Feature: Maintenance and Cleaning

FlatLiving Magazine

Information, advice & guidance
for RMCs and Property Managers

October 2024

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Welcome

Welcome to our October issue of Flat Living Magazine!

As we approach the colder months, it is important to recognise the maintenance and cleaning tasks that may require extra attention during this period.

This month, our contributors cover topics ranging from investing in the upkeep of your block of flats - both interior and exterior - to the legal implications of neglected maintenance in leasehold properties.

Don't forget to visit page 29 where you can ensure you have the necessary insurance for your home.

In news - read more from Cardinus Risk Management on their new building safety case report service alongside what to expect from The Property Institute Annual Conference 2024.

As always, we have included training opportunities from TPI and job vacancies from Block Recruit to help you upskill or move on to new pastures.

If you have any questions you would like us to organise an article on, or if you have any interesting articles to add – please send them directly to the team via info@flat-living.co.uk.

Happy reading!

Belinda Bagnall and The Flat Living Team

Flat Living Magazine is free of charge and emailed once a month - to make sure you receive it every month make sure you sign up. By signing up you could earn CPD points and we will respect your email privacy.

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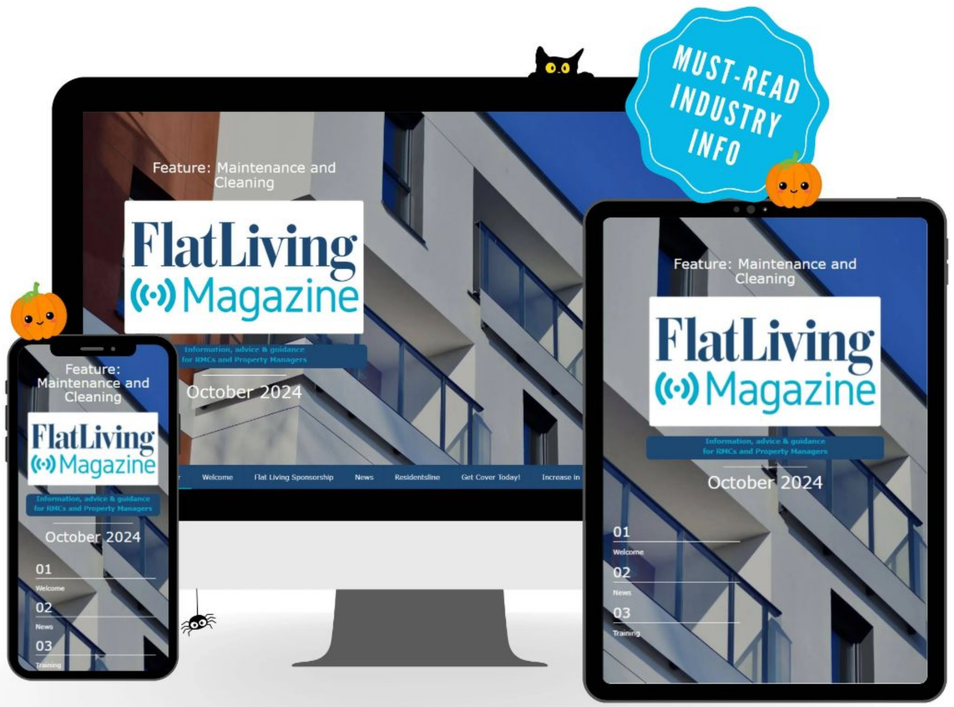

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News

The Property Institute Annual Conference 2024: Shaping the Future of Residential Leasehold

Don't miss out on The Property Institute (TPI) Annual Conference 2024, the must-attend event for property management professionals, taking place on Thursday, 24th October at Convene, 133 Houndsditch, London. The event starts at 8:30am and concludes with a drinks reception at 6:00pm.

This flagship event offers unique networking opportunities where you'll connect with industry experts, policymakers, and leading suppliers. Engage with fellow property managers and sector trailblazers on crucial topics. Be part of the conversation driving standards forward.

This year's programme has been designed to equip you with innovative ideas and exciting new trends emerging across the sector, ensuring you leave empowered. The keynote speakers will be delivering essential talks on a variety of sector topics, including Law Meets Practice, Psychological Safety, and the Building Safety Act. Gain actionable knowledge and practical skills to apply back at work.

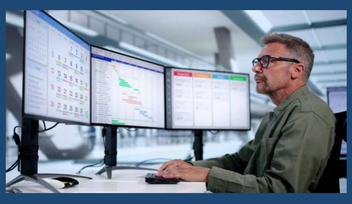
The Conference also offers you the chance to personalise your experience with interactive breakout sessions, tailored to your interests. This is your opportunity to hear fresh perspectives and engage in thought-provoking discussions. The sessions will cover a range of topics, from Insurance Premiums, Lone Working Guidance, and using AI for a Competitive Advantage to Risk Management and learning how to get the most from TPI's Compliance Review.

It promises to be a day packed with inspiration, knowledge, and collaboration. Secure your spot today and take a step towards shaping the future of residential leasehold.

BOOK YOUR PLACE HERE

Cardinus Risk Management Unveils New Building Safety Case Report Service

Leading property management services provider announces new Building Safety Case Report Service as part of its property management software.



Cardinus Risk Management, a leader in property risk management software and services, proudly announces the launch of its new Building Safety Case Report Service.

This innovative addition to the INDIGO property management software is specifically designed to support the principal accountable person in high-rise residential buildings in meeting the rigorous standards set forth by the Building Safety Act 2022.

Ensuring comprehensive building safety compliance

The Building Safety Case Report is a critical document required by the Building Safety Act 2022, aimed at ensuring the safety of high-rise residential buildings. It provides a detailed overview of a building's safety measures, risk assessments and protocols. This enables stakeholders to identify, manage and mitigate potential hazards. The purpose of this report is to offer a thorough evaluation of building safety, demonstrating that effective systems are in place for the control and management of risks associated with the building.

