



Network Homes

Safety in your building

4 February 2022

Rainbow House,
Water Lane,
Watford,
WD17 2AP

Dear residents,

Preventing damp and mould in your home, home contents insurance, project update and railway line, and new government resident portal

As we have been remediating the external wall system in colder weather, there is an increased risk of damp in your homes. We want to ensure you know to be on the lookout for any signs of damp or mould so you can report it to us, and also how best to help prevent it occurring. If you find signs of damp, please get in touch with us on customerservice@networkhomes.org.uk.

Top ways to combat damp

I thought it might be useful to include information on the best ways to try and prevent damp in your home. A lack of air flow can cause condensation which can develop into damp and mould, especially behind large pieces of furniture. These are caused by everyday activities in your homes such as cooking, laundry and bathing. Many of you will know these already, but it can be helpful to have a reminder:

- Keep a gap between large pieces of furniture and the walls. Where possible place furniture against internal rather than external walls.
- Regularly pull sofas, beds and other furniture away from walls to check behind them for signs of damp and mould.
- Hang your washing in the bathroom with the door closed and the window open or extractor fan on. You can also look at using a dehumidifier to remove some of the moisture content from the air. As many of you still have limited balcony access or aren't opening windows in the daytime due to the noise of the works, it's important to remember to open windows in the evening, even if only for a short period.
- Proper ventilation - when you're using the kitchen or bathroom, remember to close the doors to other rooms and ventilate by opening windows and using extractor fans. When these rooms are not in use, it's important to keep air circulating around your home.
- When you're filling the bath, close the bathroom door, run the cold water first and then add hot water. This can cut steam by up to 90%. Also, once you've finished bathing, shut the bathroom door and keep the extractor fan running.
- Always cook with the pan lid on and turn the heat down once the water has boiled.
- Mop up any condensation from windows and windowsills.

Again, I'd like to request that you inspect your homes regularly, especially behind furniture and on external walls, and get in touch with us if you see any signs of damp or mould.

The Hive
22 Wembley Park Boulevard
Wembley
HA9 0HP

www.networkhomes.org.uk
customerservice@
networkhomes.org.uk
0300 373 3000

A summary of this letter

Please keep an eye out for signs of damp and mould and report any instances to your resident liaison officer.

Consider getting home contents insurance to give your items further protection.

We're making great progress on the project and our focus now is to agree a method of working with Network Rail regarding the side of the building facing the railway.

The government has launched a resident portal to check information on your building's status in your Building Safety Fund application – your code is **BSFSSG-040**. Visit the portal: www.building-safety-fund-status.communities.gov.uk/.

We're organising a resident webinar for March and will write again once the date is confirmed.

Getting home contents insurance to protect your items

We strongly recommend that you look into getting home contents insurance – this will protect your items in the event of an incident such as flood, fire or significant mould. Residents have access to a subsidised home contents insurance scheme through Network Homes and you can find more information here: <https://www.networkhomes.org.uk/your-home/home-contents-insurance/>. You could also look at popular insurance comparison websites as these could be of use.

I think it is also worthwhile for you to understand the limitations of Network Homes' insurance policy and why it is worthwhile for you to have your own insurance to protect your items. Our insurance policy does not offer a 'new for old' replacement even where we are proved to be at fault. This means you would not be given the cost of a brand-new replacement sofa, but would be given a cost that reflects that the insurer has taken into account the age and use of the sofa. You would therefore be more likely to have to purchase a cheaper or second-hand sofa. Home contents insurance does tend to offer new for old replacement, so you are likely to be better protected.

Project update and railway line

I'm really pleased to say we're on track with removing the insulation and the project has made really good progress. There is one area of the project that is proving challenging and I'm sure you will appreciate that as we work through it. As Rainbow House backs onto the railway line, we have agreed with Network Rail that we will work together, but we still need to finalise the method of doing this. We both aim to cause a little disruption to you as possible, but we do recognise the challenges of this building's location. We must also ensure we don't cause major disruption to this busy trainline.

Government portal for residents

We've been asked to share some information with you by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) which is responsible for the Building Safety Fund. They have launched an online portal for leaseholders and residents to access online information on your building's status in the Building Safety Fund application process. We wrote to you in March 2021 letting you know that the government had approved our application for Rainbow House: <https://www.networkhomes.org.uk/media/11464/20210319-rainbow-fund-application-approved-sent.pdf>.

The unique access code for your building is **BSFSSG-040**. You can access the portal at: <https://www.building-safety-fund-status.communities.gov.uk/>.

DLUHC has stated the intention of the portal is to:

- Improve transparency as updated information will be published on the third week of every month. This will allow you to track the progress of your building's application.
- Provide reassurance that you will not be liable for the cost of the removal and replacement of cladding only.
- For further information, please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/remediation-of-non-acm-buildings#building-safety-fund-bsf-leaseholder-and-resident-service>.

March webinar

We'll be holding a webinar in March and will write to you nearer the time with the date when it is finalised. This will be an opportunity for us to talk through the progress, go into more detail about the railway challenges and will mainly be a check-in for you to ask us any questions you may have.

Further support

If you need further support, you can:

- Go to the London Fire Brigade’s website, which is offering a free online tool which guides you through a fire risk assessment of your home (home visits are available for more vulnerable residents): <https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/safety/the-home/home-fire-safety/>
- Visit our website where we have a building safety section with lots of information and frequently asked questions: <https://www.networkhomes.org.uk/buildingandfiresafety/>
- View resources which may help: <https://www.networkhomes.org.uk/buildingsafetyresources/>
- Remind yourself of our top fire safety tips, including not using BBQs on balconies: <https://www.networkhomes.org.uk/advice/health-and-safety/fire-safety-top-tips/>
- Check our document library for your building’s letters and documents – it takes a little while to load: <https://www.networkhomes.org.uk/rainbowbuildingsafety/>
- Get in touch with us on customerservice@networkhomes.org.uk if you have any questions.

Kind regards

Raj Gandecha
Head of Resident Management (Building Safety)

A reminder

Your building’s fire strategy is **simultaneous evacuation**, which means you must evacuate if you hear the fire alarm, even if you think it is a false alarm.