

# HATTON HOUSING TRUST LIMITED

NEWSLETTER 2025 – ISSUE 16



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**Please contact the Secretary if you require a copy of the Annual Newsletter and Annual Report in A3 or to be sent by email. A copy is also available to download on the Trust's website.**

# HATTON HOUSING TRUST LIMITED

## Introduction

The Annual Tenants Meeting took place on Friday, 10 October 2025 at the Salvation Army Hall in Tunbridge Wells and the Trust were very pleased to welcome all the tenants who attended this year.

Colin Barber, the Trust's Chairman, opened proceedings and thanked all the volunteers and members of the Management Committee who all give their time voluntarily and without any cost, to ensure that the objectives of the Trust are carried out. Colin Barber introduced all the members of the Management Committee who were present and who each look after a particular site.

Colin Barber thanked Claire Mitchell, General Administrator, Jess Stevens, the Trust's Property Manager and Mark Davis, the Trust's Legal advisor from Warners. Colin Barber also thanked all the Trust Representatives at each site for their hard work and assistance during the year.

Questions and informal discussions took place after the address, with the usual delicious homemade cakes and biscuits made by the Committee. Punnets of strawberries were provided as a special treat by the Chairman and distributed to all those attending.

## Farnham Close



We have been pleased to welcome 4 new residents to Farnham Close this year and hope all will be happy here.

Thank you to everyone who contributes to areas of the gardens looking lovely, despite the Summer heat and hosepipe ban! As you know, the Trust are responsible for the maintenance of the lawns and trees and hedges etc but we rely on residents to bring some colour to the outside spaces. Thank you also to Mr Ward for all his assistance as Trust Representative at Farnham Close.

Sadly, our Hatton signage was subject to graffiti this year, but Robert Stevens did a great job of cleaning it off and we hope that this is not repeated.

As well as supervising the refurbishment of flats in preparation for new residents and the normal ongoing maintenance issues, our Property Manager Jess Stevens has this year organised the replacement of windows at Farnham Close, which has been a major undertaking. Thank you to everyone for your patience and co-operation while this work has been going on. We are very grateful for the messages we have received about how pleased everyone is with their new windows and how impressed with the company that has carried out the work.

On the whole, the halls, landings and stairways at Farnham Close are kept in good order but a gentle reminder that the cleaning of the communal spaces is the responsibility of all residents in a block. If you have help with your cleaning, could you please ensure that includes helping with communal spaces, as well as inside your flat. Thank you.

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## Miller House



There have been no major changes at Miller House this year.

During this year's Property Inspection it was good to see that the communal hallways had been cleared of personal possessions as requested by the Management Committee. Thank you. This is something we have asked tenants to do in all our properties to ensure compliance with Fire and Safety Regulations. However our visit to the property did reveal that these areas are not being kept clean. If each tenant can spend a little time, on a regular basis, vacuuming outside the entrance to their flat this would be beneficial for all and will keep the running costs down.

This autumn, Mrs Victoria Meredith and Mrs Jess Stevens have been reviewing the shed at regular intervals and appreciate the tenants' work tidying this space: as a result all tenants are able store and more easily access their belongings. We will continue to monitor and assist where we can with the clearance of unwanted items currently stored in the shed.

## Wells House



There have been some changes in the occupancy at Wells House with one internal transfer and two new tenants. We hope everyone has settled well in their new homes.

We are grateful to all tenants for making themselves available for the Management Committee to carry out the Property Inspections earlier in the year and thank the Tenant Representative, Mr Hartmann, for carrying out his role so diligently.

There have been no major changes this year save for the two large conifers being felled. We would encourage tenants to spend a little time maintaining the garden area especially around the benches; the grass is regularly mown by the Trust's contractors but to keep costs down, looking after the flower beds does not fall within their contractual obligations.

## Pembury Close

Once again the garden areas have been well cared for, with some very colourful displays despite the very dry summer weather.

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## **Pembury Close continued**

Maintenance work during the year has included replacement of the flat roofs at the rear of Flats 5 - 16. These had shown signs of leakage to the insides of the rear hallway areas but should now be fit for another 15 or 20 years. The hedges bordering the site have again grown vigorously and were cut back to reduce obstruction to the pavements.

Over the summer the entrance area to the Close was remodelled to provide a wider barrier, making access easier.

The Property Inspections were completed in July, and we will be following up on a number of maintenance items that were identified.

During 2026 we plan to replace the windows throughout Pembury Close, as the existing windows are increasingly needing attention to replace fogging panes and broken catches.

We have welcomed one new tenant at Pembury Close during the past year.

We are again grateful to Mrs Clifton, as the Trust Representative, for her assistance in bringing any problem areas to our attention.



## **Lady Vane Close**

As we hope all tenants know the safety of our tenants is of paramount importance to the Trust. We are delighted that all of the works needed to make all of the flats at Lady Vane Close compliant with the modern requirements for fire proofing, asbestos safety and legionella safety have been completed. The standards keep changing and more work will be required but we hope it is reassuring for all the tenants at Lady Vane Close to know that these standards have been met.

