



# THE BEDFORD ESTATES



RESIDENTS' HANDBOOK

## WELCOME



Welcome to The Bedford Estates Bloomsbury, a place where history and tradition meet modern living. As a valued resident, you are an integral part of a community that spans centuries, with buildings and landscapes that tell stories of the past while embracing the future.

This handbook is designed to provide you with all the necessary information to make your residency as comfortable and enjoyable as possible. From understanding your lease agreement to exploring the amenities and services available to you, we aim to ensure that your experience with us is nothing short of exceptional.

We encourage you to read through this guide carefully and reach out to our management team should you have any questions or need further assistance.

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- Contacting The Bedford Estates
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Not everything will be applicable to you and your occupancy, but I would urge you to read the whole document and if you have any queries, please do not hesitate to call us.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Archer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

**Steve Archer**  
Head of Residential

## **YOUR BUILDING**

### **1. Fire Safety**

#### **Fire Alarms**

- We would encourage you to review the Emergency Procedure document and identify your escape routes, nearest call point and the Assembly point for your buildings if ever there was a fire. These documents are issued annually to all residents. If you require a copy, please contact The Estate.
- The fire alarms are tested weekly, by the Bedford Estates.
- Maintenance information is displayed on the fire panel

#### **Fire Panels – False Alarms**

- The Estate must be informed of every incident concerning a fire alarm activation.
- Please contact The Estate immediately on the in hours or out of hours number.
- It is important that you make all residents aware of what to do in the event of a fire.
- In the event of an accidental fire alarm activation, residents are reminded that they must inform The Estate upon any activation. This is to ensure that the panel is correctly reset to remain active.

#### **Fire Doors**

- The front door of the flat is required to be checked annually by The Estate.
- Leaseholders are responsible for front door upkeep and maintenance.
- For more information on flat front doors see appendix 4

### **Evacuation in an Emergency**

- A Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) is needed for individuals who might require assistance evacuating a building in an emergency, including those with mobility, sensory, cognitive, or mental health impairments, or temporary conditions that affect their ability to evacuate. If you believe that you might require assistance evacuating your building in an emergency, please contact The Estate.

### **2. Common Areas**

- Door Mats should be kept inside your front door as to not present a trip hazard on the corridors or walkways
- Shoe racks are not permitted outside on the landings or corridors
- Prams are not permitted to be left in the common parts corridors. We accept that there may be occasions where temporarily left in the common parts, but this should never be for any more than a few minutes.
- Residents are requested to regularly check for any post.
- If you require access to the electrical cupboards, please contact your property manager.
- Please do not store or place plant pots anywhere in the communal areas. This includes window ledges and balconies.

### **3. Bikes**

The Estate requests that bikes are not brought into the building.

- Where they are kept inside your flat, please be aware that oil and grease may fall onto common area carpeted areas and stain the fabric.
- Bikes must not be kept in the common areas.
- Bikes may be stored in designated areas such as vaults or assigned storage areas, where it has been possible to locate one.
- The London Fire Brigade have issued a safety note on the charging of e-bikes and e-scooters following a number of fires across London. Here is a link to their website: <https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/safety/lithium-batteries/charging-electric-bike-and-electric-scooter-lithium-batteries/>
- The key information to follow if you own one of these devices is as follows:
  - Consideration is made that The Estate does not permit the use of these bikes or storage within common areas of the building.
  - Please check that your batteries are not damaged and if they are please replaced immediately.
  - Batteries can get warm during use, so please allow them to cool down before attempting to charge and please do not leave a warm battery unattended.
  - Batteries must always be charged on a hard and flat surface where heat can dissipate.
  - Never leave a battery charging or unattended whilst you are asleep.
  - Ensure you do not Store an E-Bike or E-Scooter on a route that prevents your escape in the event of a fire.

### **4. Balconies**

- Most of the balconies on The Estate's buildings were installed for aesthetic purposes only and not intended for use or access. If you require further guidance on the use of a balcony, please contact your property manager.

