

# TENANT PORTAL UP & RUNNING!

**We're delighted to announce the launch of Atrium's new tenant portal, aptly called MyAtrium.**

Once registered, Atrium tenants can use the portal to access their own rent account, report a repair and manage aspects of their tenancy – via phone, tablet or computer, 24/7. The portal also has its own app which is compatible with both Android and iOS devices, so you can access your MyAtrium account on the go. It's already available via the App Store and Play Store – just type in MyAtrium from Atrium Homes to download it.

You can set up your account via our website (select the MyAtrium button, and then "Create an Account") or via the app (select "Create an Account") once you've downloaded it.

You'll be asked for your name and home address, along with your email address and phone number, and we'll use these to set up your account. Our staff will run some security checks and if everything is in order, will create the account and send you your username and password. After that, you're good to go!

If you like the portal and app, please tell us. And if there are things you don't like, please tell us about those as well so we can make it better.

And above all, tell your neighbours so they can use it too!



We'd like to extend a huge thank you to the tenants who volunteered to road test the app for us, to help us iron out any niggles, and get it working as smoothly as possible for everyone. You know who you are, and we hope you enjoy your wee reward and this message of thanks!



# Dear Tenant

Welcome to the Winter 2020 edition of Your Home. Our Summer Newsletter was written just after lockdown had started and set out the impact it was having on our services, many of which had been restricted or stopped completely. However, as we emerged from full lockdown and the restrictions on business activities eased, we've been able to recommence many of our activities and services, on a phased basis.

In this edition, you can read how we've managed to catch up on the backlog of non-emergency repairs which built up over lockdown, restart external maintenance work and allocate our new development in Shortlees. A number of properties which became empty over the past few months have been put through our 'repair and refresh' programme and they too will be ready to relet very soon. Lastly, but very importantly, we have started on Phase 2 of our Homes Fit For 21st Century Living Standard investment programme and many tenants will be benefitting from these property improvements in the coming months. We continued also to focus on tenant welfare through the activities of our Tenancy Sustainment and Money Advice teams, both of which are services that a number of you have been able to access over the past few months.

And in addition to all this, we found time to develop and launch our new tenant portal and app, called MyAtrium.

As we approach winter, although Atrium is almost back to full service delivery, we've not quite returned to normal. Our office remains closed to the public, and although we do have some staff working there Monday to Friday, our default position is still to work from home, in line with government guidance. Hopefully, for most of you who contact us by phone or email, this is not noticeable.



We also know that your lives, like our lives, are not normal. We all continue to live with restrictions and uncertainties, and we all try to make the best of these very difficult circumstances. We also know, that some of these restrictions and many of these uncertainties will be with us for some time to come. Meantime though, we're approaching the season of goodwill and the end of 2020. And we all hope, I'm sure, that 2021 will bring with it changes for the better.

On behalf of the whole staff team, have a great Christmas and New Year.

Merry Christmas!

Stephen Black  
Chief Executive

# HELLO

As you'll undoubtedly know, the last few months have been very challenging for everyone, to say the least. Elsewhere in this Newsletter, you'll hear about how the services side of the business has coped, so I thought I'd give you an insight on how it has been from a Board member's perspective.

Despite lockdown restrictions, Atrium still had to operate as a business and we still had to make sure that the organisation continued to comply with our legislative and regulatory duties, all of which continued to apply to us. These are the things that we have to do which aren't immediately obvious, such as conducting the annual financial audit to produce the annual accounts; holding the Annual General Meeting (AGM); submitting the required returns to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR), the body set up by legislation to protect the interest of tenants; and, of course, holding monthly Board meetings to monitor closely what was happening to Atrium and its tenants, and take decisive action when needed to protect their interests.

The Board is also the manifestation of Atrium as an employer and we had a number of important employment decisions to make in relation to furloughing some staff whose jobs were affected by lockdown. We had staff who left Atrium during lockdown and others who joined us. Both circumstances created new challenges for us to overcome.

We also welcomed three new Board members between March and June to strengthen our numbers and add to the knowledge and skills base going forward.