In particular the soffits, which were all made of asbestos, were removed by specialist contractors. While the scaffolding was up the Trust took the opportunity to replace the fascia boards and gutters and to decorate the flats externally and we thank the tenants for their patience while this work was carried out. In further works at Lady Vane Close there have been upgrades to the fire alarm systems and the emergency lighting systems so they now comply with current building standards. A great deal of work has also been done in the attic spaces both to improve the loft insulation, which we hope will benefit all tenants by reducing heat loss, and upgrading the insulation around the pipe work in the loft. This should reduce the risk of any serious flood hazard. We are delighted too that various leaks have been repaired where roof and chimney degradation over time had left a problem. The Trust is very grateful to Mrs Stevens for her hard work and diligence in identifying and prioritising all this work and getting it

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## Lady Vane Close continued

done. The next scheduled jobs are to repair some of the drainage works so that they comply with current building regulations. While we have taken every care to be cost effective in getting these works done they, together with the routine upgrades we carry out when a flat is vacant, have totalled nearly £400,000.00 to date, with further works to be scheduled in 2026.

Mr Norman Brittan sadly passed away and we pass on our condolences to his family. We have welcomed one new tenant to Lady Vane Close.



## Grey Lodge



There has not been very much change at Grey Lodge this year and, although there has been a recent change of tenancy, no new tenant has moved in yet.

The garden is looking lovely. Since last year the improvement is wonderful – and congratulations to the tenants, in particular Ms Sue Sparrow – for creating a colourful display.

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## Grey Lodge continued

The wooden fencing is deteriorating and will be removed shortly with the plan being to allow the laurel hedging to thicken up and replace the fence. This will be subject to review.

Further works are planned for next year involving drainage and replacement of electrical consumer unit cupboards. Meanwhile regular weekly checks of the fire alarms continue and monthly checks of the emergency lighting.

## Ferbies Close



As you all will know, Jess Stevens has organised and been supervising the refurbishment of the outhouses at Ferbies. The trust decided to carry out the repairs block by block, partly to spread the costs of the works, but mainly because each block needs to be approached differently as the slope of the site causes different issues for each of them.

The trust is pleased with the work done on the first block and would like to thank all the tenants who co-operated so helpfully in emptying the outhouses. We will let tenants know in good time which block will be repaired next.

Once the outhouse repairs have been completed in full the Trust will be carrying out groundworks to repair the damage to levels that arose from the water meter works. This will include re-laying several of the paths. The works will be scheduled once the outhouses have all been finished to avoid any risk of further damage being caused by the heavy equipment being taken across to the outhouses. We are very grateful to Jess for her hard work on these projects.

The trust would also like to thank all tenants who look after their gardens so beautifully. The more tenants who take care of the gardens the less the trust will have to spend on garden maintenance, the costs of which are largely passed back to tenants in service charges. Could we please again remind tenants not to feed wildlife as the deposits after their increased visits are very unpleasant for everyone? On a very joyful note we congratulate Mrs Cresswell on her recent "noughtie" birthday and are glad that she has given permission to include this photo of her celebrations in the newsletter.

As always we remain very grateful to Mr and Mrs Roff for continuing to act as Trust representatives.

## TRUST'S WAITING LIST

If any of our current tenants know anyone who might be interested in applying for a tenancy with the Trust, please do ask them to contact Claire Mitchell (01732 375305) or apply via our website at [hattonhousingtrust.co.uk](http://hattonhousingtrust.co.uk). The eligibility criteria is listed on the website but any applicants need to be over the age of 55, be resident in the Borough Council areas of Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge and Malling, or have some other close connection with the area, and be needful of Trust accommodation on financial grounds or otherwise.

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## TENANT SATISFACTION MEASURES SURVEY

The Regulator of Social Housing requires the Trust to ask you to complete a questionnaire measuring our performance as landlords every two years. This is our year off. As always we hope you will let us know of any concerns you have without the need for a survey.

## HOW TO DEAL WITH OUT OF HOURS EMERGENCY REPAIRS

### What is classed as 'out of hours'?

Out of hours means outside normal working hours (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm), together with weekends and bank holidays.

### What is classed as an emergency repair?

An emergency repair is defined as something which could cause danger to health, residents' safety or serious damage to property.

### Examples of repairs that are considered emergencies:

Total loss of electricity or water supply (Check with your supplier in the first instance, as the loss may be a site or area wide issue rather than a problem in your flat)

Blocked toilets where it is the only toilet in the property

Blocked drains or pipes with sewage leaking out

Significant leaking or flooding from a water or heating pipe, tank or cistern where the water cannot be contained in a bowl

A roof leak which is causing serious water damage

Guttering and loose roof tiles if it poses a health and safety risk such as the tiles flying off.

### Examples of non-emergency repairs:

Lounge light not working

Tenant appliances (eg microwave) not working

Leaking gutters or overflows

Slow draining basins, baths, showers and sinks

A minor leak to a pipe which can be contained within a bowl

Sighting of a rat on the grounds

### Who to call in the case of an emergency repair:

In the case of an emergency repair please contact **Jess Stevens** on **07887 096281** or by email at [jdpmproperty@aol.com](mailto:jdpmproperty@aol.com). If you are unable to reach Jess Stevens, please contact Robert Stevens on 07850 880841.

If you are unable to get hold of Jess or Robert Stevens, you will need to source your own contractor. Examples of contractors you can try are as below but please note that the Trust does not have any

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affiliation to these companies and cannot take any responsibility for their work, should you call them out:

Plumbing emergency repairs -

DynoRod 01233 621108  
Ability (South UK) Ltd telephone 01892 514495

Electrical emergency repairs -

Bright Spark Electrical Services on 01892 531728 or  
07775 561363

## What to do after the emergency repair?

Following any emergency repair work, please contact the Property Manager at Hatton Housing Trust during normal working hours and arrange to forward any paperwork the contractor has given you for reimbursement by the Trust.