### **5. Gutter cleaning**

- The Estate is responsible for cleaning the gutters to your building. This is an essential task as it reduces the risk of flooding during heavy downpours. Access to the roof areas in many of our buildings is via the top floor flat.

### **6. Window Cleaning**

- The Estate cleans street facing windows up to the third-floor level in most cases. All other external windowpanes are not cleaned. The flat resident is responsible for cleaning internal windowpanes.

### **7. Pest Control**

- The Estate is responsible for pest control in the common areas of your building. Please report any sightings to your property manager. For guidance and advice on how you can help reduce the risk of pests in the building see 'Pest Prevention' on pages 13 of this handbook.

## **8. Water Hygiene.**

- Please see appendix 2. 'Guidance on Legionnaire's Disease'.
- As a general principle, outlets on hot and cold-water systems should be used at least once a week to maintain a degree of water flow and minimize the chances of stagnation – which can cause bacteria build up. If you are planning on being away from your home for an extended period, you need to take steps to ensure that water is not allowed to stagnate within the system. If you are a Renter, contact your landlord – who can help arrange for the water outlets to be regularly flushed whilst you are away.
- Leaseholders will need to implement a suitable flushing regime or other measures such as draining the system if it is to remain vacant for long periods.

## **9. Waste Management**

- Refuse collection and recycling services are provided by The London Borough of Camden (LBC).
- Please ensure that you follow LBC advice when disposing of your rubbish. Rubbish & food waste that is left out at the wrong time or location may not be collected.
- For further guidance please refer to <https://www.camden.gov.uk/recycling-and-rubbish-collections>.

## **10. Pets**

- Most of The Estate's tenancy agreements and leases prohibit the keeping of pets in flats. For further guidance please speak with your property manager.

## **11. Out of hours Emergency Repairs**

- Guidance on what to do in an emergency can be found here on The Estate's website here: <https://www.bedfordstates.com/customer-information/emergency-contacts/>

## **ADVICE FOR RENTERS**

Now that you have moved into your new property, please find outlined below some of the steps we recommend you take as you settle in.

### **1. Paying the rent:**

- We advise that you set your banking order to leave your account 2 days before the rent due date.

Our bank account details are:

Account Name: Bedford Estates Bloomsbury Limited

Bank Name: Lloyds Bank PLC

Sort Code: 30-40-65

Account Number: 00999354

### **2. Deposit:**

- At the start of the tenancy, you will be required to pay a security deposit, which will be held against any damage that is not considered 'fair wear and tear'. This will be registered with a Government Approved Tenancy Deposit Scheme within 30 days of the commencement of your tenancy and a certificate will be issued, as per the terms of your tenancy agreement.

### **3. Check-In Inventory:**

- Our agents will arrange for an inventory to take place prior to your move in, we will endeavour to have this available to you prior to move in or soon thereafter.
- The purpose of the inventory is to: Detail the condition and contents of the property; and give us a record to help determine if any charges are required against your deposit at the end of your tenancy. Please read the inventory carefully, it will be assumed that you are in agreement with the inventory clerk's report unless you advise us within a 72-hour period that you are not.

### **4. Keys:**

- We will provide you with one set of keys for each person named on the tenancy agreement. We will keep one set of master keys for management, emergencies or gaining access with your permission.

#### **Lost keys/fobs and lock changes:**

- If you lose or damage any keys, you must pay for their replacement. You may come and borrow the management set of keys if you have locked yourself out; please bring a form of photo ID and return them back within one hour.

- Your tenancy agreement does not allow you to change the lock(s) without prior permission.

