Tenant handbook

Welcome to your new home
Welcome to your new home

We hope that you find this handbook helpful as you settle in to your new home. The handbook is full of useful advice and information, and should answer many of the questions that you have about your tenancy.

This handbook is part of the useful information that you will receive when you first move in. It is printed periodically and any updates can be found on our website at www.chesterfield.gov.uk

You have also received your tenancy agreement, which tells you about the rights you have as a tenant and about what you can expect from the us, the Council, as your landlord.
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Tell us what you think about this handbook
Housing offices

Housing Options Team
73 Low Pavement, Chesterfield, S40 1PB

On The Move
Phone 01246 345700
www.onthemove-cbc.org.uk

Opening times:
Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, 9.00am to 4.30pm
Wednesday, 10.00am to 4.30pm
Friday, 9.00am to 4.00pm

The housing options team deals with the council’s choice based lettings scheme “On the Move”. They can assist with placing bids, transfer applications, adaptations and provide general housing and tenancy advice. This includes giving advice on changes of personal circumstances such as marriages, relationship breakdowns and deaths.

Homelessness prevention service
Phone (01246) 345825
Email homelessness.prevention@chesterfield.gov.uk

If you have nowhere to safely stay you can contact the service, or attend the emergency service on Monday to Friday between 1.30pm to 3.30pm at the Customer Service Centre, 85 New Square, Chesterfield, S40 1AH.

If you find yourself homeless outside of office hours, please call Derbyshire County Council for advice and assistance. They will pass you through to the out-of-hours service if they cannot assist you directly.

Telephone 01629 533190

Neighbourhoods team
Stonegravels Depot, Old Brick Works Lane, Chesterfield, S41 7JD

neighbourhoods.team@chesterfield.gov.uk

The neighbourhoods team covers all areas of the borough, dealing with estate management, tenancy management and anti-social behaviour, tenancy support and sustainment and tenant participation.

Tenancy management
Phone 01246 345071

- Anti-social behaviour involving council tenants as victims and perpetrators
- Tenancy breaches relating to the condition of property (e.g. unhygienic, overgrown gardens, hoarding)
- Abandoned properties and tenancy fraud
- Evictions
- Boundary disputes

Estate management
Phone 01246 345142

- Safety, cleanliness and appearance of estates and blocks of flats managed by housing services

Tenancy sustainment
Phone 01246 345354

- Direct support and assistance for council tenants to help them stay in their homes
- Working with vulnerable tenants who may be having problems with their rent making referrals to specialist providers where needed
- Money and welfare benefits advice and help to make claims

Tenant participation
Phone 01246 345147

- Encouraging and organising ways to enable tenants to have a say in the housing-related services they receive
- Enabling tenants to challenge and scrutinise their housing-related services

Customer Service Centre
85 New Square, Chesterfield, S40 1SN

Phone 01246 345345

- Pay rent and council tax
- Call or visit with council queries

Opening times:
Monday, Tuesday and Thursday - 8.30am to 5pm
Wednesday - 10am to 5pm Friday - 8.30am to 4.30pm

Payments only
Saturday - 9am to noon
Moving into your new home

Moving home checklist

Moving home can be a really stressful time. To help you to make your move as ‘stress free’ as possible we have prepared a list of organisations and people that you may wish to tell you have moved.

✓ Tick them off as you go along and make any additional notes on page 10

Removals
Shop around and get some quotes. Book your removals as early as possible and allow plenty of time to pack.

Gas supplier
See over the page for information.

Electricity supplier
See over the page for information.

Water supplier
See over the page for information.

Telephone and broadband provider

Mobile phone supplier

The Post Office
Will redirect mail from your old home to your new home for a small charge. For details call 0345 7777 888 or visit www.postoffice.co.uk/redirection

Council Tax
They need to know the date of your change of address. Call 01246 345345

Job Centre Plus
If you receive Universal Credit, Income Support, a state pension or any other benefit call 0345 604 3719.

Housing Benefit
If you get Housing Benefit you will need to stop any benefit being paid on your old address and claim at your new address. Call 01246 345345 or collect a form from the Customer Service Centre. See page 24 for more information.

TV licensing
Call 0300 790 6144 or visit www.tvlicensing.co.uk for changes of address or for new licences.

Satellite/cable TV company

TV/appliance rental

Home contents insurance
You will need to inform your insurers of your change of address. The council operates a home contents insurance scheme. Contact us on 01246 345467 for more details.

Schools
To find out about schools in your new area telephone Derbyshire County Council on 01629533190.

Financial
Your bank, building society and credit card companies.

Your employer

Doctor

Hospital/clinic

Dentist

Optician

Social Worker

Welfare officer

Probation service
If you have a driving licence you must inform DVLA, Swansea, SA99 1AB or 0300 790 6801.

If you own a car you will need to notify DVLA so that your logbook is updated. If you own a car you will need to inform your insurers of your change of address.
Connecting gas, water and electricity

If the bills are in your name at the property you are moving out of, let them know as soon as possible that you are moving and remember to take a final meter reading when you move.

If you are staying with your current supplier you will have to give them the meter readings from your new property once you have received the keys.

If you are a new customer or wish to stay with the company who is currently supplying services for your new property; you can find out who this is by using the details below. Remember to have the postcode for your new home handy as well as the meter readings.

**Gas**

We cap off the gas so that we can carry out a safety check before you use the heating or other appliance. You must arrange for a gas supply and electricity supply to your home so that we can connect your services.

**You need to:**

Decide which gas supplier you are going use. To find out who the current gas supplier is call 0121 7134 901 or 0870 608 1524. You can then choose to have this company as your supplier or change it.

For a list of alternative suppliers contact Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 0345 404 0506 or visit their website at www.adviceguide.org.uk.

Once you have decided who you are going to buy your gas supply from you should contact them with a meter reading. They will take details of your name, address and how you are going to pay.

Contact us on (01246) 345048 to arrange for our gas engineers to visit your home to unseal the supply pipe and carry out the relevant safety checks. A copy of the ‘gas certificate’ will be left with you to say the gas system is safe to use.

We need at least 24 hours notice to arrange a visit so please contact us as soon as your gas and electric supply is in place. Please note that we will only be able to carry out the work if there is both gas and electric to the property so please ensure that any pre-payment meters are in credit.

**Electricity**

Decide which electricity supplier you are going to use. To find out who the current supplier is call Western Power Distribution on 0800 096 3080 or visit www.westernpower.co.uk. You can then choose to have this company as your supplier or change it.

For a list of alternative suppliers contact Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 0345 404 0506 or visit their website at www.adviceguide.org.uk.

Once you have decided who you are going to buy your electricity supply from you should contact them with a meter reading. They will take details of your name, address and how you are going to pay.

**Water**

The water supply should be connected when you move in. If your property does not have a water meter fitted, then you will need to organise a payment method for your water rates with Severn Trent Water. Please contact Severn Trent Water on 03457 500500 or visit their website at www.stwater.co.uk to let them know the date you have taken over the tenancy.

If you would like to have a water meter installed at your property you do not have to ask for permission from housing services. However, if any work needs to be carried out before a water meter can be installed, please contact our repairs team on 0800 587 56 59.

If your property already has a water meter fitted, you will not be able to have this removed. Please contact Severn Trent Water on 03457 500500 with a water meter reading so they can sort out your account. You can do this online at www.stwater.co.uk.

If you are on a water meter and are in receipt of means tested benefits and have either a medical condition or a large family, and use large amounts of water, you may be eligible for a capped charge on your bill. Request more information by calling 03457 500500.
Your tenancy agreement

Before you move into your new home, we ask that you sign a tenancy agreement with us. This is a very important document as it describes what you can expect of us as your landlord and what we can expect of you as our tenant.

Your tenancy agreement exists to help you, and to help us to provide the best possible home and environment for you to live in.

Your tenancy agreement is a legal contract – please keep it safe.

Unless your tenancy agreement states otherwise, all obligations and rights apply to joint tenants jointly and individually.

Please read your tenancy agreement carefully. If you are unclear on any aspect of your agreement, or would like further information, please contact us.

Chesterfield Borough Council uses three types of tenancy:

- Interim
- Introductory
- Secure

Most new tenants start as an introductory tenant and this means that for the first 12 months you don’t have the same rights as a secure tenant.

All council tenants have rights and responsibilities. However, as an introductory tenant you do not have the right to:

- Take in lodgers or sublet.
- Make improvements.
- Exchange with another tenant.
- Buy your council home.

Our responsibilities

We are committed to providing you with a home that you choose to live in, and the services that you want, so we will:

- Help you to enjoy your home without unreasonable interference from us.
- Keep your home in a good state of repair and carry out repairs as quickly as possible.
- Help you wherever possible, and always be friendly and polite.
- Treat your concerns and reasonable complaints seriously.

Where it is reasonable to do so, we may take action to enforce the tenancy agreement.

Your responsibilities

To help us to provide you with a quality service please would you:

- Advise us as soon as you can if you think that you may have problems paying your rent on time.
- Look after your home and report any repairs to us as soon as possible.
- Be considerate towards your neighbours.
- Keep the inside and outside of your property in a clean and tidy condition.

We will be happy to help if you want more information about your tenancy agreement.

Lodgers

We are happy for you to take in lodgers if you are a secure tenant as long as your home does not become overcrowded. However, we would appreciate it if you discuss your plans with us before you decide to go ahead. You should also be aware that taking in lodgers might affect any benefit entitlement.
Subletting

You may be able to sublet part of your home, eg a bedroom. Please contact us beforehand so that we can agree this arrangement. Please contact the neighbourhoods team on 01246 345071.

You do not have the right to let the whole of your house or flat to someone else. If you do so, you will no longer be a secure tenant and we shall take action to repossess the property. Subletting might affect any benefit entitlement.

Mobility scooters

Unless there is designated provision, mobility scooters must not be stored in communal areas of flats (including store rooms) and supported (sheltered) accommodation due to the potential fire hazard.

Before you buy a mobility scooter, please contact the neighbourhoods team for advice on storing it. If you buy a scooter it is normally your responsibility to safely store and charge it. If you want to erect an external store, you must ask for permission to do so. The neighbourhoods team can be contacted on 01246 345071.

Running a business

We recognise that many people now work or run a business from home. We do not want to put up any unnecessary barriers to this. However, you must have our written permission before you start doing this. We need to be sure there is no risk to people’s safety, to our property or of any nuisance being caused.

You must also have, and maintain, any necessary insurance, such as public liability insurance and legal permission, such as planning permission or an operating licence.

If your business, trade or work breaks any tenancy condition we will cancel our permission for it. You will then have to close the business or stop working from home.

Parking your vehicle

Please park considerately and take care not to cause an obstruction or interfere with emergency or other services, such as the refuse collection.

In the interest of your neighbours and your surroundings, please keep the vehicles parked at your home roadworthy and avoid undertaking major vehicle repairs.

In some estates, parking areas are provided. These are for short-term use by residents and tenants and not for the use of storing or carrying out work to vehicles.

If you wish to park your vehicle or a caravan on your garden, we are happy for you to do so, as long as there is a suitable hard standing and a dropped kerb. If you do not have a suitable place to park your vehicle, please discuss your concerns with us, and we will do our best to help you.

Keeping pets

We recognise that pets are part of your family, so please tell us about any animals that you may wish to bring into your home. We can then assess the suitability of your home.

Except in supported (sheltered) housing schemes, you are generally allowed to keep small domestic pets such as dogs, cats, small caged animals and birds or fish, as long as they are well cared for and do not cause a nuisance.

You must keep your pets under control at all times and ensure that your pets do not cause any nuisance.

If we have reason to believe that an animal is causing a nuisance, we may withdraw permission to keep the animal. We would give you the reasons for this and allow reasonable time for you to comply.
Gardens

You must get our written permission before you start work to build or install anything to improve your garden or convert part of it to park your vehicle on. We need to ensure that work meets certain standards and is in the interests of safety and the appearance of our estates. We will not unreasonably refuse permission.

If you have a garden please keep it tidy. Don’t let your grass get too long. It looks untidy and be harder to deal with later. Trees, hedges and shrubs should be trimmed regularly and not allowed to grow on to footpaths as this can be dangerous to people using them.

You should not have a barrier (e.g. A fence or hedge) which is over two metres high in your back garden or at the side of your house, or over one metre high in your front garden.

Please do not put rubbish or unwanted bulky items in your garden. More information about removing bulky items is available in the Waste Management and Recycling section of this handbook.

If you cannot look after your garden (for instance, you are elderly or disabled), and have no one who can do your garden for you, we may be able to help. The Garden Assistance Scheme is explained further in the Help and Support section of this handbook.

TV, radio and satellite aerials

In most flats we provide a communal TV aerial for everyone to connect to.

If you live in a house you are responsible for your own TV aerial. You do not need our permission for an ordinary TV aerial or to connect to cable TV. However, you must have our permission before you put up a satellite dish.

Satellite dishes, CB and amateur radio aerials

Please contact us before you get a dish or one of these aerials. You must have our written permission before you install one. We need to check where, and on what, you will be fixing it.

You may need planning permission for a dish and you will almost certainly need it for a radio aerial. Radio operators must also have a licence and broadcast only as the law allows. You will need to provide us with proof of these.

Living in a flat

Please consider the needs of your neighbours, just as we expect your neighbours to consider your needs. This is especially important when you live in a flat as you are so near to your neighbours.

Please help us to take care of the shared areas such as lifts, hallways, and stairs, bin areas and gardens, and keep communal areas completely clear from rubbish and any other items. Rubbish should be disposed of by placing it down the chute or in the communal bins. Bin chutes and bin store doors must be kept closed at all times. Bags of rubbish should never be left outside, in communal areas or near the chute areas as this attracts rats, mice and other animals. It is unsightly and unhygienic and can be a fire or trip hazard.