And the interesting thing is, that all of this activity was undertaken "virtually" i.e. without us ever meeting face to face. Instead we used Zoom, something that most of us had never heard of back in March, but which is now an invaluable tool for running the business. We think that we'll be like this for some time to come, but we're all looking forward to the time when restrictions begin to ease and we can have the occasional "old school" face to face business, Board or sub-committee meeting.

Best wishes for Christmas and 2021.

Joe Keen  
Chair, Atrium Homes

## GET INVOLVED

To find out more about joining the Board (or a sub-committee) or how Atrium works, contact us on 01563 528 816 or email [info@atrium-homes.co.uk](mailto:info@atrium-homes.co.uk)

# COME ON BOARD

We want to strengthen our Board by appointing new members.

## Would you like to join us?

Board members set Atrium's overall organisational strategy and objectives, and also monitor our performance. So it's important there's a good mix of skills and experience on our Board at any one time to match our business needs.

Currently, we're very fortunate to have people from different backgrounds, who can contribute across a wide range of areas. However, we're really keen to attract more new members who have experience of our services as customers, and are committed to service excellence and continuous improvement.

## Interested? Here are a few more things you might want to know:

### Will I get paid for being a Board member?

No, a Board position is voluntary, but we can offer you reasonable expenses to help you attend Board meetings or cover childcare costs.

### How much time is involved?

The Board meets roughly once a month, and allowing for time to read Board papers, members spend around four hours a month on Board business. We meet virtually, using video conferencing, and send the papers out electronically. We also provide a tablet/PC to members should they need it.

### Will I receive any training?

Yes, there's a full induction for new members, plus further training and support, depending on your individual requirements.

### How do I find out more?

For an informal chat about the role, please contact Shelley Hunter on 01563 528 816.



# Merry Christmas



## ATRIUM ELVES' CHRISTMAS SPECIALS

The Atrium Elves will be out and about again this year, spreading Christmas cheer and goodwill to many of our tenants.



## ENJOY AN ELFIE CHRISTMAS DINNER ON US!

New tenants (including tenants transferring from one Atrium property to another) signing up in November and December 2020 are benefitting from one of the Atrium Elves' latest incentives on empty properties. They'll be enjoying food for Christmas - or maybe even some gifts for the kids - thanks to £50 of supermarket vouchers.

This is a one-off special gift from the Elves, and is in addition to other incentive packages which we've made available on selected properties. These incentives have helped incoming tenants with removal costs, furniture packs and other household items.

## THE ELF ADVENT CALENDAR GIVE AWAY

The Elves have come up trumps on this one! Every day from 1st to 24th December, the Elves will randomly select an Atrium tenant from their special Elf Advent Calendar, and that tenant will receive £100 of supermarket vouchers.

That's a £2,400 give away to 24 lucky tenants! And the great thing is you don't have to do a thing - as an Atrium tenant, the Elves will make sure you're in the daily draw. Good luck!



## OVER 75'S

The Elves want to do something special for Atrium's older tenants this year. So if you're over 75, keep an eye out for a special delivery. That's all we're saying - don't want to spoil the surprise!!!



## ELF ASSISTANCE

Don't forget, the Elves are here to help everyone. So if you need our help this Christmas with any welfare matter (benefits, food, paying the bills, etc), please get in touch. Just phone us on 01563 528 816 or email [info@atrium-homes.co.uk](mailto:info@atrium-homes.co.uk). We'll be glad to do what we can to make your Christmas merrier.



## CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR HOLIDAYS

Atrium will be closed completely over the holiday period. We'll close on Thursday 24th December at 4pm and re-open on Wednesday 6th January 2021 at 9am. If you have any emergency repairs during this period, please phone us on 01563 528 816 and you'll be redirected to our emergency service.

# HOW TO PAY YOUR RENT AT CHRISTMAS

Although the Atrium office and shops will be shut over Christmas, that doesn't mean you can't pay your rent. There are plenty of other ways to make a payment:



### CALL US

You can phone the office on 01563 528 816 up to 24th December 2020 and pay by debit or credit card.