## **5. Moving In:**

- It is sensible to familiarize yourself with the following as soon as you move in:
  - The location of your fuse board
  - The location of your gas tap
  - The location of your water stop cock
  - The emergency contact details for The Estate.
- Please check you have organised the following where they are required:
  - Council Tax registration
  - Utilities (Gas, Water, Electricity)
  - Telephone (if required) & Broadband
  - TV Licence
  - Contents Insurance (please note you must insure your own contents)

## **6. Taking Meter Readings:**

- These will be taken by the inventory clerk at the start and end of your tenancy and recorded in both the check in and check out report. This will enable you pass on information to energy providers and ensure that you are paying for the use of these services for your tenancy only.

## **LIVING IN YOUR PROPERTY**

In this section you will find a guide to maintenance for your home and what to do when encountering basic problems. Please note that demonstrations of most of these tips are available through a simple Internet search and that manuals to most appliances can be found online with the make and model number.

### **1. Looking After your Home:**

- You are responsible for keeping your home in good condition. To help you do this it is best to carry out small tasks and routine checks to prevent the build-up of problems.
- Wipe down all areas affected by condensation on a regular basis, and if any mould has formed, clean it off using a solution of 1 part bleach to 4 parts water, or an appropriate cleaning product. See appendix 5 for further advice on dealing with condensation.
- Limescale can be removed from baths, sinks, shower heads and taps with a de-scaler available from most supermarkets and DIY stores.
- Blockages in kitchen sink waste pipes can be prevented by flushing through an appropriate drain cleaning product on a regular basis (available from supermarkets and DIY stores).
- It is your responsibility to replace light bulbs and change batteries for smoke alarms and CO detectors during your tenancy. See appendix 6 'Changing Light Bulbs & Batteries'.
- Carry out regular Maintenance Washes and checks to keep your washing machine and dishwasher clean and in good working order.
- Defrost your freezer compartment regularly. Letting ice build-up could lead to your freezer not functioning properly or efficiently.

### **2. Turning off Electricity:**

- If you need to turn off all electricity (e.g. due to a leak), use the main ON/OFF switch on the electricity consumer unit (Fuse Box).

### **3. Checking your Fuse Box:**

- Familiarise yourself with your fuse box, which should be located close to the main point of entry for electricity in your home (this may in fact be in a communal hallway). It will either have fuses or trip switches.
- Modern electric circuits are fitted with circuit breaker fuse system. A switch will trip, and the circuit will be broken, stopping power the circuit if a fault develops. Older units will have fuses that may need to be replaced.
- If in doubt, please contact your property manager.

#### **4. When a switch is tripped:**

- Open the cover on the fuse box to expose the trip switches. Check which switches have tripped to the OFF position and put them back to the ON position. For more detail, please refer to any user manual supplied.

#### **5. Overloading Plugs:**

- A common cause of electricity trips or faults is overloading plugs and blowing fuses. Therefore, do not use multiple adaptors on single plug sockets and be sure to check the appliance fuse. If a contractor is called out due to this kind of user error, you are likely to be liable for the cost.

#### **6. Leaking, burst and frozen pipes.**

- Please contact your property manager as soon as possible or the out of hours number and take the following precautions.

##### **When pipes leak:**

- Place a dish or bowl underneath the leak. Pull back and carpets and lay down towels to absorb the dampness.

##### **When pipes burst:**

- Turn off the water at the main stopcock and switch off any water heaters. Open all taps to drain water from the system. Can it be isolated? Some appliances have their own isolation valve which can be used these to stop their water supply.

##### **If electric fittings get wet:**

- Do not touch. Turn off electricity at the Fuse Box. See above.

#### **7. Controlling your central heating**

- During freezing spells, keep the heating on to prevent the pipes from freezing. Turning the thermostat down to 10C can prevent this when you are out.

##### **How to control the temperature:**

- The thermostat maintains the temperature in your property. To set it, turn the dial so that the arrow or marker indicates the temperature desired. A comfortable temperature is between 18C and 22C.
- On many systems, the temperature of individual radiators can be controlled via the turn knobs on the side.

### **How to set a digital timer:**

- Check the clock is showing the correct time. If not, put the timer switch to 'clock' and adjust the time. Reset the timer switch to 'auto' and set the 'heating' and 'hot water' switches to come on once, twice or stay on all the time as you require.