Key features of the Building Safety Case Report Service

Cardinus' new service introduces several critical features to streamline and elevate building safety management:

- Seamless information collation: The service enables users to gather all pertinent building information in a centralised, easy-to-navigate platform. This ensures that every aspect of the building's safety is documented, accessible and up to date.
- Identify risk improvements: The INDIGO platform aids in the identification of safety risks and facilitates the implementation of corrective actions. Users can prioritise and track risk improvements to ensure they are addressed proactively.
- Company-branded reports: Users can create professional, company-branded Building Safety Case Reports, ready for submission to regulatory authorities. This feature not only supports compliance but also reinforces the organisation's commitment to safety and professionalism.

Jamie Truscott, Chairman and Managing Director at Cardinus, highlighted the strategic importance of the new service, stating;

"The introduction of the Building Safety Case Report to our INDIGO platform marks a significant advancement in our mission to support our customers in safeguarding their buildings. This feature not only helps them comply with the latest UK regulations but also strengthens the overall safety framework of residential properties."

Advanced data management and security

INDIGO's Golden Thread Solution is renowned for its exceptional data management capabilities. It securely stores vital building information in a single, streamlined system that complies with ISO 27001 Information Security standards. This ensures that all building safety data is managed with the highest levels of integrity and security.

Join our live demonstration

Cardinus invites you to a live demonstration of the Building Safety Case Report service on Thursday, 19 September (11:00-11:30). This session will provide a detailed exploration of how INDIGO simplifies the creation of Building Safety Case Reports and optimises safety management processes. Attendees will gain practical insights into maintaining high safety standards efficiently and effectively. Register here for the live demo.

How to access the Building Safety Case Report Service

The Building Safety Case Report Service is exclusively available through the cutting-edge INDIGO risk management platform by Cardinus. INDIGO is designed to meet the highest regulatory standards, offering clear insights, secure data storage and user-friendly features tailored for surveyors, assessors, and clients.

For enquiries or more information about the Building Safety Case Report Service, please email property@cardinus.com or call 0207 469 0262.

For media inquiries, contact chris.hedges@cardinus.com.

Future Group: A Decade of Excellence in Health and Safety Compliance



With over 10 years of industry experience, Future Group has established itself as a multi-award-winning specialist in health and safety compliance. Our entire company is built on the foundation of compliance, making us a trusted partner in the block management industry. Our contributions to enhancing health and safety standards are evident in the comprehensive services we offer across multiple key areas.

Fire Safety Expertise

At Future Group, fire safety is a top priority. We specialize in the installation, servicing, and maintenance of essential fire safety systems, including dry risers, TOV (test of valves), and fire alarms. These systems are critical for ensuring the safety of occupants in any building, and our team is dedicated to making sure they operate flawlessly. By providing thorough inspections and timely maintenance, we help prevent potential fire hazards and ensure compliance with the latest safety regulations.

Lighting Solutions for Safe Environments

Proper lighting is crucial for maintaining a safe and secure environment. Future Group excels in the installation, servicing, and maintenance of estate, general, and emergency lighting systems. We ensure that buildings are well-lit, reducing the risk of accidents and improving overall safety. Our lighting solutions are designed to meet the specific needs of each property, providing reliable illumination that enhances both security and compliance.

EV Charger Compliance and Safety

As electric vehicles become more common, the importance of safely managing EV chargers cannot be overstated. Future Group offers comprehensive services for the installation, servicing, and maintenance of EV chargers, ensuring they meet all safety and compliance standards. Given the potential risks associated with these powerful devices, our expertise ensures that they are properly maintained and safe for everyday use.

Solar Panel Maintenance and Safety

Unmaintained solar panels can pose significant safety risks, including the potential for fires. Recent incidents have highlighted the dangers of neglected solar systems. At Future Group, we are committed to preventing such risks by offering thorough servicing and maintenance of solar panels. Our proactive approach helps ensure that these systems operate safely and efficiently, protecting both property and people.

Security Gates, CCTV, and Access Control

Security is a vital aspect of any property, and poorly maintained equipment can lead to serious harm. Future Group provides expert services for the installation, servicing, and maintenance of security gates, ensuring they function safely and effectively. In addition to gates, we offer comprehensive CCTV and access control solutions, helping to create a secure environment that meets all regulatory requirements.

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Increase in Freehold Disposals

www.bishopandsewell.co.uk

Freehold Sales under the 1987 Act – Is this a growing trend as Freeholders de-risk?

Mark Chick, Senior Partner and Joint Head of Landlord & Tenant at Bishop & Sewell considers the increase in disposals.

The Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act 2024 may have been passed into law by Parliament, but a considerable part of the Act is still awaiting commencement and will require secondary legislation before it can take effect. As such, the law with regards to leasehold enfranchisement is due to change, but hasn't changed yet.

In anticipation of the new legislation, Bishop & Sewell has seen an increasing number of freeholders take steps to reduce their exposure to risk by divesting themselves of their freehold assets.

Ground rent reform is a real possibility, and its spectre has cast a shadow over the ground rent market. Larger portfolio owners of ground rents have been divesting themselves of some of their assets over the last few years as reform has become a real possibility, and we have seen increased use of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1987 ('the 1987 Act') to provide clearance prior to sale of freeholds, be that at auction or via a fixed price route.



A recent trend in disposals

Since the summer, we have seen a particular increase in the number of enquiries not only from flat owners who have been served with notices, but also from freeholders who want to take steps to sell now, before any changes take effect. In some cases, we have seen very significant reductions in price against values that we have seen quoted previously. Clearly, this is good news for tenants but less so for landlords.

Section 5A offer notices

Often, if a fixed price Section 5A offer notice is served, this is because a deal has been agreed with a third -party buyer. Therefore, if you are a flat owner and receive one of these notices (with a fixed price) then this is likely to mean that the freeholder wants to sell and has a buyer lined up. If you and others in your building wish to consider accepting this, then prompt action is needed as a majority (more than half) of the flat owners need to accept in two months, a time frame that can pass very quickly when you need to contact overseas and remote owners.

