



# spring.

# Newsletter 2024

## Damp and Mould

We hold a register of all properties suffering from damp and mould and will try to alleviate this problem wherever possible. Please let us know if you have any concerns about damp and mould in your property. We can help with advice about how to limit the production of moisture leading to black mould or provide additional venting or insulation.



## Reasons to attend meetings

We are always asking coop members to remember the promises they made when they were housed to be involved and attend meetings. You may not be aware of some consequences of not attending meetings. Three consequences are 1. Making the future of your own housing insecure as if the Coop meetings are not able to attract enough members to satisfy our rules and ensure meetings are quorate the Coop could be swallowed up by a larger organisation who do not offer such cheap rents or opportunities to shape the organisation. 2. If you need to transfer between properties within the Coop, we will not accept transfer applications from members who have not attended meetings so this may impact on how long you need to wait for a different property. 3. If you are a member who does not attend anything then please do not refer your friends or relatives to apply to the coop as your poor demonstration of commitment to the Coop and to keeping your promises will reflect very badly on them.

## Help dealing with stress and looking after your mental health

The new year can be difficult for some people, and there may be moments when you feel you can't cope or it's too difficult to manage how you feel. During these moments it's important to remember you're not alone and that you deserve support.

If you're struggling with your mental health, then speak to your GP. They act as the gatekeeper for all mental health services that are right for your needs.

**SUPPORT**

Mind- provides advice about understanding and managing stress

Samaritans- provide support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They offer a listening ear to anyone suffering from distress. You can phone them on 016123608090 or 08457 909090 or send an email [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

One of our Coop member's is a professional counsellor and is offering 6 free sessions to BTC member's. Remember to mention when you book that you are from BTC.

**CONTACT PHONE: 0784 762 0103**  
**EMAIL: [INFO@SILVERSETCOUNSELLING.COM](mailto:INFO@SILVERSETCOUNSELLING.COM)**  
**WEBSITE: [WWW.SILVERSETCOUNSELLING.COM](http://WWW.SILVERSETCOUNSELLING.COM)**



**LEWISHAM PLUS BROMLEY CREDIT UNION - OFFERS SAVING PLANS AND LOW COST LOANS TO MEMBERS. TEL: 020 8878 4738**

**[WWW.PLUSCU.CO.UK](http://WWW.PLUSCU.CO.UK)**



## Empty Lofts

We are keen to ensure our properties have up to date loft insulation, unfortunately we are finding many lofts full of possessions. Often tenants tell us that this is not their possessions and that they were all there before they moved into the property. This may well be the case but the impact of this is that it costs us in the region of £900 to clear an attic as we have to pay to dispose of all these possessions on top of the labour to clear it. As this adds a huge amount to the overall costs, we will tackle those lofts last of all. If you have a clear loft let us know and we can prioritise your property to give better thermal efficiency.

## Tripping Hazard

One of the most common electrical faults reported to us is tripping switches. Electrical faults cause switches to trip as a safety device to shut off electricity so that fires are avoided. This is normally caused by an electrical device that is broken for example, a toaster, a kettle, an iron, hairdryers, or hair straighteners.

Before you report electrics tripping to us as a repair, please ensure you have checked that your devices are not causing the problem first. If we are called out you will be recharged for this visit if we trace the cause to be one of your appliances being faulty.

You can easily check this by unplugging all devices, re setting the trip switch (you need to fully turn the switch off before putting back to the on position to re set ) then one by one plug devices back in to see if one of them causes the unit to trip. We would suggest you try the small devices first as they are the most common culprits.

If you call us out and we re charge you this will cost you £65 plus VAT for a day to day repair call or £180 plus VAT if you call out the out of hours service. You have been warned.



**FIND ENERGY SAVING TOP TIPS ON THE ENERGY SAVING WEBSITE**

**THEY OFFER SOME REALLY GOOD ADVICE ON HOW TO KEEP WARM AND SAVE MONEY ON FUEL COSTS.**

**[WWW.ENERGYSAVINGTRUST.CO.UK](http://WWW.ENERGYSAVINGTRUST.CO.UK)**



## Rent Rise

Please remember to inform housing benefit or universal credit of your rent rise. They will not backdate rent rises unless there are extraordinary circumstances. To get a backdated award you may need to work through the appeals process. It is much easier to inform of changes to rent as soon as they happen. If there is a shortfall in benefits being paid you will need to cover this yourself. Please let us know if you need copies of rent rise letters or if we can assist with any other concerns about rent. Our last rent rise was in July and October last year. We still have a few tenants who have not informed benefits over several years of rent increases who are growing arrears on their accounts.

