

COMMUNAL AREA GUIDANCE & HOW IT EFFECTS YOU

Freebridge wants you to enjoy your home and the area in which you live. This booklet will give guidance on communal areas you may share with other residents, such as walkways, courtyards and communal bin sheds.

We have a few words of advice which will help to ensure you live safely and in harmony with your neighbours.

Failure to comply with the advice may result in breaching your tenancy or your lease conditions.

WHAT YOU CAN DO AS A RESIDENT

If, as part of your home, you have access to communal areas, your tenancy agreement or lease will state that you should not store items in communal areas and that we will treat any items left as a breach of your tenancy or lease. Communal areas include stairways, lifts, landings, hallways, and any other spaces that you share with other residents. It also includes service or meter cupboards in your building. If you currently have items, including but not limited to prams, buggies, bicycles, plants, furniture, shoes or other household items, stored or left in these spaces, please remove them immediately.

Please also be mindful that uninvited visitors may be able to access communal areas and use or take items they find. The best way to look after your possessions is to keep them inside your home.

WHAT WE WILL DO AS THE LANDLORD

If we find any items in communal areas, we will remove them and store for 28 days, before throwing them away, which means you will no longer have access to them. We do not have the storage space to hold onto items for you. Your building has a TORT notice displayed in communal area/s to let you know the type of items that are commonly stored in these areas which should not be stored there. This list has some examples, but is not exhaustive. We have included a picture of what these notices look like on page 7. If any Tort notices within blocks are found to be missing on inspection, we will replace them.

Let's work together to keep you, your family and neighbours safe. We'll ensure we follow through with our zero-tolerance approach to items we find in communal areas and you can help us by making sure you do not leave items in communal areas, even if it's just temporarily.

KEEPING COMMUNAL AREAS CLEAR AND SAFE

We have a responsibility for the area where you live, and this includes making sure all communal areas in your building (if you have them) meet fire and safety requirements. Items stored or left in communal areas, which are shared spaces, are a hazard as they can prevent people from leaving the building safely in the event of a fire. It's important we all do what we can to prevent hazards which is why we have a zero-tolerance approach to items left in communal areas. This means we will remove and throw away any items we find in these spaces without notice.

We want to keep you and your neighbours safe and can only do this with your help. The Fire and Rescue Services outline that storing belongings in these shared spaces can pose a real risk to everyone's safety as it could stop you escaping a building and prevent the fire fighters from doing their job in an emergency.

FIRE & HEALTH AND SAFETY

FIRE SAFETY

Outside bins must be at least 3 metres away from the building (unless stored in allocated bin sheds) and if provided placed on concrete pads.

No tumble dryers are to be used in external sheds where there is a boiler or a heat source.



STAY PUT

Stay put if the fire alarm sounds and the fire is not in your flat and you are in your own home.

If you are in a communal area, you must evacuate to your fire assembly point. The Fire Notices in the communal areas reflect this.

In the event of a fire, don't tackle it yourself

BARBEQUES

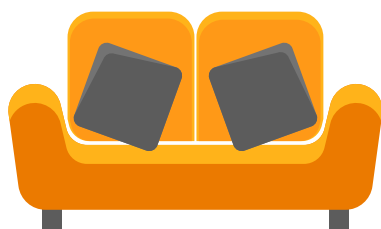
Barbeques present a significant risk of fire and risk to personal safety. Balconies on blocks of flats may seem an ideal place to relax during the summer but under no circumstances should they be used for barbecues due to the risk of falling embers, made worse by stronger wind speeds at height.



BULKY ITEMS

Furniture, electrical and other household items should not be left in your communal area as this creates a fire hazard or risk to residents and children.

Before you take ownership of any new large household items you should arrange a suitable method for disposing of the old ones.



SMOKING

Smoking within any sheltered communal areas including stairwells is illegal.

Whilst smoking within open communal courtyard areas is allowed, this should not cause nuisance, for example smoking by a window or discarding cigarette butts.



DISPOSAL OF DOMESTIC RUBBISH

If you do not dispose of your domestic waste correctly this can cause a health and safety risk to you and your neighbours.

Use your refuse and recycling bins correctly and ensure they are put out for collection.