### **How to set a clock timer:**

- Turn the clock until it is showing the correct time. Decide when you want the heating to come on and off and arrange the pins or arrows for those times.

## **8. Condensation**

- Condensation occurs when there is an excessive build-up of moisture in the air. There is always moisture in the air, but people create additional moisture in their homes by:
  - Cooking or boiling water; Taking Baths or showers; Drying clothes indoors.
  - Condensation is worsened by extreme differences in temperature, such as the outside temperature in cold weather versus the inside temperature in your home. This is why condensation is usually worse in the colder season.
  - If condensation cannot dry out, it will cause mould on walls, in cupboards and on windowsills, and mildew to form on clothes and upholstery.

There are things you can do to stop condensation forming:

### **Produce less moisture:**

- Cover pans and turn down the heat when boiling; switch off boiling kettles; and dry clothes outside, or in a well-ventilated room. Ventilate to let moisture out. Open a kitchen or bathroom window to let steam escape (in conjunction with the use of an extractor fan), and open windows for a while each day to allow air to circulate through your property.
- Keep your home warm. Drastic changes in the ambient temperature in your home can lead to more condensation. Wipe down anywhere where moisture settles.

## **9. Washing Machine**

- To keep your washing machine in good running order, you should carry out a maintenance wash once a month, to dissolve any mould or soap scum build up in the machine.
- Tip: Leave the door on your washing machine open for a while after a wash to prevent damp build up.

### **Maintenance washes:**

- These should be carried out once a month to keep your machine in clean working order. They should also be carried out if you find any mould building up in your machine, or the machine starts to smell damp.
- Do not put any clothes in the machine. Fill the soap dispense with soda crystals, not normal detergent. (Soda Crystals are available from most supermarkets and DIY Stores). Set your machine on a hot wash and allow it to complete the cycle.

### **Washer Dryer Notice**

- Please be aware that most washer dryer units cannot take the same load in washing as in drying. Always refer to the user guide and do not exceed the recommended limits.
- Removing mould: Black mould can form on the door seal, particularly if you don't allow the machine to dry out between washes, or you don't carry out maintenance washes. This is best removed by using rubber gloves and making sure you remove all mould from the layers of inner and outer door seals, followed with a maintenance wash. see above.

### **Checking the pump filter:**

- Many problems, such as the washing machine not draining properly or completing its cycle are caused by foreign objects finding their way into the pump area. You should ensure that all small objects are removed from pockets to prevent this from happening.
- Please refer to the appliance handbook to gain access to the pump area and remove such objects and be advised that any damage to the appliance caused by this sort of item will be charged to you.
- If you cannot gain access to the pump filter or you are unable to carry out the handbook instructions, contact your property manager, who will arrange for an engineer to attend.
- If a contractor is called out due to this kind of user error, you are likely to be liable for the cost.

### **Clearing blockages**

- Most blockages are caused by a build-up of foreign objects, such as food, grease or hair in your drains. You should use a drain cleaning product every so often to clear the drains, available from most Supermarkets and DIY Stores.
- If a blockage is caused by your misuse in this way, you are likely to be held liable for the full cost of clearing the blockage. Therefore, you should attempt to clear any blockages yourself before contacting your property manager.
- If more than one fitting is blocked:

- The problem may be in the soil stack or the main drain. This will need to be cleared by one of our contractors. Call your property manager during office hours.

## **10. Changing lightbulbs and batteries**

- It is your responsibility to change the bulbs and batteries in your property. Normal and halogen bulbs can be purchased from most hardware shops.

### **Changing bulbs:**

- Turn off the light at the switch. To be safe, switching off the 'lights' circuit on your fuse box is the safest option. Give the bulb time to cool. Remove the bulb with a light but firm grip. It is a good idea to use a cloth glove or other soft glove to avoid direct contact with the bulb. Replace with the same bulb type and turn the system back on.

