

# Tenant Handbook

## Flat 17, Minster Court, 2, Lower Brown Street, Leicester

Property Manager contact – [flatqueries@gmail.com](mailto:flatqueries@gmail.com)

Phone – 07307 880499

### **Please note**

These contact points are only monitored between **9 - 5pm on weekdays.**

We will endeavour to get back to you as soon as possible but this may not be the same working day and will depend on the level of urgency of your enquiry.

Please be assured that even if we haven't responded to your message it will have been reviewed (during working hours) and will be actioned.

**Emergency number - 07474 864395 and leave a voicemail**

**Please only use the emergency number if it is an emergency and cannot wait until the next working day**

### **What is an emergency repair?**

Risk to life or substantial damage to the property, a major water leak resulting in flood and immediate danger to the structure, services or fixtures and fittings, major loss of power, total loss of heating and hot water (from November to February)

### **Useful emergency numbers:**

Smell of Gas – call National Grid 0800 111 999

Power cut to street – call Western Power distribution on 0800 6783 105

Fire, Police or Ambulance – call 999

No water supply – call Severn Trent on 0800 783 4444

For issues in the block (excessive noise from other flats, water leaking in) please contact the block manager, Butlins Property Services . Their emergency contact number is displayed on the notice boards in the ground floor hallway.

## **About This Manual**

The purpose of this manual is to answer any basic questions you may have and as a future reference point.

This manual is not intended to override the wording on your lease. The lease is always the legal document under which all parties are bound by.

This manual sets out to bring to your attention some of the more general day to day situations that can and do occur, and the landlord's policies on certain issues.

If there is anything in this manual that you would like to discuss or do not understand please contact the landlord.

This manual is listed in the inventory of the flat. Loss, damage and defacing other than fair wear and tear will be charged at £25.

# Fire



If fire is found or suspected raise the alarm any way possible. **Do not risk your personal safety.** Leave the building immediately, do not stop or go back for personal belongings. Once out of the building, call the fire services. Ensure you know your quickest means of escape.

The building has fire alarms and emergency lighting to guide you to the nearest exit. Your flat has smoke and heat alarms. Minster court operates a “safer to stay” policy. This is where the apartment directly in the seat of the fire is evacuated whilst other residents stay put and are evacuated by the fire and rescue service as required. If you hear the fire alarm sounding, you should keep all entrance doors and windows fully shut in order to restrict the spread of fire and await further instructions from the fire and rescue services.

## **Smoke alarms**

It is your responsibility to confirm and check that the smoke alarms are working in your flat. Each month, please check by pressing the button on the underside of the alarm. It will emit a shrill beep to confirm it is working.

If the battery gets low in the smoke alarm then the alarm will emit a periodic beep. This means you need to replace the battery (9V square battery). Please do not remove the battery without replacing it as this leaves you and your flatmate vulnerable to a fire.

## **Carbon Monoxide Alarm**

We have provided a new carbon monoxide alarm. This is in the kitchen. Please ensure it stays in there and regularly check the battery to ensure it is working.

## **Heaters and Fire Hazards**

No gas or oil (including paraffin) heaters are to be used in the flat as they are dangerous and cause excessive condensation.

Whilst candles, joss sticks, oil burners are not prohibited we would prefer you not to use them.

## **Smoking**



There is an absolute NO smoking policy within the flat or communal halls of the building. It will cause smell and staining to the décor and furniture. If it is found that you have been smoking in the flat then a charge may be made to redecorate.

## **Keys**

You are not permitted to have additional keys cut or hand your keys to someone else without written permission from the landlord. If additional keys are permitted they remain the property of the landlord and should be given back at the end of the lease.

Lost keys are charged at £15/key. If you lock yourself out the following charges will apply

9-5pm weekdays no charge

5pm-9m weekdays - £20

Weekend and bank holidays - £25

After 9pm it cannot be guaranteed that we can be contacted or that we can attend. If you are locked out you will need to contact a locksmith and pay for their services yourself.

## **Legionella & Legionnaires Disease**

Legionnaires' disease is a potentially fatal form of pneumonia caused by the inhalation of small droplets of contaminated water containing Legionella. All man-made hot and cold water systems are likely to provide an environment where Legionella can grow. However, the risks from hot and cold water systems in most residential settings are generally considered to be low owing to regular water usage and turnover. Under health and safety law, landlords have a duty to assess the risk from exposure to Legionella to ensure the safety of their tenants. Given it is a small flat with a small domestic-type water system and there is usually daily water usage which is sufficient to turn over the entire system, having assessed the risk, I consider it to be very low. However, to ensure it remains so, please:

- regularly clean and disinfect the shower head;
- maintain a reasonable temperature setting for water so it is sufficiently hot (there is a knob for setting for the water temperature on the boiler in the kitchen);

- promptly inform us if the hot water does not appear to be heating properly or there appears to be any other problem with the system.