Don't leave any black bin bags outside of your door or any other rubbish in communal areas. Leaving waste in communal areas is considered a breach of your Tenancy Agreement.

Do not leave bags or waste by your front doors overnight, as these can become trip hazards. In the event of a fire, this waste could prevent you being able to escape your home easily.

The Borough Council has a bulky items collection service, more about this on page 8.





Fire Action

If fire breaks out in your flat

- Leave the room where the fire is straight away, then close the door.
- Tell everyone in your flat and get them to leave.
- Close the flat entrance door behind you.

- Do not stay behind to put the fire out.

- Wait outside, away from the building.
- Call the fire service - dial 999 or 112.

If you see or hear a fire in another part of the building:

- The building is designed to contain a fire in the flat where it starts. This means it will usually be safe for you to stay in your own flat if the fire is elsewhere.
- You must also leave immediately if smoke or heat affects your home, or you are told to leave by the fire service.
- If you are in doubt - get out.

To call the fire service:

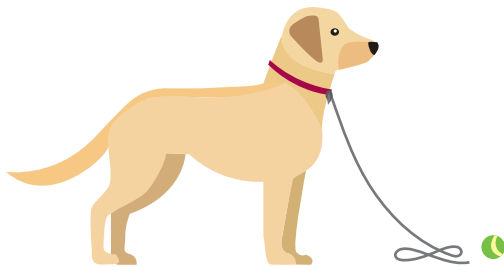
- Dial 999 or 112.
- When the operator answers, give your telephone number and ask for fire.
- When the fire service reply, give the address where the fire is.

- Do not end the call until the fire service has repeated the address correctly.

FIRE & HEALTH AND SAFETY

PETS

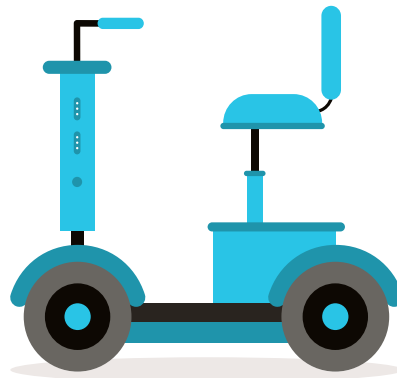
- Dogs are to be supervised at all times and not allowed to roam freely.
- You should not allow your dog to foul in any communal area. If this does happen it should be immediately picked up, double bagged and put into your general waste bin.
- Permission is required for all pets. Please contact your Tenancy Advisor for further advice before taking ownership of a pet.
- Pet related items such as feeding bowls, litter trays and scratch posts should not be left in communal areas and walkways.



MOBILITY SCOOTERS

It is important that you contact us to agree the best place to store and charge your mobility scooter. This is to ensure they do not cause a fire or safety risk to you or your neighbours.

- Mobility scooters and mobility aids should not be stored within internal communal areas and walkways.
- Mobility scooters should not be charged within communal areas and walkways.
- Mobility scooters or aids must not be left or charged in communal areas or left under stairs.



E-SCOOTERS AND E-BIKES

The London Fire Brigade has recently warned that they have seen a huge spike in fires as a result of electric bikes and e-scooters. We recognise that electric bikes and e-scooters are becoming common modes of transport, and we request that these are stored and charged within your homes.

It is advised that if they have to be charged inside, they should be placed on a hard surface, away from escape routes, in a room with a smoke alarm, and only charged when the user is awake and within the premises. If we see electric bikes or e-scooters in communal areas, they will be removed and disposed of immediately without prior notice. This is to keep all those living in the building safe.



To read more advice from the London Fire Brigade on e-Scooters and e-Bikes you can head here london-fire.gov.uk/safety/lithium-batteries/ or scan the QR code:



INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMMUNAL AREAS

INTERNAL COMMUNAL AREAS

Which includes stairwells, communal balconies, corridors and walkways

These areas should be kept clear of personal property at all times. We will remove any items left in a communal area with immediate effect, under the TORTS process (this is outlined on the next page).