### **Changing batteries:**

- You should carry out regular checks on your smoke detectors using the test button to ensure they are working. Most of them are fitted with readily available 9 Volt batteries (the rectangular ones) and are easily replaced by opening the device.

## **11. Pest Prevention**

- It is your responsibility to carry out pest control within your home. Traps and bait can be bought from some Supermarkets, or DIY Stores. If the problem persists, please contact your property manager during office hours so we may arrange a pest controller visit.
- Mice are one of the most common types of pest in London and it can be very difficult to exclude them from properties, particularly conversion flats and terraced houses, as there are so many points of entry.
- To lessen the likelihood of mice in your property you should ensure that:
  - Food is stored in sealed containers and put away in cupboards/on Shelves away from the floor.
  - Food crumbs are cleaned away immediately. Waste is kept in closed bins and removed from the property regularly for the local authority waste collection service to remove. Check your local authority website for a calendar of their collection service.

## **12. Trouble shooting**

My electric oven has stopped working:

- You may have accidentally re-set the timer. Check and re-set your clock. If there is no power at all, check your fuse box to be sure that the circuit hasn't been broken. See 'Checking your Fuse Box'

My washing machine has stopped draining, or has stopped mid-cycle:

- Your pump filter is probably blocked. Drain the machine and check the filter for foreign objects. See 'Washing Machines' for how-to guide

My sink is draining slowly/not draining at all:

- This is likely to be caused by a build-up of food and limescale. Buy a sink/drain unblocking liquid to remove the blockage. See 'Clearing Blockages'

My dishwasher isn't washing my crockery properly:

- You may need to replace your rinse aid or dishwasher salt. Both can be bought from supermarkets and are easily topped up. Check your appliance manual for further info.

My central heating isn't working properly:

- Have you checked that the thermostat isn't set too low and that the timer is set correctly on the boiler? See 'Controlling Central Heating'

### **13. Change Of Tenancy**

During your tenancy period, there may arise a situation whereby one of the joint tenants on the agreement wishes to move out whilst the others remain. This may be possible, at The Estate's discretion, but the following steps have to be followed in order to do so:

- It would be your responsibility to find a suitable replacement tenant; either a full time working individual who would be able to pay your share of the rent or student with a UK Homeowner Guarantor. He/she will have to undergo reference checks and pay the reference and administration charges of £180 inc VAT to The Estate.
- The incoming tenant will have to agree to us in writing the state of the original inventory as agreed with the original tenants.
- Once the new tenant has been successfully referenced and the Landlord has agreed to the change of tenancy, all the tenants will have to sign a new contract, at a cost of £90 in administrative fees.
- The incoming tenant would have to arrange with the outgoing tenant to pay his or her share of the deposit to him/her. The Estate does not get involved in the change of deposit transfer.
- Once we receive confirmation from the outgoing tenant that his / her share of the deposit has been repaid, we will issue a new Deposit Protection Certificate.
- Please note that until a new contract has been signed, the original contract is still valid and its named tenants are bound by it for all Rent and Bills.

## **14. Renewing A Contract**

- At least two months prior to your lease expiring, your property manager will be in contact with you to advise whether your landlord has agreed to another term. Please respond with your wishes either way as, should you not wish to stay on, the property would need to be remarketed.

## **15. Ending the tenancy**

- Should you wish not to renew your lease at the property, please find below a checklist of what to do to ensure a smooth running of this process.
- Take necessary meter readings and provide these to the utility companies – you will be held liable for any unpaid bills during your tenancy term.
- Provide The Estate with your final utility bills and/or providers details (Council, gas, electricity and water)
- Cleaning and check out procedures – our team will be in touch to arrange for a check out. Please have the property returned to the same state of cleanliness as it was handed over in.
- Your deposit cannot be refunded until the following documents have been emailed to your property manager.
- Copies of final PAID bills, gas, electricity, water, council tax
- Your bank account details for the return of your deposit.
- Your forwarding address
- Once we have received these documents and the check-out report has been received, we will email you any deductions which we feel need to be made from your deposit for your approval.
- Please note that the most common deduction is the professional end of tenancy clean having not been carried out.

