ |
| Loft area and hatch | ✓ | |

| Electrical | Brunelcare | Tenant |
|---|------------|--------|
| Light bulbs (except enclosed bulkhead or fluorescent style) | | ✓ |
| Light fittings | ✓ | |
| Smoke detectors | ✓ | |
| Repairs and replacement extractor fans | ✓ | |
| Electrical switches and sockets | ✓ | |
| Internal wiring and consumer units | ✓ | |
| Batteries in battery operated fittings, such as smoke detectors and doorbells | | ✓ |
| Reset trip switches | | ✓ |
| Replace light pull cords | | ✓ |
| Replace oven hood filters | | ✓ |
| Repairing and replacing white goods (included gifted items) | | ✓ |

| Plumbing | Brunelcare | Tenant |
|--|------------|--------|
| Bath panels | ✓ | |
| Baths, basins, sinks and taps | ✓ | |
| Replace plugs and chains to baths, basins and sinks | | ✓ |
| Your own bathroom or kitchen fittings | | ✓ |
| Repair and renew toilet seat and shower curtain where required | | ✓ |
| Showers, over bath and level access | ✓ | |
| Make initial attempt to clear blocked waste pipes and WCs | | ✓ |
| Blocked drains/bath/sinks which have been caused by damage, neglect or carelessness. | ✓ | |
| Leaks | ✓ | |
| Tiling | ✓ | |
| Toilets and cisterns | ✓ | |



| Carpentry | Brunelcare | Tenant |
|---|------------|--------|
| Skirting boards | ✓ | |
| Stairs and bannisters | ✓ | |
| Floorboards | ✓ | |
| Tighten loose screws in doors, cabinetry, windows and kitchen units | | ✓ |
| External and internal doors repairs to frames, side panels, seals, locks, handles etc | ✓ | |
| Windows and skylights, repairs and glazing | ✓ | |
| Timber batons to affix a curtain pole to | ✓ | |
| Kitchen units | ✓ | |
| Replace glass as a result of intentional damage | | ✓ |
| Worktops (rechargeable if damaged) | ✓ | |
| Adjusting doors when your own carpets and floor coverings have been laid | | ✓ |
| Your own cabinets in bathroom or kitchen | | ✓ |

| Heating and Hot Water | Brunelcare | Tenant |
|--|------------|--------|
| Brunelcare are responsible for all heating and hot water repairs | ✓ | |



Reporting a Repair

You can report a repair using the following methods:

- **Call: 0117 914 4527** Monday - Friday, 8.30am - 4.30pm and press Option 1
- **Email: info@brunelcare.org.uk**
- **Alertacall:** report a repair via your device
- **In-person:** by visiting one of our site offices or Brunelcare's Head Office.
- **Visit our website:** www.brunelcare.org.uk
- **Write to us:** Head Office, Saffron Gardens, Prospect Place, Whitehall, Bristol BS5 9FF

Our repairs service is delivered through a combination of our in-house labour team and specialist contractors. We aim to tell you when someone will attend your home to carry out a repair, and who that will be wherever possible.

- ✓ Breaches of security to outside doors and windows
- ✓ Gas leak
- ✓ Failure of a lift

Emergency Out of Hours Repairs

The emergency out-of-hours service operates outside of our office hours. Our office hours are:

**Monday - Friday
8.30 am - 4.30 pm.**

Emergency Out of Hours Repairs are defined as;

- (a) Any fault that could lead to the death or injury of occupants, staff, visitors or the public.
- (b) Faults likely to cause extensive damage to a building and its contents.
- (c) Faults that are likely to lead to a contravention of Health and Safety regulations and could result in a danger to life and limb.

Emergency Repairs

Emergency repairs are required when there is a risk to life, a real threat of serious injury or damage to property.

When we attend an emergency repair, the situation will be made safe within 24 hours, and then arrange a further appointment for any additional work that is needed.

An emergency could include:

- ✓ No water
- ✓ Flooding
- ✓ Blocked drains
- ✓ No heating or hot water (31 October to 1 May)
- ✓ Fault with electricity supply, or unsafe electricity fittings



Outside of normal office hours, either notify our designated call centre or phone the out-of-hours telephone number. If a call is received which constitutes an emergency repair, a suitably trained operative or contractor will be dispatched to attend the repair.

In some situations, it may only be possible to attend and make the situation safe and secure pending further attendance and full completion of the repair during normal working hours.

Where a call is received that does not meet the criteria for an out-of-hours emergency visit, tenants will be advised that they will be contacted on the next working day so that a daytime repair can be logged and an appointment agreed upon.

