



Blackwood homes

information
leaflet 2011-12

winter planning

introduction

beating the big freeze

A year has passed since the worst winter weather conditions we have experienced in decades, but we all need to start preparing for the cold times ahead and get ready for winter again.

We wanted to take everything we learned from last year so that we are all set if we experience severe winter weather again. We have thought about what we did right, what we did wrong and what more we can do to protect your homes against the cold. And from this, we've put a plan of action together...

This leaflet will set out what our plan is, what our responsibilities are as your landlord, what your local authority has a duty to do in your area and what is your job as a tenant. It also provides you with hints and tips for what to do to protect your home from the cold, gives you a list of emergency contacts and links you to more useful information.



our responsibilities

This leaflet will make it easier for you to know who to contact about the different problems that may arise in extreme weather conditions.

As your Landlord, we have a duty to maintain your home if anything breaks during the winter period, such as your boiler.

We have also thought about other things we can do to help you if we get a cold snap:

- We are not responsible for clearing snow. Pages 3 and 4 will help to tell you who should clear snow in different areas
- Where we have provided grit bins, we have asked our contractors to stockpile grit. If you tell us when your grit supply is running low they will come and fill up the bin for you
- We have also agreed that our contractors will keep an extra stock of emergency heaters, just in case your boiler does break down because of the cold
- We want to support tenants who would like to put themselves forward to be Snow Ambassadors to help their neighbours who are not able to clear their own paths. Please see page 7 for more information.

what your local authority should do...

The council in your area has certain responsibilities in extreme weather conditions to try to make sure that you can get out and about when it is snowing.

They monitor weather forecasts closely so that they can be as prepared as possible. Here is a list of what the council should do:

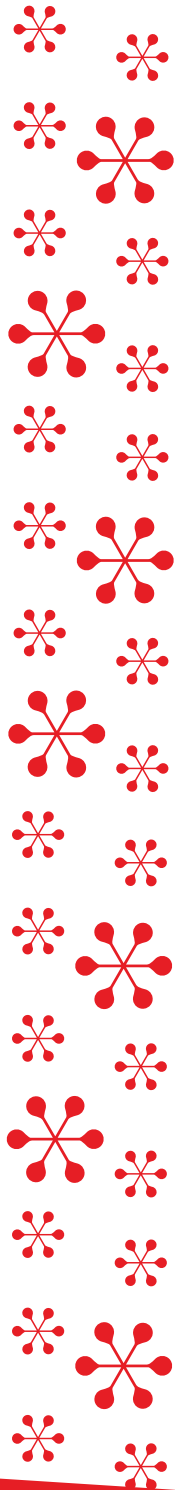
- The council are responsible for clearing the snow and ice from adopted roads. They have to prioritise main roads first before they can clear smaller roads. They should have enough specialist equipment ready to deal with extreme weather conditions.
- They are also responsible for clearing snow from public footpaths. They do not clear any paths on your property however...
- The council have to remove cars that have been abandoned on roads due to icy or snowy conditions.
- When it snows a lot and it is not melting, the council should specify where snow from roads and paths should be dumped to ensure that drainage is not effected and people are not obstructed.

On pages 9 and 10 you will find a list of all the local authorities where we have homes. We have provided you with a phone number to ring for your council and the website address for their winter planning pages.

things you could do

There are a few bits and bobs you could do to make life easier during a bad weather spell:

- Clearing the snow from your pathway - if you are able to do this, there are some hints and tips about the best way to clear snow from your path on page 5. If you are not able to, you might be able to enlist the help of a friend, family member or neighbour.
- Notify us if you are going away and leaving your home empty for a while so that we can drain your heating system so pipes don't burst
- Try to keep your house warm throughout the day if you can to protect your pipes from freezing and bursting. There are some handy hints about winter-proofing your home on page 6.
- Use the grit bins we have supplied to spread on your pathway and the paths on your street. Phone us to let us know if stocks are running low and we can top up your supply.
- If you are able to, you could keep an eye on your neighbours. If they are not able to get out to clear their pathways or go to the shops, ask if they need a hand. If you would like to become an official Snow Ambassador, see page 7 for more information.



