JW WOOD

COUNTY DURHAM · DARLINGTON

EST 1910

2026 EDITION

FOR TENANTS

# Tenant *Handbook.*

Everything you need for a safe, smooth tenancy: emergency contacts, moving in, your responsibilities, and how to get help whenever you need it.

### Your complete tenancy reference

Keep this handbook to hand throughout your tenancy, from move-in day through to the day you hand back the keys.

**JW WOOD ESTATE AGENTS**
OPENING DOORS SINCE 1910

JWW.CO.UK

A WARM WELCOME

## Welcome to your new home.

Thank you for choosing to rent with JW Wood. This handbook has been designed to give you the essential information about your tenancy and help you make the most of your new property. Please keep it handy for reference throughout your tenancy.

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SECTION 01

# In case of fire or emergency.

In the event of a fire:

- Do not attempt to tackle the fire yourself.
- Evacuate the property immediately and raise the alarm for anyone else in the building.
- Call emergency services on **999**, providing them with your address.
- Do not re-enter the property until it is officially declared safe by the authorities.

### Test your alarms

Regularly test your smoke detectors and notify us immediately if they are not functioning.

## Other emergencies

Some emergencies require immediate action of their own. Here's what to do.

### Gas leak

Turn off the gas supply and call the National Gas Emergency number on 0800 111 999.

### Water leak

Shut off the water supply at the stopcock and try to contain the leak.

### Power outage

Check the trip switches, or contact your electricity provider.

SECTION 02

# How to contact us.

We're here to help you throughout your tenancy. You can reach us using the following methods.

**Website**
www.jww.co.uk

**Office hours**
09:00 to 17:00, Monday to Friday.

**Report a repair**
eu-submit.jotform.com/251314696552359

**Works / jobs email**
jobs@jww.co.uk

## Out-of-hours emergency maintenance

| Contact | Number |
|---|---|
| Durham County Council | 03000 260 000 |
| Darlington Borough Council | 01325 405 000 |
| National Grid Gas Emergency (gas leaks) | 0800 111 999 |
| Power Cut (no power) | 105 |
| Northumbrian Water Emergency (leak / flood) | 0800 393 084 |
| Northumbrian Water (sewer flooding) | 0800 328 7648 |
| Northumbrian Water (general enquiries) | 0345 717 1100 |

**Keep this page handy**
Please save these numbers for use in an emergency.

SECTION 03

# What to do when you first move in.

Moving into a new home is exciting. Here's a quick checklist to help you settle in smoothly.

- [ ] **Inspect the property and confirm the inventory**
  Report any queries to us immediately.

- [ ] **Take meter readings**
  Electricity, gas and water, then set up utility accounts in your name.

- [ ] **Locate the essentials**
  Find the gas valve, water stopcock and fuse box before you need them.

- [ ] **Test the alarms**
  Check your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms are working.

- [ ] **Update your address**
  Update your address with your bank, insurer and subscription providers.

✓ **A little time now saves a lot of hassle later**

Working through this list in your first few days means fewer surprises down the line, and gives us the best chance of putting anything right quickly if something isn't as it should be.

SECTION 04

# Your responsibilities during your tenancy.

Tenants are responsible for maintaining the property in good condition. Your day-to-day duties include the following.

- Replace light bulbs.
- Replace smoke alarm batteries and ensure alarms are working at all times.
- Replace hoover bags and belts.
- Use a drain unblocker for blocked sinks, baths or showers.
- Checking and cleaning washing machine filters.
- Removal of any refuse.
- General upkeep and maintenance of any garden or yard areas.
- Broken windows.
- Any damage beyond fair wear and tear that wasn't noted on the check-in inventory or within the first 7 days of the tenancy.
- Ensure the property is secure at all times.
- Keeping the property smoke-free at all times. Smoking is prohibited inside all properties that we let.

**The next page covers four important points in more detail**

Lost keys, condensation and mould, heating in winter, and HMO fire safety all carry specific responsibilities worth reading properly.

WORTH READING CAREFULLY

# Four things to know in more detail.

### 1 Lost keys or security devices

You are liable for the actual cost of replacing any lost keys or other security devices at the property. If the loss means locks need to be changed, the cost of a locksmith, new lock, and replacement keys for you, your landlord, JW Wood and anyone else requiring keys will be charged to you. Where extra costs are incurred, there's a charge of £15 per hour (inc. VAT) for the time taken replacing lost keys or devices, including attending a call-out for re-entry.

### 2 Condensation and mould

Take reasonable measures to control condensation and black spot mould, common in bathrooms, externally exposed walls and unventilated areas. Regularly clean down any mould, heat the property, open windows and use extractor fans where fitted. Leave breathing space between furniture and walls, avoid drying wet towels and clothes in unventilated areas, and keep trickle vents open where possible. See section 06 for full guidance on preventing and treating condensation and mould.

### 3 Heating your property in winter

Heating your property in winter is essential to keep it in good condition. Especially during cold spells, your heating should be on at least during the coldest times of day to avoid pipes freezing and bursting. If this isn't done and a burst pipe occurs, you could be liable for the cost of any repairs.

### 4 Licensed HMOs

If you live in a licensed house of multiple occupation (HMO), you must ensure fire doors are kept closed at all times, and that other HMO regulations are followed, such as always keeping designated fire escapes clear for safe access.