Urgent Repairs

We aim to complete urgent repairs within up to 5 working days. These are repairs where the situation is causing discomfort, inconvenience or nuisance to the occupants or a third party and are likely to lead to further deterioration of the property if the problem persists.

Urgent Repairs could include:

- ✓ A follow up from an emergency repair
- ✓ A minor water leak
- ✓ A light not working in a communal staircase
- ✓ Loss of heating or hot water outside of the priority period.

Routine Repairs

We aim to complete routine repairs within up to 20 working days. Routine repairs are for defects that can be deferred without causing serious discomfort, nuisance or inconvenience to the occupants or third parties or long-term deterioration of the building.

Routine repairs could include:

- ✓ Repairs to doors, floors and windows
- ✓ Repairs to external walls, fences and paths
- ✓ Repairs to kitchen fittings
- ✓ Repairs to plasterwork
- ✓ Dripping/leaking taps or shower units
- ✓ Other minor plumbing repairs
- ✓ Repairs to tiling

Repairs by Appointment

For all repairs other than emergency and urgent repairs, an appointment that meets the needs of the tenant will be agreed. The tenant will be offered a suitable, convenient appointment during our office hours on Monday to Friday between 8:30 am – 4:30 pm. You will be given either a morning or afternoon timeslot.

Where you have given us permission to enter, we will still inform you when we are attending but will access your property independently.

Rechargeable Repairs

Brunelcare will actively seek to recover the cost of any repair that is not its responsibility. In these circumstances, the rechargeable repairs policy will be referred to, and payment will be expected in advance of the work being carried out.

Wilful neglect or deliberate action on the part of the tenants / leaseholders, household members, or their visitors could include vandalism, intentional damage, or attempting to carry out a repair or make an alteration that then requires professional attention and causes damage.

Wilful neglect and deliberate action also include failing to report an obvious problem, which leads to more extensive damage. An example of this could be failing to report a leaking pipe, which results in electrical failure or a ceiling collapsing due to persistent water damage.

Planned Works and Adaptations

Planned works

(timescales to be determined with each individual project)

Brunelcare has a programme of works as part of our continued investment into our properties. Timescales for these works will depend on the frequency of the task; e.g., oiling communal doors and windows will be an annual activity.

Repairs will be prioritised solely based on their nature, although the Repairs Team Leader or Asset Manager may amend the priority based on an individual's circumstances. Customers will be advised of the priority and timescales when the repair is requested.

Aids and Adaptations

You may find it becomes harder to manage and some tasks become more difficult over time if your needs change. Brunelcare can help make your home more comfortable to live in by making appropriate changes or adding adaptations.

Minor adaptations

Minor adaptations are classed as any low-cost adaptation work. Such adaptation work can usually be carried out on receipt of a referral from a Brunelcare Trusted Assessor. This may include;

- ✓ Lever taps
- ✓ Grab Rails
- ✓ Additional Lighting
- ✓ Half steps
- ✓ Small Ramps

Major adaptations

These would require the application of a Disabled Facilities Grant, and any proposed work would require the involvement and sign-off of a surveyor:

- ✓ Level access showers
- ✓ Major structural conversions
- ✓ Stairlifts
- ✓ Kitchen Alteration
- ✓ Ramped access for Wheelchair user
- ✓ Ceiling tracks and hoists

Enquiries for adaptations to the home will require the completion of a referral form and an assessment.

Please contact Customer Service team

Tel: **0117 914 4527** and press Option 1

Email: **info@brunelcare.org.uk**

Office hours: **Mon to Fri - 8.30 to 4.30pm**

Handyperson service at Extra Care Housing (ECH) sites

Brunelcare has a team of handy people who work across the extra care and care sites. The service is designed to assist the tenants with DIY tasks and minor repairs. They will also contribute to the general upkeep and maintenance of the internal and external communal spaces. Requests for this service are managed through the individual site teams.





Health and Safety

Fire safety

We take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure we regularly inspect and maintain all fire safety systems. This includes carrying out a suitable and sufficient Fire Risk Assessment for all buildings.

If you have a fire in your home:

- **A working smoke alarm will alert you to the fire.** If you have any impairment that may affect your ability to hear or respond to an audible alarm, you should inform your Housing Manager.
- **Don't open doors** looking for the source of the fire.
- **Alert everyone else inside and leave the flat,** closing the front door behind you.
- **Don't try to save personal items.** Your life is more important.
- **Use only designated escape routes, not lifts.** If you have mobility problems that may affect your use of the stairs, you should inform your Housing Manager.
- Once you are out of the building and in a safe location, **dial 999 and ask for the fire service.**
- **Never go back into the building** until you have been told it is safe to do so.

