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01:

Introduction

As your housing authority, we want you to have the best housing service that we can provide. Our aim is to supply this service efficiently and effectively. This handbook tells you about the various services that we offer and how to access them.

In addition to the handbook, there is a range of leaflets, public information notices and annual publications available on housing services. You can get most of these from the Council or from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

We want to hear your views

If we are to deliver a quality service, we need to know what you think about our services. Please contact us and let us have your views.

How do I contact the Council?

Write to us:

Dún Laoghaire/Rathdown County Council
County Hall
Marine Road
Dún Laoghaire
Co. Dublin

Phone us: (01) 205 4700

Email: housing@dlrcoco.ie

Visit us:

County Hall or Dundrum Office Park
Marine Road [Rear of Bank of
Dún Laoghaire Ireland]
Co. Dublin Main Street
Dundrum, Dublin 14

Log on:

www.dlrcoco.ie

You can visit us without an appointment during office hours or you can make an appointment to see a particular Council official. You can also fill in a comment card at the public counter or ask for one to be sent to you.

A tenants' association or other representative group can ask for a formal meeting with councillors and officials.

Pride in your community

By getting involved in how your housing estate is run, you and your family will be able to take personal pride in your community. See the Resident Participation section for more details.

02:

Tenancy and Tenancy Conditions

What is tenancy?

Tenancy occurs when a person (a tenant) is assigned a home by the Council. When you are assigned a home, you must sign a tenancy agreement. You will then receive the keys to your home and are expected to move in immediately. See the Tenancy Conditions section for more information on the tenancy agreement.

Shortly after you move into your new home, an Inspector of Services – a member of staff from the Housing Department – will visit your home, introduce themselves to you and answer any questions you may have. They may also call to you at other times during the year with your Rent Statement or to help you in any way they can with your tenancy.

What is joint tenancy?

This is where two people share the tenancy, for instance a husband and wife or a brother and sister. If there are two 'qualifying adults' in your household, we will usually create a joint tenancy. A 'qualifying adult' is someone who meets our requirements to be a tenant and has been approved by us. We may also create a joint tenancy on medical, compassionate or other exceptional grounds.

What happens if my spouse is the tenant and they die or leave?

In these cases, the tenancy will normally be given to you, as long as you have been

living in the property for the last five years with the Council's consent and you have been assessed for rent for that time. Being assessed for rent means that the Council has taken your income into account when working out the rent due from the household under the Rents Scheme. See the Rents section for more information.

What happens if my parents are the tenants and they die or leave?

If both parents die or leave, the tenancy will normally be given to you. However, this will depend on whether:

- you need housing,
- the size of the house or flat is suitable for your needs, and
- you were living there for the five years immediately before the death or departure of your parents and you have been assessed for rent.

We will examine each case individually. If more than one member of the household wants to remain in the house or flat, we will normally give the tenancy to the person we think is most likely to keep the household together harmoniously.

May a grandchild take over a tenancy?

This depends on whether:

- you, as the grandchild, lived in the house or flat for at least five years



immediately before the death or departure of the tenant,

- › no son or daughter is eligible to take over the tenancy,
- › you need housing,
- › the size of the house or flat is suitable for your needs, and
- › you have been continuously assessed for rent for the last five years.

What housing options do I have with the Council?

We have various options and schemes to suit your future housing needs. These include:

- › continued renting,
- › tenant purchase,
- › house improvement loans,
- › mortgage allowances,
- › shared ownership,
- › loans to buy houses,
- › affordable housing,
- › rural re-settlement, and
- › transfers to other properties.

These options are explained below.

May I buy my home?

If you live in a council house, you may be able to buy it. This is called tenant

purchase. Whether you may buy depends on:

- › your income,
- › the length of time you have been living in your home, and
- › your family circumstances.

You cannot buy your home if you live in a flat, in accommodation intended for senior citizens or in accommodation for Travellers (such as grouped housing and halting site bays).

To find out more about buying your home, please phone the Loans, Sales and Grants Section on (01) 205 4847.

Will the Council help me carry out improvements to my home?

In some cases we will. For instance, if someone in your home is disabled, we may install a stair lift, adapt a bathroom or provide a bedroom extension. We may also carry out a bedroom extension to relieve overcrowding. However, we no longer carry out extensions to mid-terrace houses.

Under our Home Improvement Loan Scheme, you may also qualify for a loan to arrange approved improvements to your home yourself. To find out more about this scheme, please phone the Loans, Sales and Grants Section on (01) 205 4845.

Will the Council help me to buy a private home?

Yes, we have a number of schemes to help you buy a private home. These include the:

- Mortgage Allowance Scheme,
- Shared Ownership Scheme,
- House Purchase Loan Scheme, and
- Affordable Housing Scheme.

To qualify for any of these schemes, you must leave your rented house or flat in good condition and with a clear rent account.

We include an outline of these schemes below, but to find out more, please phone the Loans, Sales and Grants Section on (01) 205 4847.

What is the Mortgage Allowance Scheme?