The Easiest and most effective way to pay your rent is by:

[BTC STANDING ORDER LLOYDS BANK DETAILS:](#)  
[30-98-90 17074568](#)

Under your Tenancy Agreement rent should be paid in advance. Remember to include your rent reference number when setting up your standing order.

If you are having difficulty paying your rent please contact BTC office on 0208 691 5898 or via email [housing@brockley.coop](mailto:housing@brockley.coop) to discuss an affordable payment agreement

## Out of hours

we offer an out of hours service to cover emergencies only. This service does not carry out repairs it will only make safe following an emergency such as boarding a window or stopping a leak by turning the water off. **If you use this service inappropriately then this will result in a cost to you of £180 plus VAT.**



## Census Data on Homelessness

In December the Office for National Statistics published their analysis of data relating to hostels and homeless shelters. This data suggests that 26% of homeless persons are non-white, this is significantly higher than the 9% of the population of England and Wales who would self-identify as non-white. Over 44% of homeless person identified themselves as having a disability compared with 19% for the general population. In November the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Community (DLUHC) published a snapshot of rough sleeping. Since 2022 rough sleeping has increased by 27%.



**IF THINGS DON'T FEEL RIGHT, THEY USUALLY AREN'T RIGHT. IF YOU NEED TO TALK TO SOMEONE YOU CAN CALL THE NATIONAL DOMESTIC ABUSE HELPLINE 0808 2000 247 OR CALL THE SAMARITANS (24/7) 116 123.**

## English Housing Survey



The English Housing Survey (EHS) is carried out annually. The headline details of the survey were published in December. Key details include:

- 65% of households are owner occupiers. 19% are private renters and 16% are social rented.
- 5% of the English housing Stock is vacant.
- In the last 10 years the proportion of homes with A-C energy efficiency rating has risen from 19% to 48%.
- 11% of those with mortgages reported difficulties affording repayments compares with 29% private renters and 27% of social tenants

## Money advice



The Co-op has a welfare specialist who can assist you to ensure you are getting all the help you are entitled to. To find out more please call the office to book an appointment. Email: [admin@brockley.coop](mailto:admin@brockley.coop) or phone 020 8691 5898. Hexagon tenants can also contact the Money Matters Team by phoning 020 7867 6699 or email [moneysupport@hexagon.org.uk](mailto:moneysupport@hexagon.org.uk)

## Keep in touch

If you change your telephone number or email address please remember to let us know. We send out a lot of information by email and you may miss out on important news or a really good offer. It is a good idea to let us know 'In Case of Emergency' contact details and for that person to hold a set of your keys. This would stop us having to change locks should there be a leak for example, while you are away. If you are going on holiday let us know who we should contact while you are not available- it could save you a lot of trouble.



## Communal Areas

We carry out regular inspections of the communal areas in our owned and managed properties. The purpose of these inspections is to ensure that the communal areas are: clean and clear, relevant fire action and other notices are in place & that the fire doors are functioning and not damaged. Please work with us to ensure these areas are not used for storage, even on a temporary basis. Hexagon have threatened us with a breach notice due to tenants refusing to remove objects. We have served Tort Notices requiring removal and if objects are not removed, we will be expecting tenants to pay for any removal or storage costs we incur in trying to ensure our properties are safe.

We are required by fire regulations to ensure that nothing is being stored in the communal areas because not only does this provide fuel for fires, but the communal corridor is also the main means of escape in the event of a fire. In thick smoke and emergency lighting you need to know your escape is clear and does not have any added obstacles to prevent you exiting your property.



**THE FIRE BRIGADE CARRY OUT FREE HOME SAFETY VISITS, IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO ARRANGE THIS WITH THEM, THEY CAN BE CONTACTED BY CALLING 0800 028 4428, EMAILING [SMOKEALARMS@LONDON-FIRE-GOV.UK](mailto:SMOKEALARMS@LONDON-FIRE-GOV.UK) OR TEXT SMS 07860 021319**