



Damp & Disrepair

Understand your rights to repairs

To understand your legal rights as a tenant regarding disrepair, you need to know what kind of agreement you have with your landlord. Do you have an Assured Shorthold Tenancy or are you a lodger (with a Licence)?

Advice Alert!

You can use [Shelter's Tenancy Checker](#) tool to find out what type of contract you have.

Under the Assured Shorthold Tenancy your landlord has a legal responsibility to:

- Ensure all gas appliances are serviced and checked every 12 months by a [Gas Safe registered](#) engineer (you have the right to see a copy of the gas service record)
- Maintain the structure and exterior of the house, including roofs, guttering, windows, drains and garden walls
- Repair appliances included as part of the rental agreement
- Repair sinks, WC, hot water, electrical installations and appliances and central heating and gas appliances

If you have a Licence (you live with your landlord), your landlord is still responsible for making sure your home is in a proper condition.

Write a letter to your landlord to report problems

It is important that you report any repairs needed immediately, as the owner cannot be held responsible if they are unaware of the problem. Always report disrepair in writing, as a record of your report may be needed in the future if repairs are not carried out.

A letter should include the following basics:

- The date sent
- The details of the landlord
- A brief description of the disrepair
- A reasonable timescale for the completion of the work
- A contract for you to arrange access to complete the repairs



Support Advice Centre

Top Tip

Writing a good “reporting disrepair letter” to your landlord can make a difference. You can use the following template to structure your arguments: [Letter to Landlord](#)

Contact Environmental Health for serious disrepair

If you struggle to get your landlord to help out and your property disrepair is causing you serious problems, you can report it to Southampton City Council. More details can be found [here](#). The Council will respond to your report in 5 working days and will advise you of what steps they can take. In some cases, they may arrange an inspection to assess the issues.

Follow the tips on reducing mould and condensation

Responsibility for damp can be a complex issue. For example, disrepair or structural issues require action on the part of your landlord/letting agent. Condensation on the other hand may be a normal process occurring in the house where warm moist air comes into contact with cooler air, or a cold surface.

Often the steps for preventing condensation are simple:

- Close the bathroom door, open a window and use an extractor fan
- Cover boiling pans, open a window and use an extractor fan when cooking
- Dry clothes outside or in a room with an open window. Avoid drying clothes on radiators
- Keep your heating on a low temperature for a few hours a day
- Move large items away from walls to improve air circulation

Further guidance

For further help on housing disrepair, contact the Advice Centre.

- 02380 592 085
- advice@susu.org

You can also visit us in Building 40, Highfield campus. Our opening hours are Monday–Friday 09.00–17.00.

Disclaimer: While care has been taken to ensure that information contained in the Advice Centre publications is true and correct at the time of writing, changes in circumstances after the time of publication may impact on the accuracy of this information. The Advice Centre and SUSU cannot accept responsibility for any actions taken as a result of advice given in this publication.
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