

EMERGENCY REPAIRS

If you have an emergency repair out of hours, ring us on our normal number: **020 3866 5999** and you will be diverted to our out of hours service. Please only use this in a genuine emergency—sometimes, this service is misused. If we are called out unnecessarily, we will seriously consider recharging the tenant for the cost of the call out.

CONTACT DETAILS

You can contact us through the channels below:

Bexley Community Housing Association

21 Bourne Road

Bexley

DA5 1LW

Tel: 020 3866 5999

Email: enquiries@becha.org.uk

www.becha.org.uk

Please always make an appointment before coming to our offices. Because we are a small team, we cannot always guarantee someone will be free if you just drop by, but we are always happy to make arrangements.



21 BOURNE ROAD
BEXLEY DA5 1LW
www.becha.org.uk



SAFETY FIRST

This newsletter has been produced following the tragic events in Kensington and Chelsea where a fire in a tower block caused significant loss of life. Everyone in the country has been shocked by such a tragedy. Although BECHA does not have any tower blocks, we felt it was an appropriate time to give our residents some reminders about how to stay safe in your home.

We do not have any high rise flats or, indeed, any properties more than three stories high. Two years ago, we carried out fire risk assessments on all of our properties with communal areas and we implemented all of the recommendations. If you are one of our residents who live in one of these properties, you will know that we visit every month to test the fire alarms. You will also have been given the evacuation procedures which were drawn up with specialist advice.

We frequently visit properties where fire doors have been removed or, if they are still on, the 'closers' have been taken off. We understand that sometimes, the door closers may be a nuisance, but they are there to keep you safe. We also get complaints about noise when we test the alarms but again, these tests are necessary for your safety.

Keep communal areas like the hallways and stairs free from obstacles so everyone can get out quickly in an emergency.

Electrical safety

We have a programme of fitting smoke alarms as part of our electrical upgrade programme. Occasionally, our contractors cannot get access and, despite our writing to the resident or ringing them, we find we cannot get in. Again, it might be a nuisance to have to take a day off work, or disrupt your day by being around to let the contractor in, but we are doing our very best to keep you safe.

If you do not have a smoke alarm please contact us and we will come and inspect your property.

There are a number of things you can, and should do yourselves.

Test your smoke alarms monthly

If you have battery operated smoke alarms, replace the batteries when the alarm emits a warning signal. We are in the process of replacing the battery alarms with hard wired alarms.

Do not disable smoke alarms by taking out batteries or disconnecting them

We use electricity every day but it can be dangerous. Treat it with respect. Electricity is a major cause of accidental fires in UK homes.

DO

- ◆ Regularly check flexible cables on kettles and other similar appliances – look for signs of fraying, general wear and tear, or a loose plug.
- ◆ Be careful when using hand-held electrical equipment -- make sure you switch off and unplug when you have finished. This is important with items that get hot, for instance hairdryers or curling tongs,
- ◆ Call the Fire and Rescue Service immediately if you smell burning that cannot be explained

DON'T

- ◆ Overload any adaptor or socket – especially with appliances that have a high electrical current such as kettles, irons or heaters. It's safer to have extra sockets installed if needed.
- ◆ Put electric heaters near curtains or furniture – or dry clothes on them.
- ◆ Cover the air vents on storage heaters or fan heaters.
- ◆ Trail flexible cables under carpets or rugs.

When you report a repair to us, you want the work done quickly and efficiently. So do we. We recently got together with the contractors who carry out the work in our property and here are some pointers to help you and to help us:

- ◆ If you have reported a repair to us then expect a phone call from an unknown number—we pass your contact details onto our contractors who will phone you for access and if you don't answer the phone they can't get your repair done.
- Please clear the immediate area around where the work is to be done—for example, if you are having windows replaced, clear the windowsill and the surrounding area.
- If you are having new windows, please bear in mind that it may not always be possible to fit your original blinds, particularly if they are quite old or in poor condition.
- Please bear in mind that our contractors need to work in a safe environment—keep children out of the way and please keep any animals under control. If they are working in your garden or outside, please ensure the area is free of animal waste.

If the worst happens..



Plan your escape

Fires happen when you least expect them and you will only have a short time to take action.

Think IN ADVANCE of how you would get out if your normal way out is blocked.

Keep the escape routes clear of rubbish, or bulky items at all times.

Tell everyone in the your home where the door and window keys are kept.

Stay safe when you go to bed

Close all the doors as this helps to prevent fire spreading.

Switch off and unplug electrical appliances except those that are meant to stay on, like the fridge.

SMOKING

This isn't a 'stop' smoking lecture - but if you do smoke, please be very careful.

Always make sure your cigarette is put out properly. If you are smoking outside please take extra care—we've had a couple of fires in our properties where cigarettes have blown, unnoticed, onto piles of rubbish.