### DIRECT DEBIT

You can pay monthly by setting up a Direct Debit. To do this call us on 01563 528 816 - please have your bank details ready before you call. We'll set up your Direct Debit and you'll receive a letter from our Direct Debit provider - [allpay.net](http://allpay.net) - within 7 days.



### ONLINE OR PAYPOINT OUTLET

Pay via the website [www.allpayments.net/allpayments/](http://www.allpayments.net/allpayments/) Or pay at any Post Office or other outlets which display the PayPoint sign using your rent payment card.



### ALLPAY APP

Go to the app store and download the allpay app. To use this, you'll need your rent card and your debit/credit card. Simply follow directions to set up. Once set up, this is a quick and simple way to make rent payments. It stores the last six months' transactions, so you can always check if you've made your rent payment.



### BACS/FAST PAYMENT

Transfer your rent straight to our bank account: Sort code 82-65-30, Account Number 30300484. Please make sure you quote your Customer Account Number so your payment is assigned to the correct account. If you need your Account Number, please contact us at the office.





# Update on Shortlees New Build

Staff were delighted to sign up 27 new families to the completed development site at Sunnyside Square West at the end of October/beginning of November. The site provides a range of different styles of properties for differing needs:

- 3 x 4 Person / 3 Apt Houses - General Needs
- 16 x 3 Person / 3 Apt Houses - Older & Ambulant Disabled
- 2 x 2 Person / 2 Apt Flats - General Needs
- 2 x 2 Person / 2 Apt Flats - Amenity
- 2 x 3 Person / 3 Apt Flats - General Needs
- 2 x 3 Person / 3 Apt Flats - Amenity

Allocating this development was a unique experience for staff and applicants alike as almost the entire process was carried out 'virtually'. All of the application process and verification visits were carried out by phone and email, and applicants were given a video of the properties to view prior to acceptance. The sign up and money advice interviews were also conducted over the phone, with applicants simply attending the office for a brief, socially-distanced key collection and signing appointment.

We want to extend our thanks to all applicants who participated in the allocations process, for their patience during this time and their flexibility towards the new working practices.



# PURCHASING MORE PROPERTIES

During the pandemic, Atrium has continued to grow its stock - not just through new build developments, but also through 'adhoc acquisitions' of properties on the open market.

To date, we've purchased five properties within our existing estates with the help of Scottish Government grant. Focussing on areas where we already have properties, these are brought up to 21st Century Living Standards before being allocated to tenants. We believe making these purchases is an important way of regenerating existing communities.



# HOMES FIT FOR 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY LIVING

## STANDARD: WORKS PHASE 2 BEGINS!

Phase 2 of our Homes Fit for 21st Century Living Standard programme was scheduled to begin back in May but planning was interrupted by lockdown, with CCG, the main contractor having to stand down their operatives for several months.

However, we're pleased to report that we're making progress again and we anticipate starting work in occupied properties in Phase 2 from January 2021. In the main, this phase of works will consist of bathroom replacement, kitchen replacement, boiler and/or heating system replacement, and upgrade of detectors and fans.

Phase 2 will affect around 70 homes, and we've already started work in a number of empty "pilot" properties in this phase.

The use of these properties will help ensure that the contractor has Covid safe working practices; that any teething troubles have been resolved; and Atrium and CCG can agree the required quality standard and proposed timescale for delivery of the works to the specific house types, before work starts in tenants' homes.

Before we carry out any work in tenants' homes, we also conduct a "march-in survey" to identify the work needed and to agree any specific requirements with

tenants (including colour choices and finishes). That way, everyone knows what is to happen when the contractor arrives to start work. Joint march-in surveys (Atrium and contractor) for the Phase 2 properties began at the end of October 2020.

