

# Streets Ahead

Winter 2019

Reporting a Repair Over the  
Festive Period

Stay Safe Over  
Christmas

Holiday Opening Times

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# Reporting a repair over the festive period

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**O**ur offices and Call Centre maybe closed for Christmas, but you can make contact via our website and customer portal.

You can log your routine repair and book an available appointment, pay your rent and check your balance from the comfort of your own home this Christmas 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. Please click here; <https://www.housingsolutions.co.uk/portal-home/>

Alternatively if you wish to talk to a Customer Service Agent you could use our web

chat or call our Contact centre but please check our opening times on page 6.

## **If an emergency happens at Christmas**

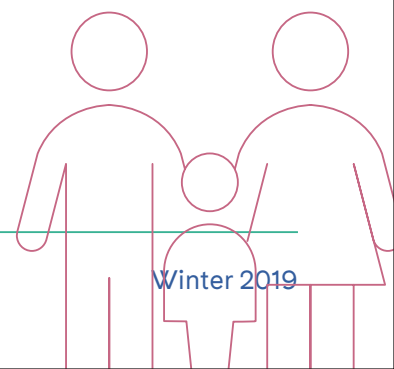
Emergency repairs can be reported throughout the festive period by calling **01628 543101**

Please remember that our staff are working over Christmas to keep you safe in your home, so please be kind to them should you need them over the festive period.

Please note it's important that we keep costs down for all our customers, so the emergency call-out service is for genuine emergencies. Tenants who

misuse our emergency repairs service will be charged £15.

Here is a link to what we classify as an emergency repair <https://www.housingsolutions.co.uk/rent-and-repairs/repairs/repair-priorities/>



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# Stay Safe at Christmas

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**C**hristmas is a special time of fun and celebration. Here's a few tips from the Berkshire Fire Service to help you celebrate safely.

## **Cooking**

- Most fires start in the kitchen don't leave your cooking unattended
- Avoid cooking when under the influence of alcohol

## **Decorations**

- Keep paper decorations, cards and wrapping paper away from candles, lights and heaters
- Never leave candles unattended
- Tuck trailing cables away so that pathways are kept clear

## **Christmas Trees**

- Switch off and unplug tree lights before you leave the house or go to bed
- Don't overload sockets – only use one plug per socket
- Never put a tree near fires, log burners or heaters

## **Home Safety**

- Leave a light on when you are out
- Keep presents out of sight
- Don't advertise on social media that you are going away
- Lastly make sure visiting family and friends know how to escape your home in an emergency.

Stay safe and have a happy, fun holiday!

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# Be Gas Aware

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If gas appliances, such as ovens, cookers and boilers, are not properly installed and maintained, there is a danger of fire, explosion, gas leaks and carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning.

## If you are a Housing Solutions tenant

As per your tenancy agreement you must give us access to your property to carry out gas safety checks. We will write to you two months before your service is due to give plenty of time to arrange a convenient visit. Please do all you can to help us and let us know immediately if you need to cancel an appointment. This check will be performed on any Housing Solutions' appliances and the gas pipework (we do not check your own appliances).

In the interests of Health and Safety we would ask for your cooperation to allow us access to carry out the safety checks as soon as possible. Badly maintained appliances can cause serious injury and even death.

If you refuse to give us access for gas safety checks, you will be in breach of your tenancy agreement and we may take legal action against you. You will have to pay any associated fees (which can be quite high).

If you need to contact us about your gas safety appointment please call 01628 543101 or use the web chat option on our website

## If you are a homeowner

You are responsible for organising your own gas safety checks. We would recommend you have appliances and gas pipework checked annually. You can find a gas safe registered engineer by searching online <https://www.gassaferegister.co.uk/>. All registered engineers use the Gas Safe logo.

### If you smell gas:

- Switch off all gas appliances;
- Shut off the gas supply at the meter control valves;
- Open all doors and windows to ventilate the room;
- Do not operate any electrical switches or use a naked flame.

**Call the Gas Emergency Freephone Number 0800 111 999**



# The importance of paying rent on time

Thank you to all our tenants who pay their rent on time and keep their rent payments up to date.

All monies received benefit our customers, as the money is ploughed back into our properties and allows us to provide a highly responsive repairs and maintenance service to you.

Paying your rent on time and keeping your account clear of arrears is part of your tenancy agreement with Housing Solutions. Unfortunately, some tenants are not paying rent on time, and a small minority aren't paying at all.

*We are now clamping down on those residents.*

If you do not pay your rent on time, you are putting your home and tenancy at risk. This may result in legal action which could lead to eviction and losing your home. Eviction due to non-payment of rent would class you as intentionally homeless, which means you may not qualify for future re-housing.