Please help us to reduce the risk of fire and the spread of fire in blocks of flats by ensuring that the main entrance doors and internal fire doors are kept closed at all times. Please do not lock or padlock any communal doors as this may prevent escape in the event of a fire.

The fire service has advised the council you should not put any item in the communal areas which can burn including mats, carpets, seats, decorative items etc. This is because it might stop the fire service getting in, cause confusion in smoke filled areas or cause people to trip when they are trying to get out. Please do not put any items in the communal areas at any time.

Items such as furniture and other belongings must not be stored on landings or in electric meter cupboards. More information about removing bulky items is available in the Waste Management and Recycling section of this handbook.

Where items are left in communal areas, we need to make sure that they are removed as quickly as possible. We will try to find out who the items belong to and ask them to remove them. However, we may do this without notice, for instance if the item is an immediate hazard or we cannot reasonably find out who is responsible.

Where we know who is responsible, we may charge for the costs of removal and disposal or take legal action against repeat offenders.

Smoking is not permitted in the shared internal areas.
Please consider the following useful information to ensure that your home stays clean and safe:

- Take care when using any lift. Report breakdowns to the repairs hotline on freephone 0800 587 5659 or to the out-of-hours emergency repairs service on 01246 345041.
- If your flat has a door entry system, please make sure the door is locked behind you.
- Please look after your keys and be careful who you give your key to.
- If you have a large item to get rid of, please contact environmental services on 01246 345543 or 345734 to arrange collection.
- Please avoid making noise that will disturb your neighbours. It would be considerate of you to lower the volume on your TV and music, especially late at night.

Health and safety

Your safety, the safety of your family, the safety of your neighbours and the safety of visitors to your home and neighbours is really important so please do not do anything that may put yourself or others at risk in or near your home. This includes not storing flammable or other hazardous materials in your home. Please dispose of your rubbish, including bulky items properly. Take care not to overload electrical sockets.

Demoted tenancies

The security of tenure of all demoted tenants is substantially reduced for the duration of demotion. The level of security of tenure of a demoted tenant is similar to that of an introductory tenant.

To evict you the council must obtain a possession order from the court, but they do not need to prove a ground for possession or that it is reasonable to make the possession order.

There do not need to have been further incidents of antisocial behaviour or nuisance for the landlord to get a possession order against a demoted tenant.

Grounds for possession

Introductory tenants

Introductory tenancies give new tenants a trial period in a council home. You automatically become a secure tenant after 12 months, unless the council has either:

- Started action to evict you
- Extended your introductory tenancy for a further six months

It is easy to be evicted from this type of tenancy. The council doesn't have to prove a legal reason to a court for you to be evicted.

Common reasons for eviction include:

- Failure to pay rent
- Causing a nuisance to neighbours
Secure tenants

Most council tenants have a secure tenancy. As a secure tenant, you can normally live in the property for the rest of your life, as long as you don’t break the conditions of the tenancy. If you are a secure tenant there are certain reasons (grounds) which may entitle your landlord to get a possession order. These are specified in Schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1985 and are outlined below.

Ground 1
There are rent arrears or a term of the tenancy has been broken

Ground 2
Anti-social behaviour has been caused by the tenant or someone else living in or visiting the property, including allowing the property to be used for illegal or immoral purposes.

Ground 2a
There has been domestic violence by a resident partner causing the victim to leave. This includes violence towards any victims’ family living with them.

Ground 2za
The tenant, or an adult living in the property, has been convicted of an offence which took place during and at the scene of a riot anywhere in the UK. The offence must have been committed on or after 13 May 2014.

Ground 3
The tenant or anyone else living in the property allows the property or any common parts to fall into a bad state of disrepair owing to acts of waste or neglect

Ground 4
Any furniture provided by the council in the property or common parts has been mistreated by the tenant or anyone else living in the property

Ground 5
The tenant or joint tenant made a false statement to obtain the tenancy either deliberately or without caring if the statements were true.

Ground 6
The tenancy was assigned to the tenant (or a family member who used to be the tenant, who still lives in the property) as part of a mutual exchange and money has been paid in connection with the exchange.

Ground 7
The property is part of a building used mainly for non-housing purposes which was let to the tenant as an employee of the council and the tenant is guilty of conduct that means it would be inappropriate for her or him to continue to occupy.

Ground 8
The property was provided whilst major repair works were being carried out on your previous property and you understood that you would have to return to that property when the works were finished.

The council can also use nine other grounds but would have to provide alternative suitable accommodation before seeking possession

Ground 9
The property is statutorily overcrowded and the tenant is guilty of an offence under part 10 of the Housing Act 1985. The offence of statutory overcrowding is not committed where there has been a natural growth in family size.

Ground 10
The council needs to demolish or reconstruct or carry out major works to the property and it is not reasonable for the tenant to remain there. If the tenant agrees to vacate the premises temporarily while the works are carried out then there may be no need for possession.

Ground 10a
The property or part of it is in an area which has been highlighted for a redevelopment scheme approved by the Secretary of State and the council intends to sell the property for the scheme.

Ground 11
This ground does not affect Chesterfield Borough Council tenants. Where the landlord is a charity and it would conflict with the charitable objectives of the charity for the tenant to remain in occupation.

Ground 12
Where the property is situated in a cemetery or part of the property forms part of a building or is connected to a building which is used for other purposes and your property was let to you as part of your employment and the council needs the property to house someone else employed to do that job.
Ground 13
The property has been substantially modified for a disabled person and the present tenant does not need the modifications and the council needs the property for someone who is disabled.

Ground 14
This ground does not affect Chesterfield Borough Council tenants as it is used by landlords who are housing associations or trusts which only lets their accommodation to a particular group of people and there is no such person living in the accommodation anymore and the property is needed by the landlord for another such person.

Ground 15
The property is reserved for a special needs occupant where a social service or facility is provided in close proximity and the current tenant does not have those special needs and the property is needed for someone who does.

Ground 15a
The tenant has succeeded the property from the previous tenant (and was not the previous tenants spouse or registered civil partner) and the property is considered too large for the current household. Proceedings for possession must begin more than six months but less than 12 months after the date of the previous tenants death or the date the council became aware of the tenants death. The court will decide whether any successor can stay in the property

These are a summary of the grounds for possession contained within schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1985 and are not intended as a legal guide. To view the full terms in the Housing Act please visit www.legislation.gov.uk

Absolute ground for possession for anti-social behaviour

In addition to the above, a mandatory ground is available for seeking possession of a secure tenancy where antisocial behaviour has already been proved in another court. This is found in Part 5 of the Anti - Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014. Part 5 contains a list of five conditions allowing a landlord absolute grounds for possession. If any of the conditions are met then the court can award possession.

Condition 1
The tenant, or anyone living in or visiting the property, has been convicted of a serious offence that was committed:
- in the locality of the property or
- elsewhere against either a person who lives, or has a right to occupy accommodation, in the locality, or
- elsewhere against the council or someone employed (whether or not by the council) in connection with the landlord’s housing management functions.

Condition 2
A court finds that the tenant, or anyone living in or visiting the property, had breached a provision of an injunction to prevent nuisance or annoyance (IPNA)

The breach must have occurred in the locality - or elsewhere if the IPNA was granted in order to prevent a harassment, alarm or distress to:
- a person who lives, or has a right to occupy accommodation, in the locality
- the council or someone employed (whether or not by the council) in connection with the council’s housing management functions.

The condition is not met where the breach of the IPNA only relates to a failure to participate in a particular activity.
Condition 3
The tenant, or anyone living in or visiting the property, has been convicted of a breach of a criminal behaviour order that prohibits an activity in the locality - or elsewhere if the criminal behaviour order was intended to protect:

- a person who lives, or has a right to occupy accommodation, in the locality
- the council or someone employed (whether or not by the council) in connection with the council’s housing management functions.

Condition 4
A closure order has been made on the tenant’s property and access to the property under the order (or a closure notice) has been prohibited for more than 48 hours.

Condition 5
The tenant, or anyone living in or visiting the property, has been convicted of an offence under section 80(4) or 82(8) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 as a result of breaching an abatement notice or court order in relation to statutory noise nuisance from the property.

These are a summary of conditions contained within section 84A of the Housing Act 1985 and are not intended as a legal guide. To view the full terms in the Housing Act please visit www.legislation.gov.uk
Managing your money

Visit www.moneysavingexpert.com and advice.org.uk for free advice about ways to save money and get better deals with all your daily costs and outgoings.

**Budgeting**

Budgeting helps you to:
- Keep a track of your money
- Shows you where your money is going
- See where you can make savings
- Avoid debt or helps you get out of debt
- Save a little money each week or month

**To make a budget:**
- Make a list of all your income from wages, benefits, tax credits, maintenance or any other source
- Check you are getting all of the benefits and tax credits you are entitled to
- Make a list of all your outgoings

A budget planner is on page 18.

Making a budget will give you a better idea about how much money is coming in and how much is going out. If you have money left over, great. You can save it or use it for treats.

If you only have a little money left over and you find you struggle to make ends meet, you could try:
- Using your budget planner to look at ways you can make savings on things that are not essential. Your budget planner should show unnecessary spending which can quickly mount up.
- Check the annual percentage rate (APR) on any loans or credit you have, see if you can shop around to get a better deal elsewhere eg, you may be able to get 0 per cent interest on a credit card if you transfer a balance from another card.

- Often gas and electric companies will give you a discount if you pay by direct debit. If you're not paying by this method, see if you can change the way you pay. Also, shop around. It is very likely that you can get a better deal with another company.

Once you have sorted your budget you need to keep a diary, planner, spreadsheet or whatever is best for you, to track your payments – when they are due and when you have paid them. If your circumstances change you will need to make a new budget.

You should consider saving some of your left over money, as this will give you a buffer to fall back on if you are faced with any unexpected costs. It also lets you save for something you want rather than buy it on credit.

You may find it easier to pay most of your bills on direct debit or standing order. You will need a bank account to do this.
## Budget planner

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item description</th>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Savings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rent and any service charges</td>
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<tr>
<td>Council Tax</td>
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<tr>
<td>Home contents insurance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Water rates</td>
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<tr>
<td>Telephone/mobile</td>
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<tr>
<td>Broadband</td>
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<tr>
<td>Television licence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Satellite/cable television</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food/groceries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alcohol</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cigarettes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Household cleaning products</td>
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<tr>
<td>Toiletries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel – bus fares</td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel – taxi fares</td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel – train fares</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hire purchase/loans/credit card payments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Car – insurance</td>
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<td>Car – road tax</td>
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<tr>
<td>Car – fuel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Car – servicing, repairs and MOT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Childcare</td>
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<tr>
<td>School meals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lottery and gambling (including bingo, scratch cards etc)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hobbies and sports</td>
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<tr>
<td>Socialising (weekend out, cinema, day trips etc)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presents (birthdays, Christmas, Easter eggs etc)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Holidays</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health (prescriptions, supplements, vitamins, gym etc)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beauty (hairdressers, sauna, sunbed, barbers)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clothing and footwear</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pets and vets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pocket money for children</td>
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<tr>
<td>Savings and investments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home improvements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bank charges</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers, magazines and books</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Anything else</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Total**                                                                 |

18 Tenant handbook
## Income sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Per week</th>
<th>Per month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wages/salary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wages/salary partner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Universal Credit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Benefit</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Tax Credit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working Tax Credit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income Support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Statutory Sick Pay</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carer’s Allowance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability benefits (DLA or PIP)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternity Allowance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statutory Maternity Pay</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>State pension</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pension Credit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Child support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Housing Benefit</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Council Tax support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other income - details</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Other income - details</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other income – details</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Bank Accounts

Basic bank accounts

Basic bank accounts are current accounts without any overdraft or credit facilities so you can only spend what is in your account and you cannot use them to borrow money.

You can have regular payments such as wages, tax credits and benefits paid into a basic bank account. You can also make regular payments such as direct debits and standing orders from most of the accounts, but check this with the bank before opening an account.

Some basic bank accounts provide a debit card, which means you can pay bills and get cash back in shops and use a cash card to get money from cash machines.

Current accounts

Current accounts allow you to make regular payments into and out of your account. They usually come with a cheque book and cheque guarantee card. You can usually arrange an overdraft on these types of account. You will need to check with the bank if they charge you for this facility, some will be free for a small amount. Larger amounts will mean you need to pay interest and possibly a charge.

If you go overdrawn without asking, either because you write cheques or because direct debits, standing orders or cash are taken from your account, then you will be charged a fee. You may even be charged a fee if the bank refuses to make the payments for you.

Current accounts will usually offer a low rate of interest on any money you have in the account, so you should be careful not to keep too high a balance. If you find you have money left at the end of every month you may like to put this into a savings account.

Savings accounts

Savings accounts are designed for investing money on a regular basis or for putting a lump sum of money into that you may not need for some time.

You will be paid interest on the money you save. The amount you get varies depending on how much it is and how long it is in the account for.

Savings accounts generally pay higher interest rates than current accounts. You can find them at banks, building societies and through National Savings and Investments. They are generally low risk investments suitable for short to medium term savings.

You can also save by buying saving stamps through supermarkets or by joining a savings club. Be careful of this type of saving as you don't earn any interest, things can go wrong and you could lose your money.

Credit unions

Credit unions are financial cooperatives, owned and run by their members. They are a safe place to save, offer affordable credit, encourage good money management and help the local economy.

