



COMPTON ESTATES

WELCOME

If you have any queries, please call us at the Estate Office on 01604 696232.

Office hours are Monday – Friday 8.30am – 5.30pm

ABOUT

This handbook has been published to provide general guidance regarding your property. Please keep this handbook at this property in a convenient place.

Our aim is to achieve your safety and wellbeing while you occupy the property and, within our available resources, we will do all we can to achieve this.

TENANT'S RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Please keep your garden tidy – if you need help, we can arrange assistance at reasonable rates (there is a garden competition in Castle Ashby each year)
2. Please keep all gutters, drains and pipework clear of obstruction – we can arrange assistance if required at reasonable rates.
3. Please ensure all septic tanks and foul water systems are emptied regularly with no longer than 12-month intervals between emptying.
4. Please keep the inside of the house in good order including window glass, fixtures and decoration.
5. Keep open fires well protected to prevent spark damage. The Estate will have the chimney swept by our sweep at least once a year.
6. Keep all plumbing protected from frost damage.
7. If you are away from the property, it is sensible to switch off water supplies
8. Please do not make alterations to the property or grounds or erect signs without prior approval from the Estate Office.
9. Please report any damage and repairs that may be required to the Estate Office as soon as possible.
10. Rents are to be paid on the due dates. Please inform the Estate Office of any difficulties that may arise. In the event of rental arrears, interest may be charged in line with your tenancy.
11. Please maintain any security systems and fire alarms installed in good working order.
12. No unsuitable materials are to be put down sink wastes or into the drainage systems i.e face wipes, toilet wipes, sanitary towels and nappies. If this does occur, charges may be made to clear blocked drains.
13. Please ensure any canine faeces deposited in village areas are collected and deposited in a bin at home or in a village bin specifically made for this purpose.
14. Where the Estate Office has arranged buildings insurance for you, please contact the office with respect to any claim you wish to make.
15. Wherever possible, please park in the designated parking bays and not on the paths or roadside.
16. Please ensure that all occupiers and visitors do not cause nuisance or annoyance in the locality.

LANDLORD'S RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Insure the buildings (NOT the contents) unless otherwise dictated within your Agreement

2. Inspect and service boilers and provide Gas Safety Certificates annually for Landlord's gas appliances.
3. Provide and repair installations for the provision of water, gas, electricity and sanitation (fixtures to utilise these services e.g. tap washers, routine clearance of septic tanks, broken glass etc. are the tenant's responsibility)
4. Keep in good order the structure of the property, including all repairs to gutters, drains, pipes etc. but not clearance of blocked drains/gutters.
5. Repair installations required for water and space heating.

Your Landlord may be in a position to assist with your responsibility towards upkeep and maintenance of the property, which may be subject to appropriate rates. For further advice, please contact the Estate Office

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Refuse bins are collected every Friday. Please ensure that all bins are removed from the front of properties and pathways as soon as practically possible after refuse has been collected.
2. Compton Estates has a website – www.comptonestates.co.uk where you will find information on the Estate, the Rural Shopping Yard and surrounding areas.
3. Compton Estates Club is open to all residents on the Estate every Friday. It is situated on the left-hand side of the entrance to The Woodyard, Castle Ashby. The bar and hall are also available for private bookings, parties and meetings. See attached information.
4. Attached is a plan showing the whereabouts of footpaths on the Estate for your guidance. When walking around the Estate, please ensure that you adhere to these footpaths and do not wander over undesignated areas.
5. Please keep dogs under control taking special care near livestock or wildlife areas.

BRIEF GUIDE TO CONDENSATION AND DAMP

This information is designed to give a brief guide to the occurrence of condensation in your property, outlining the reasons why it may occur and stating actions which may reduce its effects. Further sources of information are given at the end of the leaflet.

What is condensation?

Condensation forms because the moisture in the air can no longer be held as a vapour, so returns to liquid form. This occurs when warm moist air comes into contact with either cooler air or a cooler surface. 'Dew point' describes the temperature when air containing a given quantity of moisture vapour will condense onto that surface.

While condensation is obvious when it occurs on impermeable surfaces – most commonly window glass, cold-water pipes and ceramic tiles– it will also form on any surface which is at, or lower than, dew point. The presence of condensation on more absorbent surfaces (such as paint, plaster or wallpaper) becomes obvious when disruption, damage or mould growth forms on that surface.

Mould growth is a typical sign of chronic condensation and occurs as spores which are always present in the air. These spores find water (condensate) and organic material (dirt and grease) that support their life cycle. Mould is a significant health risk to asthmatics, anyone with other respiratory conditions, the very young and elderly people. The high humidity levels associated with condensation also enables house dust mites to flourish. The droppings from these microscopic creatures as well as mould spores can cause allergic reactions which are also linked to the onset of asthma.

For those concerned with condensation in buildings, the quantity of water vapour in the air and the temperature of surfaces within buildings are two key issues.

How to recognise condensation:-

Practically, diagnosis of condensation cannot be visual. Measurements of temperature, humidity, ventilation and condensation of insulation qualities and heating patterns need to be undertaken.