Know your evacuation policy

You need to know your evacuation policy within your site. 'Fire action' notices throughout the building explain what to do if you hear the fire alarm. If you can't see this or have any doubts about what it says, you can email or speak to your Housing Manager.

'Delayed evacuation' Policy

- Occupants of a flat that's on fire must evacuate the premises and summon the fire service by dialling 999.
- If a fire occurs in a communal area, anyone in that area should leave the building and call 999 to summon the fire service.
- Everyone else in the building is safe to 'delay evacuation'. They should remain in their flats unless they are affected by smoke or told to leave by the fire service. Tenants in surrounding flats may wish to evacuate the premises in any case and, of course, would not be prevented from doing so.

'Immediate Evacuation' policy

Some blocks of flats do not or cannot follow the 'delayed evacuation' policy.

In these buildings, a 'Immediate Evacuation' or 'simultaneous evacuation' policy is put in place. This means you must safely exit the building when the alarm is raised. The building's fire notices advise you what to do.

If you have to move through smoke, keep as close to the floor as possible where the air will be clearer.

Our fire safety systems

Fire alarms

These include the fire alarm detectors that are situated within your flat and in some common areas. They are designed to give early warning in the event of fire.

Dry and wet risers

In certain high rise buildings, these allow firefighters to pump water to the higher floors without running lots of hoses through stairwells.

Compartmentation and fire doors

Flats in purpose-built blocks have fire-restricting walls, floors, and ceilings, each creating a compartment to prevent the spread of fire. These have 30- or 60-minute fire doors, which are constructed to resist fire and contain it within the flat where it started, preventing further spread.

Fire doors create a barrier from fire and toxic cold smoke and prevent it from travelling around a building. This means they keep damage caused by smoke restricted to a small area allowing time for safe evacuation, stay-put and safe access for emergency services.

In a block of flats, you will find fire and smoke control doors on the stairwells, the corridors, and the flats' front doors. You will also see them protecting areas where there's a risk of combustion, such as bin storage or mains electricity service cupboards. Sometimes you will find fire doors inside flats, but this depends on the specific design and layout of the individual flat.

Your property's front door is an important fire door as it faces onto your critical means of escape. It is therefore vital that it works properly when a fire breaks out. You should check the door regularly to make sure:

- ✓ The self-closing device has not been tampered with
- ✓ Flat entrance doors are always fully closed when not in use
- ✓ Smoke seals are properly fitted
- ✓ The door is free from damage

You must not make any alterations to the door.

You should report any fire door damage to your Housing Manager.

Avon Fire and Rescue Service also offers a 'home fire safety visit'. This is a free service, which you can request on their website: www.avonfire.gov.uk/safety/home/home-fire-safety/request-a-visit/



A reporting culture

Our property compliance team continues to be proactive in ensuring that fire safety systems are maintained, inspected and repaired. The team also relies on you to report issues and encourages a 'reporting culture' among our residents.

If you witness damage to fire doors, obstructions to escape routes, faults on the fire alarm panels, or any issues regarding fire safety, you must report them without delay to info@brunelcare.org.uk. You can also discuss any issues with your Housing Manager, who will pass on the message.



Water hygiene and water safety

A clean water supply is vital to your health and well-being, and you need to know how to prevent problems in your home.

Most water systems contain bacteria and other organisms. If these are allowed to multiply, they can cause people to become ill. The most common and high-risk bacterium is Legionella.

What is Legionella?

Legionella is a bacterium that can cause pneumonia-like illnesses, including 'legionnaire's disease', which is a form of pneumonia. Legionella cannot be caught by drinking contaminated water. To be harmful, the bacterium needs to be inhaled through small, unseen droplets of water suspended in the air.

How to reduce risk

The risk of Legionella is small. However, you should take the following actions in your home:

- ✓ Run your shower or bath continuously for a minimum of five minutes at least once a week. This may already happen when someone is bathing, but if you mostly use one in either the bath or shower, remember to run the other, which is used less often.
- ✓ Keep your water cistern covered, insulated, clean and free of debris.
- ✓ Maintain hot water storage temperatures at a minimum of 60 degrees. However, although hotter water can control Legionella growth, it also increases the risk of burns and scalds. Please take care.

- ✓ Shower heads and taps should be clear of excessive lime scale and cleaned and descaled regularly.
- ✓ Ensure any taps which are not normally used are flushed regularly (for example, outside taps).
- ✓ External garden hoses should be disconnected from the tap and drained when not in use for over a week, and stored in a cool place. When used for the first time after being stored away, the house should be flushed through without producing aerosol (fine breathable water droplets). You do this by removing the hose spray attachment.