For more information and to find out about your local credit union contact the Association of British Credit Unions Limited by 0161 832 3694, www.abcul.org or infor@abcul.org

Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire Credit Union can be contacted on 01246 278833, www.cnedcu.co.uk or webmail@cnedcu.co.uk 4-6 Soresby Street, Chesterfield, S40 1JN.

Borrowing money

Borrowing money can be very expensive and you need to take great care. You may end up owing a lot more than you borrowed. So before borrowing, think about the following:

- Is borrowing money the only option?
- Do you really need the item, could you borrow the item or could you buy second hand?
- Where are you going to borrow from? Avoid expensive credit and loans such as doorstep lenders or store cards.
- Credit card charges can be very high if payment is late.
- Going overdrawn at your bank without arranging it can be the most costly way of borrowing. You may end up owing more than you borrowed.
- Can you afford the repayments? Use the budget planner to work out if you can afford the repayments.
- Are you borrowing to pay off debts? Borrowing more to pay off debts often causes more problems. There is free, independent help available and other ways to manage your debts.
Tips for borrowing money

- Always read the small print – check the agreement as there may be hidden charges you did not know about.
- Store cards – check the interest rates (APR) as they are often high.
- When you apply for a loan or credit, the company you are borrowing from will check your financial history with a credit reference agency. You usually need to be on the electoral role as lenders will check this.
- Think again – do you really need to borrow? Could you save up for what you need?

Debt

Top five tips for those in debt

1. Do not panic.
2. Do not ignore the problems – they will not go away and the longer they are ignored the worse they will get. Help is available free of charge.
3. Check you are legally responsible for the debts – they may not be yours.
4. Check you are getting all the benefits and tax credits you are entitled to.
5. Try not to borrow more money to pay off your debts – this can make matters worse. Do not use fee charging debt management companies. Free advice and assistance is available from a number of recognised organisations.

Loan sharks

If you are being harassed by a loan shark call 0300 555 222 (local call rate), reportaloanshark@stoploansharks.gov.uk or www.direct.gov.uk/stoploansharks

You can also text LOAN SHARK and the lender’s details to 60003

Priority debts

Priority debts are those that could result in you losing something such as your home if you do not make the payments.

Priority debts and result of not paying

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Debt</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>Loss of home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secured loan</td>
<td>Loss of home or other item</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council tax</td>
<td>Bailiffs, imprisonment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income tax or VAT arrears</td>
<td>Bankruptcy or imprisonment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fines – such as driving offences</td>
<td>Bailiffs, imprisonment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance or child support</td>
<td>Bailiffs, imprisonment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuel-gas/electricity</td>
<td>Disconnection of supply</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hire purchase (car)</td>
<td>Loss of item – car</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Non-priority debts

Non-priority debts are those unlikely to result in loss of your possessions if you do not make the payments. Non-priority debts include:

- Credit cards and store cards
- Catalogue arrears
- Overdraft and unsecured bank loans
- Overpayment of benefits
- Money owed to family and friends

You cannot be imprisoned for not paying non-priority debts and you are unlikely to lose your home or goods. However, creditors can take you to court. The court will then order you to pay. If you do not keep up with the order, the creditor can apply for another court order to send the bailiffs to collect your belongings to sell and cover the debt.
What to do if you are in debt

- Make a list of your priority debts and non-priority debts.
- Work out your weekly or monthly income and expenditure – be realistic with your costs. If you have any costs which are not essential or you could do without, try and make savings.
- Any money left over will need to be distributed amongst the creditors. You will need to pay your priority creditors first, with the biggest payment going to the biggest debt and so on.
- Do not ignore letters or phone calls from creditors – contact them and let them know you are having problems.
- Write up a financial statement about your income, your outgoings, how much you owe and how much you are offering to pay.
- You need to contact all your creditors. If you do this by telephone always follow up with a letter stating how much you will be paying and how often. Include a copy of your financial statement. Ask the creditor to freeze the interest or other charges to stop the debt increasing.
- Some creditors will try to negotiate higher payments than you can afford – you may need to provide proof of your income and outgoings with pay slips, bills etc.
- If you have any problems, seek immediate advice.

It is important that you:

- Do not promise to pay more than you can afford.
- Make sure that you stick to an arrangement that you have made with a creditor.
- Contact your creditor immediately if your circumstances change and you cannot meet the payments you first agreed.

If a creditor ignores your offer of payment, or will not accept it, make the payments anyway and seek advice.

Bailiffs and court action

If you are facing court action or the bailiffs, you need to seek immediate advice.

Debt advice

The Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) can be contacted at 6-8 Broad Pavement, Chesterfield, S40 1RP.
(01246) 209 164, www.adviceguide.org.uk
National Debtline gives free confidential advice to help you solve your money problems. They can be contacted by 0808 808 4000 or www.nationaldebtline.co.uk

Jargon buster

Creditor
The company or person you owe money to.

Debtor
The person that owes money.

Income
All the money you have coming in from work, benefits or elsewhere.

Expenditure/outgoings
How and where you spend your money.

Interest
This is a charge made by someone who lends you money or gives you credit – it is added to the amount you owe.

Credit
Like a loan, it can be in the form of cash or goods.

Charges
These can be added to the amount you owe, like interest. Some charges can be added on as a penalty eg, if you miss a payment.

Financial statement
A copy of your income and outgoings showing how much income you have spare (or not) and a list of all the other debts you have.
Paying your rent

Whoever signed your tenancy agreement is responsible for paying the rent for your home. If you are a joint tenant you are both responsible for ensuring that the rent is paid.

Rent is the money you pay to us for your home. Rent is payable from the start date of your tenancy and then every Monday. If you pay your rent monthly, please pay one month in advance. By doing this your rent account will not go into arrears. If you want to pay monthly, but cannot afford to pay in advance, contact us. We can discuss an arrangement for you to pay a little extra each month so that you eventually pay in advance.

You can pay your rent:

- **At our offices:**
  - **Customer Service Centre**
    85 New Square, Chesterfield, S40 1SN
    Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, 8.30am to 5pm
    Wednesday, 10am to 5pm
    Friday, 8.30 am to 4.30pm
    Saturday, 9am to 12.00 noon
  - **Healthy Living Centre**
    (using our payment kiosk)
    Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: 8.30am to 4.30pm
    Wednesday: 10am to 4.30pm
    Friday: 8.30am to 4pm

- **Direct Debit or Standing Order** straight from your bank account. Staff at the Customer Service Centre will be pleased to help you to arrange this.

- **Over the telephone** using the 24-hour automated service on 08456 020 214. Please allow two working days for processing. Please note there is no extra charge for payment by credit or debit card.

- **On-line** by visiting www.chesterfield.gov.uk and clicking on “Pay rent or council tax”. Please allow two working days for processing. Please note there is no extra charge for payment by credit or debit card.

- **Post** a cheque or postal order to Chesterfield Borough Council, PO Box 100, Customer Service Centre, 85 New Square, Chesterfield, S40 1SN. Please remember to write your rent reference, name and address on the back of your cheque or postal order. Never send cash through the post.

- **Payment card.** You can pay by using a rent payment card at any Post Office or paypoint outlet. You can order a card by calling 01246 345510.

The card comes to you by post and can take up to three weeks so please pay by a different method until your card arrives. Please allow four working days for processing.

**Service charges**

Some homes receive extra services not included in the basic rent charge. You may have to pay a service charge if your home gets extra services such as cleaning of communal areas. If you need to pay a service charge it will say so in your tenancy agreement.

In some properties (sheltered schemes) heating is provided by the Council and a charge is allied to your rent account. Please note heating charges are not eligible for housing benefit.

**Your rent account**

If you want details of your rent account please ask. Staff at the Customer Service Centre will be pleased to send you a statement at any time.

For enquiries about your rent account call 01246 345504 or email: revenues.recovery@chesterfield.gov.uk

**What the rent is spent on**

We are careful when deciding how to use the rent you pay. Your rent pays for:

- Repairs to your home and planned maintenance such as replacing windows or putting in new kitchens.

- The housing and estate management services we provide including landscape maintenance

**Rent rises**

At the beginning of your tenancy we tell you how much your rent is in your tenancy agreement. We normally change your rent once a year in April. We will never change your rent without telling you about it in writing at least four weeks in advance.
Help towards paying your rent

**Council tenants**

You may be able to get money through Universal Credit or Housing Benefit to help you pay your rent. It is very important that you get the most up to date information by:

- Going to the council’s website: [www.chesterfield.gov.uk/taxbenefits](http://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/taxbenefits)
- Calling our benefits adviser on: 01246 345480
- Visiting our Customer Service Centre at: 85 New Square, Chesterfield, S40 1AH

The Customer Service Centre is open:
- Monday, Tuesday and Thursday - 8.30am to 5pm
- Wednesday - 10am to 5pm
- Friday - 8.30am to 4.30pm
- Saturday (for payments only) - 9am to noon.

Where to park - the closest car parks are Rose Hill and Soresby Street.

If you are pension age then help towards your rent can be claimed via Housing Benefit from Chesterfield Borough Council. You can claim Council Tax Support on the same claim form.

**Please don’t delay getting this advice**

To make a new claim for housing cost support through Universal Credit, go on line at: [www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit](http://www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit).

We can help you make your claim for Universal Credit at the Customer Service Centre if you don’t have internet access or just want some help and advice. Please don’t delay asking for advice because Universal Credit is rarely backdated so you must not delay making your claim.

If you are already getting Housing Benefit

You will continue to get Housing Benefit until your entitlement ends due to a change of circumstance or you are told that you now need to make a claim for Universal Credit.

If you are getting Housing Benefit you don’t need to tell us if your rent changes but you must tell us about any other change of circumstance including if you change address, your income changes or your household changes.

If you are already getting Universal Credit

You must tell the Department for Work and Pensions straight away if your circumstances change. This includes if you change address or your rent, income or household changes. Once you have received your rent change letter you must tell the Department for Work and Pensions that your rent has changed and that your rent is now paid over 52 weeks with no rent free weeks.

If you don’t tell the Department for Work and Pensions straight away when you change address you may find that your housing support is removed for a period and that you are asked to pay back an overpayment of housing cost support.

**Discretionary Housing Payments**

A Discretionary Housing Payment is extra support for housing costs that can be given to you as long as you are receiving Housing Benefit or housing costs support in your claim for Universal Credit. Please ring 01246 345345 for more information.

**Council Tax Support**

You will need to make a separate claim for Council Tax Support from Chesterfield Borough Council as this is not covered by Universal Credit. For further advice contact 01246 345345.
Paying your rent when you get Universal Credit

If you get money to help pay your rent through Universal Credit, this will normally be paid to you directly. It will not be automatically paid to your rent account. You will need to pay it to Chesterfield Borough Council.

If you are worried about this please talk to your work coach at the Department for Work and Pensions. Sometimes they can arrange for your housing support money to be paid to us. We can also ask for payments to be made to us if you fall into rent arrears but this will be for a temporary period only.

You are responsible for paying your rent in full to us and the easiest way to do this and to make sure you don’t go into arrears is to set up a direct debit.

If you don’t pay your rent, you could be evicted from your home. Remember rent payments are a priority debt and should be paid before most other debts.

Falling behind with your rent

Please tell us as soon as you have any problems paying the rent. We will do our best to help you to sort the problem out. If you don’t contact us we will write to you when you miss a payment. Our letter will ask you to get in touch. Please do not ignore us as we will do all we can to help you.

We must do everything we can to collect your rent. This includes taking action in court if we cannot reach an agreement with you to pay any money you owe us. In very serious cases this can mean you are evicted. Please don’t ignore the problem as you risk losing your home.

If you have an enquiry about rent arrears contact 01246 345501 or 01246 345510 or email revenues.recovery@chesterfield.gov.uk

Benefit advice

Claiming any type of benefit can be complicated. If you would like help or advice you can contact our benefits adviser on 01246 345480.

Budgeting support

If you get Universal Credit and are worried about managing your money on a monthly basis or about managing what you spend, you can ask to talk to a budgeting support advisor at Chesterfield Borough Council by ringing 01246 345509 or calling in at the Customer Service Centre.

There are a number of advice agencies that can also offer help and advice including the Citizens Advice Bureau, Welfare Rights, Unemployed Workers Centre and the Law Centre.

Debt advice

Independent money advice and debt counselling is available from the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB).

The CAB offers a free confidential debt counselling service to Chesterfield residents. They can advise on different types of debt such as rent arrears, credit card debts and bank loans. It can:

- Check you are getting all the benefits you may be entitled to.
- Help you to identify the most important debts and take action accordingly. The law gives different creditors different ways of getting their money back.
- Help plan your weekly and monthly budget.
- Draw up a financial statement by looking at your income and outgoings
- Help you to decide on a plan to deal with your debts.
- Negotiate with the people you owe money to.
- Advise you on Court procedures and help reply to Court documents.

The CAB can be contacted at 6-8 Broad Pavement, Chesterfield, S40 1RP, (01246) 209164 or www.adviceguide.org.uk

National Debtline gives free confidential advice to help you solve your money problems. They can be contacted by 0808 808 4000 or www.nationaldebtline.co.uk
Right to buy

Buying Your Home

The Right to Buy scheme gives most council tenants the opportunity to buy their home at a discount.

You will be able to buy your home if:

- You are a secure tenant in a council house or flat
- You've had a public sector landlord (e.g., a council, housing association or NHS trust) for three years - it doesn't have to be three years in a row

You will not normally be able to buy your home if:

- You live in sheltered accommodation or your home is particularly suitable for an elderly person (e.g., a bungalow)
- Your home is only temporary accommodation
- The council does not own the property we have rented to you
- Your home is provided with your job (that is you live in tied accommodation)
- There is a court order saying you have to leave the property

Discounts

The amount of discount you will get when you buy your home depends on the time you have been a secure tenant of a public sector landlord. The discount increases for each year you have been a tenant and goes up to 70 per cent for houses and flats.