## **APPENDICES**

1. Condensation in Your Home
2. Guidance on Legionnaire's Disease
3. Home Fire Safety Guide
4. Fire Doors
5. Gas and Electrical checks: Advice for Leaseholders



# THE BEDFORD ESTATES

## How to cope with Condensation in your home

Condensation can cause dampness in your home. This can lead to patches of mould on walls and on clothes and furnishing. The advice below can help solve this problem.

### **Why does condensation occur?**

Warm air can hold more water vapour than cold air. When moist, warm air meets a colder surface the water vapour cools and appears as drops of water. This is condensation. The warmer you keep your home the less likely you are to get condensation.

### **When does condensation become a problem?**

All homes suffer condensation at sometime – usually when large amounts of steam and moisture are being produced. This can happen when you prepare a meal, when you have a bath or shower, or when you wash and dry your clothes.

It is quite normal to find windows misted over in the morning, however if your home always has condensation the following advice will help.

### **How do I know if its condensation?**

Other kinds of dampness are often confused with condensation. Rain penetration, leaks from your plumbing system and central heating, or rising damp often leave a stained line.

Condensation will often be found in the following places:

- On walls that are in the shade;
- On walls that face north;
- In the outer corners of rooms;
- In unventilated cupboards;
- Under worktops;
- Near cold water pipes;
- In places with little or no air movement;

It is worth checking all pipes for leaks. Check under the sinks, overflows from cisterns and tanks, behind the W.C. and radiator connections. Have a look outside for missing roof tiles, leaking gutter joints and loose fitted rainwater downpipes.

### **What can I do about it?**

You can reduce condensation by keeping your home warm. In the coldest weather do not let the temperature of the home drop away. Once dwellings get very cold, they can take a long time to warm up.



# THE BEDFORD ESTATES

## **Ventilation**

You need adequate ventilation in your home to stop condensation from forming. Draughts are unwelcome, but some ventilation is essential. Try to remember the following:

- Even in winter, when the glass is misted over, open the window a little until it is cleared. Don't let it build up;
- Try to ensure that draught stripping to doors and windows allows a small amount of air to get through;
- Make sure window ventilators are opened when you sleep at night;
- Ventilate kitchens and bathrooms when in use;

## **Drying clothes**

When drying clothes indoors, you should open windows. This increases air circulation. If you are using a tumble dryer that has no vent to the outside then additional ventilation is essential.

## **Doors**

Keep kitchen, utility room, bathroom and shower room doors shut when in use and make sure there is plenty of ventilation. Otherwise moist air will spread throughout your home

## **Extractor fans**

If you have an extractor fan fitted, use it as soon as you start cooking, washing clothes or bathing. Use it when windows start to get steamed up.

## **Kettles and Pans**

Don't boil kettles and pans for longer than necessary.

## **Cupboards and Wardrobes**

Try not to overfill cupboards and wardrobes, allowing air space between stored items and at the back of shelves. Allow air circulation space at the back of wardrobes

## **Mould Growth**

Mould growth usually appears because of condensation and lack of ventilation. Mould growth can be removed by washing down the affected areas with a fungicidal solution. You can buy these at your local DIY store.

## Guidance on Legionnaires' Disease for tenants and residents of rented domestic accommodation

Domestic hot and cold water systems can provide an environment where Legionella bacteria can grow. This can cause Legionnaires' Disease which is a potentially fatal form of pneumonia caused by inhalation of small droplets of contaminated water containing Legionella bacteria. This advice sheet gives tips for residents of rented domestic accommodation such as houses, bungalows and flats in small blocks.