However, typical signs of condensation to look out for are:

- Mould growth on wall surfaces, around external wall openings and in areas of low air circulation or poor ventilation;
- Misty wall surfaces;
- Water staining and streaking on walls, particularly in bathrooms and kitchens;
- Patches of damp with no obvious edges.

What action is required?

Double glazing and improved insulation mean we have warmer homes, but unless a property is adequately ventilated, it can become damp.

We ask all tenants to ensure that our properties are sufficiently ventilated by taking a few simple precautions stated below in order to avoid condensation and the build-up of damp.

Bedrooms:- Open bedroom windows when you go to bed at night; a 10mm gap will do. If it really is too cold to do this, wipe the condensation off the windows first thing in the morning, but please do not put the cloth you used on the radiator to dry as this will create more condensation.

Shower/Bathrooms:- Ensure full use of extractor or ventilation fans. Where these are not provided, open a window after bathing or showering to give the steam and damp air a chance to escape. Wipe windows, walls and mirrors to remove condensation (a micro-fibre cloth is the most efficient means of doing this), and dry the shower tray or bath. Keep the door closed while the bathroom is in use to prevent the steam escaping to other parts of the house.

Kitchen:- When cooking, cover pans. Use extractor or ventilation fans where provided. If you do not have an automatic kettle, take care to ensure it is not left boiling. These precautions will help to reduce steam and therefore moisture in the air. Keep the door closed while the kitchen is in use to prevent the steam escaping to other parts of the house.

Living Areas:- Where there are chimneys, do not block them up. If a wall appears to be damp, do not put furniture right up against it; allow some circulation of air.

General:- Make sure that any ventilation bricks or openings in the building are not obstructed.

Windows:- Keep glass as clear of condensation as you can. Wipe away any moisture that has formed using a soft cloth. Leave open any 'trickle' vents in double glazed units. Get into the habit of opening windows to keep the moisture content in the air down and to air the property whenever you can.

Laundry:- Avoid drying clothes on radiators. Tumble dryers should be vented to the outside, unless fitted with a condenser.

Heating:- Provide a reasonable level of heating (no less than 10°C in an unused area, or 16°C if in use); cold rooms are susceptible to condensation. Remember, the best way to heat a room and avoid condensation is to maintain a low level of warmth throughout the day rather than to turn the heating off while you are out and put it on at a high level when you return back home.

Portable Heaters:- Portable gas and paraffin heaters can create a significant amount of damp and condensation within properties. Please do not use these types of heaters unless you have permission from the Estate Office

Remedies:- Mildew may be removed from clothes by using a dry-cleaning process. Remove and kill mould by wiping the affected area(s) with a fungicide which carries a Health and Safety Executive approval number, precisely following manufacturers instruction. Alternatively, a mild bleach solution will have the desired effect, but do test on a small area first.

DO NOT DISTURB MOULD BY VACUUMING OR BRUSHING AS THIS CAN GIVE RISE TO RESPIRATORY COMPLAINTS

Ventilation and extractor fans are not prohibitively expensive to use, and used correctly can in fact save dilapidation expenses at the end of your tenancy.

If you believe there to be a need for an extractor fan or any similar piece of equipment in the property you are renting, please inform the Estate Office.

We hope you have found this information useful and that it might help to resolve any issues concerning condensation and damp before they become a serious problem.

If you follow the advice given here, the risk of mould and damp condensation should be kept to a minimum and the possibility of deductions from your deposit are less likely.

CONTACT NUMBERS

Contact	Number
Doctor – Denton Surgery	01604 890313
Vicar	01604 891885
South Northants Council	01327 322322
Wellingborough Council	01933 229777
Septic tank clearance – Cammack & Wilcox	01604 891457
Hospital	01604 634700
Yardley Hastings Garage	01604 696225
Compton Estates Landscaping Services	
Compton Club	01604 696435

A - Z of Property Matters

ACCESS

You will be consulted about any works that are to be undertaken on the property. You will be expected to allow access to contractors for this purpose.

ALTERATIONS

Please do not make alterations to the property or grounds or erect signs without prior approval from the Estate Office.

ALARMS

Please maintain any security systems and fire alarms installed in good working order.

BATS

Bats are protected species and there are fines for disturbing them. If you think you have a colony of them in the property, please notify the Estate Office.

BOILERS AND CENTRAL HEATING

If Central heating is provided in the property the Estate is responsible for the maintenance, repair and replacement of the boiler. The Estate Office organises an annual service and our plumber will be in consultation with you as to access. If you have problems with your boiler between services, please contact the Estate Office. You are responsible for the costs of the energy that you use.

BURGLARIES

If you are unfortunate enough to have a burglary, these are the steps to follow:-

- Notify the police immediately and get a crimereference number
- Contact the Estate Office as soon as possible
- Contact your own insurance provider in relation to your contents insurance

CRACKS

It is most likely that you, as the regular occupier of the property, will notice cracks internally and externally and be aware of whether they are getting worse. Most hairline cracks, especially if they run in parallel with the walls and ceiling, are due to plaster shrinkage and can be dealt with during the course of redecoration.