For houses you will get a 35 per cent discount after being a tenant for 3 years. This remains at a 35 per cent discount for the 4th and 5th years of tenancy. For each year after that, you get another 1 per cent for each year of tenancy up to a maximum of 70 per cent. For example, if you have been a tenant for 15 years, you will get 45 per cent discount (35 per cent for the first 5 years and then 1 per cent a year for the next 10 years).

For flats you will get a 50 per cent discount for the first 3 years. This remains at a 50 per cent discount for the 4th and 5th years of tenancy. For each year after that, you get another 2 per cent for each year of tenancy, up to a maximum of 70 per cent. For example, if you have been a tenant for 15 years, you will get 70 per cent discount (50 per cent for the first five years and then 2 per cent a year for the next 10 years).

Any time you spend as a tenant of a public landlord will count towards your discount. You may also be able to claim discount for the time your wife, husband or parent was a tenant of a qualifying landlord.

Selling your home

If you sell your home within 10 years of buying it through Right to Buy, you must first offer it to either:

- Chesterfield Borough Council
- Another social landlord in the area

The property should be sold at the full market price agreed between you and the landlord. If you can't agree, a district valuer will say how much your home is worth and set the price. You can sell your home to anyone if the landlord doesn't agree to buy it within eight weeks.
Repaying discount

If you sell your Right to Buy home within the first five years of buying it, you will have to repay some or all of your discount. This is called the Repayment of Discount Sum (RDS). You'll have to pay back all of the Repayment Discount Sum if you sell within the first year. After that, the total amount you pay back reduces by 20 per cent for each full year of ownership to:

- 80 per cent of the RDS in the second year
- 60 per cent of the RDS in the third year
- 40 per cent of the RDS in the fourth year
- 20 per cent of the RDS in the fifth year

The repayment of discount sum is worked out by using the original percentage of discount against the market value of the property at the time of resale - the owner's improvements are disregarded.

Example 1

You bought your home worth £100,000 and got a 40 per cent discount (£40,000). You then sold your home after 18 months for £120,000.

40 per cent of £120,000 is £48,000. As you’re in the second year, you would repay 80 per cent of £48,000 (£38,400).

Example 2

You bought your home worth £100,000 and got a 50 per cent discount (£50,000). You then sold your home after 30 months for £120,000.

50 per cent of £120,000 is £60,000. As you’re in the third year, you would repay 60 per cent of £60,000 (£36,000).

Example 3

You bought your home worth £100,000 and got a 60 per cent discount (£60,000). You then sold your home after 42 months for £140,000.

60 per cent of £140,000 is £84,000. As you’re in the fourth year you would repay 40 per cent of £84,000 (£33,600).

Repairs

If you do apply to buy your home, while the sale is going through, the council will not include your home in most improvement schemes and may cancel any major works already ordered.

If you buy a house you will be responsible for all repairs to it.

If you buy a flat you will be responsible for paying any service charges and all the repairs inside it, including the window glass and front door. You will not be able to change the front door and window frames without permission and if the front door is a fire door it can only be replaced with a fire door. You will also be responsible for paying a proportion of the cost of any repairs and improvements we carry out to the block and communal areas.

For more information about right to buy:

Contact 01246 345446
Maintaining your home

Repairs guide

Please also refer to the Repairs Guide which will help you to report your repairs quickly and easily. We have included diagrams in the Guide to help you to identify what is wrong, and to help you to accurately describe the repair to us.

Our responsibilities

We have legal duties to repair and maintain your home. We will:

- Keep the structure and outside of your home in good condition
- Repair fixtures and fittings inside your home, for example, heating systems, bathroom fittings, kitchen units and doors
- Make sure you can receive gas, (where applicable) electricity and water into your home and that waste is taken away properly
- Repair any shared areas that form part of your home, for example, staircases and shared entrances

We will do this through our day-to-day repair service and our long-term planned maintenance and improvement programme.

Your responsibilities

You are responsible for your own minor repair work. Examples of some of the things you are responsible for are:

- decorating the inside of your home
- changing any locks if you lose your keys or fobs or have them stolen
- general fixtures and fittings such as:
  - cylinder jackets
  - light bulbs (bayonet and screw fittings)
  - replacing batteries in smoke alarms, carbon monoxide detectors and heating controls
  - plugs and fuses
  - washing lines (unless communal)
  - providing or replacing door knockers and bells
  - replacing shower components (head, hose, slider rail and curtain)
  - replacing plugs and chains to baths, basins and sinks
  - filling nail holes and minor decorative cracks in walls and ceilings
  - grouting wall tiles
  - oiling door hinges
  - treating walls and ceilings for mould caused by condensation
  - plumbing in your washing machine and connecting your cooker (CBC can now offer this payable service for you)
  - bleeding radiators
  - TV and phone outlets
  - your own fixtures and fittings
  - external taps
  - turning the water supply off (whilst away on holiday or away from your own for long periods of more than a day)
  - clearing over grown gardens
  - maintaining and repairing your fences
  - maintaining paths other than the ones leading directly to the front and or back doors (excludes garden paths / to washing lines)
  - We expect you to pay and be responsible for any damaged items in and around your property not deemed to be affected by fair wear and tear (re-chargeable repairs).

If you employ tradespeople, please ensure they are suitably qualified and registered with the appropriate governing bodies.
In addition to the above there are some other minor repairs that we expect you to carry out yourself. Examples of some of the things we would ask you to do before contacting the council are:

- clearing a blocked bath, basin, shower or sink using a plunger or suitable cleaning agent
- clearing a blocked toilet using a plunger or other suitable tool
- clearing a blocked shower head
- resetting electric trip switches
- resetting circuit breakers in the consumer unit
- re-pressurising a combi boiler

If there is still a problem after you have tried to sort it out, please contact the Council who will arrange for a repair to be carried out. This repair may be re-chargeable if the problem has been caused by you (eg, nappy causing a blocked toilet).

When you report a repair please tell us:

- Your name, full address and an up to date daytime telephone number
- As much as you can about what is wrong, and where the problem is
- When we will be able to get in to do the work within the working week

We have included information to help you to identify what is wrong, and to help you with describing the repair. Please see the repairs guide.

Emergency repairs out-of-hours

If you need an emergency repair, and the Repair Hotline is closed, you should use the out-of-hours emergency repairs service on 01246 345041.

Please only call out-of-hours for genuine emergencies as we are not able to deal with other repairs at this time.

Our out-of-hours emergency service may attend and make safe only, unless the repair is minor, can be done safely in a short time and the operative has the parts to complete the repair.

You may be recharged for calling us out if it’s not an emergency and the repair is damage you have caused or is listed in the items above under ‘your responsibilities’.

Emergency repairs during working hours can be reported through the Repairs Hotline on freephone 0800 587 5659
Paying for repairs

The rent we collect pays for the repairs and maintenance service so most tenants never get charged for any repairs. We do not charge for fair wear and tear.

You will be charged if we need to repair or replace anything due to neglect, misuse, theft or deliberate damage by you or anyone you, as a tenant, are responsible for (including your children, family, visitors and pets). You can be charged for this whether it happens in your home, in any communal areas or at a neighbouring property.

You will also be charged if we need to remove or reinstate something you have changed or installed with or without our permission. You must get permission for any alterations you wish to make with the exception of normal decorating and gardening (excluding landscaping).

If we decide to charge you, in most cases you will be asked to sign an agreement to pay the charge before the works are carried out. Sometimes it may be the trades employee who may ask you to sign the form before they start work. However, sometimes we will not be able to ask you to do this before we charge you. For example:

- If you have moved out and we need to do the work to re-let the property
- In emergency situations eg, if your washing machine is overflowing into the flat below

You must report damage resulting from a crime to the police (eg, vandalism or burglary). We will not order any repairs unless the police have given you a crime reference number or you have agreed to pay for it, except where we need to secure a property or where safety had been affected (eg, renewal of a fire door).

Carrying out repairs

You will be offered an appointment for all internal repairs and some external repairs where access may be required. The appointment can be for either the morning (8am to noon) or afternoon (12.30pm to 4.30pm)

There are also options for evening appointments up to 7pm Monday to Friday and Saturday appointments up to 4pm but please be aware that these are only for minor repairs which can be completed during these hours.

Your appointment will be confirmed by a repair receipt, which will be sent to you through the post. We will also send a text message to your mobile, or a voicemail message to your landline, to remind you.

If we are not able to keep an appointment we will telephone you to rearrange it. If we do not keep an appointment, and do not tell you before the appointment, we will pay you £13.

Right to Repair:

Under the Right to Repair scheme you have the right to have certain repairs done quickly and easily. These are called ‘qualifying repairs’ and include urgent repairs that are likely to affect your health, safety and security.

When you report a qualifying repair, you will be sent the normal repair receipt. This will tell you when the work should be done and will confirm the appointment that has been made. If the repair is not done by this date then you should tell us and we will chase up the contractor, who will then be given an amount of time to complete the work. If the work is not completed this time you can apply for compensation.

Full details of the scheme are given in a separate government leaflet called ‘A Better Deal for Tenants – Your New Right to Repair’. Please contact the Repairs Hotline for a copy of the leaflet or for information about the Right to Repair.
### Repair categories

We give every repair a category:

#### Within 24 hours

Examples of these include:
- Complete loss of power or heating
- Flood or seriously leaking pipe
- Something else that is a serious risk to your health and safety

We will make the repair safe within 24 hours. In many cases we will complete the repair during this visit. Sometimes we have to do a temporary repair to stop the emergency then return to complete the repair. This depends on the type of repair and the availability of parts.

#### 3 working days (72 hours)

These are urgent repairs but not immediate emergencies. Examples include:
- Partial loss of power or water supply
- Heating or hot water not working between May and October
- Loose or detached banister or handrail.

#### Within 7 working days (168 hours)

Urgent repairs but not immediate emergencies. Examples are:
- Extractor fan not working
- Door entry phone not working

Please note that these timescales do not include Saturday and Sunday.

#### All other repairs

All other repairs will be carried out within 30 days by an appointment that we pre-arrange with you.

These are things that we must put right that don’t cause a risk to your health or safety. We will put the problem right within 30 working days of you reporting it to us.

### Planned maintenance

Some non-urgent maintenance work may be put into a programme, along with similar repairs, and dealt with at a later date. Examples of these types of works are:
- Kitchen replacement
- Boiler replacement
- Bathroom replacement
- Roof replacement
- Regular external decorations
- External door or window replacement
- Fencing (which will become your responsibility to maintain and repair)

### Our standards

When we carry out the repair we will:
- Be punctual and keep the appointment we made with you. We will not be late without telling you first.
- Be polite and courteous at all times and will not use offensive language.
- Ask permission before we enter your home. We will explain who we are, why we are visiting your home and what we will be doing.
- Not smoke inside your home.
- Not use your electricity, water, toilet or appliances without asking you first.
- Ask you to remove personal belongings away from the work area to avoid any damage being caused to them.
- Treat your home with respect, cleaning all rubbish and leaving the area where we have been working clean and tidy. We will use dustsheets to protect your furniture.
- Make sure that all work is carried out safely and will not leave materials or tools lying around. We will remove any repair elated rubbish from your home within 24 hours.
- Try to complete your repair on the first visit. Getting it right first time is something that our customers have said they want us to do. We will keep you informed on the progress of your repair, give you information about any follow up work that needs doing and tell you when this will be done.
Repairs to your home are carried out by trained staff. All staff wear name badges and uniforms.

When you report a repair, you will be offered the option of giving us a password for the operative to use when they visit your home. This allows you to verify that the operative is a genuine Council employee.

You should not allow anyone who states that they are representing the Council into your home unless you can see their identification badge.

Please note that our employees reserve the right not to enter a home unless there is an adult present.

Please do not smoke around the employee whilst they are in your home. If you do, the employee may ask you to stop and may decide to leave your property without completing the repair.

**Gas and solid fuel appliance servicing**

If your home has a gas supply or a solid fuel appliance we have a responsibility to check every year that all gas and solid fuel appliances that are owned and installed by us, eg, the fire and the central heating boiler, are safe. A qualified engineer will visit your home to carry out this service and issue you with the latest safety check as a record.

This is done to protect you and your family. Please allow the engineer into your home to carry out the work. Failure to do so is a breach of your tenancy agreement and will result in the council taking legal action to obtain access.

You do not need our permission to connect your gas cooker but you should use a competent Gas Safe registered installer.

Any gas appliances that you own should be regularly maintained and checked by a Gas Safe registered installer, at least once every 12 months. A copy of the gas safety record should be provided to us.

If you are in any doubt about the safety of any gas equipment it should be turned off and not used until it has been checked.

If you have any enquiries regarding gas servicing contact 01246 345048.

**Damp and mould**

Damp and mould patches on walls, furniture or clothing is likely to be caused by condensation. The only permanent solution is to reduce condensation. Mould cleaning products can be purchased from supermarkets and DIY stores.

Handy tips to help reduce condensation are:

- Use lids on pans when cooking
- Close bathroom and kitchen doors to prevent steam going into other rooms
- Open windows and use extractor fans after cooking or bathing
- Avoid drying clothes indoors, especially on radiators
- Ensure tumble driers are ventilated correctly to the outside of your home
- Prevent steam when filling your bath by part filling it with cold water and topping it up using the hot water
- Don’t push wardrobes up to the walls
- Don’t cover airbricks or vents
- Open doors to circulate air around your home (except when cooking or bathing)
- Wipe down damp surfaces
- Keep your home well heated, set your heating thermostat on low to provide constant background heat.
- Dehumidifiers won’t completely prevent condensation but will help control the moisture which causes it

If you need advice on controlling condensation in your home please contact Repairs Hotline on freephone 0800 587 56 59.
Asbestos

Asbestos used to be commonly used in building materials. Asbestos is most commonly found in gutters, fascias and fall pipes, in older bath panels and in corrugated sheeting used on garages. These items are usually grey in colour beneath any painted coatings.