### Most importantly, make sure that:

- Hot water in the system remains hot
- Cold water is kept cold
- The water is kept circulated



### In particular, it is important that you –

- **Do not** interfere with the settings on your boiler or hot water system. The hot water should be set so that the water is heated to a minimum 60°C.
- **Tell your landlord if:**
  - The cold water is still running warm after you have initially run off any water which may have accumulated in the pipes. It should not be above 20°C.
  - There are any problems, debris or discolouration in the water.
  - The boiler or hot water tank are not working properly, particularly if the water is not coming out of the taps at a sufficiently high temperature. It should come out at a temperature of 50°C after it has run for a minute at the latest.

### Where showers are fitted –

- If they are used only occasionally then flush them through by running them for at least two minutes every week. Keep out of the way whilst this is being done as far as possible.
- Clean the shower head periodically, descale and disinfect it. This should be done at least every three months.

Where a property is left vacant for seven days or more, e.g. student accommodation over the summer holidays, make sure that when it is occupied again at the outset both hot and cold water systems are flushed through by running all outlets for at least 2 minutes. It is the occupiers responsibility to ensure that the system is flushed weekly when empty and to notify their landlord.

Legally, it is your landlord's responsibility to take precautions to prevent Legionella being present in the hot or cold water system but tenants and residents also have an important part to play in taking these simple and practical precautions.



# Home fire safety guide

## PREVENTING FIRE

Prevent a fire starting in your home:

- Never smoke in a chair if you think you may doze off, never smoke in bed.
- Do not leave a lit cigarette, pipe or candle unattended.
- Use deep ashtrays so that cigarettes can not roll out, and don't throw hot ash into a waste paper basket.
- Keep matches and lighters well out of the reach of children.
- Sit at least three feet away from heaters. Never put a heater near clothes or furnishings.
- Don't overload electrical sockets.

### REMEMBER

Don't smoke in bed.

Keep matches safe.

Don't sit too close to a fire.

Don't overload electrical sockets.

Avoiding damage and injury from fire at home:

- Fit a smoke alarm, this gives extra time for you and others to get out safely.
- A smoke alarm is cheap and simple to install. Make sure it is a good one and complies with the British Standard or equivalent type of international standard. They are widely available from DIY and hardware shops.
- If you have difficulties, local voluntary organisations or the fire brigade may be able to fit the alarm for you.
- Some smoke alarms for people with poor hearing set off a vibrating pad or flashing light. The vibrating pad is particularly useful for deaf-blind people.

### REMEMBER

Fit smoke alarms.

Check it is an approved standard.

## BEDTIME ROUTINE

Before going to bed:

- Make sure the cooker and heaters are turned off.
- Rake out open fires and put a fire guard in place.
- Switch off and unplug all electrical appliances except those that are meant to stay on, like a video or fridge.
- Ensure you have access to a phone.
- Empty ashtrays, making sure the contents are cold.
- Close all the doors as this prevents fire spreading.
- Always turn underblankets off when you get into bed and never use an electric blanket and hot water bottle together.
- Have your electric blankets checked by an expert at least every three years.

### REMEMBER

Check everything is safe before you go to bed.

Switch off electric blankets when in bed.

Have electric blankets checked regularly.

## KITCHEN SAFETY

Prevent a fire starting in the kitchen:

- Never fill a pan more than one third full of fat or oil.
- Never leave the pan unattended with the heat on.
- Dry food before placing it in the hot oil – wet food will cause the oil to bubble up and possibly spill over the edge of the pan.

If the pan does catch fire:

- Don't move it or throw water on to it.
- Turn off the heat if it is safe to do so.
- If in any doubt, leave the room, close the door, shout a warning to others and call the fire brigade.

### REMEMBER

Don't overfill pans and deep fat fryers.

If the oil catches light – turn off the heat.

## ESCAPING FROM FIRE

Planning your escape:

- You will only have a short time to get out, so plan your escape route rather than waiting until there is a fire.
- Think of another way out in case the normal one is blocked.
- Keep the escape routes clear of obstructions at all times.
- Tell everyone in the house where the door and window keys are kept.
- Keep valuable documents in a metal fire-proof box.