## UTILITIES

### Electricity

Your flat has a consumer unit with circuit breakers. This can be found on the wall just above the flat entrance door. These circuit breakers are designed to cut out rather than ‘blow’ like out fashioned fuses did. Should they cut out then push the relevant breaker back up into the ‘on’ position. The labels should give you an indication of where the issue lies.

The fuse box should then look like this....



They seldom ‘blow’ for no reason and an appliance must have caused it. Try and work out which appliance is causing the issue and then stop using it. If this does not resolve the issue please contact your Landlord.

Your electricity meter is situated in the cupboard outside the front door of the flat, on the left before you head out of the block of flats.

This is the meter.



Make sure the serial number on this picture of the meter corresponds with the serial number of the meter you are reading.

You need to take 3 readings from the meter, Rate 1, 2 and 3, you can scroll through these by pressing the blue display button. If you are not on the all-inclusive bills package, you will need to decide on a provider for your electricity and call them to activate an account. You will need to give them the 3 readings sent to you by the property manager when you moved in.

## Water

Water is metered and the meter is situated above the hot water tank (see picture below) in the cupboard to the right of the bathroom door.

Your main stop cock to the flat is also to be found in this cupboard. Please ensure you know where it is and in an emergency, where there is flooding, please turn the water to the flat off using this.



Stop cock

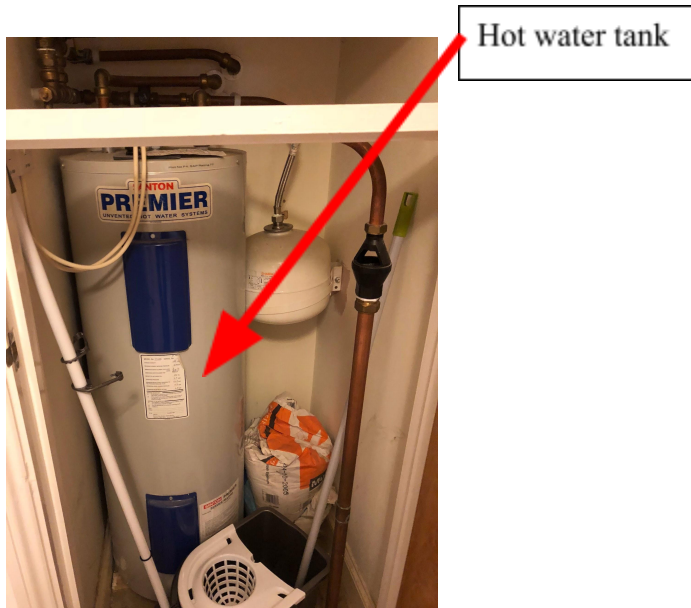
Water meter

## **Gas**

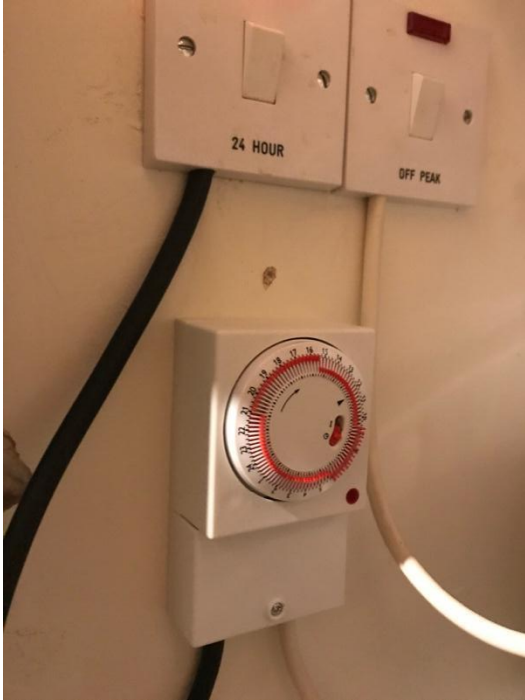
There is no gas supplied to your flat.

## **Hot water**

The hot water tank is situated in the same cupboard as the meter and the stop cock and is operated by the switches to the left of the heater.



For hot water, turn on the 24 hour switch. The tank is fitted with a timer, to enable you to control when the hot water is heated. The red tabs need to be up or nearer the numbers for the water to be timed to be on, e.g. in the picture below, the timer is set for the water to be heated between 15.30 and 21.00



### **Paying your bills**

As we explained in your welcome letter, you are responsible for paying your utility bills – electricity, water and TV licence. Students do not pay council tax (see below) and we provide broadband as part of the rent.