Provided asbestos products are in a good state of repair and left undisturbed, you will not be at risk from them. Anyone who disturbs asbestos whether it has deteriorated or been damaged to the extent that it releases fibres may be at risk. If you undertake work that involves drilling, sawing, abrading or cutting into the fabric of any material containing asbestos you could be at risk.

If you believe there may be asbestos present, please do not carry out work to any part of your home without first discussing your proposals with us.

Please contact theremove hotline on 0800 587 5659 for advice.

Decent Homes Standard

The government has set a standard of decency that all social housing must meet. A decent home is one that is wind and weather tight, warm and has modern facilities.

To be classed as ‘decent’ your home must:

- Meet the minimum standard for housing. This is the Housing Health and Safety Rating System. For your home to fail this standard there must be a hazard present that is likely to cause extreme or severe harm. An example would be no heating system or no handrail or banister on your staircase.

- Be in a reasonable state of repair. For your home to fail this standard it is likely to need a new heating system or new roof etc.

- Have reasonably modern facilities and services such as kitchens, bathrooms, wcs and noise insulation. For your home to fail this standard it is likely to need a new kitchen and/or bathroom. However, the kitchen or a bathroom must be old and in a poor condition.

- Provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort. This means it should have efficient heating and insulation. For your home to fail this standard you are likely to have a solid fuel heating system or one which cannot be programmed. We will also look at the amount of insulation your home has.

To make sure all Chesterfield Council homes meet the standard, each council home will be independently surveyed to establish what work is needed to bring it up to the Decent Home Standard.

If you would like any further information, please contact the business planning and strategy team on 01246 345175 or 01246 345158.
Home insurance
Accidents do happen and dealing with the damage can cost a lot of money. We strongly advise you to insure the contents of your home.
What would happen if you had a burglary or even just a burst pipe? How would you replace your precious possessions? Or, supposing you had a fire in your home, could you afford to replace your furniture out of your own pocket?
The council offers a home contents insurance scheme for its tenants and for an additional premium you can also insure against accidental damage to your possessions. The scheme is very easy to join. Please ask us if you would like details.
Payments can be made weekly with your rent. Please remember - if you have arranged your household insurance through the council, your insurance policy may be cancelled without notice if your rent account goes into arrears.

Please note - The council is not responsible for insuring your personal belongings or furniture. The council is under no obligation to provide compensation or financial assistance in the event of an accident, disaster or theft from your home.

Please contact 01246 345467 for more information.

Decorating and furnishing your home
To make the house your home, you may wish to decorate.
Some organisations provide recycled and low cost furniture and household items to local people on low incomes. Please contact the housing options team for more information.

Improving or making changes to your home
If you want to improve or make changes to your home then please discuss this with us before starting the work. We will be pleased to give permission as long as what you want to do is reasonable.

Please write to Commercial Services - Building Services, Stonegravels Depot, Old Brick Works Lane, Chesterfield, S41 7JD, describing the changes you would like to make. If you feel that it will help to explain what you would like to do, include a basic drawing of the change (don't worry – we are not looking for anything too artistic).
A few examples of the things that you should get permission for are:
- Removal and replacement of doors or putting in arches
- Changing bathroom or kitchen fixtures
- Putting in a shower, central heating or gas fire
- Decorating the outside of your home
- Building a garage or shed
- Laying a drive or hard standing

It is important that you do not start work without talking to us first. If you do not get written permission before you start work, then you may have to return the property to how it was before.
Even when permission has been granted, the responsibility for maintenance and upkeep of these items remains with the tenant. For example if you install a shower over a bath where there was not one previously, the Council is not responsible.
You may be entitled to compensation for making improvements if you do the work as we ask you to. We will pay you this compensation at the end of your tenancy.

Right to compensation
Secure tenants can apply for compensation for certain improvements they have carried out to their homes since 1 April 1994.

The qualifying period
An application can be made by the tenant within 28 days before or 14 days after the end of the tenancy.

A qualifying person (tenants who may claim compensation) can be:
- The tenant who made the improvement
- Anyone who became a tenant jointly with the improving tenant
- A person succeeding to the tenancy on the death of the improving tenant
Assignees who would have qualified to succeed to the tenancy if the tenant had died

A spouse or former spouse, cohabitant or former cohabitant to whom the tenancy was assigned or transferred by a court order following a relationship breakdown

The table below shows the qualifying improvement (works the tenant may claim for) and the notional life span in years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvement</th>
<th>Life Span (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bath or shower</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wash hand basin</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toilet</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen sink</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storage cupboards in bathroom or kitchen work surfaces for food preparation</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space or water heating</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thermostatic radiator valves</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insulation of pipes, water tank or cylinder</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loft insulation</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cavity wall insulation</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draught proofing of external doors or windows</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double glazing or other external window replacement of glazing 2</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rewiring or the provision of power and lighting or other electrical fittings (including smoke detectors)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security measures (excluding burglar alarm systems)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The tenant can claim compensation for:

- The cost of materials (but not appliances such as a cooker or a fridge)
- Labour costs (but not DIY)

The tenant can get up to a total of £3,000 for any one improvement, but will not get any compensation if the cost is below £50. The amount of compensation will depend on the age and condition of the improvement when the claim is made.

### Heating your home

To get the most from your heating, we would advise you to:

- Fit draft excluders around doors, windows and the letter box
- Use thick curtains, and tuck them onto the window sills
- Lag hot water pipes. Lagging can be bought in DIY shops
- If you are away from your home in very cold weather keep heating on low to avoid burst pipes
- Open windows to allow a change of air and do not cover vents
- Close internal doors to avoid heat escaping
- Put a good underlay under your carpets

### Home energy efficiency

When you were offered the tenancy of your new home you were given an Energy Performance Certificate. This provides details about how energy efficient your home is, the likely running costs for heating and lighting and what could be installed to make it more efficient. The certificate is valid for ten years.

If you have not received this certificate or you have any questions please contact the business planning and strategy team on 01246 345175 or 345158.

### Energy Saving

For independent, expert advice on saving energy in your home, or for funding requests for making energy efficiency improvements, contact your local energy advice centre.

Call the Energy Saving Advice Service on 0300 123 1234 or e-mail energy-advice@est.org.uk.

### Winter fuel payment helpline

If you are eligible for a winter fuel payment but have not received it, call the helpline on 0345 915 1515 or 0345 606 0285 for textphone users. Or write to:

Winter Fuel Payment Centre, Mail Handling Site A Wolverhampton, WV98 1LR
Fire safety

Almost all fires can be prevented as they start with people not realising the potential hazards caused by everyday things around the home. In particular are items that we use for heating and cooking.

There are two major threats from fire:
- **Fire** - It burns and destroys if it is not stopped.
- **Smoke** - Is produced from the burning. The smoke can render you unconscious so that you cannot deal with the fire or escape it.

**Chip pans and deep fat fryers**
- **Never** fill a pan more than one third full of oil or fat.
- **Never** ever leave the pan unattended when the heat is on.
- **Never** put food in the pan if the pan is smoking. Turn off the heat and leave the pan to cool down before cooking anything.

If the pan does catch fire:
- **Do not move it** – leave it where it is
- **Turn off the cooker if it is safe to do so**
- **Do not lean over the pan** or you may get seriously burnt
- **Never throw water** on a pan fire as this will make the fire spread immediately
- If you are in doubt as to whether or not to put out the fire yourself, close the door to the kitchen and call the fire services on 999

**Open fires**
- Always place a fireguard in front of the fire
- Do not place clothes on the guard to dry them
- Do not overload the fire so that there is a risk of fuel spilling onto the carpet

**Portable heaters**
- Do not sit closer than three feet away from a portable heater. If you sit too close, your clothes may catch fire. If this happens, roll the person up in a rug or curtains and cover the flame.
- Once it is out, call 999 for an ambulance.
- Do not drape clothes over the heater.
- Keep furniture away from any portable heater.

**Smoking**
- Never leave a lit cigarette or pipe unattended as it may fall onto an armchair or a carpet that will catch fire and give off potentially lethal smoke and fumes
- Never smoke in a chair if there is a risk of you falling asleep
- Always keep matches and lighters in a safe place and out of the reach of young children

**Fire safety routine**

Many fires start at night when people are asleep. Here are few simple tips that may help to keep you and your family safe:
- Switch off and unplug electrical appliances not designed to be left on
- Make sure no cigarettes or pipes are still alight and do not smoke in bed
- Before emptying ashtrays, ensure that the contents are no longer burning
- Switch off all portable heaters
- Close the doors to all rooms
**Electrical fires**

Electrical appliances cause more fires in homes than anything else. They can be avoided if you take the following steps:

- Switch off all electrical appliances at the end of the evening.
- Never tug at the flex when taking out a plug – this may cause the wire in the flex to shear away and cause a short circuit that may cause a fire.
- Make sure that all your plugs conform to British Safety standards.
- Always fit a plug properly – ensure that the flex grip at the bottom of the plug is gripping the flex.
- Never run an electrical appliance from a light fitting – the current drain may overheat the wiring and a fire may start as a result.
- Do not run flexes under carpets or rugs – an overheating wire may make the material catch fire.
- Use short flexes rather than long ones. Check them regularly for defects such as holes, etc.
- Do not overload sockets with adaptors. Use multi-plug socket blocks instead – these will have additional protection in them to prevent overheating or blowing out.
- Use a residual circuit breaker (RCB) with your appliances – this will automatically cut off the current should an appliance malfunction and keep you safe.
- Always use the correctly rated fuse for an appliance.

**Smoke alarms**

A smoke alarm can give you those precious few minutes for you and your family to get out safely. If you fit your own smoke alarm, the manufacturer’s instructions will tell you about battery replacement and maintenance.

**Smoke detectors**

Housing services carry out annual checks on all smoke detectors that we have fitted in your home to make sure they are in working order. The smoke detectors are normally checked at the same time that the gas servicing is carried out to gas heating systems. However, if you do not have a gas heating system do not worry, any smoke detectors that have been provided by us will still be checked every year.

If think that your smoke detector is not working please report this immediately to the repairs hotline on freephone **0800 5875659**.

**What to do if a fire starts**

Once a fire starts, you have very little time to act so whatever you do, use this time wisely:

- If possible, close the door to the room where the fire has broken out. This will help to delay the spread of the fire and smoke.
- Before you open a door to a room that you suspect has a fire in it, touch the door with the back of your hand. If it feels warm or hot, do not open the door. If the door is opened, air will rush into the room and make the fire more intense and more dangerous.
- Get everyone out of the building as quickly as possible. Do not try to get possessions or belongings. Make your way out safely and try not to panic.
- Call the fire service on 999 from a safe location.
- Do not return to the home unless a fire officer tells you that it is safe to do so.

**Electrocution**

As well as causing fire, poorly maintained or fitted electrical appliances can give you a severe or even fatal electric shock. The use of a residual circuit breaker (RCB) will help to prevent this from occurring. It is your responsibility to ensure that all the appliances that you have in your home are in proper, safe working order. Please consult a qualified electrician if you are in doubt.
### If you are cut off by fire:

- Try to remain calm.
- Keep doors closed and block gaps with towels or sheets.
- Open any available windows and attract attention or help.
- Crouch on the floor where the air will be better to breathe (smoke rises).
- If necessary, throw mattresses and pillows out of the window for you to jump on if you are in real danger. Lower yourself down first, and then jump onto the mattresses below.

### If you live in a flat

Blocks of flats will have their own fire plan and occupants should make themselves aware of the specific advice that relates to the building in which they live. If there is a fire inside your flat, alert all the people in your flat and leave. Close doors behind you. Follow your escape plan. If there is lots of smoke, crawl along the floor where the air should be clearer. Always use the stairs rather than the lift and call 999 as soon as you are in a safe place.

If there is a fire elsewhere in the building, then the structure of your flat – the walls, floors and doors - are designed to give you a minimum of 30 to 60 minutes' protection from a fire. If there is a fire in your building, but not inside your own home, then you are usually safer to stay in your flat unless the heat or smoke from the fire is affecting you. If you stay put, you should still call 999.

Check your front door. If it opens into a communal area your flat should be fitted with a fire door and closer. If you have a fire door but it does not have a closer or you have disconnected it you are putting yourself and other tenants in the block at risk. If your front door does not have or has a disconnected or broken closer please contact our repairs team as soon as possible.
Community safety

Chesterfield Community Safety Partnership (CSP)

Crime, the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour is an important consideration in the quality of life of local communities. Across Derbyshire, agencies and authorities are committed to working in partnership to reduce crime and disorder and to maintain quality of life for people who live, work and visit the area.

Cutting crime and tackling the causes of crime needs to involve a range of organisations.

Chesterfield Community Safety Partnership brings these organisations together to deliver local initiatives to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour.

To contact the Partnership 01246 345345 or email community.safety@chesterfield.gov.uk

Other useful contacts:

- To report any problems you see in the Borough, including rubbish, graffiti and fly tipping contact Chesterfield Borough Council on 01246 345345
- If you have information about crime, you can phone Crime stoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111
- Find out how to set up or join your local Neighbourhood Watch Scheme 01246 522331
- To report non-emergency incidents of crime or anti-social behaviour contact the Police on 101
- To report domestic abuse to dedicated Police Domestic Abuse Officers 101
- To speak confidentially to a volunteer agency to get some advice on domestic violence call 0800 0189 8668
- In an emergency always dial 999 and ask for the appropriate agency

Home security

We want you to feel safe and secure in your home. We have provided you with some useful advice below. You may wish to contact your local community police officer for some individual advice.