This scheme helps pay the interest on your mortgage for the first five years of the mortgage.

What is shared ownership?

This helps people on low incomes who would not otherwise qualify for a mortgage to buy a home of their choice. Ownership is 'shared' between you and the Council. You buy part of the property and rent the rest from us. Over time, you buy out the entire property.

What is the House Purchase Loan Scheme?

This Scheme allows a buyer on a low income to buy a house with a loan from the Council. It is similar to a mortgage.

What is affordable housing?

This is where housing is sold at a discounted price to people who cannot afford to pay the full market value. Certain conditions apply. For instance, if you sell or re-mortgage the property within 20 years of buying it, you must repay the discount to the Council.

What is rural re-settlement?

You may, with the permission of the Dún Laoghaire/Rathdown County Council, surrender your home, as long as you have been accepted by Rural Re-settlement Ireland (tel. (01) 672 2256) for accommodation in the country. You can get details from the Allocations Section in the Housing Department on (01) 205 4828.

Can I transfer to another house or flat?

You may transfer on exceptional medical or overcrowding grounds. You may also transfer to a smaller house or flat if the one you are living in is too large for you.

In addition, you may transfer to another house or flat if the tenants in the other house or flat are willing to transfer to your home. This is called mutual transfer. Certain conditions apply. For instance, you



need the approval of the Council before you transfer.

To find out more about transfers, please phone the Housing Allocations Section on (01) 205 4828.

Tenancy Conditions

Your Tenancy Agreement explains the conditions of your tenancy. For your convenience, we have summarised these below through questions and answers.

How does my tenancy operate?

- You must live in the house or flat as your main home and nowhere else.
- You must not carry out a business from your home, garden or shed.
- You must not pass the tenancy of your home to anyone else without our permission.
- You must give us at least four weeks' notice if you wish to move out of your home and we must carry out a maintenance inspection before you can move out.

What are my responsibilities in relation to rent?

- You must pay your rent and any other charges when they are due.
- You must give us full details of your household income so that we can calculate the correct rent for you.

- You must return your completed Rent Assessment Form each year and tell us of any changes in your income or household circumstances.

Can I take in a lodger or sub-tenant?

No, not without written permission from us.

Am I responsible for the garden?

You are responsible for maintaining your house and garden, including walls, gates and fences. You must make sure that you, others living in the house with you, including children, and any visitors to your home look after your house and garden.

Is the Council responsible for litter outside my home?

No, under litter law you are responsible for keeping the footpath and road gutter in front of your home free from litter. You should also make sure that rubbish bins and rubbish bags left out for collection are securely closed so that they do not cause litter. See the Environmental Issues section for more details.

Must I carry out all repairs?

- You are responsible for decorating the inside of your home.
- You are also responsible for repairing any damage to windows, fixtures and fittings in your home.

- You must carry out any minor repairs, including those listed in the section on Housing Maintenance.

Can I make alterations to my home?

If you want to make alterations to your home, you must first apply in writing to the Housing Maintenance Section for permission to carry out the work. Your letter should state exactly what you plan to do and who will carry out the work. We may ask for more information before making any decision.

You may also need planning permission for certain works or alterations such as putting in a driveway. An application for planning permission will not be accepted unless the Housing Maintenance Section has given you permission to carry out the works or alterations. If you receive planning permission, you must send a copy of the Grant of Permission to the Housing Department.

Do not carry out any works or alterations without permission and never interfere with the structure of the house. If you do, you will be breaking your tenancy agreement and we will take immediate action to return the house to its original condition.

Can I keep pets in the house?

You may keep domestic pets, such as cats, dogs and certain birds, as long as they don't become a nuisance to your

neighbours. Horses, poultry and pigs are not domestic animals and keeping any of these is a serious breach of your tenancy agreement.

If you have a dog, it must have a licence, which you can buy from any post office or directly from us. If you do not have a dog licence or if you do not keep your dog under proper control, you may receive an on-the-spot fine. Take particular care to keep your dog under control on bin days.

Must I insure my home?

We will insure the structure of your home, but you must insure the contents. We never provide contents insurance.

03 :

Resident Participation

Having a say in how your estate is run

We want to work with you to manage your housing estate or block of flats. We believe you have a right to be consulted about decisions that affect your life and your estate. We want to share ideas and information with you and we want you to get involved in making the decisions that affect your area.

Why should I get involved?

By getting involved in managing your estate, you will develop knowledge and skills that can greatly help develop the social aspect of your community. For instance, it may lead to preparing a local services plan for your estate.

How do I get involved in managing my estate?

We run training programmes to help tenants learn more about estate management. We then help them set up an Estate Management Forum, which is made up of tenants and a community worker from the Council. Several residential areas are now involved in estate management and these have been very successful to date.

What about managing anti-social behaviour on my estate?

Estate management in Dún Laoghaire/Rathdown does not deal with specific anti-social behaviour or with lettings, transfers or allocations, as these are the sole responsibility of the Council's Housing Department. See the Anti-social Behaviour section for more details.