Section 5B offer notices

A Section 5B offer notice means that the property is going to auction. There are various hoops to jump through but if a majority act promptly and serve the relevant notices (acceptance, nomination and an election notice) then the flat owners will have the same rights as any successful bidder at auction. This means completing the purchase in 28 days, which can be no mean feat if there is a large number of flats.

What do offers like this mean?

Whilst each case is fact specific, a Section 5 disposal (auction or fixed price) represents a good opportunity to buy your freehold and will generally be much quicker (and usually cheaper) than using other enfranchisement rights under the Leasehold Reform Housing and Urban Development Act 1993. It also goes without saying that in larger cases, having a team that is experienced in dealing with the issues that arise in this sort of project is key to success.

There are other points to consider such as how the contributions will be structured and how the cost of those not taking part will be dealt with, along with tax issues and the corporate structure of the holding company used to buy the freehold. Our Corporate and Landlord & Tenant team is well versed in working together to help participants achieve what is needed in a short space of time.

Where are we now with the reforms?

In the world of leasehold reform, we have some further uncertainty as there are now at least two challenges to the legislation, and we also have the argument to be explored as to what a total ban on ground rent might mean – there was discussion that the compensation bill in such circumstances could run to £30BN. The new government is clearly looking to raise revenues and, we expect, might want to avoid an unexpected expense such as this.

A new leasehold bill

We also know that the government plans to introduce a new Commonhold and Freehold Reform Bill, which we do not have sight of. It is possible that this might have some aspects of ground rent reform rolled into it; a wider programme of reform to process and procedure may be introduced, however, we have no draft bill in sight. All of this means further delay and uncertainty.

The one thing that is certain is that if you are a flat owner and you receive a Section 5 notice, this probably represents an opportunity to buy your freehold (together with others) at what may well be a keen price. Likewise, if you are a freeholder and want to consider a disposal, now may be a good time, before we see a more definitive shift in values.

What next?

The government may well have decided that leasehold reform can wait while these tests play out in the courts and whilst it formulates its wider plans to rejuvenate Commonhold. We will watch how they react with interest, but in the meantime the market is making its own preparations, and we remain ready to advise.

Contact the experts at Bishop & Sewell

If you have a query concerning leasehold property, then please contact our expert Landlord & Tenant team.

Email: leasehold@bishopandsewell.co.uk
Call: 0207 7631 4141

The content of this article should not be considered legal advice, and each matter should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Advising on property law is at the heart of Bishop & Sewell. Founded on property work, the issues matter to us as much as they do to our clients. We take pride in simplifying complex property issues, providing services covering every aspect – from purchase and sale, development and financing, to rental and enfranchisement.

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Why Specialist Management is Essential for Complex Residential Properties

www.firstport.co.uk

An effective property manager understands that when it comes to managing a portfolio, one size rarely fits all. In-depth specialist knowledge is required to navigate the unique complexities of each site, whether it be large-scale, new-build developments with a range of amenities or converted mansion buildings with historic considerations and legislative restrictions.

Amir Khani, Regional Manager for the FirstPort London Real Estate team, discusses the key considerations when approaching more complex residential developments.

Understanding the Development



Amir Khani, Regional Manager for the FirstPort London Real Estate Team.

Amir oversees site teams at over 80 developments across the capital and has managed a variety of building types throughout his career. With over 15 years of industry experience, acquiring knowledge across a diverse portfolio is essential to the role and something property managers must be comfortable with.

"I would describe the properties I manage as 'a mixed bag,'" Amir says.

"I oversee buildings ranging from large new-build developments, consisting of high-rise apartment buildings, to converted mansion stock. Managing a diverse portfolio requires a management team that has broad knowledge, skills, and experience—understanding the unique requirements of each development and how they must be cared for."

When it comes to maintenance across a varied portfolio, it is important to consider that the unique requirements of each site often reflect the period in which they were built. Aside from age-related wear and tear and cyclical maintenance, each building will have been constructed in accordance with the legislation and guidance of its time. This requires property managers not only to maintain an up-to-date knowledge of current regulations and standards but also to understand the historical context of each building's design.

Amir comments: "With new builds, for example, they would have been built to standards in line with current regulations, whereas some of our older buildings, which include Georgian or Victorian mansion blocks, won't have been built to the same specifications.

"The most prominent example of the difference would be around fire safety," Amir adds. "Recent events have, of course, increased the focus in this area, and new buildings are certainly being designed and built to reflect lessons learned. While up-to-date training enables property managers to understand and maintain these features, experienced managers will also have some understanding of where safety features may vary, remaining vigilant to potential risks and knowing how to mitigate them."

Managing the Complexities

Taking a tailored approach to building maintenance is the hallmark of an expert property manager. Whether it's day-to-day running repairs, scheduled maintenance, or major works, many buildings will have their own unique factors that need to be considered.

"With a new build, the building may have various warranties in place that can cover any faults or defects," Amir says "Should these need to be called upon, management teams will understand the terms of the warranty and how to activate it, while working with external contractors to ensure any repairs are carried out in a timely manner, minimising cost or inconvenience for residents.

"Some of our newer sites have additional amenities, such as gyms and swimming pools, which also require specialist training to ensure they are kept clean, safe, and functional for the residents that use them."

While older properties often won't have the same communal facilities, maintaining the fabric of a building, which may have key historical considerations, also requires expert care.

Amir comments: "It's important to look at the historical aspect and maintain the integrity of these buildings' fabric. These buildings are aged and require a more robust, rigorous maintenance schedule, being mindful of both aging materials and the way the building was constructed at the time. For example, existing pipework and the way it was installed may make it more difficult to detect a leak, meaning managers must have an in-depth knowledge of the building and ensure they are sufficiently monitored."