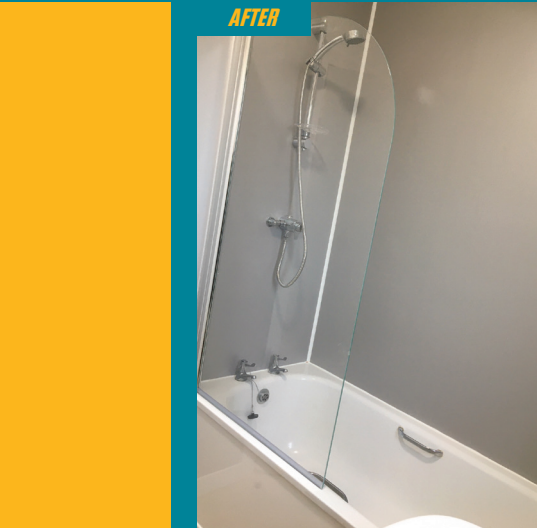
We've produced Covid-19 risk assessments for our own staff to follow when carrying out any work for the organisation, including being onsite and within properties. CCG has provided copies of their own risk assessments.



BEFORE



BEFORE



AFTER



AFTER



AFTER



# ANNUAL RETURN ON THE CHARTER 2019/2020

Atrium submitted its 6th Annual Return on the Charter in June 2020 to the Scottish Housing Regulator. The ARC Report is broken down into 5 sections: Homes & Rents; Tenant Satisfaction; Quality & Maintenance of Homes; Neighbourhoods and Value for Money.

## HOMES + RENT

At 31 March 2020

No. of homes owned by Atrium:  
**1,169**

Total rent due for year:  
**£5,247,066**

Increase on weekly rent:  
**2.6% on average from previous year**

At Atrium Homes we allocate all our available properties through the Common Housing Register for East Ayrshire, known as SEARCH. Properties are allocated from 5 lists, with targets for each agreed at the start of the year - Waiting, Transfer, Homeless, Strategic Needs and Outwith the District.

### AVERAGE WEEKLY RENTS

Size of Home	Number of Homes Owned	Atrium
1 Apartment	-	-
2 Apartment	119	£74.44
3 Apartment	532	£85.87
4 Apartment	477	£98.25
5 Apartment	41	£107.68

## TENANT SATISFACTION

Of the tenants who responded to this landlord's most recent satisfaction survey:

	Atrium	Scottish Average
Tenants satisfied with landlord's overall service	89.3%	89.2%
Tenants who felt their landlord was good at keeping them informed about its services and outcomes	91.1%	92.0%
Tenants satisfied with opportunities to participate in landlord's decision making	89.8%	87.2%

## QUALITY + MAINTENANCE OF HOMES

We aim to provide well maintained homes for all our tenants.

	Atrium	Scottish Average
Landlord homes meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard	98.8%	94.4%
Average time taken to complete emergency repairs	2.0 Hours	3.6 Hours
Average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs	5.7 Days	6.4 Days
Reactive repairs completed 'right first time'	93.3%	92.4%
Tenants satisfied with the service they received for repairs or maintenance carried out on their home	88.6%	91.3%

## NEIGHBOURHOODS

For every 100 of your landlord's homes, 8.5 cases of anti-social behaviour were reported in the last year.

	Atrium	Scottish Average
Percentage of anti-social behaviour cases resolved within targets agreed locally	97.4%	94.1%

## VALUE FOR MONEY

We recognise the importance of delivering value for money in all our services.

	Atrium	Scottish Average
Percentage of total rent due in the year collected by landlord	99.5%	99.3%
Percentage of rent due but not collected due to empty homes	1.3%	1.2%
Average number of days taken to re-let homes	43.7 Days	31.8 Days





# Scottish Child Payments

The new Scottish Child Payment - which is unique to Scotland – is now open for applications. Social Security Scotland will be taking applications ahead of its introduction on Monday 15th February 2021 to help manage the expected demand.

The new benefit will give eligible families on low incomes with children under 6 an extra £10 per week for each child. The first payments will be made by the end of February 2021 but by applying now and having your claim assessed it can be in place ready to pay out as soon as possible. Scotland is the only part of the UK where this additional payment for families with young children will be available. The payment could support up to 194,000 children this financial year and the payment will be made every four weeks.