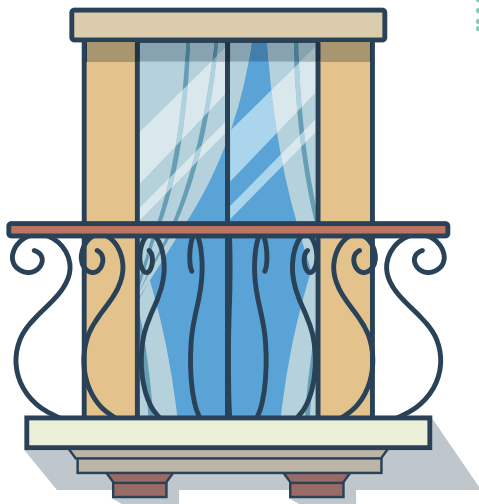
Please note the following process:

- Any items in the communal area will be removed with immediate effect, in accordance with Fire Safety and the terms of your tenancy
- If you fail to contact Freebridge and collect the items within 28 days of removal, we intend to dispose of or donate to charity the goods after that date.

If you have a doormat, it should be located inside your property so that it is not a trip hazard and it should be constructed of non-combustible material.

No items are to be hung over or suspended from handrails, bannisters or balconies.

Any item shackled to the stairs, bannisters or railings (such as bicycles) or situated within a stairwell, will be removed including any locks used to secure.



EXTERNAL COMMUNAL AREAS

COURTYARDS

Items not permitted in the communal courtyard:

- Trampolines, large pools, climbing frames, bouncy castles, swings, slides, climbing frames, domestic furniture such as sofas and armchairs.

Items that are permitted in the communal courtyard:

- Paddling pools not exceeding 1 metre in diameter and as long as supervised and emptied/removed after use.
- Children's toys are allowed providing they are cleared when not in use and the quantity and type does not present a danger to other residents or persons.
- Barbeques, providing they are not left unattended when lit and are stored safely once properly extinguished. BBQ's should also not be used within 2 metres of any building and lit with materials or liquids specifically for use on a BBQ.

BALCONIES

Items that are not permitted on your balcony:

- Barbeques (lit or otherwise), cycles, pushchairs, paddling pools, cat litter trays, tables, mobility scooters or any other items which may cause a potential danger. No items to be hung over or suspended from handrails or the balcony.

Items that are permitted on your balcony:

- Any other property such as plants, pots and garden chairs, as long as they are positioned or stored in a way that does not present a potential danger. Pots and plants must be facing into the balcony, and not hanging over the railing facing outwards. No paint or combustible items to be stored.

TORTS (INTERFERENCE WITH GOODS) ACT 1977

NOTICE IMPOSING OBLIGATION TO COLLECT GOODS

Pursuant to S.12(1) Torts (Interference with Goods) Act 1977

AND

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO SELL GOODS

Pursuant to S.12(3) Torts (Interference with Goods) Act 1977

This Notice applies to All Freebridge Community Housing Tenants and All Freebridge Community Housing Properties and communal areas where displayed. This Notice states we will remove any items left in a communal area with immediate effect.

Freebridge Community Housing

HEREBY GIVE YOU NOTICE that:

1. Any items in the communal area will be removed with immediate effect, in accordance with Fire Safety and the terms of your tenancy
2. The items are being held by Freebridge Community Housing at Juniper House, Austin Street, Kings Lynn Norfolk PE30 1DZ
3. The goods are ready for you to collect. Please contact us to arrange a time for collection within 28 of removal.
4. If you fail to collect the items within 28 days of removal, we intend to dispose of or donate to charity the goods after that date.

Signed on behalf of Freebridge Community Housing



Sophie Bates, Director of Operations

Registered Office: Juniper House, Austin Street, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE30 1DZ
Main Telephone: 03332 404 444

Freebridge Community Housing is a Registered Society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014. Registration No. 29744R, Registered with the Regulator of Social Housing No. L4463

REMOVAL OF BULKY ITEMS

Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk collection service

They provide a collection service to domestic properties for bulky household items that are too big to put in your bin.