Please note that if you call an emergency contractor for a less serious repair, you may be charged all costs if the Trust feels you have acted unreasonably.

## PLANNED MAINTENANCE VISITS

There are some visits required by contractors to ensure the properties are safe. On these visits you will always be notified in writing beforehand. Most tenants are very helpful with these visits and arrange access if they cannot be in for the visit. However, when no access is arranged, and the contractor cannot complete the relevant works/checks this results in arranging more visits which can cost the Trust more. It is important that tenants allow access on these occasions and advise ahead of the visit if the key held by the Trust needs to be used to obtain access.

## ENERGY ADVICE

We know that rising electricity prices are a real cause for concern for many of our tenants.

However, there are simple steps that can be taken towards reducing your energy bills without making your home less comfortable.



### No-cost energy saving tips

Here are some tips for things you can do right now to cut your energy costs.

- Leave your curtains open in the day to let the sunlight coming through your windows heat your home. Close your curtains at dusk to stop the heat that has built up escaping. Blinds do not stop heat escaping.
- Make sure all appliances are switched off when you go to bed or leave your home.
- Use energy saving lightbulbs – they use 80% less energy.
- Turning down your heater thermostat by just one degree, when you're not too cold inside, can also make savings.
- Move any furniture from in front of your radiators to let the heat escape.

### Saving electricity

- When replacing your bulbs, buy energy-saving ones; in the long-run, these can save you 20% compared to the cost of traditional bulbs.

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- Put a full load on for your washing machine, tumble dryer or dishwasher. It uses less energy than 2 half loads.
- Set your washing machine to 30°C to wash clothes.
- Turn off your appliances. If it is on standby, it is still using electricity. Switching off appliances rather than putting them on standby can help reduce your electricity bill.

## Reduce the amount of water you are using – in the kitchen

- Washing using a bowl rather than under a running tap could save you money.
- Dripping taps waste energy, so if you have one, report it to the Trust to get it repaired.
- Only boil as much water in your kettle as you need.
- Keep a jug of water in the fridge rather than re-using the tap every time you need a drink.

## Reduce the amount of water you are using – in the bathroom

- If possible, take a shower not a bath – it uses roughly half the amount of water!
- Do not leave the tap running when having a wash or brushing your teeth. A running tap can use up to 9 litres of water a minute.

## See if you qualify for government schemes to help save you money

- [WaterSure Scheme](#) – this scheme caps water bills for people who are receiving benefits and need to use a lot of water for medical reasons.
- [Cold Weather Payment](#) – you may get this if you are getting certain benefits and the local temperature is forecasted below zero degrees for 7 consecutive days.
- [Warm Home Discount Scheme](#) - this could get you a discount on your electricity bill.
- [Winter Fuel Payment](#) – if you were born on or before 25 September 1957, you could get a tax-free payment to help pay your heating bills.
- [The Household Support Fund](#) – A discretionary grant administered by your Local Authority to help households with the cost of food, clothing and utilities.

## For further help – You might also like to contact:

**Energy Saving Trust** (for information on savings and grants available)  
Website: [www.energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk)

**Simply Switch** (for assistance on switching utility companies)  
Website: [www.simplyswitch.com](http://www.simplyswitch.com) Email: [customerservice@simplyswitch.com](mailto:customerservice@simplyswitch.com) Tel: 0800 011 1395

**Energy Helpline** (for advice and tips on switching utilities and related matters)  
Website: [www.energyhelpline.com](http://www.energyhelpline.com) Email: [customerservices@energyhelpline.com](mailto:customerservices@energyhelpline.com)

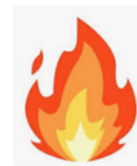
**Citizens Advice Bureau** (for free independent advice on problems people are facing)  
Website: [www.catwd.org.uk](http://www.catwd.org.uk) Email: [advice@catwd.org.uk](mailto:advice@catwd.org.uk) Tel: 01892 518460

**Involve Kent - Community Navigators** (can help you to access and understand the different services available to you including entitlements, form filling, making referrals and accessing services)  
Website: [involvekent.org.uk/community-navigation](http://involvekent.org.uk/community-navigation) Email: [communitynavigation@involvekent.org.uk](mailto:communitynavigation@involvekent.org.uk)  
Tel: 0300 081 0005

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## FIRE SAFETY ADVICE

As a responsible landlord Hatton Housing Trust is committed to providing a safe home for all of its tenants, which is why we have recently carried out improvements to the flat entrance doors and communal areas of some of our blocks. These improvements will improve the fire safety of the properties, but you as tenants can also play your part in making your home a safer place to live.



Here is some advice from Kent Fire & Rescue Service on keeping you and your neighbours safe:

### Smoke alarms

- A fire can start anywhere in your home, and the easiest way to protect you and your family is to have working smoke alarms fitted. Smoke alarms provide an early warning of a fire and give you time to make your escape
- It's important to ensure smoke alarms are fitted in the right place, and you should always follow the manufacturer's fitting instructions
- Make sure you have a working smoke alarm in your main circulation area hallway/landing; if not, fit one as soon as possible
- To fully protect you and your family, it is recommended that smoke alarms are also fitted in the lounge and a heat alarm is fitted in your kitchen
- If your flat is on more than one level, you should fit smoke alarms on every level
- Test your smoke alarms monthly
- Never cover your alarms, and never disconnect or remove the batteries from your alarms

### Stop fires from happening

By taking a few simple steps, you can stop fires from happening in your home.