How do I find out more?

Please phone the Community Development Department on (01) 204 7229 or (01) 204 7231 and we will help you have a say in the way your estate is run.

04 :

Housing Maintenance

The Housing Maintenance Section is responsible for managing, repairing and controlling the Council's rented housing.

How do I request repairs to my home?

You may make a request in person at the Council's offices in Dún Laoghaire or Dundrum. The addresses are in the Introduction. You may also request repairs online through our website, www.dlrccoco.ie, or you may telephone the Council on (01) 205 47 00, ext 4118 and 4119.

Will the Council carry out any repairs I want?

No, we will just carry out structural repairs to your home and then only if your rent is paid up to date. You are responsible for arranging and paying for all other repairs.

What types of repairs am I responsible for?

You are responsible for certain general internal, external, electrical and plumbing repairs. You are also responsible for repairs to doors and windows and to electrical appliances. You will find examples of these below and on the next page.

Internal repairs

- Filling plaster cracks
- Decorating
- Repairing or replacing cupboards, wardrobes, kitchen units and their

doors, hinges, handles, locks, catches and drawers

- Repairing or replacing curtain rails and window boards
- Chimney sweeping
- Repairing, replacing or fitting wall and floor tiles
- Repairing woodwork including floors, doors and skirting boards
- Repairing or replacing ventilator
- Carrying out repairs due to condensation*

***Note:** Condensation is caused mainly by not opening windows, especially in bathrooms, or by drying clothes in rooms with no windows or vents open. Condensation appears as black mould on walls and edges of windows. Always make sure that vents are clear to allow air to flow into a room.

Doors and windows

- Repairing or replacing external and internal door locks and handles
- Repairing window stays, catches and restrictors
- Draught proofing doors and windows
- Replacing broken glass
- Repairing permavents where fitted
- Repairing or replacing internal tiles on windowsills and window boards



- › Repairing letter boxes
- › Painting internal timber work on windows and doors (recommended every five years)

External repairs

- › Keeping gardens and hedges tidy
- › Repairing or replacing fences and garden boundary walls, whether erected by us or by you
- › Repairing or replacing or re-erecting front gates, side gates or doors leading to garden areas
- › Repairing fuel sheds or outhouses, unless they form part of the structure of the house
- › Cleaning silt, leaves or other deposits from gutters or downpipes

Electrical repairs

- › Repairing or replacing ceiling roses, lamp holders and plugs of any appliances
- › Replacing fuses, except for mains fuse
- › Replacing elements for electric fires
- › Repairing electrical appliances, fires and heaters not installed by us
- › Replacing light bulbs and pilot light bulbs
- › Installing and repairing doorbells

Note: All electrical repairs (other than replacing bulbs and fuses) must be carried out by a qualified and competent electrician. You should send the electrician's name and contact details, a description of the work carried out and a certificate to cover the works to the Housing Maintenance Section.

Plumbing repairs

- › Cleaning gully traps
- › Paying the cost of clearing a blocked house drain (if you have a single drain) and paying part of the cost of clearing a combined drain
- › Repairing or replacing waste pipes inside your home
- › Clearing airlocks in pipes
- › Repairing or replacing taps on sink units and wash hand basins, including leaking or dripping taps
- › Repairing or replacing a toilet bowl except if it is cracked and leaking due to fair wear and tear
- › Repairing or replacing a toilet cistern and cover, except if it is cracked and leaking due to normal wear and tear
- › Repairing or replacing a ballcock or other water flotation control device in a toilet cistern
- › Repairing or replacing of toilet seats, chains and handles

- Repairing burst pipes caused by frost or freezing temperatures and repairing damage to contents resulting from the burst pipe

Cooking and heating appliances

- Repairing or replacing solid fuel, gas or other heating or cooking appliances installed by you
- Repairing or replacing the basket or grate in all fireplaces and replacing glass panels in doors of room heaters
- Repairing damage caused to room heaters by improper use
- Repairing and replacing tiles on fireplace or hearth

Who carries out repairs caused by malicious damage?

You are responsible for repairs arising from all deliberate or malicious damage to Council property, no matter who causes it. We will not carry out these repairs. You are also responsible for repairing doors, windows, fixtures and fittings that might have been damaged or destroyed due to a burglary or break-in to your home.

What happens if I need repairs carried out but I am behind with my rent?

We will only carry out emergency repairs when you start paying the arrears and clearing your rent account.

Does the Council make any exceptions?

We may make an exception if it is impossible for you to carry out the repairs yourself, for instance if you are a senior citizen. If you think you fall into this category, please contact the Housing Maintenance Section on (01) 205 4700, extension 4118 or 4119, for more information and assistance.

How long will it take for repairs to be carried out?

We group all requests for repairs, depending on the nature of the problem, as emergency, urgent, routine or cyclical repairs. We try to respond to requests for repairs according to the guidelines below.

