

As your landlord, we have a legal duty to make sure all of the communal areas in our properties are kept clear. Not only does this reduce the risk of fire, but also makes sure escape routes are not obstructed so that you and your family can get to safety if any problems do occur.

To help us do this, we have a policy in place which allows us to quickly remove any items which are being stored in communal areas and may be a fire risk.

By signing your tenancy agreement, you have agreed to this policy. This means you are responsible for storing items in your own home and not in communal areas, stairways, halls or corridors.

## What can be stored in a communal area?

We want to keep our buildings looking attractive, homely and welcoming. To do this, we allow tenants living in our flats to use communal areas to store:

- One non-slip welcome mat
- One plant pot and other non-combustible items, which should be kept on windowsills
- One picture frame hung on a wall

## What can't be stored?

The short answer is anything which isn't listed above. Pushchairs, bikes, furniture, shoes, clothes driers and unwanted furniture, for example, all increase the chance of fire spreading and can stop people from leaving the building if a fire does break out.

## What will happen if I do keep these items in a communal area?

Our housing officers will visit every six weeks to make sure stairways and other communal areas are free from people's belongings.

If we do find any items, we will always try and speak to the owner so that we can explain why they need to be moved. If action isn't taken, or the items are later returned

to the communal area, we will serve a formal warning and take steps to remove them.

You will be given up to 30 days to reclaim anything of value which we have removed. You will also need to pay £50 for its removal, £30 for every week it has been in storage and £50 for its return.

Items which aren't reclaimed within 30 days will be disposed of.

## **Any questions?**

Please work with us to keep your home attractive and safe for everyone by removing items immediately. If you have any questions, please talk to your Housing Officer who will be happy to help.