In your home ensure that you:

- Keep all doors locked, even when you are in
- Leave a light on when you go out at night
- If you are out all day and night, use a light timer
- Think about fitting a burglar alarm

When you answer the door:

- If you can, switch on an outside light
- Use your door safety locks eg, chain, and your peephole, or entry phone if you have one
- Ask for identification and check it
- Always stay with the caller, if you have let them in
- Do not let anyone in if you are unsure

When you go on holiday:

- Make the house look occupied by fitting light timers
- Ask a friend/neighbour to close the curtains at night
- Put your valuables in a secure place
- Leave a key with your neighbour
Look after your possessions by:

- Getting rid of boxes that expensive possessions have been boxed in
- Mark your valuables with a security marker. They can be bought from most DIY shops. Your Crime Reduction Officer will provide you with ‘postcoded property’ stickers for your window
- Think about photographing your valuables

Problems with neighbours

Most of us have disagreements with neighbours from time to time. If you have a problem with a neighbour, your first step should be to approach them yourself. You can then explain how they are disturbing you.

You may think that it should be obvious, but in many cases, a neighbour does not realise they are causing a problem and they will be prepared to compromise with you. If you involve us before you let your neighbour know about the problem, this can make things worse.

Try not to shout or lose your temper, as this is likely to make the situation worse and may lead to action being taken against you.

If you have experienced violent behaviour or harassment from your neighbour or feel threatened by them, you should not try to resolve this yourself.

If you have spoken to your neighbour, but things don’t improve, or if you cannot sort it out between yourselves, we will try to help. Please contact the neighbourhoods team to discuss your concerns. We can get involved if we have evidence that the behaviour is unreasonable.

You can contact the neighbourhoods team at Stonegravels Depot, Old Brick Works Lane, Chesterfield, S41 7JD. See contact details on page 6 or email us for more information at: neighbourhoods.team@chesterfield.gov.uk

Dealing with anti-social behaviour

Chesterfield Borough Council is one of six agencies within the Community Safety Partnership that has a legal responsibility to work together with other partners to reduce crime and disorder.

We believe that everyone has a right to the ‘quiet enjoyment of their home’ - free from crime, disturbance, harassment or abuse.

Anti-social behaviour is unreasonable behaviour that is capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to any person. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Neighbour problems – these are disputes which can happen between two neighbours and cover complaints about noise, verbal abuse, boundary disputes, harassment and intimidation, nuisance from children, car repairs, damage to property and barking dogs.
- Neighbourhood problems – these problems affect more people living in a neighbourhood such as graffiti, dog fouling, fly tipping, young people causing nuisance, nuisance motor cycles and abandoned vehicles.
- Crime problems – such problems include burglary of houses, criminal damage, drug dealing, car crime, arson, hate crime, public order offences and violence against people.

Nuisance is a general term to include all types of unacceptable behaviour that interferes with other people’s rights, for example, unreasonable noise. It can also include the build-up of rubbish, noxious smells or animals kept in such a place or manner that is harmful to health in which case, action may be taken under environmental protection laws.

Harassment is deliberate behaviour intended to intimidate, dominate or harm an individual or a certain group, such as members of minority ethnic communities, disabled people or LGBTQ people.

The council will not tolerate any form of hate harassment – whether it is:

- Verbal abuse
- Physical attacks on people or property
- Racist slogans
- Rubbish etc put through letter boxes
- Racist leaflets

If you are being harassed please contact the neighbourhoods team (see page 6 for details).
Our response to anti-social behaviour

We will:

- Treat all complaints seriously, investigating them promptly and fairly.
- Respond to all serious anti-social behaviour or hate crime reports within one working day.
- Arrange to talk to you within five working days to discuss the situation and to advise on what can and cannot be done.
- Take appropriate action to help those who are affected by, or who are victims of anti-social behaviour.
- Where needed, ask you to keep a detailed diary of events.
- Help you to compile evidence and make statements.
- Where we can, ensure that extra support is provided for vulnerable people.
- Try to sort out the problem without legal action but will consider legal action against any person who continues to behave in an anti-social manner.
- Make sure that if you want, your information is kept confidential at all times
- Regularly update you on how your case is progressing.
- Notify you in writing when a case is closed.
- Where needed, work with our partners and the police
- Thoroughly investigate credible reports of anti-social behaviour and hate harassment.
- Use appropriate remedies that are available to us

If a person has engaged in anti-social behaviour or hate harassment, they may be excluded from our waiting list and we may not have a duty to re-house them under homelessness legislation.

Useful advice and support is also available from:

**Citizens Advice Bureau**
6-8 Broad Pavement, Chesterfield, S40 1RP
0300 456 8437

**Derbyshire Law Centre**
1 Rose Hill East, Chesterfield, S40 1NU
01246 550674 / 0800 707 6990

**Derbyshire Stop Hate Crime**
www.stophateuk.org/talk/
24-hour Helpline 0800 138 1625
Text 07717 989 025
Advice is also available online at www.stophateuk.org
Help and support
There are a number of specialised services available to people who may be vulnerable or who may need more support at home.

Tenancy Sustainment
Tenancy sustainment officers help tenants to set up and keep their homes. They work with tenants who may be vulnerable or at high risk of losing their homes because they struggle with keeping to the terms of their tenancy agreement, such as paying rent regularly. This could be for a number of reasons including having mental health problems, having a disability, having a long term illness, having a drug or alcohol dependency, or being young and not having had a tenancy before. If someone has long term needs for support or care, or has problems that need the experience of a specialist organisation, tenants will be referred on for that help.

Some examples of the sort of help that can be provided are:

- Advice on tenancy rights and responsibilities
- Help to fill in forms
- Looking at benefit entitlement and helping with benefit claims
- Dealing with letters
- Managing money and paying rent
- Putting people in touch with agencies such as Social Services for care of adults
- Getting access to health services
- Setting up home at the start of the tenancy and getting furniture

Tenancy sustainment officers do not provide social or personal care, and cannot act as a friend. They can however help tenants find organisations and agencies that do this.

It is a free service. Tenants may be offered the service or can ask for it themselves. If you think you may need help to keep your tenancy, please ring 01246 345354.

Careline
Careline is a pendant alarm monitoring and response service available to anyone.

Careline provides peace of mind to you and your loved ones whilst helping you to live independently in your own home.

At the touch of a button you can speak to our trained operators whenever you need assistance, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

The alarm can be used to summon for help for a variety of reasons including:

- If you have fallen or had an accident
- In case of a medical emergency
- If you are experiencing domestic abuse or anti-social behaviour
- If you are worried about a bogus caller

Careline operatives handle over 150,000 calls and respond to over 3,500 callouts in person each year. Almost 60 per cent of these callouts are as a result of a fall where the person is unable to get back up.

The Careline operator can:

- Offer advice and reassurance
- Send a response officer to assist
- Call for medical assistance or contact the emergency services
- Call family or friends

The Careline unit is connected to your existing telephone line and has a powerful microphone and speaker so that the operator can talk to you no matter where you are in your home.

If for whatever reason, the operator is unable to speak with you, a responder will be sent to your home to confirm you are well and provide help if needed. The discreet pendant can be worn on the wrist like a watch, around the neck or clipped to a waistband.
We can also advise on other sensors that are available to suit your needs. For example, sensors can be installed to notify Careline if you have had a fall or if you have left a tap running.

For more information or a free demonstration please contact 0300 323 0076.

If you would like to take up a one month free trial of the Careline service, please quote Care2 when contacting us.

Response service

Response officers provide a 24-hour emergency response to calls for assistance via Careline. They go to the aid of people who have fallen or who are in need of help through illness or distress. Response officers have specialist training and equipment to lift service users safely after a fall.

Support service

The support service is available to anyone living in Chesterfield. It offers help and support for older, vulnerable and disabled residents based on their needs. The service promotes independent living by offering support and advice in relation to agencies that can provide the specialist services you may require.

Our professional team of support officers can arrange a home visit and help you to:

- Live more independently in your own home
- Access services offered by other agencies
- Check that you are receiving all of the benefits you are entitled to
- Identify any issues affecting your personal health and safety
- Be involved in the community and enjoy social activities in the area
- Ensure that you are receiving the support you need

A support officer will discuss visiting options and complete a needs assessment and support plan with you. This will be reviewed regularly as your needs change.

For more information please contact 0300 323 0076.

Housing for older people

We have a number of schemes across the borough specifically for older residents who may need additional support to live independently. The schemes all benefit from a communal lounge, laundry, lifts, gardens and most have storage for mobility scooters. They also have secure door entry systems linked to Careline to enable convenient access for residents and visitors at any time of day or night. Every resident on one of our schemes also benefits from the inclusion of the Careline pendant alarm system in their flat and weekly visits from a support officer. We would be happy to discuss with you whether one of our schemes would be suitable for your particular needs.

For more information please contact the Housing Options Centre on 01246 345 700.

Helping with disabilities - adaptations

If you or someone you live with are, or become, physically disabled, we may be able to improve or adapt parts of your home to help you. These improvements are called adaptations and are considered following a referral from Social Services. We can refer you to Social Services for an assessment should you wish us to do so.

Each referral for an adaptation is considered individually so that we can meet your needs. We can do small adaptations like fit lever taps instead of those you need to turn. Larger jobs like fitting a stair lift or changing your bath for a level access shower can also be considered.

It is not always possible to adapt properties because of the way they were originally designed or because of the substantial costs involved. In these cases rehousing may be more appropriate and in some cases priority may be given. We can provide advice on a range of housing options and help you to decide on the one that is most suitable for your needs.

If you think you could benefit by having your home adapted and would like to know more, please contact us on 01246 345671 or 345672.
Domestic abuse

We will give support and assistance to anyone who experiences domestic abuse. We will maintain strict confidentiality and help you to get in touch with other agencies that can help.

Remember, domestic abuse is a crime – don’t suffer in silence. The 24-hour National Domestic Violence Helpline can be contacted on 0808 2000 247.

To report domestic abuse to dedicated Police Domestic Abuse Officers 101.

Garden assistance scheme

The garden assistance scheme is for council tenants who have difficulty managing their garden.

The council arranges for lawns and hedges to be cut at regular intervals during the growing season. The service is free to people who are 75 or over, and to younger people who claim disability benefits, or have a letter from their doctor or other professional stating that they are physically unable to manage their gardens. Tenants under 75 years old who want to go on the free service will need to show proof of benefits entitlement. Tenants should also have no one living with them who is physically able to cut grass and hedges, or have carers that give this help living within 5 miles.

People who have difficulty in managing their gardens but do not qualify for the free service, can apply for the garden assistance scheme. They will have to pay a small charge. The charge is added to the rent and is payable for the whole year, not just for the period that the work is carried out. The cost of gardening has to be paid for by tenants and is not covered by housing benefit or universal credit. Tenants who want this service will need to qualify for the Council's concessionary charges.

The scheme is managed by the neighbourhoods team and the work is carried out by a contractor. For more information please contact the neighbourhoods assistants on 01246 345071 or 345354.

Councillors

The councillors responsible for each Ward within Chesterfield have been elected to provide a voice for individuals and communities. Your councillor would be pleased to discuss suggestions and concerns relating to your community. They can always be contacted by telephone, or you can visit their surgery.

For information about councillors and details of councillor surgeries contact 01246 345238 or visit the council's web site at www.chesterfield.gov.uk

Neighbourhood rangers

The neighbourhood rangers look after the cleanliness, appearance and safety of our council estates.

Examples of some of the things the rangers do are:

- Keeping an eye out for problems such as fly tipping, vandalism and graffiti
- Making sure rubbish is cleared away from blocks of flats and shared gardens
- Making sure there is nothing in the shared areas of flats that would cause a fire hazard or stop people getting out of flats easily
- Encouraging occupiers to tidy and to cut back untidy and overgrown gardens
- Look out for untaxed and abandoned vehicles, vehicles parked in gardens and any other things that affect the appearance of an estate
- Providing a visible presence on the streets
- Providing a link between residents and the services available to them

The neighbourhood rangers will report any problems to the right agencies and keep a track of the report until the problem is resolved.

The neighbourhood rangers are part of the neighbourhoods team. See page 8 for contact details.
Environmental services

Environmental services clean up streets and promote a tidy environment. They work closely with the community to maintain and improve the street scene to a high standard to help promote civic pride and community responsibility.

This includes a range of activities including street cleaning, litter picking, grass cutting and dog waste. Their staff also play a supporting role in tackling crime and disorder issues by linking up with police and other agencies with better coordination using the CCTV control room.

If you have a query regarding grounds maintenance or street cleaning in your area, contact the council on 01246 345345.

NHS 111 service

111 is the NHS non-emergency number. It's fast, easy and free. Call 111 and speak to a highly trained adviser, supported by healthcare professionals. They will ask you a series of questions to assess your symptoms and immediately direct you to the best medical care for you. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

When to use 111

You should use the NHS 111 service if you urgently need medical help or advice but it's not a life-threatening situation. Call 111 if:

- You need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency
- You think you need to go to the Accident and Emergency Department or need another NHS urgent care service
- You don't know who to call or you don't have a GP to call
- You need health information or reassurance about what to do next

For less urgent health needs, contact your GP or local pharmacist in the usual way.

For immediate life-threatening emergencies call 999.