Asbestos

You can find out what asbestos is and why it is dangerous at the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) website:
www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/



We undertake asbestos refurbishment surveys of our properties when we carry out improvement works or upgrade empty properties. The results are entered into our asbestos register. We have also surveyed all of our properties to find out which are most likely to have asbestos.

Most instances of asbestos products in our housing stock are of low risk and are managed accordingly.

There is no danger unless an asbestos product is disturbed. If you believe asbestos-containing materials may be in your building, you should:

- ✓ inspect it regularly, looking for signs of wear and tear. If you see any deterioration, you should let us know.
- ✓ get our permission to make changes or adaptations that involve the fabric or structure of the building
- ✓ not drill, cut, scrape or sand the material, or disturb it in any way

If you do not follow these guidelines, you put yourself, your family, and anyone carrying out work at risk.

If you are worried about asbestos in your home, or if you would like us to carry out a survey before you do any work, contact your housing manager.

Brunelcare's responsibilities

If we know there is asbestos-containing material in your home, we will ensure it is maintained in safe condition and arrange for its removal.

Do not try to remove any asbestos-containing material yourself. Only licenced contractors are allowed to remove and dispose of most types of asbestos.

Reporting accidents, incidents or dangerous situations

Residents must promptly report any concern or potential hazards to Brunelcare as soon as they know of any issue. This gives Brunelcare time to investigate and arrange for any defect to be repaired. Without this notification, Brunelcare might not become aware of an issue until it has caused an injury.

Should an accident happen that results in injury or damage to property or equipment, this must be reported to the Customer Service team, who will then, if necessary, forward the information to the relevant housing team members.

If there is an incident that results in a serious injury or damage to equipment, the tenant services team will raise the necessary incident/accident form and forward it to the health and Safety Team who will if necessary investigate the incident/accident.

Decent Homes

As your landlord we have a responsibility to make sure your home is safe, warm and comfortable.

The government sets a quality standard that all social-rented homes must meet. This is called the Decent Homes Standard.

In summary the Decent Homes Standard says:

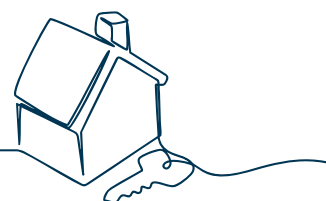
- ✓ Your home must meet the current statutory minimum standard for housing
- ✓ Your home must have reasonably modern facilities and services
- ✓ Your home must provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort

More information including the criteria on Decent Homes Standard is set out on our website.

How do we check that your home is meeting these standards?

To make sure we're investing in, and improving, our properties at the right time, we collect data on our properties through condition surveys and energy efficiency surveys which produce energy performance certificates (EPCs).

If you feel your home does not meet the Decent Homes Standard, please contact us.





Staffing and Role Profiles

Housing Team

We have a team of staff dedicated to supporting you and helping you stay happy and safe in your home.

HEAD OF HOUSING:

Head of the Housing Team (North and South) and Customer Services Team.

HOUSING TEAM MANAGERS (1 NORTH AND 1 SOUTH):

They are responsible for managing the housing teams in each geographical area.

INCOME OFFICERS:

Income Officers help with rent and service charge issues or queries, Housing Benefits or Universal Credit claims, queries about setting up direct debits, arranging payment plans and recovering any tenancy-related debts.

TENANCY OFFICERS:

Help with all tenancy-related matters, including tenancy agreement queries, dealing with anti-social behaviour and/or neighbour disputes, any breach of the tenancy agreement, end of tenancy matters, deeds of assignment and succession.

LETTINGS AND ALLOCATIONS OFFICERS:

Are responsible for advertising and letting empty or available properties. They are also responsible for mutual exchanges, internal transfers, and addressing any queries relating to moves within or outside of Brunelcare.

ESTATE SERVICES OFFICERS:

Generally, the Estate Services Officer is your first point of contact. They can help with monitoring the quality of service chargeable contractors, ensuring your details are up to date, completing site inspections, arranging laundry slots and booking guest rooms or communal lounges.

CUSTOMER SERVICES TEAM:

Helps tenants with any queries they may have and will signpost you to the correct person or service. They can take rent and service charge payments, log complaints, concerns, and compliments, and arrange all the Quarterly Site Meetings.