SECTION 05

# Tenant and landlord responsibilities.

To maintain a harmonious relationship, both parties have roles to fulfil.

### T Tenant responsibilities

- Follow the terms outlined in your tenancy agreement.
- Ensure the property is secure by locking doors and windows.

### L Landlord responsibilities

- Maintain structural integrity, plumbing, heating and electrical safety.
- Ensure appliances provided are in working condition.
- Respond promptly to maintenance concerns.

### i A shared responsibility

A well-kept home works best when both sides play their part. If you're ever unsure whether something is your responsibility or your landlord's, just ask us and we'll clarify.

SECTION 06

# Condensation and mould growth.

Understanding what causes it is the first step to preventing it. Here's what you need to know.

## What is condensation?

There's always some moisture in the air, even if you can't see it. If air gets cold, it can't hold all the moisture produced by everyday activities, and some of this moisture appears as tiny droplets of water, most noticeable on windows on a cold morning. This is condensation. It can also be seen on mirrors after a bath or shower, and on cold surfaces such as tiles or cold walls. Condensation occurs in cold weather, even when the weather is dry.

Look for condensation on or near windows, in corners, and in or behind wardrobes and cupboards. It forms on cold surfaces and in places with little movement of air.

## Problems caused by excessive condensation

Dampness caused by excessive condensation can lead to mould growth on walls and furniture, mildew on clothes and other fabrics, and the rotting of wooden window frames.

> **First steps against condensation**
>
> Dry your windows and windowsills every morning, along with any surfaces in the kitchen or bathroom that have become wet. Wring out the cloth rather than drying it on a radiator.

## First steps against mould growth

First, treat any mould already in your home, then deal with the underlying condensation to stop mould reappearing.

## To kill and remove mould

- Wipe down or spray walls and window frames with a fungicidal wash carrying a Health and Safety Executive (HSE) approval number, and follow the instructions for safe use.
- Dry-clean mildewed clothes.
- Shampoo carpets.
- Do not try to remove mould using a brush or vacuum cleaner.

## Too much moisture being produced at home

Our everyday activities add extra moisture to the air inside our homes. Even our breathing adds some moisture. Here's roughly how much some common activities add.

| Activity | Moisture produced |
|---|---|
| 2 people at home for 16 hours | 3 pints |
| A bath or shower | 2 pints |
| Drying clothes indoors | 9 pints |
| Cooking and use of a kettle | 6 pints |
| Washing dishes | 2 pints |

## How can you help?

- Hang washing outside to dry where possible, or in the bathroom with the door closed and a window slightly open or extractor fan on. Avoid radiators or radiant heaters.
- If you use a tumble dryer, make sure it's vented to the outside or is a condensing type.
- Cook with pan lids on, turn the heat down once water has boiled, and use the minimum amount of water. Switch on any kitchen extractors.
- When filling a bath, run the cold water first, then add the hot. It reduces the steam that leads to condensation.
- Avoid using a gas cooker to heat your kitchen, as it produces moisture when burning gas.

SECTIONS 07 & 08

# Reporting a maintenance issue.

A couple of quick checks first, then our simple process for getting it sorted.

## Before you report an issue

- Ensure the issue isn't caused by a blown fuse or tripped switch.
- Verify the appliance is correctly connected or powered.
- Bleed radiators to resolve heating problems.
- Clear blockages from sinks and drains using household tools.

## How to report a maintenance issue

1. Identify the issue in detail and take photographs.
2. Use our online portal at go.jww.co.uk/maintenance.
3. Provide your contact details and your availability for an inspection or repair.
4. You can report more than one issue at a time.

WRAPPING UP

# Visits, complaints and useful links.

## Routine and safety property visits

We carry out routine property inspections to make sure everything is in order.

- We'll notify you at least 24 hours in advance before visiting.
- Inspections focus on health, safety and the condition of the property.
- These checks let us address any issues early, before they become bigger problems.

## Complaints procedure

We aim to provide the highest level of service. If you're ever unhappy with something, please follow our complaints procedure, which you'll find on our website.

## Useful links

- Gas Safety: www.gassafety.com
- Electricity Emergencies: www.powercut105.com
- Durham Council Tax: www.durham.gov.uk/counciltax
- Darlington Council Tax: www.darlington.gov.uk/council-tax

### Thank you

Thank you for taking the time to read through this handbook. If you have any questions, please reach out to our team. We're here to make sure your tenancy is as smooth and enjoyable as possible.

The information in this handbook was correct at the time of publication (2026 edition). Contact numbers, procedures and links may change; please visit jww.co.uk for the latest version. JW Wood Estate Agents is a trading name of JW Wood Ltd.

# Questions about your tenancy? *Let's talk.*

Five branches across County Durham and Darlington, with dedicated lettings teams in Durham and Darlington. However you prefer to reach us, we're here to help.

### Durham (Sales)
0191 386 9921
durham@jww.co.uk

### Durham (Lettings)
0191 383 0184
lettings@jww.co.uk

### Bishop Auckland
Sales & Lettings
01388 604 273
bishop@jww.co.uk

### Chester-le-Street
Sales & Lettings
0191 388 7245
chester@jww.co.uk

### Consett
Sales & Lettings
01207 502109
consett@jww.co.uk

### Darlington
Sales & Lettings
01325 485 151
darlington@jww.co.uk