Kind of items they can collect:

- mattress
- bed
- sofa
- washing machine

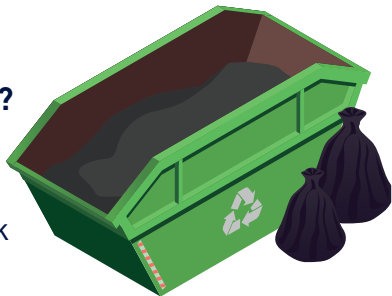
Items they can't collect:

They can't collect certain items. These include (but are not limited to):

- fixture and fittings such as bathroom suites and boilers
- general builders waste
- bags of rubble
- doors - internal and external
- gas bottles
- asbestos

What happens next?

Once the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk have received your application, they'll contact you to arrange a suitable time and date for the collection. We aim to collect your items within 10 working days.



What you'll need to do once your collection time has been booked:

- You need to call their contractor Serco on 03301099220 (at least 24 hours before your scheduled collection) if you want to cancel or change an existing collection.
- leave your items outside your home for the Council's collections team to collect,
- ensure they can see your items from the roadside. They're not allowed to enter homes, sheds, garages and outbuildings to collect items. You must not leave items in the communal areas awaiting collection. Please put your items on the kerbside on the day of collection.

Tel: 01553 776676

west-norfolk.gov.uk

Find your local Recycling Centre:
norfolk.gov.uk/recyclingcentres

Borough Council of
**King's Lynn &
West Norfolk**



If you are in a different area, then please see your local authorities website for a similar service.

Find your local Recycling Centre:
norfolk.gov.uk/recyclingcentres



Working in partnership
with

Freebridge
COMMUNITY HOUSING

Borough Council of
King's Lynn &
West Norfolk



at the tip

Fly-tipping
fine: £££

Fly-tipping: it doesn't add up



Find your
nearest tip



what3words

///occurs.prime.hedge

FLY-TIPPING

Fly-tipping is illegally dumped rubbish - which also includes household waste that has been presented incorrectly.

The Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk (BCKLWN) will investigate cases of fly-tipping, which includes dumped:

- household rubbish
- garden waste
- mattresses
- construction materials
- electrical items

It's important that you take the above on board, as there will be financial and legal penalties for anybody found guilty of fly-tipping.



If you see somebody doing so, gather as much evidence as you can and report it via the BCKLWN website, where there is also a lot more information to be found on fly-tipping: [west-norfolk.gov.uk/homepage/312/fly-tipping-illegal-dumping](https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/homepage/312/fly-tipping-illegal-dumping)



SPRING



In spring, the emerging stems are green to red/purple with rolled leaves that unfurl as the shoots extend

SPRING



It has shield-shaped leaves which are flat at the base that form an alternate zig-zag pattern along the stem

SUMMER



It can grow to 3 metres in height

SUMMER



SUMMER



The stems are sturdy, purple spotted and hollow (like bamboo)

SUMMER



In late summer to early autumn, it will have creamy white flowers in drooping clusters

AUTUMN



In the autumn the leaves will start to go yellow and drop as winter approaches

WINTER



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

JAPANESE KNOTWEED

We've put this information leaflet together to help you to identify if there is Japanese Knotweed in your garden

Have a read through and remember, if you suspect you have this plant in your garden, please contact us by emailing GroundsMaintenance@freebridge.org.uk with some photos of the plant so we can identify it. You can also give us a call on **03332 404 444**, hold the line and ask to speak to our Placeshaping Estates Team.

WHAT DOES JAPANESE KNOTWEED LOOK LIKE?

We've included some pictures of what the plant could look like at different times of year to help you diagnose whether you have the weed in your garden.

WHAT IS JAPANESE KNOTWEED?

It is a tall, hardy plant that is an invasive weed and considered one of the most problematic plant species here in the UK.

WHY IS IT A PROBLEM FOR RESIDENTS?

It's a fast growing plant, and like an iceberg, there is more happening underground out of sight – the weed's root system can fan out at 3 metres from the plant, and continue downwards a further 1.5

metres. If left uncontrolled, it can damage lightweight structures, freestanding walls, retaining walls, paths, hardstanding's, drains, buried services, and most importantly, it can damage the structure of your home.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND IT IN YOUR GARDEN

The most important thing to do if you think you have Japanese Knotweed in your garden, is to leave it alone. Do not cut it down or try to remove it, and do not disturb the area if you can help it.