Escaping from fire:

- Fire can strike when you least expect it, often during the night.
- If your smoke alarm goes off while you are asleep, don't investigate. Shout to wake everyone up, and get them out as quickly as possible. Never assume that it is a false alarm.
- Dial 999 if you have time.
- Check closed doors with the back of the hand. If they are warm do not open because this means there is a fire on the other side.

- Smoke and fumes can also kill. If there is a lot of smoke, get down as near to the floor as possible where the air will be cleaner.
- Don't rush, keep calm and get everyone out as quickly as possible.
- Don't stop to pick up valuables.
- If your escape is blocked by fire it may be safer to stay put until the fire brigade arrives. Close the door and use towels or sheets to block any gaps to stop the smoke. Go to a window, call for help and wait to be rescued.

### REMEMBER

Make an escape plan.

Keep keys to window locks by the windows.

Get everyone out as soon as possible.

Dial 999.

Crawl under smoke and fumes.

Block gaps around doors if trapped by fire.

## ESCAPING FROM FIRES IN FLATS AND MAISONNETTES

If you live in a flat or maisonette please follow this extra advice:

- Flats and maisonettes are built to give you some protection from fire. Walls, floors and doors will hold back flames and smoke for a time. If there is a fire elsewhere in the building you're usually safer staying in your flat unless heat or smoke is affecting you.
- If there is a fire in your flat, leave the building closing the door to your flat behind you.

- If there is a lot of smoke, crawl along the floor where the air will be clearer.
- If you live in a building with a lift, do not use it if there is a fire, go down the stairs instead.
- Call 999 from any phone. Give them the address including the number of your flat, and tell them which floor the fire is on.

### REMEMBER

Communal staircases, corridors and balconies should be kept clear of all combustible material, ie prams, bicycles.

Domestic waste, ie rubbish should be removed to the appropriate refuse area immediately and not stored in communal areas.

**KEEP YOUR COMMUNITY SAFE & ND**

[www.london-fire.gov.uk](http://www.london-fire.gov.uk)



# THE BEDFORD ESTATES

## FIRE DOORS

Fire doors are crucial life safety devices, designed to restrict the spread of smoke and fire for a substantial period of time.

### All residents must ensure:

- Fire doors are kept shut when not in use
- Residents and visitors do not tamper with doors or self-closing devices
- Any faults or damage is reported immediately using the details below

### Residents must not:

- Alter or change their flat front door without prior consent from The Bedford Estates.

**ANY UNAUTHORISED MODIFICATION OF A FIRE DOOR MAY  
PUT LIVES AT RISK**

Please report any defects or concerns with fire doors to  
[info@bedfordstates.com](mailto:info@bedfordstates.com) or call 020 7636 2885.





## THE BEDFORD ESTATES

### **Gas & fixed electrical installations – safety inspections.**

#### Advice for Leaseholders.

Keeping you and your neighbours safe in your homes is a top priority for us.

As a leaseholder, you are responsible for electrical safety within your flat. You should arrange regular electrical safety tests (at least every ten years) within your flat, or as determined by any previous inspections of the electrical installation - as advice may vary depending on age and condition of electrics within your property.

#### If you sublet your flat.

If you sublet your flat, you must ensure every electrical installation in the flat is inspected and tested at intervals of no more than 5 years by a qualified and competent person.

In addition, you are responsible for making sure all your gas appliances are checked regularly (every 12 months) by a qualified gas engineer to ensure safety, this will include but not limited to your gas boiler, gas cooker, gas hob or gas fire, pipework and flues.

Any room used as living accommodation containing a gas appliance should also include a Carbon Monoxide detector, which should be regularly tested.

You are required to provide your tenant with a copy of the current Gas Safe Certificate and electrical inspection report.

If you require any further help or guidance relating to electrical or gas safety, please contact us at The Estates office.