#### Smoking:

- Ideally, smoke outside in fresh air, clear of the building, and dispose of cigarettes safely
- Do not smoke in bed or anywhere you could fall asleep
- Make sure cigarettes are put out properly and use a proper ashtray
- Keep matches and lighters out of reach and sight of children
- If you use e-cigarettes, follow the manufacturer's instructions and use the correct charger

#### Cooking:

- Never leave pans unattended when cooking
- Never overfill chip pans. Never throw water on a chip pan fire; you should turn off the heat and close the door to the kitchen
- Never leave children alone in the kitchen whilst cooking

#### Electrics:

- Never overload electrical sockets
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions when using extension cables
- Do not leave items on continuous charge
- Turn off electrical appliances when not in use, and don't leave them on standby

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- Follow safety guidance issued on product recalls, such as tumble dryers, washing machines, fridges, freezers, and other appliances
- Regularly remove fluff from tumble dryers

## **Candles:**

- Candles, tea lights and incense burners should only be placed in stable, heat resistant holders
- Keep them clear of any materials that may catch fire, such as curtains, fabrics, furniture and clothes
- Never leave children alone with lit candles

## **Heating:**

- Keep portable heaters well away from anything that can catch alight, such as furniture and bedding
- Never use damaged or defective heaters, and always follow the manufacturer's safety advice

## **Housekeeping:**

- Never leave rubbish, waste or any belongings in the common stairways or corridors; this could affect you and your neighbour's safety

## **Stay safe when you go to bed**

- Close all doors, as this helps to prevent fire and smoke spreading
- Switch off and unplug electrical appliances, such as TVs
- Check that cookers and heaters are turned off
- Make sure candles and tea lights are extinguished
- Avoid charging mobile phones, e-cigarettes, etc. overnight
- Don't store or charge mobility scooters on the only route out of your flat, such as the hallway. Overnight, scooters should be kept in a separate room, such as the lounge or a second bedroom

## **Fire Blankets**

Following a recent Kent Fire and Rescue Service regulatory inspection we have been advised to remove the fire blankets from all Trust properties. KFRS have informed the Trust that tenants must either receive training on the use of fire blankets or we should remove them. Obviously training all existing and incoming tenants is not something the Trust can achieve so we would request that you leave the fire blanket for your property beside your doorstep for collection on **Wednesday 10 December 2025**. These will be collected and stored in case of future use. Thank you in advance for your co-operation.

## **Fire Doors**

Fire doors are specialist doors which have been tested against the elements and are purpose built to withstand roaring fires for as long as possible. They enable buildings to compartmentalise and delay the spread of fire from one area to another, as well as forming a crucial part of a passive fire protection strategy.

Certified fire doors are given a fire resistance rating which details the length of time the doorset (a pre-assembled unit including the door, door frame and ironmongery) will be able to withstand smoke and fire. In the original Trust properties the flat front doors and the electrical cupboard doors in the communal hallways have a fire rating of 30 minutes.

Fire doors are fitted with intumescent strips (or seals) around their edges which expand to fill the gap between the door and the frame should there be a fire. They also often have overhead self-closing devices which help to close the door behind you when you enter or leave the property.

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Fire doors have various safety features and can be the difference between life and death. Two of the most important functions fire doors have are:

- When closed, they form a barrier to stop the spread of fire.
- When opened, they provide a means of escape.

**Due to the important safety function that a fire door performs, tenants are asked not to attach anything to the doors, paint over them or adjust the overhead self-closing devices on them.**

To ensure that the fire doors continue to prove effective during the event of a fire, it is necessary for the Trust to carry out periodic maintenance checks. Should you become concerned over the condition of a fire door at any time, please report this matter to the Trust for further investigation.

## **What to do if a fire breaks out**

Where there is a communal fire alarm in place in the building and a fire starts outside of your property you should make sure:

- Upon hearing the alarm, leave the building by the nearest available fire escape route.
- Before you open a door check it with the back of your hand. If it is warm, do not open it – fire is on the other side.
- Do not delay your escape - leave all personal belongings in your property.
- If your building has a stairlift do not use it.
- Go to a safe place away from the building and call Kent Fire and Rescue Services on 999.
- Await instructions from the fire services.
- Do not attempt to re-enter the property.

If the fire alarm goes off and you cannot leave your home as your access may be blocked:

- Place a rolled-up damp towel at the foot of your front door to block the smoke.
- Keep low to the ground where the air is cleaner and find a safe place to wait in a room with a window that opens. Stay as close to the window as possible.
- Shut the door to the room you are in.
- Call Kent Fire and Rescue Services on 999
- Open the window and call for help.

## **Calling Kent Fire and Rescue Services**

Kent Fire and Rescue Services should always be called if you suspect a fire has started. This should be done straight away. The way to ring Kent Fire and Rescue Services is as follows:

- 1) Ring 999.
- 2) When the operator answers, give the telephone number you are ringing from and ask for the Kent Fire and Rescue Services.
- 3) When Kent Fire and Rescue Services reply, tell them clearly the address where the fire is.
- 4) Do not replace the receiver until Kent Fire and Rescue Services has repeated the address to you and you are sure they have got it right. Kent Fire and Rescue Services may not be able to help if they do not have the full address.