Report it to Freebridge Community Housing as soon as you can by emailing GroundsMaintenance@freebridge.org.uk with some photos of the plant so we can identify it. You can also give us a call on **03332 404 444**, hold the line and ask to speak to our Placeshaping Estates Team.

IMPORTANT: Japanese Knotweed is classed as 'Controlled Waste' and must not be mixed with other garden waste for disposal. The plant can only be disposed of at a landfill site or incineration facility that has the correct type of permit to accept this type of waste.

LANDLORDS PERMISSION

We understand that part of making a house your own home is to put your personal stamp on it. We're here to help you with this, and we've simplified the process into three categories:

1. No Permission Needed Feel free to make certain changes within your home without needing our permission.
2. Seek Permission First For specific alterations, it's important to get our approval before making any changes. We're here to guide you through this process.
3. Not Allowed There are some changes that cannot be made to your home. Please refer to our guidelines for more information on what falls into this category.

There are also a lot of rules around CCTV, which we've also included information about on our website (at the below link). This includes guidance around Ring doorbells.

You can find this information over
on our website at:
freebridge.org.uk/freebridge-customer/landlord-permissions



myFreebridge has been born due to customers who have voiced their desire for Freebridge to start strengthening communities and so in 2023, the platform was created. This platform differs from our website and other social media platforms as it is designed to:

1. Engage with our Customers on topics that matter to them
2. Offer the opportunity for Freebridge Tenants to share information, tips and ideas with each other
3. Enable our Service Champions and Ambassadors to use the constructive feedback you give us to improve Freebridge Services and Communities

You will see that there are a variety of pages, articles, surveys, polls, forums and idea pages all ready for you to engage with. This really is only the start as this is a platform that will grow as its membership does. Follow our pages and be the first to be updated on topics that matter to you, for example keep up to date on what your Customer Ambassadors and Service Champions are up to as soon as they post their updates or be one of the first people to try out the latest recipe.

The more you engage the more
useful this platform becomes.
Head over and register by going
to [freebridgecommunityhousing.
uk.engagementhq.com](https://freebridgecommunityhousing.uk.engagementhq.com)



GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

There may be areas of shared space including grassed areas, plants and courtyards around your home.

We will maintain these areas, and this includes the cutting of the grass, as well as trimming of hedges/bushes/trees and the spraying/removal of weeds from courtyard areas.

We always aim to provide high quality grounds maintenance services, if you find that this is not the case, please contact us so we can take action and correct this.

PARKING AND GARAGES

As a customer you must act responsibly when parking your vehicle and give consideration to your neighbours and anyone else visiting.

Please do not:

- Cause an obstruction when parking
- Park any vehicle, whether at your home or in a communal area, which is illegal, unroadworthy and/or untaxed (we will arrange for such vehicles to be removed if you do this)
- Carry out major repairs to any car, motorcycle or other vehicle at your home, in communal/ shared areas, on forecourts, in landscaped areas or on the road
- Park any vehicle, caravan, boat or trailer at your home unless there is a properly made hard-standing or garage together with a dropped kerb crossing.



FREEBRIDGE COMMUNAL AREA STANDARDS

Communal areas are visited once every two weeks, the rest of the time it is every resident's responsibility to maintain the areas.

These next couple of pages outline the standards we have set for the communal areas we own at Freebridge Community Housing. If you have any questions or concerns about the work we are doing to meet the standards detailed below please call us on 03332 404 444.

On every visit by our Placeshaping Team, we will do the following:



- all security doors installed are working as they should be
- emergency drop key boxes are working correctly (where installed) and raise any necessary repairs required



We will carry out a visual fire safety check, to ensure that escape routes remain free of any obstructions and that appropriate safety signage is in place.



Where repairs are identified, a sticker will be placed on the defective item, confirming the date the repair was reported. Red stickers will be applied to emergency repairs (four hours) and green routine repairs (28 days).



We will check that:

- all communal grassed areas and shrubs are tidy and well maintained; any follow up work required will be reported to our grounds maintenance contractor,
- all external yards and pathways are leaf free,
- any dangerous or low hanging trees are trimmed back.