Category	Example	Timescale
Emergency	Smoking fuse board, tiles falling off roof	1 – 3 working days
Urgent	Leak under sink unit, overflow pipe leaking	10 working days
Routine	Replace fire cheeks, replace toilet cistern	12 weeks
Cyclical	External painting	Set by a programme of works for planned maintenance



What should I do if a repair team calls to my house and I'm not there?

When you put in a request for maintenance, you will be asked to leave a contact telephone number and the best time for someone to call. If they call and nobody is there, they will leave a card with the number for you to phone to re-arrange access. You must call back within seven days or we will assume that you no longer need to have the repairs carried out.

Is my house insured by the Council?

We insure the structure of all rented houses against fire, flood and storm damage. But it is up to you to insure your belongings in the home (known as taking out contents insurance). If you buy your house, you will be responsible for structural and contents insurance.

Do you repair properties before new tenants move in?

We do all we can to make a house or flat liveable before a new tenant moves in. However, if it is an old building, we cannot renovate it to an 'as new' state.

Does anybody from the Council inspect my home?

We may inspect your home from time to time. You must give authorised agents and workers from the Council reasonable access to inspect your home or to carry out necessary works. The same applies to workers in gas, electricity supply and

telephone companies who may need to carry out repairs.

All Council and utility workers carry identification. Please make sure you check for appropriate identification before letting anybody into your home. Also, we ask you and anybody in your house not to smoke while inspections or repairs are taking place.

What does the Council do about vacant houses or flats?

Vacant houses or flats can become a target for anti-social behaviour. If you intend to move out of your home, you must give us at least four weeks notice. We can then make arrangements to have the property re-let so that it won't remain vacant for any length of time.

If there is a vacant property in your estate, please don't assume that we know about it. Tell us! You can phone the Housing Allocations Section on (01) 205 4828 with the details. The sooner we find out about vacant properties, the sooner we can arrange to have them re-let. Also, if you see people interfering with a house or flat that you know is vacant, please let us know as soon as possible to avoid any damage or possible danger.

05:

Safety in the Home

Fire precautions

Fire is a danger in every home and older people and young children are most often the victims. Please take the following steps to prevent fires.

- Keep matches and lighters out of the reach of children and do not leave young children alone in the home.
- If you have an open fire, use a secure fireguard.
- Switch off and unplug all appliances not in use at night.
- Do not smoke in bed.
- Only plug one electrical appliance into a socket.
- Close doors to all rooms at night. Don't open a door if you suspect there is a fire in the room.
- Use gas and electrical appliances according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Have gas and electrical appliances serviced regularly.

What should I do if a fire breaks out?

Your first priority is to get everyone out of the house and then to call the fire brigade. If your escape routes are blocked by fire or smoke, go into a room, close the door and stuff a blanket or carpet at the bottom of the door to keep out smoke. Call for help

from the window and wait for the fire brigade to arrive. Do not jump from an upstairs window except as a last resort.

What should I do if the chimney goes on fire?

Call the fire brigade. If possible, move furniture and carpets away from the fireplace. After a chimney fire, get an experienced builder to check the chimney for damage. If necessary, repair the chimney and fireplace before using it again. Get the chimney cleaned at least twice a year.

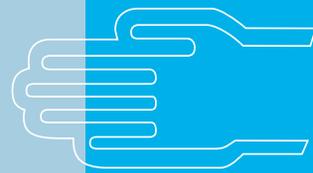
What is the advice about open fires?

Use a fireguard and always check that it is in position before you go to bed. Never carry hot coals from one fireplace to another and avoid banking fires too high.

What should I do if my chip pan goes on fire?

Use a fire blanket or the correct extinguisher to smother the flames. If you do not have a fire blanket or extinguisher, use a lid, large plate or wet towel. Do not move the pan or use water to put out the fire. Never leave a chip pan unattended. If you have to answer the phone or door, turn off the power and move the chip pan to a cold ring or hob.

Most fires start in the kitchen, so you should consider a fire blanket or



extinguisher and, if you use a chip pan, buy one with a thermostat.

Gas cylinders and heating care

Do I need to take special care with gas cylinders?

Yes, please take the following precautions.

- › Always keep cylinders upright.
- › Switch off cylinders at the regulator when not using them.
- › Never seal air vents, as it is important that each room with a gas heater has adequate ventilation.
- › Don't store cylinders indoors.
- › Return empty cylinders promptly.
- › Check flexible hoses and couplings regularly for signs of wear and tear.
- › Keep all portable heaters away from curtains and furniture and place them where they can't be knocked over.
- › Never move a gas or oil heater when it is switched on.

What should I do if I smell gas?

- › Do not ignore it.
- › Immediately ring the Bord Gáis Emergency Service Line on 1850 20 50 50 (open 24 hours).
- › Turn off the gas at your meter and appliances.
- › Open the doors and windows.

› Do not smoke or use naked flames or nearby light switches.

› Check nearby premises.

What should I do if my gas central heating is not working?