He continues: "When we assess maintenance in historical buildings, it's vital to consider any preservation requirements, such as planning permission and ensuring specifications protect the heritage of the buildings as much as possible. Our property managers are supported by specialist support teams to ensure that all works are compliant and carried out by qualified contractors to the required specifications."

Resident Engagement

The unique features of these developments are often what attract residents to the properties. Therefore, whether maintaining the historical aspects of the building fabric or ensuring the smooth running of luxury leisure facilities, residents and property owners are often keen observers of how their buildings are cared for.

"As with any residential development, where every property is somebody's home, each property also represents significant expenditure to own and or live in it, in many cases, it can also be a source of income," Amir says. "As a result, these customers often keep a close eye on how the development is managed.

"This is where expert property management comes into its own," Amir adds. "As specialist management teams not only possess the expertise to manage the buildings, but also maintain regular, dialogue with customers, so that property managers can be receptive to the needs and the feedback of residents, whilst also providing the reassurance that their homes are being cared for to the highest possible standard."

FirstPort is the UK's leading residential property services provider. With more than 40 years' experience, we work with over 1,000 resident managed developments, helping RTM and RMC Directors meet their management and legal obligations, all while delivering a great service for residents too.

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FIRST PORT



Feature: Maintenance and Cleaning

Reminder: Clocks Go Back on October 27th – Don't Forget to Adjust Your Lighting Systems

www.future-group.uk

With the clocks set to go back an hour on Sunday, October 27th, it's a good time for block managers and on-site teams to check that their timeclock operated lighting systems are properly commissioned to accommodate the change in sunrise-sunset hours. As the evenings get darker earlier, it is essential to make sure that timeclocks controlling dusk-to-dawn lighting are updated to match the change in daylight hours.

Failing to do so could leave key areas like stairwells, entrances, and pathways unlit at the times they are needed most, which could lead to safety issues.



Avoid Unlit Areas – Take Action Now

If your site doesn't have staff available to handle these changes, it's important to act in advance. Our Lighting & Electrical Team is here to help with a full recommissioning of your timeclocks, so residents won't come home to dark, unlit spaces. Get ahead of the change now to avoid any hassle later!

Thinking About an Upgrade?

This time of year, is also a great opportunity to think about upgrading old time-clock systems. New technology, like photocells and occupancy sensors, can save time and effort by automatically adjusting to changing light levels. That means fewer manual adjustments throughout the year and more efficient lighting overall.

At Future Lighting, we're ready to help modernize your lighting controls, ensuring your building is equipped with the latest technology to save both time, energy and money.

Get in Touch:

If you need help with time-clock adjustments or want to discuss upgrading to a smarter system, our team is here to assist. Let's keep your property safe, well-lit, and efficient as the nights draw in.

For more from Future Group, click here.

The award-winning Future Group collaborates with the property management industry to provide top-tier, energy-efficient, and fully compliant solutions. Our commitment lies in addressing the genuine requirements of the property and estate managers. We take pride in delivering innovative and competitive turnkey services across our five divisions.

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Feature: Maintenance and Cleaning

How to Deal with Mould in Your Property

Fraser Allen
— Estate Management —
www.fraserallenem.co.uk

After months of rain and very little sunshine, chances are you've already experienced mould over the past few months. It can affect clothing, shoes, furniture, walls, and many other parts of the home.

Mould only grows when there is sufficient moisture on a surface or humidity in the air. Common causes include: leaky roofs and walls, blocked gutters and downpipes, leaky plumbing and excessive rainfall.

Mould is found both indoors and outdoors and can enter your home through open doorways, windows, vents, and heating and air conditioning systems. Mould in the air outside can also attach itself to clothing, shoes, and pets which can and be carried indoors. When mould spores drop on places where there is excessive moisture they will grow.

What causes mould?

Mould is part of the fungi group that also includes mushrooms and yeast. It often grows in poorly ventilated spaces including kitchens, bathrooms, and laundries. Dust and dirt can also encourage mould growth. It can range in colour from green, white and brown and is attracted to surfaces including roofs, windows, or areas where there has been flooding or rising dampness levels. Mould can grow on paper, cardboard, and wood, as well as wallpaper, carpet, fabric, and upholstery. Large infestations of mould can be identified by a smell, which is often described as a "musty" smell.

Mould in the home is caused by wet or dampness, lack of ventilation, and humidity. Due to the wet weather, we're seeing more and more properties that are being flood affected or water damaged. We're seeing a lot of properties that have got water ingress through them. Sometimes it's because the gutters are filling up so quickly with water, they just can't get the water away from the home. They then go back over into the eaves and then that water can flow into the house.'



How do you stop mould from growing?

Removing the dampness and humidity is the key to stopping mould, as it needs moisture and nutrients to grow. When it's a sunny day, allow as much sunlight as possible into the area. When it's wet and humid, try the following:

- If you have an air conditioner, put it on a dry cycle or use a dehumidifier if you do not have an air conditioner.
- Don't pack your furniture too close to the wall — leave room for airflow.
- Use absorbent beads to soak up extra moisture in wardrobes and other areas. – Plant lovers should know that reducing the number of indoor plants in your home can stop mould forming.

How do you remove mould?

There are a number of products you can use to remove mould.

- A mix of three parts vinegar to two parts water – A few drops of Oil of Clove in vinegar (10 drops to 1L) is often recommended but can cause surfaces to discolour or cause allergies (please use a test patch first)
- Methylated spirits at a ratio of 70 per cent and 30 per cent water
- Tea tree oil with water – Half cut lemon, bi-carb soda and vinegar
- Fungicide mould spray

Any cloths used with mould removal should be discarded to avoid the spread of spores. Using a broom or brush to remove the mould is not recommended as it can have the same effect.

Please ensure when you're tackling any type of mould, that you wear the correct PPE, including gloves and facemask.

Who is responsible for fixing mould in a leasehold property?

Deciding who is responsible for cleaning mould and repairing any resultant damage depends on how the mould appeared in the first place.