snow clearing tips

1. Do not use hot water to melt snow. It may be replaced with black ice, increasing the risk of injury.
2. Spread some grit, salt or sand on the area you have cleared to prevent ice forming and to provide a good grip. The salt will take a little while to work.
3. Make sure that you wear shoes that provide a good grip so that you don't fall.
4. When clearing snow and ice on or near roads, wear brightly coloured clothing that helps traffic to see you.
5. Clear a small path down the middle of the area to be cleared first, so you have a safe surface to walk on. You can then shovel from the centre to the sides.
6. Think about where you are going to put your snow pile, so that it does not block people's paths or simply shift the problem elsewhere. Make sure it will not cause problems when it melts. Piling snow over drains may stop melting snow from draining away and allows it to refreeze.
7. Particular care and attention should be given to steps and steep slopes. Additional salt could be used in these areas to reduce the risk of slipping.
8. Salt can be washed away by further snowfalls or rain and then refreeze, leaving black ice. If this happens more salt should be used soon after the rain has stopped and before temperatures reach freezing.
9. When shovelling, be aware that snow is very heavy so please take care.



winter-proofing your home

1. If cold weather is forecast, or during a cold snap, keep your heating on at a low temperature to help prevent pipes from freezing.
2. Find out where your stop valve is and how to turn off your water just in case you get a leak.
3. Find out how to turn off your electricity supply at the mains, again in case you get a leak.
4. Check for leaking joints or bursts in your pipes. Gently heat any frozen sections with a hairdryer or a heated cloth wrapped around the pipe. Never apply a direct flame.
5. If your pipes do freeze, turn off the stop valve immediately, open all cold taps to drain the system, but don't turn on hot taps as this may effect your boiler.
6. If you can't afford to heat all your rooms, make sure you keep your living room warm throughout the day and heat your bedroom before going to bed.
7. Be aware that snow and ice could fall from roofs suddenly. Don't park your car, bikes or garden furniture where it could fall.
8. Keep warm and healthy by eating healthily, wearing layers, staying active and keeping in touch with your friends and family.
9. Listen out for the weather forecast and stock up on the essentials if the outlook is bad (e.g. UHT milk, freeze bread and other essentials, ensure you have more than enough medication etc.)

would you like to be a Snow Ambassador ?

In winter, it's more important than ever to look after our neighbours who are less able to get out and about in the bad weather. Communities get through severe weather better when people consider what they can do to help others.

Volunteering a small amount of your time can make a big difference to those who are struggling during the cold weather, even if this is something as simple as checking to see people are warm, well and have enough food.

Here at Blackwood Homes, we would like to support people who want to volunteer as Snow Ambassadors in their area.

Some of the things you might do as a Snow Ambassador:

- Check on elderly or vulnerable neighbours
- Offer to do shopping for people who can't get out and about
- Clear paths of snow and ice for your neighbours

How will we support our Snow Ambassadors:

- Provide basic equipment like snow shovels and hi-viz vests
- Give health and safety training
- Be there to give support and advise

If you want to volunteer in your community, **please contact your Housing Officer.**

Repairs contact details

for repairs, Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm:

Call Blackwood Homes on 0845-712-5865

for emergency repairs out of office hours:

Call Bield Response 24 on 0800-783-7937

for problems with gas central heating or hot water systems:

Call Kingdom Gas on 0800-389-9463

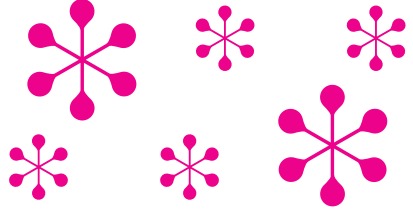
scottish water

- if you need to report a leak
- information about protecting pipes from freezing

0845-600-8855

www.scottishwater.co.uk

other useful contacts



home energy scotland hotline

- offers expert advice on how to save energy and money in your home

0800-512-012

www.homeenergyscotland.org.uk

utility aid

- a charity we have teamed up with to help our tenants get the best value gas and electricity prices. Try the free and easy price comparison website today to save money through winter so you can keep your house warmer...

www.ua-switchme.com/margaretblackwood.htm

ready scotland

- this website gives lots more information to help you prepare for the cold...