If we installed your heating or if you are paying the weekly boiler maintenance charge, we will maintain your system. Ring the Housing Maintenance Section immediately on (01) 205 4700, extension 4118 or 4119. We will deal with calls about central heating problems as soon as possible, but it is not always possible to have a system back up and running within 24 hours.

If you installed the gas central heating system yourself and you are not paying the boiler charge, you must contact and pay for a Bord Gáis certified contractor to carry out any repairs. However, if you wish the Council to take over maintaining your heating system, you should contact the Housing Maintenance Section, which will arrange for an Inspector of Services to call to you to discuss the procedure.

06 :

Anti-social Behaviour

What is anti-social behaviour?

Anti-social behaviour includes:

- drug dealing,
- violence or threats of violence,
- harassment, and
- intimidation.

How does the Council deal with anti-social behaviour?

We take a strong position where acts of anti-social behaviour are proven. If necessary, we will repossess the homes of offending tenants and their families. Where tenants or their families are involved in drug dealing or allow their homes to be used for drug dealing, we will consider legal action, which may lead to evictions or excluding orders. Tenants will not be re-housed until the Council is satisfied they will not be anti-social.

What can I do about anti-social neighbours?

If your neighbours are tenants of the Council, tell us about the problem. Don't assume that we already know about it. If you cannot resolve the issue yourself, write to us, giving full details of the complaint and the dates and times of any incidents. If you do not want us to use your name, state this clearly in your letter and your complaint will be treated in confidence. You can also make a complaint by

contacting the Anti-Social Section on (01) 205 4700, extension 4112, 4117 or 4158.

Remember, if your complaint is urgent and of a criminal nature please contact An Garda Síochána.

When we receive your complaint, we will investigate it and, if appropriate, refer the matter to the Gardaí or other relevant agency.

If your complaint is in writing, please send it to:

Anti-Social Section
Dún Laoghaire/Rathdown County Council
County Hall
Marine Road
Dún Laoghaire
Co. Dublin

How does the Council deal with former tenants who have now bought their homes?

We regard tenants who buy their homes from us (tenant purchasers) as private property owners, so they are no longer our responsibility. This means we cannot evict or obtain excluding orders on tenant purchasers who engage in anti-social behaviour. However, if a tenant purchaser's family or visitors to their home engage in anti-social behaviour, we can take action against them by issuing warning letters or applying for excluding orders.



What happens if I disturb my neighbours?

You must make sure that you, other people living with you, including children, and any visitors to your home do not damage your neighbours' property or become a nuisance to your neighbours.

In particular, this means:

- › no drug dealing,
- › no violence or threats of violence,
- › no harassment or abuse,
- › no intimidation, and
- › no loud noise.

How will the Council deal with a complaint about me from my neighbours?

We will fully investigate the complaint. If we find the complaint is true, we will consider immediate action. This may lead to sending you a warning letter. In serious cases, we may start legal action against you, which may result in you and your family being evicted or excluded from your home.

What can I do to become a better neighbour?

Please do not cause disturbance or become a nuisance to your neighbours. Try to always respect your neighbours' boundary fences or walls and do not trespass onto their property. Some older residents live

in the Council's estates, so please watch out for them and help them in every way possible.

Together, we can make your neighbourhood a better place for you and your family.

07 : Rents

The Rents Section assesses your rent and deals with any questions you may have about your account, methods of payment, arrears or evictions. Every three months we will send you a statement of your account, showing the rent charged, payments made by you, any adjustments to your account and the up-to-date balance.

We set fixed rents and differential rents for tenants. Differential rents vary according to the total household income and family size, but fixed rents remain the same no matter who is earning money in the household. All new tenants pay differential rent.

How can I pay my rent?

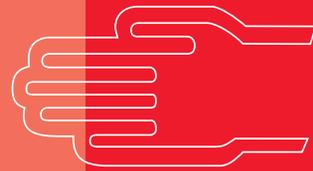
You have several options:

- using Billpay at any post office with your Rent Payment Card or by registering at www.billpay.ie,
- using the Household Budget Scheme, which involves paying rent straight from your social welfare payment (details from your local post office or our Rents Section),
- using your Rent Payment Card in any shop displaying the Postpoint sign,
- paying in person at either of our offices,
- paying by cheque or postal order – but not cash – through the post, or
- setting up a standing order or bank giro from your bank or building society account.

If you pay in a shop or post office, always use your Rent Payment Card so that your payments are credited to the correct account. You should also keep your rent receipts, at least until you have checked the payments against your rent account statement.

How does the Council decide how much rent I must pay?

We base your rent on the total income of your household and on your family size. To calculate the exact amount, we use a table called the Differential Rent Scheme, which matches income and family size with the rent due. You can get a copy of the Differential Rent Scheme from the Council's web site, www.dlrcoco.ie, or by phoning (01) 205 4841. In setting your rent, we try to be fair and not cause financial hardship for you.



How is my rent affected if someone else in my home is earning money?

We will increase the rent for everyone in your home who is earning money.

How often does the Council review my rent?