The responsibility for removing mould in a leasehold property typically depends on the terms outlined in the lease and local laws and regulations.

In leasehold properties, landlords are usually responsible for maintaining the structural integrity of the building. If mould is a result of structural issues such as a leaky roof or faulty plumbing, it is often the landlord's responsibility to address and rectify the problem, including mould removal.

Leaseholders or their tenants are responsible for maintaining a clean and sanitary living environment. If mould is caused by the occupants' actions, such as failing to ventilate the property properly or not cleaning up spills promptly, the occupant will be responsible for mould removal. If the tenant has caused the mould to appear (for example, by allowing steam to build up in a bathroom without proper ventilation and/or regular cleaning), they are responsible for cleaning it and paying for any damages that the mould has caused.

Sometimes, the responsibility might be shared between the landlord and the leaseholder or occupant. For instance, if the property has a history of leaks, and the tenant fails to report a new leak promptly, resulting in mould growth, both parties might share the responsibility for remediation. Regardless of where responsibility falls, it is in your best interest to address mould issues promptly to avoid long term damage to your property. We also recommend having extractor fans in bathrooms to prevent mouldy ceilings.

For more from Fraser Allen, click here.

Fraser Allen Estate Management specialise in Residential Block Management and are committed to ensuring your needs are put first. We bring an innovative, organised and reputable approach to the industry with a friendly team who are on hand to assist you.

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Feature: Maintenance and Cleaning

Building Exterior Masonry Cleaning

www.earlkendrick.com

There are a number of reasons why building owners may wish to carry out cleaning of the exterior masonry to their building and these include;

- For aesthetic purposes where the intention is to improve the appearance of the building to make it look newer and well maintained. Dirty buildings generally look like they have been neglected.
- To protect the surface of the masonry from being stained and eroded by chemical pollutants, algae, moss, mildew etc.
- To reveal defects and to prepare the building for repair and redecoration.

The results of masonry cleaning can be quite spectacular.



Masonry Cleaning – Before & After

There are a number of different ways in which masonry can be cleaned and these include jet washing, steam cleaning, dry abrasive cleaning, acid cleaning, chemical cleaning, etc.

High pressure steam cleaning seems to be one of the more popular methods of masonry cleaning. It is often preferable to jet washing as it uses less water and the high-pressure steam is more effective in removing dirt and grime. It is also preferable to chemical cleaning as it avoids the use of chemicals and is therefore more environmentally friendly. Dry abrasive cleaning may be preferable in certain circumstance but should be undertaken with care to ensure that it does not erode the surface of the masonry.



High Pressure Steam Cleaning – Before & After

If the intention is to clean historic / listed buildings a listed building application will need to be submitted and the method of cleaning approved to ensure that the cleaning process will be sympathetic to the building and that it will not cause any damage.

It is always advisable to undertake cleaning samples to a less conspicuous part of the building prior to proceeding to ensure that the cleaning method has the desired effect and that it is not too aggressive as care needs to be taken to ensure that it does not cause damage. The building owner should be presented with the opportunity to inspect the cleaning samples so that they are aware of the likely results that the cleaning will achieve prior to proceeding with the work.

Also, prior to the commencement of the cleaning work, all air grilles, apertures, gaps etc. should be sealed in order to prevent the ingress of water or other cleaning materials into the building as this could cause damage to internal furnishings and finishes for which repairing liability could arise.

As part of a building external refurbishment project, masonry cleaning should be carried out first prior to any masonry repairs being undertaken as the cleaning process may dislodge loose sections of pointing etc. that will require replacement.

Stubborn staining to stonework in localized areas can be removed using a chemical paste poultice that is applied for a period of 24 to 48 hours. However, the level of success will depend upon how deeply engrained the staining is in the stonework.

The downside to masonry cleaning tends to be the expense as, depending on the size of the building, it can cost thousands of pounds. The building owner will therefore need to decide whether the benefits of having a clean, well maintained building outweigh the capital expenditure cost.

Earl Kendrick Group are a multi-disciplinary firm of chartered engineers, surveyors and designers, providing national services from our offices in London, North, Midlands, West and South Coast.

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Feature: Maintenance and Cleaning

Why Regular Maintenance of Lifts is Essential

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1. Ensuring Safety

Lifts are subject to stringent safety regulations in the UK, governed by the Lift Regulations 2016, which align with the European Union's Lift Directive. Failure to maintain lifts can pose significant safety risks, including malfunctioning doors, faulty brakes, or incorrect level alignment. Regular maintenance ensures that these components work smoothly, preventing accidents and ensuring the safety of passengers.

2. Regulatory Compliance

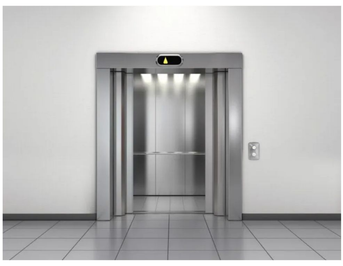
In the UK, the law mandates that all lifts carrying people should be thoroughly examined by a "competent person" at regular intervals, typically every 6 months. This is specified under the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER). A well-maintained lift helps building owners and managers stay compliant with these regulations and avoid penalties.

3. Extending Lift Lifespan

Routine maintenance and timely repairs can prolong the life of your lift system. Just like any other mechanical equipment, lifts are subject to wear and tear. Replacing parts and addressing issues early on can prevent major failures and extend the operational life of the lift.

4. Improving Energy Efficiency

A poorly maintained lift can consume more energy than necessary. Maintenance helps keep the lift running smoothly, reducing unnecessary power consumption and lowering energy costs. This is particularly important in a country like the UK, where energy efficiency has become a priority for many businesses and residential complexes.



5. Key Components of Lift Maintenance

Mechanical Checks

Regular inspections should include checks on essential mechanical components such as cables, pulleys, and brakes. These parts wear down over time, and if left unattended, they can fail, leading to dangerous situations. Lubricating moving parts ensures smooth operation and reduces wear.