Hospitals

Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust:

Chesterfield Road, Calow, Chesterfield, S44 5BL.
General enquiries 01246 277271
24-hour Accident and Emergency Department 01246 513777

Walton Hospital

Whitecotes Lane, Chesterfield, S40 3HW
01246 515151

Ashgate Hospice

Ashgate Road, Old Brampton, Chesterfield, S42 7JD, 01246 568801

Gold Card

The Gold Card is a travel and discount scheme for over 60s and disabled people in Derbyshire. All Gold Card holders travel for free by local bus anywhere throughout the whole of England between 9.30am and 11.00pm on weekdays and at any time at weekends and on bank holidays.

The Gold Card is also a discount card, entitling the cardholder to discounts at over 700 businesses in and around Derbyshire, including shops, restaurants, hotels and services. Your Derbyshire Gold Card can also be used as a library card at all Derbyshire and Derby City libraries.

For information on how to apply for a Gold Card contact Call Derbyshire on 01629 533190 or email goldcard@derbyshire.gov.uk
Citizens Advice Bureau

The Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) helps people resolve their legal, money and other problems by providing free, independent and confidential advice on housing, employment rights and discrimination, debt and tax issues.

For more information and details of opening times contact CAB, 6-8 Broad Pavement, Chesterfield, S40 1RP.

Call 01246 209164 for advice on the telephone or email admin@chesterfieldcab.co.uk

Advice is also available on line at www.adviceguide.org.uk

Derbyshire Law Centre

The Derbyshire Law Centre aims to achieve equal access to justice for all sections of the community, and particularly those of limited means, by providing legal services in social welfare law in the Derbyshire area. Services provided:

- Initial assessment of legal problems at drop-in sessions or by phone or e-mail
- Signposting to appropriate services
- Telephone advice and a full casework service is provided for individuals on issues around housing, employment, debt, hate harassment and disability discrimination
- A duty scheme at Chesterfield County Court where the Law Centre attends on housing possession days – for unrepresented tenants and owner occupiers facing proceedings

For more information and details of opening times contact:

Derbyshire Law Centre
1 Rose Hill East, Chesterfield, S40 1NU
Phone: 01246 550674 / 0800 707 6990
Text Box: 0845 833 4252
Email: dlc@derbyshirelawcentre.org.uk
Website: www.derbyshirelawcentre.org.uk

Derbyshire Unemployed Workers’ Centre

Derbyshire Unemployed Workers’ Centre provide free and independent welfare rights advice and representation. They also campaign for the rights of those who are unemployed, on a low income or who have been made sick, injured or disabled by their work. The Centre can help with benefit checks and completion of claim forms etc.

For more information and details of local outreaches contact:

Derbyshire Unemployed Workers’ Centre
1 Rose Hill East, Chesterfield, S40 1NU
Helpline: 01246 231441
Email: info@duwc.org.uk
Website: www.duwc.org.uk

Other organisations offering advice and assistance

- Age Concern 01246 273333
- Alcohol Advice Service 01246 206514 or 0845 3084010
- Alcoholics Anonymous 08457 697 555 or 0800 917650
- Crimestoppers 0800 555 111
- Deaf and Hearing Support 01246 555934
  Textphone: 01246 555933
- Sight Support Derbyshire 01332 292262
- Debtline 0808 808 4000
- Domestic Violence Helpline 0808 2000 247
- Gamcare (gambling) 0808 8020 133
- NHS Choices 111
- Samaritans 01246 270000 or free from any phone 116123
- Shelter (homelessness) 0808 800 4444
- Social Services 01629 533190
- Talk to Frank (drugs) 0300 123 6600
- Victim Support (crime) 01629 825864
- Derbyshire Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse Service 01246 540444 or 0800 0198668
Waste and recycling

Recycling

Here in Chesterfield we are trying to recycle and compost as much of our waste as possible and to reduce waste thrown away which is collected and sent for costly disposal.

Reducing what we throw away in the first place is the best option and can even save you money too. Here are some easy ways that can help you:

- Only buy and cook the food you are going to eat. In the UK we still throw away millions of tonnes of edible food every year. For top tips and tasty recipe ideas visit: www.lovefoodhatewaste.com.
- Try to buy items that are not heavily packaged.
- Reduce junk mail by registering for free with the Mailing Preference Service and opt out of receiving unsolicited mail, visit www.mpsonline.org.uk
- When buying electrical goods ask the shop if they have a “take back scheme” for unwanted items not fit for re-use. Many will take your old item away at the same time as they deliver your new one.
- Compost at home, this is great for all vegetable/fruit peelings, tea bags, coffee grounds, dead flowers, garden waste and some cardboard. You end up with a compost to use on your garden. Compost bins can be ordered from www.derbyshire.getcomposting.com or other retailers.
- Donate unwanted clothes and shoes to your local charity shop or charity textile bank.

For unwanted furniture and items:

- Offer to friends and family or give them away via groups such as www.freecycle.org or ilovefreegle.org
- Sell through newspapers and free ads, auction sites, car boots or desk top sales.
- Donate to charities e.g.
  - Ashgate Hospice 01246 203727,
  - British Heart Foundation 01246 209653
  - St Vincent de Paul Society 01246 472243
  - Valley CIDS 01246 520754

Recycling and waste collections

Households with own bins

Most households have three bins:

- Blue for recycling
- Green for garden and food waste for composting
- Black for waste which cannot be recycled or composted. This waste goes for disposal.

Blue and green bins are collected one week with black bins the following week.

Blue bin (main part of bin)

Please put the following in your blue bin for recycling, they should be clean and rinsed and put in loose, not in bags:

- Household paper and cardboard e.g. envelopes (no need to tear out windows), junk mail, magazines, newspapers, catalogues, corrugated card, greeting cards and wrapping paper (no glitter, tape and plastic)
- Plastic bottles e.g. milk and drinks bottles, bleach, cleaning products, shampoo
- Plastic pots, tubs and trays e.g. margarine and yoghurt pots, ice cream tubs, meat trays, fruit punnets
- Drinks cans and food tins
- Empty aerosols
- Clean aluminium trays and scrunched foil.
No thanks:
- Plastic bags and film e.g., bubble wrap, magazine wrappings, lids from food trays
- Polystyrene e.g., packaging and takeaway trays
- Plastic items, e.g., buckets or toys
- Drinks and food cartons (Tetra Paks) e.g., fruit juice and Pringles tubs
- Foil pouches e.g., pet food and coffee
- Waxed frozen food boxes
- Crisp packets and wrappers
- Plastic film e.g., Bubble wrap, magazine wrapping, lids from food trays
- Metal items e.g., Pots, pans and trays
- Textiles (clothing and bedding)
- Nappies
- Food waste
- General waste

Remember

Only put the items requested in the blue bin and caddy for recycling (see list above). If other items are included this causes problems. Whole loads of recycling can end up being rejected and not recycled. This wastes all the good material which residents have put in and may end up having to go for disposal which not only wastes resources but cost the council tax payer a lot more.

Small electricals - on top of your blue bin

Broken or unwanted small electrical items can be put on the top of the lid of your blue bin on collection day and they will be taken away for recycling. You can put them in a carrier bag if you wish.

Yes please:
- Alarm clocks
- Blenders
- CD players
- Christmas lights
- Coffee makers
- Docking stations
- Electric toothbrushes
- Fans
- Game consoles
- Hairdryers
- Hedge cutters
- Irons
- Kettles
- Mobile phones (remove data)
- Lamps
- Other small electricals.

No thanks:
- Pyrex,
- Drinking glasses
- Window glass
- Light bulbs

These cannot be recycled with glass jars and bottles as they melt at different temperatures.

Black box (caddy)

This is for all glass bottles and jars. This can be kept inside your blue bin or put out next to your blue bin for emptying. Please do not mix glass with your other recycling in the blue bin.
If you have too much recycling

If you find that you have too much recycling than will go in your blue bin:

- For loose items place in a box
- For large cardboard please flatten and place securely behind your bin on collection day.

An extra blue bin can be provided on request if you regularly produce a lot of recycling.

Green bin

The green bin is for food and garden waste. This material is taken to a local composting plant where it is made into soil improver. Please remember to put all material in loose, not in bags, as this causes problems at the composting plant.

Yes please:
- Grass cuttings, prunings, windfalls, flowers, plants, weeds
- Cooked and raw food and kitchen waste including fruit, salad, vegetable waste, egg shells, stale bread, cakes, pastries, rice, pasta, lentils, meat, poultry, fish (including carcasses and bones), plate scrapings
- Tea bags and coffee grounds

Remember

Only garden and food waste which is in the green bin will be collected.

Please don’t overfill your green bin - even a half filled bin can quickly become very heavy making it difficult to move and can cause problems when the bins are emptied.

It is really important that only garden and food waste which can be composted goes in the green bin. If other items are included this causes problems. Whole loads can end up being rejected and not composted. This wastes all the good material which residents have put in and may end up having to go for disposal which not only waste resources but costs the council tax payer a lot more too.

Black bin

Any household waste that cannot be recycled should go in the black bin, this waste goes for disposal. Please ensure that the lid of the bin is closed. Only waste which is contained in the black bin will be collected – no waste left at the side will be taken with the black bin.

No thanks:
- Other items from the garden e.g. Soil, wooden items, stones etc.

Sack collections

A small number of properties where wheeled bins are not suitable have waste collected in sacks. Up to three sacks of household waste will be taken per collection and replacement sacks are provided on a like for like basis. Dustbins are provided to store the sacks. Hessian sacks are provided for recycling and paper sacks for composting.

Yes please:

- Hessian sacks
- Paper sack

No thanks:

- Black sack

Please do not put any of the following in your black bin:

- Anything recyclable which can go in your blue bin and black box
- Garden waste which can go in your green bin
- Hazardous waste, e.g. paint, oil, chemicals such as baits and poisons and garden chemicals
- Bricks, rubble and soil.
Households living in flats

Flats and multi-occupancy properties may have shared bins for waste and recycling.

Large black bins for recycling

Shared bins are provided for recycling. Please put the following in your black recycling bin, they should be clean and rinsed and put in loose, not in bags:

Household paper and cardboard e.g. envelopes (no need to tear out windows), junk mail, magazines, newspapers, catalogues, corrugated card, greeting cards/wrapping paper (no glitter, tape and plastic),

Plastic bottles e.g. milk and drinks bottles, bleach, cleaning products, shampoo,

Plastic pots, tubs and trays e.g. margarine and yoghurt pots, ice cream tubs, meat trays, fruit punnets and clean plastic plant pots,

Drinks cans and food tins,

Empty aerosols,

Clean aluminium trays and scrunched foil.

No thanks:

Polystyrene e.g. Packaging and trays

Plastic items, e.g. Buckets or toys

Drinks and food cartons (Tetra Paks) e.g. Fruit juice and Pringles tubs

Foil pouches e.g. Pet food and coffee

Waxed frozen food boxes

Crisp packets/wrappers

Plastic film e.g. Bubble wrap, magazine wrapping, lids from food trays

Metal items e.g. Pots, pans and trays

Textiles (clothing and bedding)

Nappies

Dog waste or cat litter - bagged

Food waste

General waste

Large amounts of cardboard which, when flattened, will not fit into the bins will be collected if placed securely and tidily by the bin on collection day.

Blue bins for glass

Blue wheeled bins are provided for all glass bottles and jars only.

No thanks:

Plastic bags and film eg, bubble wrap, magazine wrappings, lids from food trays

Pyrex

Drinking glasses

Window glass

Light bulbs.

These cannot be recycled with glass jars and bottles as they melt at different temperatures.

Remember

Only put the items requested in the recycling bin (see list above). If other items are included this causes problems. Whole loads of recycling can end up being rejected and not recycled. This wastes all the good material which residents have put in and may end up having to go for disposal which not only waste resources but costs the council tax payer a lot more too.

Shared general waste bins

Any household waste that cannot be recycled should go in the shared general waste bin, this waste goes for disposal. Only waste which is contained in the bins will be collected – no waste left at the side will be taken.

Please do not put any of the following in the shared general waste bins:

- Anything recyclable which can go in the black or blue recycling bins
- Hazardous waste, e.g. Paint, oil, chemicals such as baits and poisons and garden chemicals
- Electrical items
- Large items e.g. Furniture
- Bricks and rubble
Household waste recycling centres

Household waste recycling centres are provided by Derbyshire County Council for items of household waste which may be too large or bulky to be taken by your normal kerbside waste collection. Please be aware that restrictions may apply for certain types of waste.

The sites are open between 8.30am and 6pm every day of the year except Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

The nearest sites are located on Stonegravels Lane (off Sheffield Road), Chesterfield and Buttermilk Lane, Bolsover.

For more details visit

www.derbyshire.gov.uk/recyclingcentres

or call Derbyshire on 01629 533190

Bulky waste collection service

A bulky waste collection service is provided by the council for the collection of larger household items such as free-standing furniture, domestic appliances and other general household waste that cannot be recycled, sold or given away. There is a charge for this service.

Items for collection should be placed outside. To prevent items being collected by mistake, only items specified when booking will be taken so please don't add any extra items afterwards.

If you have more than 10 items we can provide a quote for the cost of removal. You can then decide if you want to make alternative arrangements for disposal, such as hiring a skip.

General collection information

Normally collections take place on the same day each week. For households with their own bins please put them out by 7am on your collection day at the outside edge of your property. Please make sure that bin lids are closed. Once your bin has been emptied please return it to your property as soon as possible.

If you are on a sack collection or an assisted collection please make sure that the collectors can gain access to your property.

If recycling bins regularly contain the wrong items the council reserves the right to withdraw the recycling bins.