If you are in rent arrears and need to report a routine repair job, we will now be talking to you about making a rent payment before your repair is logged.

## Risks if you do not pay your rent on time

Getting into debt will severely affect your personal credit rating and may make it much harder for you to get credit in the future. In practical terms this could mean your ability to purchase goods like a new phone, TV and other household goods such as a washing machine is limited. You may also end up having to pay extremely high interest rates which will get you into further debt.

Housing Solutions want to help you to stay in your home by remaining in credit on your rent account.

If you are in arrears you need to pay your rent now. You can make payment by:

- Online at <https://www.housingsolutions.co.uk/portal-home/>
- Calling 01628 543101
- At our offices by Cash, Card or Cheque
- Full details on payment methods can be found here; <https://www.housingsolutions.co.uk/rent-and-repairs/rent/ways-to-make-a-payment/>

If you cannot pay your rent arrears you must call us on 01628 543101 and ask to discuss your rent account.



Our Welfare and Support Team are here to help you deal with financial difficulties, but they can only help you if you are willing to help yourself and get in contact. You can find out about the Welfare and Support Team, who they are, what they can do to help you by visiting our Welfare and Support page on our website:

<https://www.housingsolutions.co.uk/supporting-you/welfare-and-benefit-support>

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# Holiday opening times

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**Our offices will remain open between Christmas and the New Year**

## **Christmas Eve Tuesday 24th December**

Customer Contact Centre	08:45a.m - 3:00p.m
Offices	08:45a.m - 3:00p.m
Cash Kiosk	08:45a.m - 2:30p.m

**Christmas Day Wednesday 25th December – Closed**  
**Boxing Day Thursday 26th December – Closed**

## **Friday 27th December**

Customer Contact Centre	08:45a.m - 4:00p.m
Offices	08:45a.m - 4:45p.m
Cash Kiosk	08:45a.m - 4:15p.m

## **Monday 30th December**

Customer Contact Centre	08:45a.m - 4:45p.m
Offices	08:45a.m - 5:15p.m
Cash Kiosk	08:45a.m - 4:45p.m

## **New Years Eve Tuesday 31st December**

Customer Contact Centre	08:45a.m - 3:00p.m
Offices	08:45a.m - 3:00p.m
Cash Kiosk	08:45a.m - 2:30p.m

**New Years Day Wednesday 1st January - Closed**

**Thursday 2nd January – Business operating as usual**



Customer Portal <https://www.housingsolutions.co.uk/portal-home/>

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# Streets Ahead Feedback

## Win a £25 High Street Voucher

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We are always looking for ways to improve your newsletter. So we are offering you the chance to win a £25 High Street Voucher in return for your feedback. All you have to do is answer these three questions on the survey here: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/L7YPCPD>

1. Which article did you enjoy the most and why?
2. How can we improve our newsletter?
3. If you could change something about our newsletter, what would it be?



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## Opening times

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### Main office

Our offices are open:

Monday to Thursday:  
8.45am to 5.15pm

Friday: 8.45am to 4.45pm

### Cash office

For the payment of rent,  
our cash office is open:

Monday to Thursday:  
8.45am to 4.45pm

Friday: 8.45am to 4.15pm.

Or call 01628 543101 to use  
our automated telephone  
rent payment line.

### Customer contact centre

Monday: 8.45am to 5.15pm

Tuesday: 8.45am to 5.15pm

Wednesday: 10am to 5.15pm

Thursday: 8.45am to 5.15pm

Friday: 8.45am to 4.45pm

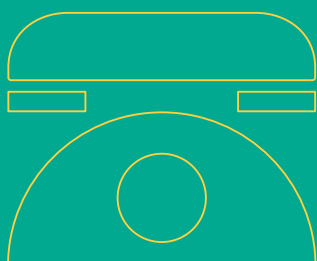
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## Get in touch

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Streets Ahead is the newsletter for Housing Solutions customers. Don't forget that this is your newsletter, so if you have any suggestions for improvements or ideas for stories or local news, please let us know by dropping an email to:

pr@housingsolutions.co.uk or by calling Amanda Stockhill on 01628 543113



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## Contact details

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Email

[contact@housingsolutions.co.uk](mailto:contact@housingsolutions.co.uk)

Website

[www.housingsolutions.co.uk](http://www.housingsolutions.co.uk)

Facebook

[facebook.com/Housing.Solutions.UK](https://facebook.com/Housing.Solutions.UK)

Twitter

[@HS\\_Homes](https://twitter.com/HS_Homes)