We will ensure that all internal and external communal areas and paths are tidy and free of any litter or other obstructions.



We will ensure that all internal and external communal areas are clean and that:

- internal communal areas are free of cobwebs,
- internal communal light fittings are clean and in good order,
- internal windows, security doors and glass in internal communal areas is clean,
- internal and external hard floors are dirt and litter free.

SIGNPOSTING

RSPCA

westnorfolkrspca.org.uk

Report animal cruelty by calling: 0300 1234 999

Reporting ASB to Freebridge

asb@freebridge.org.uk

03332 404 444

Reporting a repair (including within a communal area)

hcm@freebridge.org.uk

03332 404 444

Reporting Noise

asb@freebridge.org.uk

03332 404 444

Reporting Fly-Tipping

King's Lynn Borough Council website:

west-norfolk.gov.uk/homepage/312/fly-tipping_illegal_dumping

Check a Trade

For checking trades people before using their services

checkatrade.com/

Wellbeing

For help with wellbeing and mental health in Norfolk take a look at NHS

Talking Therapies:

wellbeingnands.co.uk/norfolk/

Suicide Prevention Awareness:

norfolkandwaveneymind.org.uk/training-courses/suicide-prevention-awareness

Ask Lily

Lily is a service from the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk that helps adults in west Norfolk develop friendships and engage in our community.

asklily.org.uk/kb5/westnorfolk/cd/home.page

For ways to contact us, head to
[freebridge.org.uk/who-we-are/
contact](http://freebridge.org.uk/who-we-are/contact)



Please let us know at the start of a call with us if you need a translator and we can arrange one for you. This goes for any printed material too - we want speaking with us to be easy, language should not be a barrier.

Ar jums reikia vertėjo, kad galėtumėte su mumis kalbėtis? Telefoninio pokalbio pradžioje pasakykite mums, ar jums reikia vertėjo, ir mes tuo pasirūpinsime. Tai taikoma ir bet kokiai spausdintinei medžiagai: mes norime, kad jums su mumis kalbėti būtų lengva, ir kad kalba nebūtų kliūtis.

Vai jums ir nepieciešams tulkotājs, lai sazinātos ar mums? Lūdzu, zvana sākumā paziņojiet mums, ja jums nepieciešams tulkotājs, un mēs to nodrošināsim. Tas attiecas arī uz drukātiem materiāliem - mēs vēlamies, lai sarunāties ar mums būtu viegli, un valodai nevajadzētu būt šķērslim.

Czy do rozmowy z nami potrzebny jest tłumacz? Prosimy o poinformowanie nas na początku rozmowy, czy potrzebują Państwo tłumacza, a my zapewnimy jego obecność. Dotyczy to również wszelkich materiałów drukowanych - chcemy, aby rozmowa z nami była łatwa, a język nie powinien stanowić bariery.

Precisa de um tradutor para falar conosco? Por favor, informe-nos no início da chamada se precisar de um interprete e nós arranjaremos um. Isto aplica-se também a qualquer material impresso - queremos que seja fácil falar conosco e o idioma não deve ser uma barreira.

Você precisa de um tradutor para falar conosco? Por favor, informe-nos no início da chamada se você precisar de um tradutor e nós providenciaremos um. Isto vale também para qualquer material impresso - queremos que seja fácil falar conosco e a linguagem não deve ser uma barreira.

Нужен ли вам переводчик для разговора с нами? Пожалуйста, сообщите нам в начале разговора, если вам нужен переводчик, и мы его предоставим. Это касается и любых печатных материалов – мы хотим, чтобы разговор с нами был легким, и язык не должен быть препятствием.

If you need further help or advice about anything in this leaflet, please contact our Tenancy or Placeshaping Team on 03332 404 444.

Freebridge Community Housing
Juniper House
Austin Street
King's Lynn
Norfolk PE30 1DZ

Main Telephone: 03332 404 444

Office Opening Hours:

8:45am - 5.15pm (Mon-Thurs)

8:45am - 4.45pm (Fri)

Bank Holidays, Saturday and Sunday Closed

Out of Office Hours:

The main telephone number (03332 404 444) will divert to our 24 hour emergency service.