People can apply for Scottish Child Payment from now by visiting [mygov.scot/benefits](https://mygov.scot/benefits) or calling 0800 182 2222 or speak to Money Advice staff here at Atrium on 01563 528 816.



## DON'T LET YOUR SPENDING SNOWBALL OUT OF CONTROL THIS CHRISTMAS

We know that in the run up to Christmas, household budgets come under greater pressure. We want to help you avoid getting into debt and rent arrears.

So put your rent first and make sure your monthly rent and/or arrears payments are made on time.

Many people choose to ignore their rent at Christmas and then are faced with arrears in January - just when the credit card bills arrive on your doorstep too.

Please DON'T start the New Year with a financial hangover. If you're struggling to keep up with your payments, try and plan ahead now, and speak to our staff to help you budget.

Our Money Advice staff can offer a range of support for tenants who are facing financial difficulties. But don't wait until it's too late. Contact us today on 01563 528 816.

# WARM HOME DISCOUNT

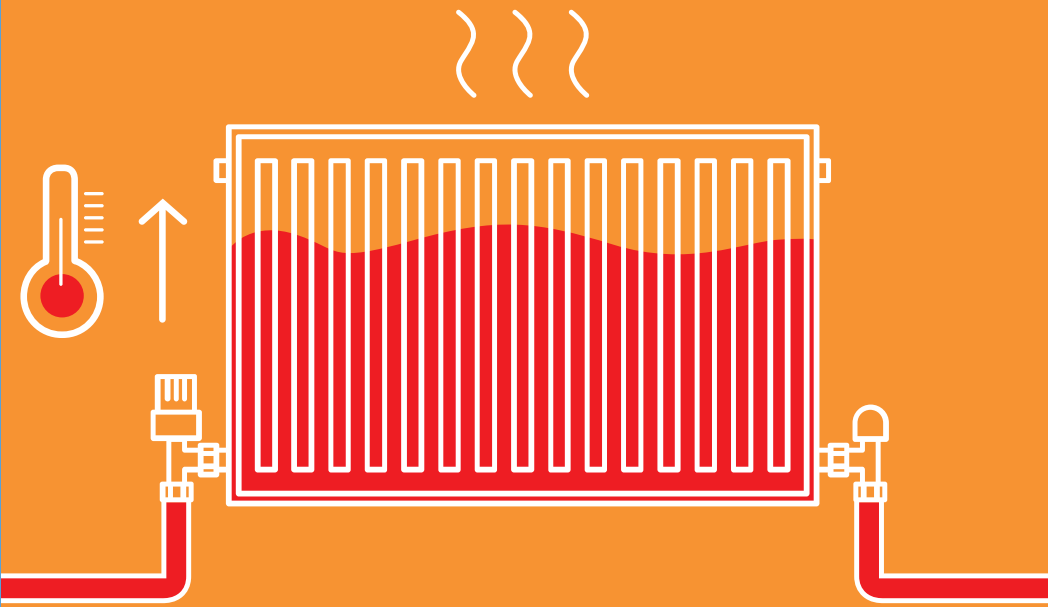
Did you know you could get £140 off your electricity bill under the Warm Home Discount Scheme?

The money is not paid to you - it's a one-off discount on your electricity bill, between September 2020 and March 2021. If your supplier provides you with both gas and electricity, you might be able to get the discount on your gas bill instead. Contact your supplier to find out.

The discount will not affect your **Cold Weather Payment** or your **Winter Fuel Payment**. There are two ways to qualify for the Warm Home Discount Scheme:

- ❖ You receive the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit – known as the 'core group'
- ❖ You're on a low income and meet your energy supplier's criteria for the scheme – known as the 'broader group'

Please contact your electricity supplier for further information.



## EMERGENCY REPAIRS SERVICE

Keep these numbers next to your phone for easy reference.

