



town & city

management limited

Welcome to the Autumn/Winter 2010 newsletter.

Now that the nights are drawing in and the beautiful colours of Autumn are beginning to fade we turn our thoughts to the twinkling lights of Christmas and the coming Winter. Following the significant snow falls of early 2010 we are including an article published by ARMA on snow and ice clearance which we hope will clarify the law regarding clearing snow in public and communal places around your homes. It would also be helpful to us if you would let our Maintenance Department know if you spot any lights out either in grounds or communal hallways and staircases. They can be reached by phone, fax or email or go the Existing Leaseholders section on our website www.townandcity.com to report any maintenance issue.



Snow and Ice

As promised the government has published advice to the public about clearing snow and ice.

“Last winter many people helped keep pavements and public spaces around their homes clear of snow. However, many people were put off doing so because of fears of being sued. Read on for advice on your rights and responsibilities when clearing snow and ice from public areas.

The law on clearing snow and ice from public spaces

There is no law stopping you from clearing snow and ice on the pavement outside your property, pathways to your property or public spaces.

If an accident did happen, it's highly unlikely that you would be sued as long as you:

- are careful
- use common sense to make sure that you don't make the pavement or pathway clearly more dangerous than before

People using areas affected by snow and ice also have responsibility to be careful themselves.

Tips and advice on clearing snow and ice:

- start early - it's much easier to clear fresh, loose snow compared to compacted ice that has been compressed by people walking on it
- don't use hot water - this will melt the snow, but may replace it with black ice, increasing the risk of injury
- be a good neighbour - some people may be unable to clear snow and ice on paths from their property
- if shovelling snow, think where you are going to put it so that it doesn't block people's paths or drainage channels
- make a pathway down the middle of the area to be cleared first, so you have a clear surface to walk on
- spreading some salt on the area you have cleared will help stop ice forming - table salt or dishwasher salt will work, but avoid spreading on plants or grass as they may be damaged by it
- pay particular care and attention to steps and steep gradients
- use the sun to your advantage - removing the top layer of snow will allow the sun to melt any ice beneath; however you will need to cover any ice with salt to stop it refreezing overnight
- if there's no salt available, sand or ash are good alternatives.”

This advice can be found on the directgov website go to: http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/NI1/Newsroom/DG_191868



Condensation



WHAT IS CONDENSATION?

Condensation is a situation where moisture is deposited on cooler surfaces, such as external walls of a building and frequently gives rise to the growth of mould (especially where sustained high humidity is present). Such organisms need pure water - as is produced by condensation - to sustain their life.

WHAT CAUSES CONDENSATION?

Condensation can occur naturally as a result of changes in temperature or artificially by the actions of people themselves.

Air naturally contains water vapour (often referred to as humidity) in varying quantities and its capacity to do so is related to its temperature - warm air holds more moisture than cold air.

In Britain, condensation in flats and houses is often a winter problem particularly where warm moist air is generated in living areas and then penetrates to the colder parts of the building. However it does not have to be, for as long as the air is cooled sufficiently below its Dew Point by the colder surface it comes into contact with, moisture will be released.

In order to have condensation, moisture must be present in the air and this can come from a number of sources within a house. Water vapour is produced in relatively large quantities from normal day to day activities - a 5 person household puts about 10 kg of water into the air every day (without taking into account any heating) -

- breathing (asleep) 0.3 kg
- breathing (awake) 0.85 kg
- cooking 3 kg
- personal washing 1.0 kg
- washing and drying clothes 5.5 kg
- heating - especially paraffin and flueless gas heaters.

For every litre of paraffin burnt over one litre of moisture vaporises into air. Every carbon fuel produces some amount of water from combustion. (1 kg of water equates to about 1 litre)

Moisture can also be drawn from the structure of the building into the internal air; from below the floor or through the walls/ceilings. Buildings can often lack or have insufficient airbricks to allow adequate ventilation of the accommodation and structure.

The effect of moisture "generation" is made worse by keeping the moist air in the property. Usually in certain areas of a property (such as bathrooms and kitchens) the warmer air contains a lot more moisture than other parts of the building.

MOULD

One of the most common visual effects of condensation – apart from water being deposited on cooler surfaces – is that of mould growth. This will often look like 'black spots' (although it will completely cover a surface when conditions are right).

For mould growth to occur there needs to be a sufficient amount of clean water available (in relatively humid conditions) for extended periods of time.

Mould can be removed by washing down with a bleach type solution and special paints can be applied which may help prevent growth of mould but the only permanent cure is to reduce the amount of condensation in a property.

WAYS TO CONTROL CONDENSATION

There are three primary measures that can be taken to prevent condensation. These are to:

1. Increase ventilation – to remove moist air from the building and not allow it to come into contact with cold surfaces
2. Increase insulation – to prevent a cold surface reaching below Dew Point
3. Maintain consistent heating – to prevent the structure to become cold

It is unlikely that a British home can be condensation free, however by keeping your property properly maintained and thinking about your lifestyle and decoration, you should be able to live with condensation without it ruining your life.

Short-Term Tenancies

Do you rent out your property to tenants on a short-term lease either directly or through an appointed letting agent?

As the owner of the property it is your responsibility when your tenant moves in or vacates the property to ensure all rubbish and furniture is removed from the premises and where necessary safely disposed of. These items **MUST NOT** be left in the communal bin areas or communal areas. Normally the local council will remove such items free of charge, you will find their contact details in your local Yellow Pages or the internet.

Should it be necessary for Town and City to arrange removal of such items the charge will be passed on to registered leaseholder of the property.

And Finally

We would like to welcome Mike Willans to Town and City. Mike has joined us as a Portfolio Manager. Mike was previously Senior Property Manager with Eddisons and brings with him a wealth of property management experience which we are sure will bring benefits to all our clients.

We would also like to welcome the residents of Cambridge Square, Middlesbrough and Park Hall, Sunderland.

New Office Opens in Leeds at

5th Floor, 2 Wellington Place, Leeds, LS14HZ
Tel: 0113 322 3191.

We would like to wish all our leaseholders

A MERRY CHRISTMAS
&
HAPPY NEW YEAR