Electrical System Inspections

The lift's electrical system is a critical area for maintenance. This includes checking control panels, motor operations, and safety mechanisms like emergency alarms and lighting. Any signs of malfunction should be addressed immediately to prevent system failure.

Door Operation

Faulty lift doors are one of the most common sources of lift-related issues. Maintenance should include cleaning and lubricating of the door tracks and testing of the sensor systems. Ensuring smooth door operation prevents unnecessary delays and improves user experience.

Hydraulic or Traction Systems

For hydraulic lifts, checking for leaks and monitoring fluid levels is essential, while for traction lifts, the condition of the hoist ropes and counterweights must be examined regularly.

Control Panel and Software Updates

Modern lifts are often equipped with sophisticated control panels and software. Regular updates and checks for software errors can prevent malfunctions and improve lift performance.

6. Historic Buildings

Many lifts in the UK are housed in older buildings. In such cases, maintenance becomes more complex, especially if the lift needs to meet modern safety standards while preserving the architectural integrity of the building. Consulting a lift specialist who understands both modern technology and heritage preservation is crucial for such cases.

7. Scheduled Maintenance Contracts

For most commercial and residential buildings, it's best to enter into a maintenance contract with a certified lift service provider. These contracts typically include routine inspections, cleaning, and emergency call-out services, helping building managers stay compliant with UK regulations.

8. Emergency Maintenance

Despite regular checks, issues may still arise unexpectedly. Having an emergency maintenance provider ensures quick response times in case of breakdowns, reducing the inconvenience to users and ensuring safety.

9. Hiring Professionals for Lift Maintenance and Cleaning

While regular cleaning can be handled by janitorial staff, more complex tasks like deep shaft cleaning, mechanical maintenance, and electrical inspections should be performed by certified lift technicians. In the UK, it's advisable to hire lift engineers who are accredited by organisations such as the **Lift and Escalator Industry Association (LEIA)**, which ensures adherence to UK safety standards and best practices.

10. Lift Shaft Cleaning

The lift shaft itself can accumulate debris and dust over time, which can interfere with the lift's mechanical components. A thorough cleaning of the shaft and pit area can prevent operational issues and improve safety. Given the confined space and height of the lift shaft, this is a job for trained professionals using specialised equipment.

11. Care and cleaning recommendations

Both to protect the investment made by the Lift Owner and to assist in maintaining the reliability of the lift, a regular regime of lift housekeeping should be implemented.

The requirements of the regime will depend wholly upon the environment in which the lift is located and the amount of usage that the lift is receiving.

Below are some generalised recommendations from lift contractors on how best to take care of your lift car.

Plastic Coated Steel Surfaces (Skinplate)

Clean using a mild detergent mixed with water or proprietary aerosol polish using a lint-free cloth.

Stainless Steel Surfaces (Plain or Coloured) e.g. walls, skirtings, doors, architraves, push/indicator faceplates).

Stainless steel surfaces generally resist staining but will occasionally dull or show oily fingerprints. Clean using a proprietary stainless-steel cleaner designed to remove the build-up of dirt with a lint-free cloth, while leaving a dry to the touch finish. Avoid using oils as these leave a surface prone to marking from fingerprints, etc.

Stainless Steel Surfaces (Patterned or Embossed) e.g. walls, skirtings, doors, architraves

Stainless steel surfaces can attract dust and thus should be wiped in the direction of the grain at regular intervals to prevent the build-up of dust.

Stainless steel surfaces generally resist staining but will occasionally dull or show oily fingerprints. Clean using a proprietary stainless-steel cleaner designed to remove the build-up of dirt with a lint-free cloth, while leaving a dry to the touch finish. Avoid using oils as these leave a surface prone to marking from fingerprints etc. Take care to avoid leaving residue of cleaning products inside the profile of the patterning, this is liable to attract fresh dirt more quickly.

Wood Effect and Plastic Laminate Finishes

Laminate surfaces are durable and do not easily scratch or chip, they should withstand normal wear and tear. Clean with water mixed with a mild detergent. Persistent marks can be removed with the use of a mild abrasive cleaner, but extreme caution must be exercised to avoid damaging the surface finish.

Real Wood Finishes (Plain, Stained or Varnished)

Exercise care when cleaning to avoid damage to the material surface, a proprietary cleaner or suitable polish may be used but only if it is not likely to be absorbed into the surface of the material.

Sprayed Finishes (Painted or Primed)

Clean using a proprietary cleaner or suitable polish taking care to avoid damaging the paint finish which may lead to corrosion.

Lift Car Mirror (e.g. car walls and/or panels within landing or car doors)

Glass mirror surfaces should be cleaned with a proprietary glass cleaner using a soft lint-free cloth. Avoid the use of liquids that dry opaque as they can become trapped around the edges causing unsightly marks.

Lift Car Flooring – Rubber / Linoleum

Clean the floor using a proprietary floor cleaner suitable for rubber or linoleum finishes or water mixed with a mild detergent. After cleaning, the surface can be sealed with proprietary floor polish if required.

Lift Car Flooring – Stone/Granite/Composite

Clean the floor using a proprietary stone/granite floor cleaner or water mixed with a mild detergent.

Lift Car Flooring – Carpet

Clean the carpet using a suitable proprietary carpet cleaner only when required. Avoid the use of liquid shampoo where possible as residual amounts of shampoo retained by the carpet can attract fresh dirt into the fibres.

Conclusion

Regular maintenance and cleaning of vertical lifts in the UK are essential to ensure safety, comply with regulations, and extend the life of the equipment. From mechanical inspections to cleaning routines, both aspects go hand-in-hand to provide a reliable and pleasant lift experience for users. By adhering to best practices and working with qualified professionals, building managers and residents alike can ensure their lifts remain in peak condition for years to come. And should there ever come a time when your lift looks like it could do with a little attention ARDENT are always on hand to offer some free advice.