We review rents in March each year. We will send you a Rent Assessment Form in January for you to complete and return as soon as possible. You must tell us immediately about any changes in your or your family's circumstances. This means you must tell us when someone in your home:

- › gets a job,
- › moves in (only with our permission – contact the Housing Allocations Section on (01) 205 4828),
- › starts claiming a social welfare payment,
- › dies,
- › is born,
- › leaves home, or
- › reaches 18 years of age.

How do I tell the Council when my circumstances change?

Tell us about the change by contacting the Rent Assessment Section on (01) 205 4841. Once we receive evidence of the change, we will adjust your rent. Examples of documentary evidence include birth or death certificates or a letter from the

Department of Social and Family Affairs. Contact the Rent Assessment Section if you have any questions about evidence of other changes in circumstances.

What happens if I don't tell the Council when my circumstances change?

When we find out about the changes, we will re-assess your rent and backdate your rent account to the date of the change. This means that you could owe a large amount of back rent, known as arrears.

I am on a fixed rent. Will my rent be reviewed?

Yes, we review fixed rents each year at the same time as differential rents. If you are on a fixed rent, you can change to a differential rent at any time, as long as you don't owe money on your rent account.

What can I do if I owe arrears?

You can pay off what you owe bit by bit by paying more than your weekly rent each week. It is important that you make an agreement with us about this and that you stick to it. If you are in arrears, the sooner you tackle the problem, the better.

How do I make arrangements to clear rent arrears?

Contact your Inspector of Services (the member of Council's Housing Department who visits you with your Rent Statement and helps with your tenancy) or the Rents

Section on (01) 205 4841. You may also wish to contact your local Money Advice and Budgeting Service, which is independent and confidential (details in Useful Phone Numbers section).

The next step is to agree a plan with us to clear the arrears. Once you make an arrangement and keep to it, your arrears will reduce. We will be satisfied you are clearing your arrears even if it takes a while to clear them completely.

Will I be taken to court for rent arrears?

Yes, we may take you to court if you refuse to come to a reasonable arrangement or if you do not keep to the agreed plan. At this stage, you must clear all the arrears and pay our legal costs or you will be evicted. If you are evicted, we will not re-house you.

08 : Environmental Issues and Saving Energy in the Home

Aim to reduce, reuse and recycle wherever you can.

Green bin recycling

The service is carried out for us by Greyhound. You can get advice sheets and calendars directly from Greyhound by phoning 1890 342342 and you can also check your collection dates at www.greenbin.ie or www.dublinwaste.ie.

Greyhound collects green bins every two weeks on the same day, except for public holidays, where separate arrangements can be made. You should put your green bin out by 7am on collection day.

Materials accepted in green bins

- Paper – newspapers, magazines, flyers, junk mail
- Cardboard packaging
- Clean aluminium cans
- Clean steel food cans
- Milk and juice cartons, for example Tetra Pak & Biscuit tins
- All plastics are now accepted in the green bin

Please note that there is a fee for a replacement bin if your bin is lost or stolen. For more details, or to request and pay for a bin, please contact the Water & Waste Services Department on (01) 205 4810 or call in to either of our offices. You will find the addresses in the Introduction.

Home composting

About one third of all household waste is made up of fruit and vegetable peels and garden waste. By composting, you will save on waste charges and get a free soil enhancer for your garden. You can buy and collect a home composting bin from our Dundrum office.

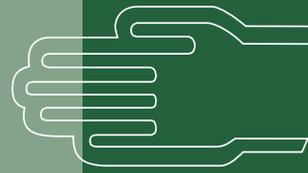
If your community or residents' group would like to host a composting or recycling workshop, we can help you. Please contact the Water & Waste Services Department on (01) 205 4817.

Suitable for composting

- Leaves
- Grass
- Old plants
- Fruit and vegetable peels
- Small amounts of cardboard and newspaper

Not suitable

- Any cooked or processed foods
- Meat or fish
- Cheese
- Cooking oil or fats



Recycling at Ballyogan

Ballyogan Recycling Park is a site where you can bring a wide range of materials for recycling or disposal. Some items are accepted free of charge; for other items you will have to pay a recycling or disposal fee. The current charges for Ballyogan are listed on our website, www.dlrcoco.ie, and on www.dublinwaste.ie.

Items that can be recycled in Ballyogan for free

- › Paper
- › Cardboard
- › Plastics (all types excepted)
- › Aluminium and steel cans
- › Glass
- › Clothing
- › Milk and drink cartons, for example Tetra Pak
- › Domestic appliances – washing machines, cookers, microwaves and so on
- › All plastics are now accepted
- › Bulbs and fluorescent tubes
- › Batteries
- › Gas cylinders
- › Waste oils – motor and cooking
- › Household hazardous waste, for example paint, medicines or aerosols

- › Electronic and electrical equipment
- › Scrap metal
- › Gypsum

Items that carry a €5.00 charge for recycling or disposal at Ballyogan

- › Wood
- › Garden Waste
- › Bulky items, such as furniture, carpets and so on
- › General household waste
- › Soil, stones and construction waste

If you have any queries about what is accepted, please call Ballyogan Recycling Park on (01) 291 3600. The recycling service is only for homeowners or tenants. Commercial vehicles are not allowed into the park. Ballyogan is open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 5.30pm, Saturday from 9.30am to 5.30pm and Sunday and Bank Holidays from 10.30am to 5.30pm.