However, if you see one wider than a hairline that is changing or worsening, it is important you contact the Estate Office.

CURTAINS, BLINDS, CURTAIN TRACKS AND FIXINGS

The fitting of curtains, blinds and their tracks and fixings are the responsibility of the occupant.

DECORATIONS - EXTERNAL

External decoration is done every five years if necessary and will be programmed in by the Estate Office. It is important that you allow access for decorators to open and close windows and doors during the works.

DRAINS

Drains and sewer systems that work properly are an essential part of maintaining a property as a safe and healthy environment for living.

In order to keep them working well, you can help by

- Making sure you avoid pouring fatty substances down the sink
- Making sure that those who use the bathrooms and cloakrooms do not flush items down the lavatory that can block the drains
- Making sure that no forbidden substances are put into the drains that could enter water courses and be subject to action by the Environment Agency, for example oil or paint.

If you have a problem with the drains, please contact the Estate Office as soon as possible.

ELECTRICAL

No electrical works should be carried out unless they are commissioned and monitored by the Estate Office.

EXTRACTORS

Extractor fans are provided in some kitchens and bathrooms which are maintained by the Estate Office but you are expected to make sure dust and grime are removed from the cover and to provide replacement filters .

FIRE SAFETY

Smoke detectors are provided as standard and the Estate Office is responsible for their replacement and repair. The provision of batteries is your responsibility.

GARDENS

If your property has a garden, you are responsible for keeping it neat and tidy which means cutting the lawns regularly, trimming hedges and shrubs and weeding flower beds drives and paths. If you need help, we can arrange assistance at reasonable rates (there is a garden competition in Castle Ashby each year). At no time should you put yourself or other occupants at risk by climbing ladders, using power saws or otherwise doing work which requires specialist knowledge. Fencing will not be provided for the protection of pets. Trees on site should not be cut down without prior consultation with the Estate Office

GAS AND ELECTRIC

The cost of these is the responsibility of the occupant, who should look carefully at the various tariffs and discounts on offer from energy providers.

GAS LEAKS

In the event of a suspected gas leak do not operate any electrical or switch device, in case of sparks, and make sure that there are no sources of flames anywhere. Open all the windows and, if you can safely do so, turn the gas lever near the meter to the off position (usually across the pipe or as marked).

GUTTERS

Clearance of gutters is your responsibility. Please keep all gutters, drains and pipework clear of obstruction – we can arrange assistance if required at reasonable rates.

HOLIDAYS

If you are away from the property, it is sensible to switch off water supplies

INFESTATION - MICE, RATS AND OTHER VERMIN

Prevention is better than cure, so it is important to make sure that anything that would attract vermin is removed and destroyed or, in the case of things like pet food, kept in secure and sealed containers. Spillages and debris that would provide food for vermin should be cleared up immediately. **Tenants are responsible for dealing with issues arising from infestations which include bees and wasps etc.**

INSULATION

A basic standard of insulation is in place in the properties.

INSURANCE - CONTENTS

You are responsible for the insurance of your contents.

KEYS

The Estate Office does not hold keys to tenanted properties. Therefore, if you lose your keys or get locked out of the property, you will need to contact a locksmith at your own cost.

LOFTS

Great care should be taken in accessing and using the loft for storage. It should only contain a small number of items and they should not be of a nature to cause risk to people or property, such as flammable items like camping gas cartridges or items likely to leak and cause damage to ceilings or attract vermin. Things should be arranged to spread the weight. You should avoid contact or inhalation of any insulating material in the loft and you should take care to use stable ladders and secure them when accessing the loft space.

OPEN FIRES

Keep open fires well protected to prevent spark damage. The Estate will have the chimney swept by our sweep once a year.

PETS

Pets may sometimes be kept in the house on request to the Estate Office. Any damage to the fabric of the property or the garden will be repaired at your expense. Dog faeces should be picked up within your property and whilst walking.

PLUMBING

Keep all plumbing protected from frost damage

RENT

Rents are to be paid on the due dates. Please inform the Estate Office of any difficulties that may arise. In the event of rental arrears, interest may be charged in line with your tenancy.

SEPTIC TANKS AND SEWERAGE

The Estate Office is responsible for the septic tank and any problems that arise with its maintenance, other than emptying which is the responsibility of the occupant. Please ensure all septic tanks and foul water systems are emptied regularly with no longer than 12 month intervals between emptying.

SINKS

No unsuitable materials are to be put down sink wastes or into the drainage systems i.e face wipes, toilet wipes, sanitary towels and nappies. If this does occur, charges may be made to clear blocked drains.

SMOKE DETECTORS

Occupants are strongly advised to check their smoke detectors regularly.

The Compton Club

Open to all tenants, parishioners and businesses of the Castle Ashby Estate

Bar open 7.00pm until 10pm every Friday – all welcome

We would very much like to encourage you and your families to enjoy the facilities at the Club. The Club is operated by a team of unpaid volunteers and you are very welcome as a tenant of the Estate.

There is also a website to keep in touch with dates

<http://www.comptonstatesclub.co.uk>

Please call in and join us any Friday night

Any questions

contact@comptonstatesclub.co.uk