If you would like any advice, please get in touch where one of our dedicated team will be happy to help.

ardentlc.co.uk

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Feature: Maintenance and Cleaning

Leaseholder Maintenance Contracts and Service Charges: Understanding the Implications for Landlords

www.jbleitch.co.uk

The team at specialist property solicitors JB Leitch, provide a timely overview on the key elements property owners and managers should be mindful of...

Landlords must navigate several legal and contractual complexities when managing service charges and entering into maintenance contracts, particularly when these contracts potentially qualify as “Qualifying Long-Term Agreements” (QLTAs).

Understanding the implications of service charges, maintenance contracts, and QLTAs is critical for landlords to avoid legal disputes, meet their obligations under lease agreements, and maintain positive relationships with leaseholders.

The Role of Maintenance Contracts

Landlords typically enter into maintenance contracts with external contractors to provide the necessary services for the property, such as cleaning, landscaping, or building repairs. These contracts form the basis of the service charges billed to leaseholders.

However, landlords must be cautious when entering such contracts to ensure they comply with the terms of the lease. Any services that the landlord intends to charge to leaseholders must be clearly stipulated in the lease. If a contract goes beyond the scope of the lease provisions, the landlord may face challenges in recovering the associated costs via the service charge.

For instance, if the lease only permits landlords to charge for routine cleaning and minor repairs, entering into a contract for extensive refurbishment works would be carrying out works to which the lease does not permit. Therefore, careful lease interpretation and transparent communication with leaseholders are vital when it comes to the nature and scope of maintenance contracts.



Qualifying Long-Term Agreements (QLTAs) and Their Impact on Landlords

A Qualifying Long-Term Agreement (QLTA), as defined by the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, is any agreement entered into by the landlord for services that extend for more than 12 months and where the cost to any single leaseholder exceeds £100 in any accounting period. These contracts trigger statutory consultation obligations, which have significant implications for landlords.

If a landlord enters into a QLTA, they must follow the consultation process outlined in Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 and the Service Charges (Consultation Requirements) (England) Regulations 2003, SI 2003/1987, this process requires the landlord to notify leaseholders of the proposed contract, provide them with details of the services, and allow them the opportunity to provide feedback and nominate alternative contractors. Failure to carry out the consultation process correctly can have serious financial consequences for landlords. In such cases, landlords may only be able to recover a maximum of £100 per leaseholder per year, even if the actual costs exceed this amount.

A QLTA in terms of services to a property could by way of example encompass agreements with long term general maintenance contractors who have one contract but attend frequently to carry out small repairs, general cleaning/gardening, window cleaning, caretaking services.

Agreements with any contractors attending regularly need to be considered carefully as it is crucial for landlords to recognise when a contract qualifies as a QLTA and to comply with the required consultation process.

Challenges of Non-Compliance with QLTA Requirements

Landlords may attempt to circumvent the consultation requirements by entering shorter-term contracts (under 12 months). However, a pattern of renewing short-term contracts without proper consultation could be seen as an attempt to avoid QLTA obligations, and leaseholders may take action to cap the amount recoverable by the landlord. If at any stage there is uncertainty regarding the contract, advice should be sought in respect of applying to the First-tier Tribunal for dispensation.

Moreover, landlords who fail to adhere to the consultation process risk not only financial losses but also damage to their reputation and relationships with leaseholders. A lack of transparency in contracting can lead to disputes, and potentially legal challenges, all of which can be costly and time-consuming to resolve.

The Importance of Lease Interpretation for Landlords

Landlords must also ensure that they fully understand the terms of the lease governing their properties. The lease is the key document that outlines the specific services for which landlords can charge leaseholders. If the lease does not explicitly allow for a particular service, landlords may find themselves unable to recover the associated costs through service charges.

In cases where the lease terms are unclear or ambiguous, landlords should seek legal advice to ensure that any service charges levied are in line with their legal obligations.

Best Practices for Landlords

To avoid potential issues with maintenance contracts and service charges, landlords should adhere to the following best practices:

1. **Discuss with leaseholders:** Regularly communicate with leaseholders regarding upcoming maintenance works and the associated costs. Engaging with leaseholders helps build trust and reduces the likelihood of later disputes over service charges.
2. **Ensure transparency:** Clearly outline the terms of any maintenance contracts and ensure that they fall within the scope of the lease. Leaseholders should be informed of what services they are paying for and why those services are necessary.
3. **Comply with QLTA requirements:** If entering into a long-term agreement (over 12 months), landlords must follow the statutory consultation process. Familiarisation with consultation procedures and timelines is critical. This ensures that leaseholders are properly consulted and that landlords can recover the full costs of the services provided.
4. **Review and understand the lease:** Before entering any contracts, landlords should thoroughly review the lease to ensure that the services they intend to charge for are allowed under the terms of the agreement. Where necessary, seek legal advice to avoid misinterpretation.

Conclusion: Protecting the Landlord’s Interests

While service charges and maintenance contracts are essential for the upkeep of leased properties, landlords must navigate the legal landscape carefully to ensure they comply with both the lease and statutory requirements. Entering long-term maintenance contracts without proper consultation can lead to significant financial losses, disputes with leaseholders, and damage to a landlord’s reputation. By ensuring transparency, following consultation requirements for any QLTAs, and adhering to the terms of the lease, landlords can avoid these pitfalls and ensure the smooth management of their properties.

Should you wish to learn more, or discuss the contents of this article, please contact us: mail@jbleitch.co.uk

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Feature: Maintenance and Cleaning

Communicating Asbestos Risks to Tenants and Residents

www.4siteconsulting.co.uk

Detailed legislation is in place to ensure that building managers are managing the risks of asbestos appropriately. Legally required to monitor and control any asbestos-containing materials, they are also expected to share all information with contractors or employees who may come into contact with asbestos in the course of their work.