## **E-bikes & Scooters Fire hazards**

The batteries within e-bikes and scooters can cause serious fires. When they have started a fire, something called “thermal runaway” can occur. This creates an uncontrollable, chemical reaction with a

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self-heating state causing the internal temperature to rise uncontrollably. If this happens the fire will be extremely difficult to put out.

Most batteries are safe when well looked after and charged correctly, however some batteries and chargers that have been damaged or are from un reputable sellers can cause a problem. If batteries are not looked after properly or used when damaged there is a serious risk of fire.

**Please notify the Trust if you are keeping an e-bike or scooter at the property.** If you are keeping an e-bike at a Trust property, please follow the below guidelines:

- All batteries and chargers must meet official safety standards.
- All chargers used should be the official correct charger for the battery concerned.
- Batteries should be allowed to cool before charging.
- Manufacturer's instructions should be followed at all times – in particular, note maximum charge levels and temperature thresholds.
- Batteries should not be tampered with or modified.
- Batteries should be checked carefully before charging to make sure that they have not been damaged (e.g. by being dropped) and that there are no cracks, dents, or leaks in the battery casing.
- Batteries should be kept clean, as dust and dirt build up on the battery contacts can cause them to overheat.
- Batteries should not be left to charge unattended and should be unplugged as soon as they have finished charging.
- Batteries should be disconnected when not in use and kept in a battery case or fireproof bag.
- Do not charge batteries using an extension lead.
- Never cover the battery when charging.

## HOME FIRE SAFETY VISITS



**Kent** Fire &  
Rescue Service

Free Home Fire Safety visits are available to anyone who is aged 70 or over, living with dementia, has a long term health condition or is a smoker. Should you wish to arrange a home safety visit, you can speak to one of their fire safety officers on [0800 923 7000](tel:08009237000) (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm). For more information you can visit their website at <https://www.kent.fire-uk.org/hfsv>

## LEGIONELLA

Legionnaires disease is a form of bacterial pneumonia. Infection occurs from inhaling microscopic water droplets that contain legionella bacteria from aspiration of water droplets or working with/using contaminated soil in the garden.

Not everybody exposed to legionella bacteria will become infected. You are more prone to the infection for various reasons which include, if you smoke, have a weakened immune system, have a chronic lung disease or other serious condition or are over 50.

There is also a milder illness that is also caused from legionella bacteria, Pontiac fever which causes flu like symptoms. Pontiac fever will usually clear up on its own, legionnaires usually cures with prompt treatment and antibiotics but can be fatal if left untreated.

Although it is possible to get legionnaires disease from a residential plumbing system, it is extremely rare. The simpler the plumbing system, the less risk there is. Most outbreaks of legionnaires have occurred in large buildings with complex systems, care homes and hospitals hold a high risk. Hatton

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properties have a very simple plumbing system.

The Trust has had legionella surveys carried out on all properties, most are minor or low risk. The highest risk recorded is medium risk and only 16 of 116 properties were given this risk level. The survey noted on all 16 of these that the hot water was not being heated adequately.

The following recommendation was given by the assessor; Keeping the hot water tank on will eliminate the risk of legionella in the system and its supplying taps.

The surveys have been produced using a simple 6 level risk system as follows:

None	No risk	There is no significant present risk and no action is currently required
Minor	Minor risk	There is a low risk but not under normal conditions.
Low	Low risk	There is a low risk under normal conditions.
Medium	Medium risk	There is a significant risk but not under normal conditions.
High	High risk	There is a significant risk under normal conditions.
Critical	Critical risk	There is an immediate risk and urgent action is required. This may include isolation of the system and water sampling, and could include disinfection if necessary.

As seen on the table above if the plumbing system is operated at correct temperatures even the highest risk level recorded on a Hatton property is very little under normal conditions. The Trust will continue to carry out inspections and repairs where necessary to minimise risks of legionella.

You can reduce the risk of legionella bacteria further, please follow the advice below to ensure your water system is safe,

- Do not interfere with the settings on your hot water system. The hot water should be set so that the water is heated up to 60°C.
- Heat your water to full temperature every day so the water is always kept hot.
- Clean your shower head regularly in line with the manufacturer's guidelines. Descale and disinfect it at least every six months to reduce the risk of legionella bacteria multiplying within the shower head. Showers are responsible for the majority of risk within a residential dwelling as they provide the greatest potential for inhalation of small water droplets.
- If the shower is used only occasionally then flush the shower through by running it for at least 2 minutes once a week. Keep out of the way whilst this is being done.
- Tell the Property Manager if the hot water tank is not working properly, particularly if the water is not coming out of the taps at a sufficiently high temperature. It should reach the taps at 50°C.
- Tell the Property Manager if the cold water is still running warm after you have initially run off any water, which may have accumulated in the pipes. It should not be above 20°C.
- Tell the Property Manager if there are problems, debris or discolouration in the water.
- When your property is left vacant for more than a few days, please make sure that when it is occupied again at the outset both hot and cold water systems are flushed through by running all outlets for at least 2 minutes.

## SHOWER HEADS ON ELECTRIC SHOWERS

In the UK all manufactured electric showers and attachments are tested by the manufacturer and approved for use. Any replacement shower heads must be approved by the manufacture to ensure they are safe for use with the shower and will not affect any of the safety standards and energy efficient

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standards.