www.readyscotland.org

SEPA flood warnings

- use this website to check for river and coastal flood warnings across scotland

0845 988 1188

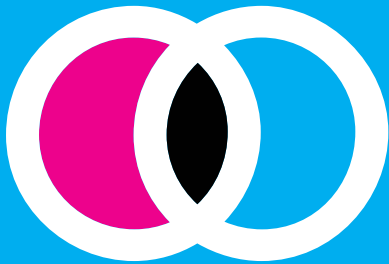
www.floodline.sepa.org.uk/floodupdates

local authority contact & information

Local Authority area	Website	Telephone
Aberdeen	www.aberdeen-city.gov.uk/xaz_AtoZ.asp?idn=5741	0845-608-0910
Aberdeenshire	www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/contact/phone.asp	0845-608-1207
Angus	www.angus.gov.uk/emergencyplanning/	0845-277-7778
Argyll & Bute	www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/content/enquiriesform	01546-602-127
Scottish Borders	www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/1291/adverse_weather_plans/682/road_winter_maintenance	0300-100-1800
Clackmannanshire	www.clacksweb.org.uk/council/emergencynumbers/	01259-450-000
Dumfries & Galloway	http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=2526	0303-333-3000
Dundee	www.dundee.gov.uk/housing/prepareforwinter/	01382-433-558
East Ayrshire	www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/devser/roadstrans/ops_winter1.asp	0845-724-0000
East Dumbartonshire	www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/content/planning_and_the_environment/emergencies/get_ready_for_winter.aspx	0300-123-4510
East Lothian	www.eastlothian.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=1226&documentID=1118	01620-827-827
East Renfrewshire	www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/winter-travel.htm	0141-577-3001
Edinburgh	www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/1291/roads_and_pavements-adverse_weather_plans/1327/winter_weather-working_together/1	0131-200-2000
Falkirk	www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/social_work/community_care/community_advice_service/cas_pdfs/Winterwarmth2011-12.pdf	01324-506-070

Fife	www.fife.gov.uk/fife_council/index.cfm?fuseaction=service.display&objectid=E6976A35-1273-4801-BB55-65E2704D945D	0845-155-0000
Glasgow	www.glasgow.gov.uk/en/Residents/GettingAround/Roads/WinterMaintenance/wintermaintenancequestions.htm	0141-287-2000
Highland	www.highland.gov.uk/yourcouncil/news/winterwatch/	01349-886-606
Inverclyde	www.inverclyde.gov.uk/news/2010/jan/weather-wise-don-caught-cold/	01475-717-171
Midlothian	www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/1284/roads_and_pavements/154/grit-ting_and_snow_clearance	0131-270-7500
Moray	www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_74128.html	01343-543-451
North Ayrshire	www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/Usefullinks/EmergencyTelNumbers.aspx	0845-603-0590
North Lanarkshire	www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=13080	01698-403-200
Perthshire & Kinross	www.pkc.gov.uk/Transport+and+streets/Roads+and+pavements/Roads+and+pavements++adverse+weather/Gritting+and+snow+clearing/	01738-475-000
Renfrewshire	www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/ilwwcm/publishing.nsf/Content/HP-LB-Beat-theFreeze	0141-842-5000
South Ayrshire	www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/roads/maintenance/wintertreatment.aspx	0300-123-0900
South Lanarkshire	www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/press/article/368/are_you_ready_for_winter	0303-123-1015
Stirling	www.stirling.gov.uk/beat_the_freee_single_pages-2.pdf	0845-277-7000
West Dunbartonshire	www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/law-and-licensing/risk-management/contingency-planning/severe-weather/	01389-737-000
West Lothian	www.westlothian.gov.uk/Council_and_government/Winterready/home	01506-775-000

This leaflet can be provided in larger print, as an audio CD or tape and in Braille. It can also be provided in languages other than English. For your preferred option, please contact us.



Registered Office, Craigevar House, 77 Craigmount Brae, Edinburgh EH12 8XF.

T: 0131-317-7227 F: 0131-317-7294

E: info@mbha.org.uk W: www.mbha.org.uk

Financial Services Authority Mutuals Public Register No. 1728 RS.

The Scottish Housing Regulator Registration No. HEP 158.

Registered Scottish Charity No. SC007658.

Blackwood Care is a trading name of Margaret Blackwood Housing Association Limited.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