EXTRA CARE HOUSING (ECH) OFFICER:

Responsible for dealing with all housing and Tenancy issues (tenancy, income and allocations) at all three of our Extra Care Housing sites (ABC Centre, Colliers Gardens, Waverley Gardens).



How to Get Involved

We are committed to ensuring that you are involved in shaping the services that we provide, how we deliver them and the decisions we make.

Brunelcare's Together with Customers Charter underpins our ambition to put our customers at the heart of what we do. The Charter has six main commitments:

- ✓ Relationships
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Voice and influence
- ✓ Accountability
- ✓ Quality
- ✓ When things go wrong.

We offer a wide range of ways for you to get involved in our services, including joining one of our resident engagement groups, helping review policies and key documents, taking part in focus groups looking at a particular issue or project, and helping us to select contractors and feedback on the performance of key contracts.

Engagement Groups

Residents First Group: This group, first launched in 2023, is open to all sheltered and extra care housing residents. The group meets regularly and provides feedback on key services, as well as scrutinising some of our key performance measures.

Want to Get Involved?

We want to engage with more residents and get more people involved in groups. For more information, please visit our website:

For more information about either of these groups, please visit our website:

www.brunelcare.org.uk/about-us/togetherwith-tenants or email together@brunelcare.org.uk

Feedback and Surveys

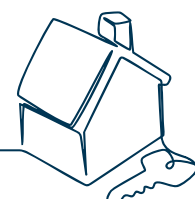
Gathering feedback from our tenants is really important to Brunelcare, and we use that information from you to improve our services. This can happen in a number of ways, including the complaints, compliments and feedback processes detailed in Section 10.

We also carry out a Customer Satisfaction Survey annually, working with an independent market research company to offer all residents the chance to have their say. Any information you provide will be treated in confidence and will only be seen by the independent company carrying out the research on Brunelcare's behalf, unless you provide explicit consent for us to see your responses.

The Regulator of Social Housing requires us to conduct the survey each year, and we are measured against the Regulator's Tenant Satisfaction Measures. Each year, we publish our results so that tenants can see how we have performed and any areas where we might want to make improvements.

We will let you know when the Customer Satisfaction Survey is approaching and can offer residents any support they may need to complete it - for example, if you need a questionnaire with a larger font or in a different language.

We also carry out other ad-hoc surveys, including via Alertacall, offering you another way to have your say on our services. We may ask you to take part in a transactional survey if you have had a repair carried out or reported a case of antisocial behaviour for example.





Feedback and Complaints

Gathering feedback from you, our tenants, is really important to Brunelcare, and we use that information to improve our services. This can happen in a number of ways, including through the processes below, and we welcome all feedback as a gift.

Compliments

It is great to hear when we are getting things right and very motivating for staff to receive positive feedback for their hard work. We ensure all compliments are passed on to colleagues directly.

Email any compliments to **feedback@brunelcare.org.uk** or tell a Brunelcare staff member in person.

Service Requests

If you are experiencing a day-to-day problem which could be resolved quickly (within 48-hours), contact our Customer Services team and they will forward your request to the relevant staff member or team

- Call **0117 914 4257**
Monday to Friday, 8.30 am to 4.30 pm
- Email: **info@brunelcare.org.uk**

If you are not happy with our reply or we cannot resolve the issue at this point, we can begin our complaints process. You can start a complaint at any time.

Making a Complaint

Here are some examples of what you can complain about:

- ✓ If we fail to provide a service
- ✓ If you are not happy with the standard of our service
- ✓ If we don't do things the way we said we would
- ✓ Our attitude or the way we treat you

How to Make a Complaint

You can contact the Complaints Officer in a number of ways:

Call **0117 914 4214**

Email: **complaints@brunelcare.org.uk**

Use the form on our website:
brunelcare.org.uk/contact-us/make-a-complaint



Scan
me

Write to: Complaints, Brunelcare,
Saffron Gardens, Prospect Place,
Whitehall, Bristol, BS5 9FF

Send us a direct message via social media

Our Complaints Procedure

Stage 1

(10 working days)

As soon as the matter is logged as a complaint, we will do the following.

- ✓ The Complaints Officer will send you a written acknowledgement letter within five working days
- ✓ Your complaint will then be investigated by a manager within the organisation who has the expertise and authority to resolve the problem where possible.
- ✓ Aim to respond to your complaint within 10 working days of you receiving the acknowledgement letter. The investigation may take longer than 10 days in some cases and the Complaints Officer will let you know if this is the case.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome or the way your complaint has been investigated, you can escalate your complaint to stage 2.