We will read all utility meters with you on the day you move in and take photographs of these for everyone's record. We will then inform all utility providers of your names and that you've moved into the property. They will write to you to set up accounts, although you're welcome to use any utility provider you like.

Whilst every group of tenants is different, in our experience the main source of disagreement in shared houses is managing the utility bills! Arguments over usage and chasing each other for payments does not make for a happy student household.

We will also ask for proof that all utility bills have been paid before we refund your deposit at the end of your tenancy.

For this reason, we would **strongly recommend** you use an unlimited all-inclusive bill service such as split the bills ([www.splitthebills.com](http://www.splitthebills.com)) or glide (<https://glide.co.uk/>). That way there is one fixed payment for each tenant paid directly and they'll be no unexpected costs or surprises at the end of your tenancy.



## **Council Tax**

If you are students then you are exempt from council tax but you have to inform the council that this is the case. **Please speak to your university students' services department about council tax as they will be able to inform the council that you're a student and you're exempt. However, we'd strongly recommend you also email the council and inform them you're students too as otherwise there is a strong chance you'll get inadvertently charged. We see this happen every year. Email [council.tax@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:council.tax@leicester.gov.uk)**

## **Energy saving**

It is in your interest to keep the amount you spend on bills down. In our experience, the main reason for costly bills is careless or over use.

Here are some tips to save energy and water:

- Limit time spent in the shower
- Take a shower instead of a bath
- Wash clothes on a short cycle at a low temperature
- Only fill the kettle with the amount of water you need
- Use the kettle to boil water for pasta/rice/veg instead of the hob
- Do your washing up in a bowl to save on running water
- Report a leak/continuously running water in your toilet/dripping tap
- Ask your energy company for a smart meter to help monitor your energy use
- Wrap up warm instead of immediately turning on your heating
- Use a low setting on your heating
- Make sure windows are closed when your heating is on
- Turn off heating at night and use extra blankets if necessary
- Turn off heating when you are out

## **TV Licence**

If you are watching TV then it is your responsibility to have a TV licence. It is also your responsibility to tell them if you are not watching TV <https://www.tvlicensing.co.uk/>

## **Pets**

Animals and pets of any kind are not permitted to be kept in or about your flat without written permission of the landlords.

## **Subletting**

It is against the terms of your tenancy agreement to sublet the property whilst you are not occupying it. **Any subletting will be a breach and will lead to a termination of your tenancy.** See clause 9.32 - 'Not to assign sublet or part with or share possession of the Premises or any

part of it nor allow the Premises to be occupied by anyone other than the Tenant (and the Permitted Occupier) and no more than the maximum number of permitted persons (the Occupancy)'

### **Rubbish disposal**

Please dispose of your rubbish and recycling regularly into the bins provided in the car park (accessed through the back door). It is a health risk to leave rubbish lying around and can cause infestations of flies and mice.



### **Maintenance and decoration**

This will be carried out by the landlords only, unless you are given written permission to undertake the work yourself.

You are not permitted to fix anything to the walls, doors, ceilings, floors on any other part of the flat or common area. If you need any fixing of any sort please contact us to discuss your requirements. Damage caused by DIY fixings will be deducted from your deposit.

Please keep all rooms and furniture clean to avoid damage. There will be a mid-term inspection halfway through your tenancy where your flat will be inspected to ensure everything is working as it should be and to check the condition of the property.

### **Light bulbs**

All light bulbs are checked when you first move in. You are responsible for replacing any blown light bulbs. Any bulbs that need replacing when you leave the flat will be taken out of your deposit.

### **Neighbourly conduct – Noise**

Please keep noise to a minimum between the hours of 11pm and 8am, to be considerate to your neighbours.

### **Post/Parcels**

Your post will be delivered through your letterbox. If you are not in when a parcel is delivered, a card will be left in your post box advising you on how to have the parcel redelivered or where to collect it from. You can also use one of the local collect/pick-ups depending on who/what you are ordering.

### **When you leave**

Please make sure all bills are paid up to the date you leave.

Your deposit will only be returned once this has been confirmed.

Please return all sets of keys and ensure that all items belonging to the property are returned to their original places. The flat was professionally cleaned before you moved in so please leave it as you found it. If you would like the number of a cleaner, please contact us using the details above.

Make sure all lightbulbs are working. Ensure that the fridge, freezer and all dustbins are empty. If rubbish is left in the flat, a charge for its removal will be deducted from your deposit.

The flat will be thoroughly inspected.

PLEASE LET US KNOW OF ANY ISSUES AS SOON AS THEY ARISE USING THE CONTACT DETAILS ABOVE