**EMERGENCY REPAIRS**  
Atrium Property Services  
01563 528 816

**GAS OR HEATING EMERGENCIES**  
GasSure  
01294 468 113

**GAS LEAKS**  
Scotland Gas Networks  
0800 111 999

**GENERAL REPAIRS**  
Atrium Homes  
01563 528 816

Please only use the out of hours emergency service when it is a REAL emergency such as:

**Burst or leaking pipe**

**Loss of power to the house**

**No heating or hot water**

**Storm damage which requires action to ensure the property is wind and watertight.**

If the problem can wait until office hours with only minor inconvenience, it would not be classed as an emergency. If tradesmen are called out to incidents that are not emergencies or are found to have been caused by you, we will recharge the cost of the call out. The minimum cost of this is £75.





# A QUICK SERVICES UPDATE

A lot of Atrium’s services were affected by the Covid lockdown, so we thought it would be useful to summarise where we are at the moment. And since it’s Christmas, we thought we’d illustrate this in our Atrium Christmas Tree.

Information is accurate as at 20 November 2020.



# Annual Assurance Statement 2020

As part of our Governance and Compliance Requirements, Atrium’s Board is required to submit a formal statement every year to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) outlining our compliance or otherwise with their Regulatory Framework. This year’s statement, considered and approved by the Board, is below:

**Annual Assurance Statement 2020**  
As an organisation committed to continuous improvement, Atrium Homes has embraced the self-assurance process, and the Board has continually monitored organisational performance and compliance.

It is the judgement of the Board of Atrium Homes that for the period leading up to the introduction of lockdown restrictions in March 2020, we have appropriate assurance we materially complied with

- all relevant regulatory requirements set out in Chapter 3 of the Regulatory Framework
- all relevant standards and outcomes in the Scottish Social Housing Charter
- all relevant legislative duties

This judgement extends to our wholly owned subsidiary Atrium Initiatives.

In considering our compliance since March 2020, the Board has taken account of the considerable impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and consequent business, economic and social disruption. It is the judgement of the Board of Atrium Homes that we have complied, and continue to comply materially with the temporary changes to legislation and continue to follow national and local policy and requirements e.g. in respect of health and safety, physical distancing, travel, office opening, use of PPE, application of Test and Protect requirements and indoor gatherings.

In the period since the introduction of lockdown restrictions in March 2020, Atrium’s ability to deliver a number of its core services has also been restricted. However, the combination of Atrium’s business continuity measures and the resilience of its staff team and governance structures have helped minimise those core service restrictions. Where we have had to adopt revised standards of service delivery, we have communicated changes clearly to our tenants and are maintaining the necessary records to ensure a smooth resumption of normal service levels when possible; and we have informed the Scottish Housing Regulator and our other stakeholders.

Between April and June 2020, due to Covid 19, we were unable to renew fifteen CP12 gas safety certificates before the previous ones expired. At the point of preparing this statement valid CP12 certificates are in place for all properties.

The Board is of the opinion that any failures to deliver core services in the period since Covid-19 restrictions were introduced are wholly related to the restrictions themselves. Looking forward, the Board is confident that when those restrictions are lifted, Atrium will return quickly to its normal service delivery standards and be able to build on the resilience it has developed during this difficult period.

We continue to monitor our business plan, budget and financial assumptions in the context of the ongoing emergency situation and associated business interruption.

The judgement expressed in this statement is to the best of the Board’s knowledge and belief, based on factors including, internal review of background information and reports presented to the Boards of Atrium Homes and Atrium Initiatives on an ongoing basis, supplemented by independent reviews conducted by internal and external auditors.

This statement was considered and agreed by the Board of Directors of Atrium Homes at its meeting on 24 November 2020.

Signed on behalf of the Board

*Joe Keen*  
Joe Keen  
Chair of Atrium Homes



# WINTER WEATHER WARNING

## ACT NOW TO AVOID DISASTER

Whether we like it or not, winter's on its way. Over the years many of our homes have been badly affected by frozen and burst pipes. Sadly, this resulted in extensive damage to furniture and decoration, as well as a great deal of distress for our tenants. It's therefore vital that everyone takes the necessary precautions NOW to minimise potential frost damage in the coming weeks and months. To help you keep your home safe this winter, we've put together our top tips along with steps to take should the worst happen.