Stage 2

(20 working days)

- ✓ The Complaints Officer will support you and will send you a written acknowledgement letter within five working days of escalation.
- ✓ Your complaint will then be investigated by a more Senior Manager within the organisation who is independent of the Stage 1 complaint and will approach it with fresh eyes.
- ✓ Aim to respond to your complaint within 20 working days of the acknowledgement letter. The investigation may take longer than 20 days in some cases and the Complaints Officer will let you know if this is the case.

If you do not agree with the response you get from our Stage 2 investigation, then you can ask the Housing Ombudsman to look at your case.

The Housing Ombudsman

Please note that you can contact the Housing Ombudsman at any point during the complaint process. It cannot investigate while your complaint is going through our internal complaints procedure, but it can provide impartial advice and support.

Contact:

Email:
info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Call: **0300 111 3000**

Visit the website:
www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk



Write to:
Housing Ombudsman Service,
PO Box 1484, Unit D,
Preston, PR2 0ET





Being a good neighbour

You should be able to enjoy life in your home. Good neighbours will tolerate the different lifestyles of people living near them as long as they don't cause a nuisance. Good neighbours will also understand the impact their behaviour may have on their neighbours and act accordingly.

We also expect you to take responsibility for your own behaviour and the behaviour of your children and visitors. We ask you to treat your neighbours and your neighbourhood with respect.

If you have problems with your neighbours, try to resolve them in a friendly and polite way yourself in the first instance. If you can't resolve your problem, you can ask Brunelcare for help.

Noise Nuisance

Please respect your neighbours by refraining from making too much noise. This includes playing loud music, having your TV on loud and slamming doors.

Please show consideration for your neighbours in adjoining flats

Different tenants will have different lifestyles. For example, some people work shift patterns, others are at home during the day, some are younger than others. Where this is the case, please try and respect / be respectful. We cannot stop 'normal' day-to-day living noises, such as footsteps and housework.

Keeping your environment clean

- ✓ Put your rubbish into the designated bins.
- ✓ Spitting is unhygienic and unsightly, so please do not spit in and around communal areas, including the lift.

- ✓ Clean up any litter or other mess made by you, your family or visitors straight away.
- ✓ Park considerately so that you don't block anyone's access, and always display your Blue Badge when using a disabled parking space.
- ✓ It is against the law to smoke in all communal parts of the building.
- ✓ Be responsible for your visitors – do not let children play in halls, lobbies, corridors or stairways.
- ✓ No ball games or sports, skating or skateboarding, bike or scooter riding in communal areas.
- ✓ Never leave, store or dump anything in shared areas, including furniture, old fridges or other appliances, bikes, mobility scooters, shoe/shoe racks prams and pushchairs – remember, we have a legal duty to keep shared areas clear as these things can cause a fire hazard or stop you exiting the property quickly if there is a fire.
- ✓ If communal areas are cluttered, we will dispose of the items and charge you for the cost after giving you a warning.

Tenancy Fraud

Tenancy fraud is when a resident provides false information to gain a property, sublets the property to someone else or does not use their home as their only or main home. If you have concerns that your neighbour has abandoned their property, or is letting the property to someone else instead of them, please contact us so we can discuss this with you.

Anti-social behaviour

The following list gives examples of what is classed as anti-social behaviour:

- ✓ Violence or threats of violence.
- ✓ Harassment (repeatedly to cause upset).
- ✓ Hate crime and hate incidents.
- ✓ Verbal abuse and offensive behaviour.
- ✓ Unreasonable and persistent noise.
- ✓ Graffiti and criminal damage.
- ✓ Drug/alcohol use that leads to alarm, harassment and distress to others.

What annoys one person may not annoy another, so sometimes incidents will not be classed as anti-social behaviour. Examples where we don't usually take action are:

- ✓ The sound of visiting children playing or a baby crying.
- ✓ Everyday living noises (e.g. flushing toilets or closing doors).
- ✓ Minor personal disputes and differences. Remember, noise nuisance (e.g. loud music, shouting or slamming doors) in flats affects all of the neighbours around you.