Electric showers work by heating cold mains fed water over electric heating elements to reach the desired outlet temperature. They have multiple safety devices within them to prevent burns and ensure safe operation.

The use of unauthorised shower heads causes a lot of issues with electric showers. They provide additional resistance and backflow into the shower which can cause the pressure relief device or the thermal cut out to pop. When either of these devices are activated, they require replacement, often it will require an entire shower replacement as not all safety devices are available as replacements and many times they will take other parts of the shower out with them.

Start/stop-button showerheads should never be used with instantaneous electric showers. They stop the water flow at the outlet without deactivating the heating elements. This causes the water within the appliance to overheat rapidly, potentially reaching temperatures as high as 80°C. When the shower is resumed, scalding water can be discharged under pressure due to the abnormal stop at the showerhead. Scalding water can lead to severe burn injuries. This will, at most times, also trigger the safety devices within a shower leading to the shower requiring repair or replacement.

Even showerheads that do not have the start/stop button but have beads to “filter” the water can cause the shower to have multiple problems and will require a new shower long before time due to the additional pressure created within the heat exchanger. Always replace shower hoses and heads with manufacturer approved products.

## **BIRD FEEDER ADVICE - Stopping unwanted visitors such as squirrels and rats from sharing your bird food**

Keeping the area around your bird feeders clean and removing any fallen food or seed on a regular basis is essential to keep unwanted visitors from your bird feeders. Rats especially locate food easily and will continue to visit until the food supply stops. This is easier if your feeders are on a hard standing or paving slab. If your bird feeder is placed on grass, it can be difficult to completely clean up all of the food that falls in the grass and these remnants attract squirrels or rats. Placing a bird seed catcher or tray beneath your bird feeder will help to catch any fallen bird food before it makes its way into the grass so will be easier to keep clean.



Keeping the area around your bird feeder tidy is a really good way to discourage rats, they like to hide in dark corners or underneath items or sheds. Checking regularly items that you have around will keep on top of any habitations of rats early.

Putting your bird feeders where rats and squirrels cannot jump or climb onto them will also help. Try to keep your feeders 3m away from anything a rat or squirrel can climb up to jump from.

Using a baffle (a small plastic cone) on your feeders can help, they block the animal being able to access the feeder and are slippery for the animal to climb over.

If rats are seen sharing the bird's food, then removing food is a good way to break the habit of rats coming to look for food in your garden. Obviously, you don't want to stop providing food for birds. This cycle break should only take a few weeks to stop the rats returning.

The following advice was received from David Roff at Ferbies Close, who has had great success with stopping the squirrels that frequented his bird feeders. Birds don't have the same taste or smell receptors as rats, squirrels and other mammals have, so mixing a small amount of hot chilli powder to your bird food is harmless to the birds and it won't deter them from feeding, however rats and squirrels don't like the taste of hot chilli powder so will not be attracted to the food you're putting out for the birds.

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## ADVICE ON CONDENSATION AND MOULD

Every home will be affected by condensation at some point. It is completely normal and expected during certain activities and humidity levels. Cooking, washing, drying clothes indoors even breathing creates moisture in the air. The average water vapour that one person will put into the air in their home each day is equivalent to 10 glasses of water. This is just a normal day without the activities that exasperate condensation forming. Drying clothes indoors can add 10-15 litres a week. This water vapour will only be seen when it reaches a cold surface and turns into condensation. The amount of water vapour within a home depends on how warm or cold the property is, how much ventilation there is, how much water vapour is created and the humidity levels.

- It is really important to heat and ventilate all homes, finding the right balance of heating and ventilation is imperative in stopping and preventing condensation which leads to mould formation. Heating and ventilation must be balanced with each other to solve the issue. By opening windows it's easy to feel you are losing heat but what you are actually doing is changing the air within the property. Warm moisture laden air is more expensive to heat than cool dry air. Just 30 minutes to 1 hour of ventilation a day is adequate. This is even more effective when split to 3 or 4 times during the day. Either use trickle vents on the properties that have them or open the windows just a small amount. This air change is crucial for reducing condensation and providing a better air quality within the home. Whenever possible open windows on opposite sides of the property to allow a through flow of air. Always open bedroom windows first thing in the morning as sleeping creates about half a pint of water vapour per person. Replacing that moisture laden air is better for the property and for your health. Just 10-20 minutes is adequate. Even better if you could sleep with the window in the bedroom open.
- Heat the property to a background ambient temperature. A low background temperature of 16 degrees will be more effective at stopping condensation than short bursts of heat when you are in the property and feeling cold. The ideal temperature for a property is between 18-21 degrees. However, it is better to have a cooler temperature constantly than a warmer temperature occasionally. Heating just one area or room is almost certain to cause excessive condensation as it creates greater disparities in temperature creating the perfect conditions for condensation to form and mould to grow. This is one of the biggest contributors to black mould in properties. An even background temperature is essential.
- Keep all furniture away from outside walls, leaving a gap for air to circulate behind.
- Avoid excessive clutter around cold walls and surfaces. Air needs to be unobstructed to circulate freely.
- Remove as much moisture as possible by wiping any moisture from windows and sills in the morning away.
- If you have a shower, use a squeegee to remove as much moisture as possible from the glass screen and tiled areas. Always keep the door closed when showering.
- If your bathroom extractor fan is powered with the light, please use the light when showering to boost the fan. This will also allow the fan to overrun afterwards to expedite clearing the moisture laden air. If not open the bathroom window after showering for 10-15 minutes with the door closed.
- Dry clothes outside whenever possible, if you absolutely must dry clothes inside, dry them in the bathroom with the door closed and the extractor fan running or window open.
- Always cover pots and pans when cooking.