On bank holidays and at Christmas and New Year the collection days can be different. Any changes are publicised on the website and detailed in an annual calendar distributed to households.

If you need to check your day of collection, please check our website at www.chesterfield.gov.uk/bin-day or contact us on 01246 345543

Help with putting out and returning bins

Assisted collections can be offered where, due to disability or infirmity, no one in the household is able to present their bin at the kerbside or collection point for emptying.

What if my bin is missed?

If your bin was presented by 7am on the morning of collection and has not been emptied by the end of your normal collection day, please let us know as soon as possible if you cannot wait until your next scheduled collection.

Missing and replacement bins and caddies

If your bin or caddy has gone missing please allow a little time for it to be found. However, if you do not find it please let us know and a replacement can be arranged.

If your bin lid has a pin missing and is no longer secure, please contact us to arrange a repair. Damaged bins and boxes will be replaced free of charge only if the damage has occurred during the emptying process or through wear and tear.

For more information on any of the above visit:

www.chesterfield.gov.uk/bins-and-recycling

Or call 01246 345543 or 345734
# Getting involved

## Tenant participation

Tenant participation is about influencing decisions that affect you, your home and your environment. If you want to get involved, we can offer you training and other sources of help and support.

We have a variety of means to keep tenants and leaseholders informed and involved so that we take your views into account.

### Keeping you informed

#### Newsletter

This is a magazine that keeps you up to date on what is happening both in housing and your area, and providing information on our performance. These are produced regularly and sent to all tenants and leaseholders.

#### Posters and flyers

These are useful for letting you know what events are happening in your area. These may be delivered directly to your home or displayed on the notice boards in communal areas in blocks of flats or other local places such as shops.

#### Handbook and leaflets

All tenants receive a handbook with useful information concerning your tenancy at sign up. There are also a variety of leaflets about many aspects of the housing service that are available at the council’s Customer Service Centre and receptions or some are online on the council’s website.

#### Website

Check our website at [www.chesterfield.gov.uk](http://www.chesterfield.gov.uk) and go to the housing section for lots of useful information.

#### Twitter

Find us on twitter at @cbchousing

### Facebook

Our facebook page can be found at [www.facebook.com/chesterfieldbchousing](http://www.facebook.com/chesterfieldbchousing).

### Mobile office

The mobile office visits areas when there is something specific to consult about in your area. It may also visit areas so that tenants can bring their ideas and suggestions about how to improve the environment and the housing service to us.

### How to get involved

We are keen to know what you think about the services we provide. We want to do things better and you are the best people to tell us how to improve our services. We believe that the more involved you are, the more satisfied you will be with the services you receive from us.

We will offer as many opportunities as possible for you to work with us. This could be through attending meetings or joining one of our groups but we recognise that for some people this is not the way that they want to participate. They may not have the time, may have other commitments or just don’t feel comfortable in that type of environment but they may still want to have a say in what is happening in their local area and how the housing service is run. We can offer quick and easy ways for you to get involved and have your say, in the way that works best for you.

We want to involve more people from different age groups and backgrounds so that we get a broader view. For more information about how to get involved contact 01246 345147 or tpenquiries@chesterfield.gov.uk.
Moving on

We hope you have many happy years in your new home but there may come a time when you want to move again.

Rehousing and transferring council property

When you apply for rehousing, staff will help you to consider your housing needs and the range of housing options available to you.

If you are a current tenant of Chesterfield Borough Council and you decide to move to another Chesterfield Council property, this is called a transfer. You can apply for a transfer if:

- Your property is now too big or too small for you and your family
- You are disabled or have a medical condition that means you need a home that meets your new needs
- You are the victim of serious anti-social behaviour such as harassment or threats of violence to you or someone in your family
- You wish to move areas.

If you are the victim of anti-social behaviour you should contact the neighbourhoods team to discuss your circumstances before making a transfer request. There may be other action we could take to resolve the problem rather than moving you.

To transfer, you need to fill in an application form from the housing options team. ‘On the Move’ is Chesterfield’s Choice Based Lettings (CBL) Scheme. All properties are advertised in the Housing Options Centre, on the website: [www.onthemove-cbc.org.uk](http://www.onthemove-cbc.org.uk)

You must be eligible for the type and size of property to be able to bid.

You will not be allowed to transfer to another property if there is damage within your current property and the property and/or garden is in poor condition i.e. not in a clean/tidy condition or poor decorative state. You will also not be allowed to transfer to another property if you are in arrears with your rent or any other debt owed to the council.

For more information about eligibility please refer to the Choice Based Lettings Allocations Policy.

What is bidding?

‘Bidding’ is another way of saying ‘selecting’ or ‘choosing’. It does not mean the same thing under CBL as it would at an auction. It isn’t possible to ‘increase’ bids in the same way as you could if you were trying to buy something at auction.

Under CBL, available homes for rent are advertised. People on the housing register are able to bid for properties – a ‘bid’ for an advertised property is simply an expression of your interest.

You can bid on properties using the following methods:

- In person at the Housing Options Centre, 73 Low Pavement, Chesterfield, S40 1PB
- On the internet at [www.onthemove-cbc.org.uk](http://www.onthemove-cbc.org.uk)
- Via automated on 0800 1804696
- Via Text(SMS) to 07786 202503

Exchanging your property with someone else

You can swap with another Chesterfield Council tenant or someone who is the tenant of another landlord such as another local authority or housing association. This is called a mutual exchange.

When you have found someone to exchange with you need to tell the housing options team. We will give you permission to move unless:

- You or the person you are exchanging with have rent arrears
- Your current home would be too big or too small for the people you want to swap with
- Legal action is being taken for arrears or other breaches of the tenancy agreement
- The property is reserved for people with special needs and the person moving in does not have those special needs
Moving out of the area

If you need to move out of the area swapandmove can help you to find someone to exchange homes with. Homeswapper is for social housing tenants (council and housing association tenants) who want a house swap.

To register go to www.homeswapper.co.uk and select the ‘register’ link. Enter some simple details about you, your home and where you want to move to.

When you have found someone to exchange with you tell us. We will give you permission to move unless:

- You or the person you are exchanging with have rent arrears
- Your current home would be too big or too small for the people you want to swap with

Transfer Incentive Scheme

Chesterfield has a shortage of family houses to let. The Council’s Transfer Incentive Scheme offers financial incentives and assistance to existing tenants who are willing to move from a family house to a smaller property.

The scheme has a range of incentive packages. If required, we can help with:

- A payment of money
- Arranging removals
- Decorating
- Re-fitting of carpets
- Repayment of rent arrears

If you are interested in the scheme and would like to know more, please contact the Housing Options Centre.

Ending your tenancy

You must let us know at least four weeks before you want to end your tenancy. You can complete a termination form at the Housing Options Centre or write to us. The minimum four week notice period must start on a Monday and end on a Monday.

Unless we receive your letter or termination form on a Monday, your notice period will not start until the following Monday.

Please note that you are required to pay your rent until the end of your tenancy, however, you can move out before then if you want to. During your notice period we may make an appointment with you to visit your home to inspect the property.

Before you move out, please make sure you have paid your rent up to date. You also need to make sure that the property is clean and you have repaired any damage you are responsible for.

When you move out, please take all your belongings with you. If we have to clear the property or do repairs that you should have done, we can charge you for this.

Pre-termination of tenancy inspection

When you decide to end your tenancy, we may carry out an inspection of your home and garden (if you have one). The inspection is to check that the property has been looked after and not changed in any way without agreement.
Succession in your tenancy

If you die and have been living alone we will sort out everything with your family. If you were the tenant, and your family are still living with you, your tenancy may not end. This is because certain people have the right to take over or ‘succeed’ to the tenancy.

You will find more information about succession in your tenancy agreement or from the Housing Options Centre.

Ensuring your move goes well

There are a number of things that you need to consider to make sure that your move goes well:

The weeks before the move:

- If you are throwing things away, please don't leave large piles of rubbish outside your house.
- Don't draw attention to your move. Avoid theft of your possessions by keeping any packing boxes out of sight.
- If you use a removal firm, make sure it has proper insurance.

The day of the move:

- Ask a friend to keep an eye on your home and possessions.
- Arrange for children and animals to be looked after.
- Make sure the removers secure their van and stop it from being stolen.

Clearing the property

Please leave your property clean and tidy. Make sure you have cleared the property including any sheds and store places.

Remember to return your keys or you may continue to be charged rent.

If you leave your home in a poor condition or containing any items, you may be recharged for the cost of repairs or rubbish removal.
Complaints, comments and compliments

Customer complaints, comments and compliments

We want to provide good quality services for everyone. You can make suggestions about anything that you feel would improve our service through the Council's Complaints, Comments and Compliments Scheme.

You can contact us:

- In person
- By telephoning the main switchboard on 01246 345345 and asking for the relevant service area
- By texting 07960 910264
- By using the Complaints, Comments and Compliments form
- By writing to us at Chesterfield Borough Council, Town Hall, Rose Hill, Chesterfield, S40 1LP
- By email via info@chesterfield.gov.uk
- By visiting our website www.chesterfield.gov.uk, choose the feedback section and select contact us to fill in the form online

A Complaints, Comments and Compliments form is included in this handbook on page XX.

If things go wrong we need to know about them, so that we can put them right. You can make a complaint when you are not happy with the standard of service you have had from us. We will investigate and deal with complaints thoroughly and quickly and make sure you know what is going on at all times. We will treat your complaint as confidential.

Definition of a complaint

The Council needs to be clear about whether it has received a complaint, rather than a request for a service or a request for an explanation of a decision. The following definition, suggested by the Ombudsman, has been adopted:

“A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more members of the public about the Council's action or lack of action or about the standard of a service, whether the action was taken or the service provided by the council itself or a person or body acting on behalf of the council.”

We will use your comments, complaints and compliments in a positive way so that we can learn from our mistakes and improve our services to you.

Treating you fairly

We promise to treat all people fairly. We are committed to ensuring that no individual or group is disadvantaged in the service they receive.

There will be no discrimination against anyone on the grounds of race, colour, gender, marital status, disability, appearance, sexual orientation, lifestyle, perceived or real HIV status, religion or social background.

Under no circumstances will harassment be tolerated.

Services and service provision will be continuously reviewed and developed to meet the needs and requirements of all sections of the community.

We will make every effort to meet any special needs and ensure the service provided is equitable and accessible to all.
# Complaints, comments and compliments form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your details</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
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<td>Telephone</td>
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<td>Email</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Your complaint, comment or compliment**

**Which Council service do you wish to complain about?**

**What do you think the council did wrong or failed to do?**

(Please give as much information as possible, continue on another sheet if necessary)

**What do you think the Council ought to do to put things right?**

**Did you speak to a member of staff first to complain?**

Yes [ ]  No [ ]
Useful contact numbers

Chesterfield Borough Council

Contact us about

- Abandoned vehicles
- Anti social behaviour
- Benefits advice
- Bin collections or damaged bins
- Building control
- Bulk collections
- Business rates
- Business support
- Caravan sites and illegal encampments
- Car parks (except privately run ones)
- Cemeteries
- Commercial waste
- Conservation areas
- Council Tax
- Crematorium
- Dog fouling
- Dog wardens
- Electoral registration
- Economic development
- Energy advice
- Environmental health
- Fly tipping
- Graffiti
- Homelessness
- Housing benefits
- Leisure centres (Queen's Park Sports Centre and Healthy Living Centre, Staveley)
- Licensing
- Litter problems
- Markets (indoor and outdoor)
- Museum
- Noise pollution
- Parks and open spaces
- Pest control
- Planning applications (making or commenting on one)
- Planning enforcement
- Pollution control (air, noise, odour and smoke)
- Private housing advice
- Recycling
- Street cleaning
- Stray animals
- Theatres (Winding Wheel and Pomegranate Theatre)
- Visitor Information Centre
- Welfare benefits
- Council house issues
- Adaptations
- Choice based lettings (On the Move)
- Community involvement
- Decent homes
- Estate management
- Housing solutions team
- Rent payments and arrears
- Repairs/improvements
- Right to buy
- Sheltered housing

Visit: www.chesterfield.gov.uk  Ring 01246 345345  Texting 07960 910264

Contact them by

Visit: www.derbyshire.gov.uk  Ring 01629 533190

Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service

Contact them about all fire and fire safety related issues:

Visit: www.derbyshire.police.uk  Ring 01332 771221 for all non-emergency calls  Ring 999 for emergencies only

Derbyshire Police

Contact them about all crime issues:

Visit: www.chesterfield.gov.uk  Ring 01246 345345  Texting 07960 910264

Contact them by

Visit: www.derbyshire.gov.uk  Ring 01629 533190
Tell us what you think about this handbook

We hope that you have found this handbook and the information that we have provided useful.

It would be helpful if you could complete this short survey about the handbook and let us have your comments and any suggestions on how it could be improved.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is the guide useful? Please comment</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Could you find the information you needed in the guide? Please comment</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there any information that you think should be added to the guide? Please comment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the language used in the guide clear and easy to understand? Please comment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Please make any other comments or suggestion below</td>
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</table>

Send to: The tenant participation team, housing services, Old Brick Works Lane, Stonegravels, Chesterfield, S41 7JD
Your comments will help us to improve the services that we provide to our customers.
We can provide this handbook in a variety of formats and text sizes. If you require it in another format please contact the tenant participation team on 01246 345147

كيا تتم كت آپ كي رساني يه؟ اگر شما تا تماس بگیم! 

你可覺得易於與我們接觸？若不的話，請提出要求。

Czy łatwo jest skontaktować się z nami? Jeżeli nie, powiedz nam o tym!

Siamo accessibili nei vostri riguardi? In caso contrario rivolgetevi a noi!