For the full anti-social behaviour policy please scan the QR code

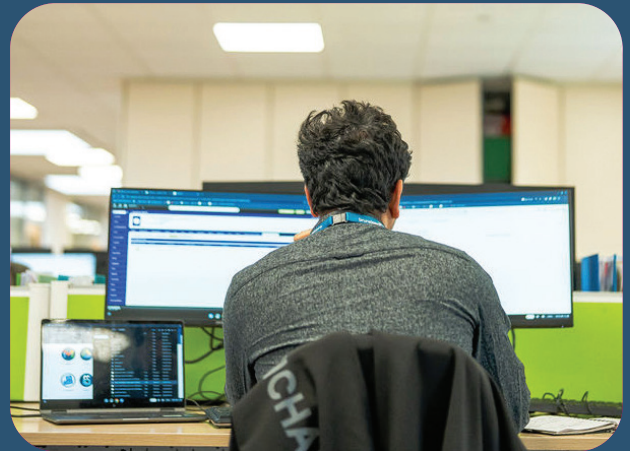


Scan
me

How to report anti-social behaviour

- ✓ **Call:** Customer Service Team on 0117 914 4257, Monday to Friday, 8.30 am to 4.30 pm and press Option 1
- ✓ **Email:** info@brunelcare.org.uk
- ✓ **In person:** Speak to a member of the Housing Team in person
- ✓ **Alertacall:** report it via your device

When making a report, please let us know:



- ✓ **What** happened? Provide us with a description of the incident.
- ✓ **Where** it happened? Was it at a specific address or can you describe the location?
- ✓ **When** it happened? What time was it and on what date?
- ✓ **Who** was responsible? Do you know their name and address? If not, can you describe them?
- ✓ **Why** it happened? Was it directly targeted at you? Or is it a problem that affects the whole community?
- ✓ **How** did it affect you?

If you make a report of anti-social behaviour, hate crime or domestic abuse, you will be contacted by a member of the Housing Team to agree what action can be taken to help resolve the matter.

Anti-social behaviour that involves criminal activity, violence or threatened violence should be reported first to the police. **If it is an emergency, phone 999, but if it is not an emergency situation, phone 101. You should then notify Brunelcare.**





Moving Home

We hope you will be very happy as a tenant of Brunelcare. However, we also recognise that as life changes you may wish to move on.

How to end your tenancy

If you wish to end your tenancy you must:

- ✓ give four weeks' written notice.
- ✓ Whether it is your tenancy, or you are legally acting on behalf of a tenant that has died, you must complete 'an End of Tenancy' form.

We recommend you seek advice when ending your tenancy. Please be aware that any tenant giving notice ends the whole tenancy (i.e. for everyone living at the property).

Succession

In the event of your death the tenancy may be inherited - we call this succession. We will determine if the succession can take place.

Housing Options

People want to move for lots of reasons. With a limited number of properties, we can't always offer you a change of home, but we will always aim to do our best to help you. Below are some of your options:

Homechoice Bristol

This is the main housing register for Bristol covering all local authority and housing association properties. You would need to apply directly to Bristol City Council to join.

Mutual Exchange

This is where you swap with a tenant of any other social housing landlord, however they would need to meet our age criteria of over 55 years. You can apply via Homeswapper, www.homeswapper.co.uk



Internal Transfer

This is an application for existing tenants to move into an alternative Brunelcare property.

Shared Ownership (Low Cost Home Ownership)

This is where you purchase a proportion of a property with a mortgage or savings and pay rent on the part you don't own, and service charges.

Leasehold

This is where you purchase a property outright with savings or with a mortgage. You will be required to pay service charges.

If you require further information, please visit our website for more information.

Managing your future

Every adult has the right to manage his or her own money and affairs. Sometimes, however, our ability to do this could decrease as we age. Whether this is caused by illness, disability, or an accident, there are a number of practical steps you can take to prepare for this.

A solicitor can help by encouraging you to get your affairs in order and make your wishes for the future known. This may involve anything from writing a will to choosing someone to take power of attorney (legal authority to act for you) over your financial affairs if this is necessary.

This can lighten the burden on relatives or carers who might otherwise find it difficult to make complicated decisions on your behalf.

Where there is not enough time to take these precautionary steps, or if a person is already 'incapacitated' (unable to handle their own financial affairs), it is usually the relatives of the person who need advice.

In these circumstances, there are several options available. One is to contact the Court of Protection, which can make arrangements for managing the person's financial affairs. A solicitor will tell you the best course of action in your case.

Power of Attorney (PoA)

A POA is a legal document which lets you appoint one or more people to help you make decisions or to make decisions on your behalf when your ability to manage your affairs decreases. There are 2 types of POA: one for Health and welfare; and another for Property and financial affairs. You can choose to have one or both. A solicitor can help you with the POA application if you do not feel confident to do it yourself.

Finding a solicitor

If you don't already have a solicitor, use the Find a Solicitor website: **www.solicitors.lawsociety.org.uk** to search for details of solicitors in your area.

Making a Will

Why you need a will

It's important to make sure that after you die, your assets and possessions (known as your estate) will go to the people and organisations (known as your beneficiaries) you choose, such as family members and charities you want to support.