### HOW TO DEAL WITH A FROZEN PIPE

1. Turn the water off at the main stopcock and open all your taps to drain water from the system. Remember to close the taps again when you're finished. (Make sure you know now where the stopcock is - it's usually on the ground floor, under the kitchen sink or in a downstairs toilet.) Closing the stopcock will stop the supply of mains water into the house, helping to reduce damage.
  2. It's best to let the pipes thaw naturally, but you can try to thaw the ice in the pipe with a hot water bottle or hairdryer (taking care to keep it well away from any water). NEVER use a heat gun or blow torch.
  3. Check if the blockage is at the u bend at the kitchen sink (most likely, as this will be the point of entry of the water supply). You may be able to clear this by pouring hot water down it.
  4. If the hot water system is frozen, turn off any water heaters.
  5. If you have some water, fill available containers to ensure you have an adequate supply should the pipes freeze further. The only real remedy for frozen pipes is a significant thaw. While you should report any cases of frozen pipes to us to monitor, in most cases the contractor will NOT attend as there is little beyond the advice given here that they can do. Atrium Homes is also unable to help tenants by providing water supplies. You should try to use the facilities of neighbours, friends and family for water, toilet, etc if they're unaffected.
- REMEMBER**  
If you fail to take reasonable care and precautions to guard your home against burst pipes etc, you could be held responsible for damage caused by frost to the structure and fittings, as well as to your own household items or decor.

### HOW TO REDUCE THE RISK OF DAMAGE

**KEEP YOUR HOME WARM DAY AND NIGHT**  
In very cold weather, you'll need to leave your heating on a low setting continuously. Most modern boilers have a frost protection thermostat which turns on automatically if the temperature drops to a level which will cause your pipes to freeze. Check this is working properly.

**OPEN INTERNAL DOORS**  
As an added protection on cold days, open your loft trap door and also your sink cupboards to let the heat in.

**CHECK PIPES REGULARLY**  
If you're going away for a while, ask a friend or relative to check your home regularly to make sure your pipes haven't burst or frozen.

**CHECK YOUR INSURANCE**  
Make sure you have adequate contents insurance in place to help cover the cost of replacing damaged items if needs be. Don't miss your renewal date - check it now!

**KEEP ON TOP OF MAINTENANCE**  
Maintenance is key during winter. For example, did you know something as simple as a dripping tap can block your pipes? So avert potential disaster by checking all your taps and putting a new washer on any which are dripping - otherwise they could freeze, causing pipes to block.

### WHAT TO DO IF A PIPE BURSTS

1. Turn the water off at the main stopcock and open all your taps to drain water from the system. Remember to close the taps again when you're finished. (Make sure you know now where the stopcock is - it's usually on the ground floor, under the kitchen sink or in a downstairs toilet.) Closing the stopcock will stop the supply of mains water into the house, helping to reduce damage.
2. Turn off water heaters.
3. Find the leak and bind it tightly with a towel, placing a bowl below to catch any drips.
4. If water is lying on top of a ceiling and making it bulge, pierce the ceiling using a screwdriver to let the water escape.
5. If electric cables are wet, switch off the supply at the mains. DO NOT TOUCH THE CABLES THEMSELVES.

Contact our office for help, or if outside office hours, contact our emergency service (see page 11 ).

### STORM DAMAGE: WHAT TO DO WHEN

It might not be cold, snowy weather that your home is exposed to over the winter months - there's the risk of storm damage too. Here's what to do when:

**IF TILES ARE BLOWN OFF YOUR ROOF, BUT THERE'S NO WATER PENETRATION**  
Contact Atrium on 01563 528 816. We'll log the details of your repair, which will be classed as a Routine Repair, and a roofer will call within 7 working days. However, please remember working on roofs in bad weather is dangerous, and due to the number of calls and the weather conditions it may be more than 7 days before a roofer can get up onto your roof. Our staff will keep you advised.