Eden Park Recycling Centre

Located next to Sandycove and Glasthule DART station, Eden Park is a recycling centre where you can recycle the following items free of charge.

- › Glass
- › Plastics (all types excepted)
- › Aluminium and steel cans
- › Paper

- Cardboard
- Tetra Pak cartons
- Textiles
- Batteries (Retailers can take back used batteries (free of charge))
- Light bulbs
- Aerosols
- Books
- Polystyrene

Opening hours:

Monday to Thursday

8.30am to 4.00pm

Friday

8.30am to 2.00pm

Saturday

8.30am to 3.30pm

Sunday & Bank Holidays - Closed

Bring Centres

Bring Centres provide another way to reduce your household waste. They accept glass, cans and textiles, but you must separate, clean and dry the items beforehand. Call into the Water & Waste Services Department or visit www.dublinwaste.ie for a full list of Bring Centres in the county and the items accepted at each one.

Apart from Ballyogan and Eden Park, four sites accept plastic bottles for recycling. They are:

- Loughlinstown Leisure Centre,
- Newpark Shopping Centre, Newtownpark Avenue,
- Old Dundrum Shopping Centre, and
- College Road car park, Marlay Park.

Batteries

To dispose of batteries, please use the special containers at the following locations:

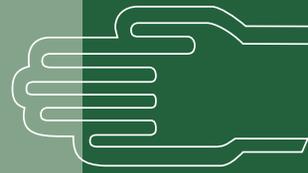
- County Hall, Dún Laoghaire,
- Cabinteely Library, Cabinteely,
- Council Area Office, Dundrum and
- Eden Park Recycling Centre.

For more information about recycling, visit www.dublinwaste.ie.

Domestic waste

Even more important than recycling is the need to reduce and reuse our waste. To encourage householders to do this, we introduced a pay-by-weight collection system in January 2005. Please try and reduce your waste and only put out your bin when it is full.

For information on the pay-by-weight system, visit www.dlrcco.ie, or phone the Water & Waste Services Department on (01) 205 4747.



Refuse collection starts at 7am on collection day. Please put your bin out on the morning of collection (not the night before) and make sure that it is closed securely. Also, please make sure that your bins do not block the footpath or obstruct wheelchair users, prams or people who use walking aids.

Exceptions to weekly collection of household waste

If your collection day falls on a public or bank holiday, there will be no collection that day. Instead, your waste collection will take place on the nearest Saturday.

In the case of Christmas, New Year and St. Patrick's Day, we will advertise collection arrangements in the newspapers at least three days beforehand. We will also list the arrangements on our website, www.dlrcoco.ie, at our offices in Dún Laoghaire and Dundrum, in public libraries and on voice mail on (01) 205 4810.

If there is an unexpected disruption to service, we will make every effort to provide a refuse collection on the next available collection day.

If you have any questions about our waste or recycling services, please call (01) 205 4810, e-mail environ@dlrcoco.ie or visit www.dlrcoco.ie/env.

Litter

Remember, you are responsible for the footpath and grass verge (if any) in front of and to the side of your home. You must keep this area, as well as your front garden, clean and litter free. You should also make sure that your bins or refuse bags are securely fastened so that they don't cause littering.

Please note: It is an offence to place domestic waste in a public litter bin. Burning domestic waste can be considered anti-social behaviour. As well as being seriously damaging to health, it may also lead to the Environmental Health Officer being asked to visit you. You must dispose of waste properly.

Dog fouling is a litter offence and a health hazard, particularly to small children playing in open areas. If you own a dog, you must clean up after it by using a bag or pooper-scooper. These are available free from our Dún Laoghaire and Dundrum offices.

We help communities carry out local clean ups by providing bags, gloves and litter pickers. Contact the LitterLine on 1800 403 503 with details of your clean up.

You can help stamp out littering by reporting any litter offences in private on our special freephone hotline 1800 403 503.

If you have an old car you would like removed from your property, we can remove it for a small fee. For details of this service, or to report an abandoned car in your area, please phone (01) 205 4817.

Control of dogs

We employ a full-time dog warden to deal with dog control.

Dog licences

If you own a dog, you must get a dog licence. Dog licences are available for a fee from our offices in Dundrum and Dún Laoghaire or from any post office. They are valid for 12 months. If you have a dog without a licence, you may have to pay a fine. For details of licence fees and penalties, please phone the Environment & Culture Department on (01) 205 4771.

Dog barking

It is an offence if you allow your dog's barking to be a nuisance to neighbours. If you want to complain about a neighbour's dog, contact the District Court. You can get the appropriate form from the Environment & Culture Department by phoning (01) 205 4771 or (01) 205 7954.