Your estate includes your personal possessions, as well as assets such as:

- ✓ Property (in the UK or overseas)
- ✓ Savings and investments
- ✓ Insurance funds
- ✓ Pension funds

If you die without a valid will, it could be difficult for your family to sort out your affairs. Your estate will be shared according to the rules of intestacy.

Under the intestacy rules, only married partners, civil partners and certain close relatives can inherit your estate.

If you and your partner are not married or in a civil partnership, your partner won't have the right to inherit – even if you're living together.

You can make your will yourself, but you should only consider this if your will is straightforward. If you do make your own will, you should still get a solicitor to check it over.

Visit the Find a Solicitor website **www.solicitors.lawsociety.org.uk** and use the quick search option "Wills and probate" to find your nearest solicitor.





A-Z of useful contacts

SECTION 13

Police:

999

Police (non-emergency):

101

Gas leaks:

0800 111 999

Electricity problems:

0800 678 3105

A

Adaptations services

Disabled Adults: 0117 922 2700
www.bristol.gov.uk/caredirect

Adult Social Care

Care Direct: 0117 922 2700
www.bristol.gov.uk/adultcare

B

Bins and recycling

www.bristol.gov.uk/bins

Bristol Credit Union

0117 924 7309
www.bristolcreditunion.org

Bus passes, disabled and tenants' parking permits

Apply for a blue badge, disabled parking bay, travelcard enquiries or a parking permit.
www.bristol.gov.uk/bluebadges

C

Citizens Advice Bureau (Bristol)

0844 499 4718

D

Dog wardens

www.bristol.gov.uk/dogs
Domestic violence and abuse
www.bristol.gov.uk/domesticviolence

E

Electric

Western Power - www.westernpower.co.uk
Fire safety advice

Avon Fire and Rescue

0800 1693 999
www.avonfire.gov.uk

G

Gas safety

National Grid: safety advice if you smell leaking gas
0800 111 999

H

Handyperson service

WE Care and Repair handyperson service
0300 323 0700
www.wecr.org.uk

HomeChoice Bristol

Enquiries and appointments
www.bristol.gov.uk/homechoice

Housing and council tax benefit

Enquiries and appointments
www.bristol.gov.uk/benefits
Email: benefits.enquiry@bristol.gov.uk

L

Learning and Training

Community Learning – find out about free courses to improve your confidence and skills for work www.bristolesl.org/community-learning

Adult Learning

A wide range of personal development courses and subjects
www.bristolcourses.com

Employment Support

Local services to find and apply for a job
www.bristolesl.com/employment-support

Libraries

www.bristol.gov.uk/library

Loan sharks

This is a 24 hour, 365 day helpline for victims.
reportaloanshark@stoploansharks.gov.uk

Local information

Enter your postcode to find services local to you www.bristol.gov.uk/myneighbourhood
Website www.bristol.gov.uk/councilhousing

M

Money matters

Benefits changes – information and sources of advice www.bristol.gov.uk/welfarereform

Talking Money

(Formerly Bristol Debt Advice Centre)
- advice to manage debt, income and expenditure www.talkingmoney.org.uk

For a directory of local advice agencies

www.moneyadvicewest.org.uk

N

Noise pollution

www.bristol.gov.uk/noises

P

Police

www.avonandsomerset.police.uk
Emergencies: 999
Non-emergencies: 101

R

Register office

Replacement certificates, register a birth, death, marriage or civil partnership
www.bristol.gov.uk/registeroffice

S

Streets

Abandoned vehicles, graffiti and litter -
www.bristol.gov.uk/report-a-street-issue

Faulty street or traffic lights and potholes

www.bristol.gov.uk/streets-travel/roadmaintenance

Roadworks and closures

www.bristol.gov.uk/roadworks

Report road/pavement maintenance issues

www.bristol.gov.uk/transportandstreets

Support for older people

If you or someone you care for needs help and support to remain living at home or staying active

www.wellaware.org.uk / 0808 808 5252

If you're already a carer find out about possible help at www.bristol.gov.uk/carers

T

Transfers

www.homechoicebristol.co.uk

V

Voting

Ensure you are registered to vote at your current address. You can register at:
www.gov.uk/register-to-vote
Email: electoral.services@bristol.gov.uk

W

Waste disposal

Recycling and waste collections (e.g. wheelie bins, mini recycling centres and bulky items)
www.bristol.gov.uk/waste



How to Contact Us

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Whitehall
Bristol
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Email: info@brunelcare.org.uk

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