**IF WATER STARTS TO PENETRATE THROUGH THE ROOF**  
There's roofing felt under the tiles and this should prevent water coming into your house. However, if your roof does start to leak, use a bucket or container to catch any water coming into rooms and lay a plastic sheet over any possessions which are close to the leak. You should inform us immediately to update the information. We may be able to lay visqueen (heavy duty polythene) in your attic to prevent any further water penetration until it's safe to allow workmen on the roof.

**IF THERE'S ANY DOUBT ABOUT WATER IN THE ELECTRICS**  
Turn off the electricity at the meter box and inform us immediately.

**IF THERE ARE LOOSE SLATES**  
Loose slates can pose an immediate danger to life or property, so if you can see any slates hanging off your roof, report this to us immediately.

If the damage occurs outside working hours and you consider this to be an emergency, contact the out of hours contractor on **01563 528 816** who will assess the situation.



# SWITCH ON TO CHRISTMAS SAFETY

At this time of year when we're all decorating our homes the risk of house fires goes up - Christmas lights and candles are two of the most common causes of house fires. So let's all remind ourselves about fire safety this festive season.

## CANDLES

- ✳ Always put candles on a heat resistant surface. Be especially careful with night lights and tea lights, which get hot enough to melt plastic. TVs are NOT fire-resistant objects!
- ✳ Don't put candles near curtains or other fabrics, or furniture. And keep them out of draughts - curtains can waft into the flame.
- ✳ Don't put candles under shelves. It's easy to forget that there's a lot of heat above a burning candle. If you put a candle under a shelf or other surface, then it can burn it. Make sure there's at least three feet (one metre) between a candle and any surface above.
- ✳ Keep candles out of reach of children and pets.
- ✳ Keep candles apart. Leave at least four inches (10cm) between two burning candles.
- ✳ Take care with votive or scented candles. These kinds of candles turn to liquid to release their fragrance, so put them in a glass or metal holder.
- ✳ Don't leave candles burning. Extinguish candles before you leave a room. NEVER go to sleep with a candle still burning. And never leave a burning candle or oil burner in a child's bedroom.
- ✳ Make sure candles are completely out. Even candles that have been put out can go on smouldering and start a fire, so double check.

## FAIRY LIGHTS

- ✳ Check fuses are the right type (see the box for the maximum size of fuse you should use).
- ✳ If bulbs blow, replace them.
- ✳ Don't leave fairy lights on when you go out or go to sleep.
- ✳ Don't let the bulbs touch anything that can burn easily, like paper.
- ✳ Don't overload sockets.

## DECORATIONS

Decorations made of light tissue paper or cardboard burn easily. So:

- ✳ Don't attach them to lights or heaters.
- ✳ Don't put them immediately above or around the fireplace.
- ✳ Keep them away from candles.



## CHIP PANS

**It's not just about our decorations at this time of year - be fire aware when you're cooking too, especially with chips.**

Chip pan fires cause one fifth of all accidental house fires attended by the Fire and Rescue Service in the UK each year.

If you think about what you're doing when you're deep frying: you're heating several pints of oil to extremely high temperatures. The oil can not only cause terrible burns, but it can go up in flames.

In fact, it's an ideal fuel for a fire, and difficult to put out.

If you do choose to deep fat fry your chips, make sure you do it safely. Better still, choose oven chips or use a thermostatic fryer.

**Top tips to protect your family from chip pan fires:**

- ✳ Never fill a chip pan more than a third full of oil.
- ✳ Consider using a thermostatically controlled deep fat fryer.
- ✳ Never leave your chip pan unattended - even if the phone or doorbell rings.
- ✳ If you've had a drink, don't be tempted to cook with a chip pan. It's just too high a risk to take.

**Remember - fires start when your attention stops. Don't put yourself or your family at risk.**



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If you have any comments or questions or want to know what Atrium is doing at the moment, then please get in touch. Our contact details are:

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