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- Do not block over extractor fans and vents in the property, they are there for a purpose and need to be unobstructed at all times.
- The undercut on internal doors is required to help ventilation within a home, do not block this with draught excluders. The gap beneath the doors should be unobstructed at all times.
- When running a bath put the cold water in first, this will significantly reduce the condensation created.
- A thick carpet with a thermal underlay always helps with condensation.
- If you are physically able, wash down any black mould that appears with a mould killer fungicidal wash. It is important to use a product that kills the mould as well as preventing it. Mould spores spread so washing down any that forms will reduce how much you get. If you are not physically able to wash the mould off and you have black mould forming, please inform the Trust of this. Try to use a specialist cleaner rather than bleach or vinegar. Mould has deep roots (hyphae) on porous surfaces that bleach can't reach. Bleach may be able to eliminate the mould on the surface, but it doesn't affect the membranes underneath which will cause the mould to return over time and actually worsen the condition. Vinegar can penetrate deep into the pores of the surface, killing around 82% of mould but vinegar does not penetrate every material very deeply, and so often leaves behind some mould spores and roots deep in the material. Specialist mould killers and fungicidal cleaners will penetrate the mould and prevent reoccurrence. A few examples of appropriate cleaners are:
  - Dettol antibacterial mould & mildew remover spray
  - Zinsser mould killer and remover spray
  - Ronseal 3 in 1 mould killer spray

## PRIORITY SERVICES REGISTER – UK POWER NETWORKS



UK Power Networks offer a Priority Services Register, which we encourage tenants to join, where you will receive extra support if you experience a power cut.

### Support offered by UK Power Networks during a power cut:

- A priority number that you can call 24 hours a day
- Text and voice message alerts, letting you know when we are aware of a large power cut in your area
- Tailored support if needed such as home visits, hot meals, advice and keeping your friends and relatives updated
- Where possible we will send you text and voice messages when we expect severe weather to help you prepare
- In certain scenarios we may also offer a free hotel overnight and transport to the hotel
- For complex power cuts our community welfare teams provide on-site support which includes hot drinks, hot meals, a Wi-Fi connection and charge points

More information can be found on their website <https://www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/power-cut/priority-services> where tenants can sign up on line, or by calling 0800 169 9970.

## PRIORITY SERVICES REGISTER – SOUTH EAST WATER



South East Water also offer Priority Services which are free and could help you and your family to additional support, including:

- **Receive prior warning** of planned work which may interrupt your water supply

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- **Receive priority treatment** should your water supply be interrupted (we aim to arrange an alternative source as quickly as possible, and will often hand-deliver bottled drinking water to our customers with mobility issues)
- **Receive important information** in a more convenient format, such as large print or the spoken word, where our normal presentation style is not suitable

If you would like to register for Priority Services from South East Water you can find more information on their website <https://www.southeastwater.co.uk/help/priority-services> or by calling their Customer Care Team on [0333 000 2468](tel:03330002468).



## COMMUNITY CAR SERVICE

The Community Car Service provides safe transport for the disabled, elderly and vulnerable people of Tunbridge Wells and the surrounding areas. They can also provide wheelchair-friendly transport. Once registered you can use the service as many times as you need to. All drivers are volunteers and they all have an enhanced DBS check. It is not a free service so please ask for a quote. Contact details are: Email: [info@communitycarservice.org.uk](mailto:info@communitycarservice.org.uk), telephone: 01892 540131/01892 511627.

If you are retired, have a car, enjoy driving and have any spare time would you like to help your community and drive for Community Car Service? You are reimbursed for every mile your car is on the road. If you would like more details, please contact them on the numbers above.

## KEY SAFE STORAGE

The Trust has been in discussions following a few incidents where emergency access to a property was required which proved very difficult due to the location and opening hours of the keys stored at Warners. On recent regulatory inspections we have also received guidance from Kent Fire and Rescue Service on emergency access requirements to properties leading to a change in the storage of keys currently held at Warners.

Warners will still hold a key to every Trust property in a secured locked key safe. However, in addition to this, a secured locked key safe will be installed at each site within the locked communal area cupboards holding a key to each property in case of emergency access.

## GENERAL ADVICE

**Refuse/Recycling:** The recycling and waste service from Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council (for the properties at Lady Vane Close) enables households to recycle more materials from home. Please contact Tunbridge Wells Borough Council or Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council directly if you require any further information.

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council also both offer an assisted waste collection service if you experience difficulty moving your recycling boxes or wheele bins. To register for this service contact Tunbridge Wells Borough Council directly on 01892 526121 or Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council on 01732 876147.

**Cleaning of communal areas:** the cleaning of the communal areas is the tenant's responsibility, which can be carried out by the tenants between them, or by engaging the services of a cleaner, with any costs to be paid by the tenants directly to the cleaner.

**Food for the birds:** at some sites we have had problems with vermin attracted inside by food left on the ground. So please use feeders if you wish to feed the birds.