Stray and unwanted dogs

These should be handed over to the dog warden, who will take them to the dog pound. Strays can be collected by their owners and the pound will try to re-house unwanted dogs.

Leashes

You must keep your dog under control while in a public place. In addition, certain breeds of dog must always be leashed, muzzled and accompanied by someone over the age of 16. These breeds are:

- American Pitt Bull Terrier,
- Ban Dog,
- Bull Mastiff,
- Doberman Pinscher,
- English Bull Terrier,
- German Shepherd or Alsatian,
- Japanese Akita,
- Japanese Tosa,
- Rhodesian Ridgeback,
- Rottweiler,
- Staffordshire Bull Terrier, or
- any crossbreed of the above.

Failing to keep your dog under control will result in a penalty. To find out more about penalties, please phone the Environment & Culture Department on (01) 205 4771.

08 :

Saving Energy in the Home

You can do a lot to save energy – and cut your bills – by using heat and electricity carefully and maintaining heaters, boilers and appliances. When making new investments or upgrades in your home, be sure to think about the many no-cost or low-cost steps you can take to save energy. We have listed some of these here.

Appliances

Look for an energy rating label. Appliances are rated from A to G, according to how much energy they use. Those with an A, B or C rating use less energy than those rated near G. Though these appliances may be more expensive at first, the lower energy use will save the cost difference over their lifetime.

TVs and video or DVD players

Turn television, video and DVD players off rather than leaving them on standby. You could save up to €15 a year on your electricity bill by doing this.

Heating and water

Heating and hot water account for over half the cost of the average fuel bill.

- > Use the shower instead of a bath – a shower typically uses only 20% of the hot water that a bath uses.
- > Fix dripping taps.
- > Turn your room thermostats down by 1°C – it could save you 10% on your fuel bill. The ideal temperature is 18°–21°C.

Lighting

Buy and install energy-saving bulbs, which use about a quarter of the energy but last up to ten times longer than a standard bulb for the same amount of light.

For more ideas on simple and cheap energy-saving measures, see our leaflet, *Saving Energy in the Home*, which is available from our offices.

Other useful website addresses: -

www.sei.ie (Sustainable Energy Ireland)

www.change.ie (Energy Efficiency Website)

www.enfo.ie (Environmental Awareness Website)

09:

Useful Phone Numbers

Dún Laoghaire/Rathdown County Council Housing Department

Anti-Social Behaviour	(01) 205 4700 – ext: 4112 or 4117
Allocations	(01) 205 4828
Construction	(01) 205 4832
Housing Maintenance	(01) 205 4700 – ext: 4118 or 4119
Rents	(01) 205 4841
Loans, Sales and Grants	(01) 205 4847
Transfers	(01) 205 4828
Traveller Unit	(01) 2054700 – ext: 4133
Housing Welfare	(01) 2054700 – ext: 4177

Other Council services

Environmental Waste Charges	(01) 205 4747
Higher Education Grants, Electoral Register	(01) 205 4880
Parks Department (playing pitches)	(01) 205 4848
Sports Development Office	(01) 205 4878
Economic Development & Community Department	(01) 205 4763 or 204 7228

Emergency numbers

Garda/Fire/Ambulance	999 or 112
Bord Gáis	1850 20 50 50
Homeless support	(01) 205 4828
Homeless (after hours service)	1800 724 724

Other useful numbers

Comhairle – Citizens Information Call Centre [Information and advice on a range of social	1890 777 121
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services, including contact details of local Citizens Information Centres]

Discover Guidance Centre (01) 663 9210
[Resource for educational and training opportunities in the county]

Dún Laoghaire Youth Service (01) 280 6147
[Supports and develops programmes in youth work]

Dún Laoghaire VEC Adult Education Programme (01) 214 7200
[Information and support for adult learners]

FÁS Loughlinstown (01) 204 3600
[Information on FÁS training courses in Loughlinstown]

Money Advice and Budgeting Service

Free money advice, community education and budget support services

Dún Laoghaire (01) 230 2002

Dundrum/Rathfarnham (01) 299 0360

Bray (01) 276 0411

Social and Family Affairs queries

Dún Laoghaire (01) 214 5540

Nutgrove, Churchtown (01) 406 9010

Freephone numbers

Childline 1800 666 666

Dublin Rape Crisis Centre 1800 77 88 88

Garda Confidential Line 1800 66 61 11

Samaritans 1850 60 90 90

Women's Aid Helpline 1800 341 900

Garda stations serving Dún Laoghaire/Rathdown County Council areas

Blackrock (01) 666 5200

Bray	(01) 666 5300
Cabinteely	(01) 666 5400
Dalkey	(01) 666 5450
Dundrum	(01) 666 5600
Dún Laoghaire	(01) 666 5000
Kill O' The Grange	(01) 666 5500
Rathfarnham	(01) 666 6500
Shankill	(01) 666 5900
Stepaside	(01) 666 5700