**Hanging out washing:** A gentle reminder that, under the terms of your tenancy agreement, tenants

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should ensure that any clothes should be hung out to dry in the mornings only, as far as reasonably possible. **Tenants should not be removing other tenants' items of clothing from the washing lines unless permission has been given.**

Keeping the drains clear: each year the Trust spends a considerable amount of money on unblocking the drains. Please do not put any wipes etc. down the toilet but dispose of them responsibly in the general waste bin. Please do not flush anything other than toilet paper down the toilets. The Committee may consider charging tenants who continue to block the drains in the future.

Wallpaper: The Trust request that if you plan to decorate that you do not use vinyl wallpaper and if you redecorate at a later stage, please ensure that the existing wallpaper is removed.

Salt/sand bins: are provided at each of the Trust's sites and are topped up in the autumn. However, do let us know if these are running low

Noise: some of us are very light sleepers so please do not use washing machines or have other loud machines on after 11pm or before 7am. Please ensure that all guests or visitors are considerate when visiting.

Spare keys: most tenants now keep a spare key with a friend or the Trust Representative. In case emergency access is required please do let us know the name of the keyholder.

Going away: if you are planning to be away for more than a day or so then please do let the Trust Representative know and leave a contact telephone number.

Parking: many of our sites have on-site parking but none have unlimited space; please also ask your visitors to be considerate when they park and to limit the spaces being used.

Repairs: Please let the Trust Property Manager know if you are still awaiting completion of repairs after a reasonable period has passed, so that the matter can be followed up with the relevant contractor.

Electricity supplier: The Trust has compiled a list of each tenant's electricity supplier. You are under no obligation to stay with the current electricity supplier, and many of our tenants shop around for energy savings and switch suppliers. If you do change your electricity supplier, we would ask that you inform Claire Mitchell so that she can keep a note of the new supplier.

Key holders/Emergency Contact: The Trust keeps a list of key holders and emergency contacts for each of our tenants and it is important to remember to notify Claire Mitchell if these change.

Key boxes: tenants who have key boxes should check with their insurance companies to make sure that they are covered. Also, one of the Trust's tenants had their key box broken into and the key was used to gain access to the block. Therefore, it is essential that if any key box is fitted, it conforms to your insurance company's specifications.

Insurance: please ensure that you have adequate insurance to cover the contents of your property against usual risks as the Trust's insurance does not cover household contents. An event happened at a trust property last year that caused some damage requiring a claim under the Trust's building insurance. The damage was accidental and no one was at fault. It did cause the Trustees to consider for the first time who can and/or should bear the excess on the Trust's insurance policy. Clearly each claim has a knock on effect on the level of premium the Trust has to pay. And each excess payment the trust makes reduces the funds the trust holds to carry out maintenance and improvement works on all the flats. Bearing this in mind the Trustees have decided that if accidental damage causes the Trust to have to claim under their insurance, then the Trust will bear the cost of any excess. However, the Trust may consider asking tenants to contribute towards the excess in the case of repeated or reckless damage.

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Tenants are reminded that the front and any rear doors to each block should be secured when not actually in use.

Tenants are also reminded that the garden areas are designed for communal use and tenants should not plant trees, hedges or erect any garden structures, including fences, archways or gates, without the Trust's prior permission in writing.

Please note that the cupboards in the communal areas do not form part of your tenancy. However, the Trust will allow, at their discretion, the storage of non-combustible items **only** in the communal cupboards, (excluding the electrical cupboards). The Trust reserve the right to withdraw this permission at any time.

Storage of items in the communal loft area of a block is not permitted as this constitutes a fire hazard.

In the event that any Tenant uses security cameras or other recording devices please note any recording from such a device is not to be shared other than with recognised law enforcement agencies unless such sharing is required in the case of an emergency.

In order to avoid accusations of financial abuse the Trust cannot and will not provide financial advice, assume power of attorney, handle residents' money or accept gifts from Tenants.

## MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Hatton Housing Trust is managed by a Management Committee. The Committee meet approximately every six weeks. All Committee members give up their time voluntarily and without any cost to the Trust. Operating costs are kept to a minimum ensuring that our rents are kept as low as possible and any surplus funds are ploughed back into improving the stock.

The current Committee Members are:

Colin Barber (Chairman)  
Jane Clay (Vice Chairman)  
Debs Manley  
Victoria Meredith  
Viv Packer

Diana Barber  
Amanda Harris  
Marcus Mayne  
Philip Packer

## CONTACT DETAILS

Hatton Housing Trust Limited  
Bank House  
Bank Street  
Tonbridge  
Kent TN9 1BL

Tel no: 01732 770660

Website: [www.hattonhousingtrust.co.uk](http://www.hattonhousingtrust.co.uk)

Claire Mitchell is the main point of contact for all the Trust services. She works for Warners Solicitors who in turn act as Secretary to the Trust. Claire deals with all administrative and financial matters, as well as all the regulatory matters. Claire works Monday to Friday (meetings by prior arrangement) and you can contact her on 01732 375305 and her email address is [c.mitchell@warners.law](mailto:c.mitchell@warners.law).

Jess Stevens deals with any maintenance or repair work for the Trust properties. She works for JDPM Property Services Ltd who act as Property Manager for the Trust. You can contact her during office hours on 07887 096281 and her email address is [jdpmproperty@aol.com](mailto:jdpmproperty@aol.com)

Our Trust Representatives deal with many of the day to day questions and problems encountered by tenants. They provide an invaluable service to the Trust and each site has a Trust Representative.