However, there is nothing specific in the legislation to say that they should also share this information with leaseholders or tenants. As the eyes and ears of the building, and as valid stakeholders in their own right, residents should (we believe) be made aware of any asbestos present in their building.

Here we'll be discussing how to go about communicating the risks or lack thereof to avoid any accidental disturbances and to make sure that those living in the building are doing so as safely as possible.



A Quick Recap of the Dangers of Asbestos Exposure

Asbestos is a natural, fibrous material widely used in construction until it was banned in 1999. The health risks it carries weren't truly understood until then, although there were recorded cases of asbestos-related illness stemming from the Roman and Victorian eras.

The material becomes dangerous if it deteriorates or is disturbed. Fibres then become airborne and can be breathed in, causing respiratory and skin issues as well as various cancers. There are several different kinds of asbestos but all are known carcinogens.

Asbestosis is also a common ailment for those who have been exposed. This causes breathing difficulties and can lead to heart enlargement, developing slowly over a number of decades. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) have estimated that UK asbestos-related deaths are still in excess of 5000 every year.

Asbestos Management Plans

An asbestos management plan lays out the necessary steps property managers must take to ensure compliance with current regulations. A solid management plan will ensure that any Asbestos-Containing Materials (ACMs) within the building are managed appropriately, ensuring the safety of residents and any staff or visitors that spend time in the block.

The plan for your block should be site-specific and be clear and concise throughout. It should include:

- The names of those responsible for managing asbestos within the building, including any deputies
- The asbestos register for the building, including a site plan (which clearly indicates where the ACM is already located as well as areas yet to be inspected)
- A detailed schedule for monitoring the condition of known ACMs
- A plan for how you will share your asbestos register with any staff who will be working on site
- An explanation of the control arrangements you have in place to ensure the ACMs are kept undisturbed
- The emergency procedures you will follow should the ACMs be disturbed in any way

Why Communicating With Residents is Important

While there is no legal obligation to do so, communicating the presence of asbestos in the building with residents has many advantages. Firstly, it builds trust. Residents will feel informed and there will be no nasty surprises if materials are disturbed and must be removed.

Secondly, it increases the likelihood of safe outcomes. Residents will know to be respectful of safety rules and will also be able to report any concerns promptly.

Education is key. Most people know that asbestos is very dangerous, but many may not be aware that, with proper maintenance and duty of care, it can be safe to live with.

Communicating the presence of asbestos in the building will be a delicate balance- letting residents know about the dangers so they take things seriously on the one hand, while reassuring them of the safety measures in place on the other.

The aim is to make them safety-conscious while not making them uncomfortable or scared in their own homes.

How to Communicate Your Message

Every block is different- you will know the age, language and ability demographics within your resident pool. It's important to tailor your communication style to suit each group.

To make sure any information you share is easily accessible for all, several channels should be used to spread the message. This could include a social media page for the block, group messaging services, direct phone calls or emails, newsletters in accessible formats and good old fashioned resident meetings and notice boards.

Whatever the medium, make sure your language is simple, direct and free of any technical jargon. Key messaging should be repeated- namely that there are asbestos containing materials present, where they are, what your management plan is and why they should be left undisturbed.

You can make residents aware when an inspection is due and what they can expect while safety teams are on site. Any changes in your management plan should be communicated, even if they don't directly impact residents. This will help to maintain trust and a sense of a working partnership between residents and management.

Always make it clear that you're available for any further questions and make time to put any worried minds at ease. You can provide online information from HSE or simply host an asbestos-specific meeting to answer any lingering questions. If an expert can attend to help you field these questions then that's even better.

To Sum Things Up...

Communicating asbestos risks is about more than just providing information- it's about ensuring that all residents feel informed, safe, and supported.

By understanding your audience, using clear language, providing regular updates, and being transparent, you can help ensure that all residents are aware of the risks and know how to stay safe.

This approach not only helps manage asbestos risks effectively but also fosters trust and peace of mind among your residents.

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Feature: Maintenance and Cleaning

How to Prepare Your Home for Winter

Written by Colin Stokes
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As we approach the winter months, the changing weather conditions can cause damage to your home. However, with a few easy steps you can prepare your property for the long, cold months ahead.



1) Test your heating

As we transition from summer to winter, you'll probably be re-acquainting yourself with your heating. Before the weather gets really cold, start to think about whether your radiators need bleeding, check that your boiler is working and dust off the vents/filters for maximum benefit. This will give you some time to make sure everything is still working before the days get too cold!



2) Service your boiler

Check that the pilot light is on and re-light it if necessary. Instructions on how to do this will be in the boiler manual, or on the side of the boiler itself. It may also be worth having your boiler serviced by a Gas Safety registered engineer. This will ultimately give you peace of mind, as leaking carbon monoxide is a risk at any time of the year.



3) Check your windows and doors

Through the summer you may have left windows on the latch for some fresh air. To save on your heating bill, do a quick whip round and make sure they're shut tight ready for the colder weather. Also check whether there are any gaps in windows and doors so you can seal them and reduce draughts (and heating costs!).



4) Check your guttering

Clear any rubbish/leaves from your gutters to prevent a build-up which could result in icy, heavy gutters collapsing when the cold weather starts.



5) Hire a chimney sweep

The winter weather can cause damage to your chimney, so the pre-winter months are a great time to get your chimney swept.



6) Insulate your pipes

Insulating (or lagging) your pipes can reduce the loss of heating and also prevent them freezing and bursting.



7) Look after your pipes

As the cold weather sets in, the water in your pipes may freeze causing them to burst. Not only could this cause a lot of expensive damage, but it may mean you have to move out whilst the repairs are undertaken.

- Keep an eye on any cracks or holes that may appear in the outside walls that might let cold air make its way to your pipes. Seal up any gaps before they become a larger issue.
- Keep the heating at a low level (above 4°C) even when you're away from the property, as this will help maintain a consistent temperature around the pipes.



8) Locate your stopcock

Just in case of emergencies (such as burst pipes), knowing where your stopcock is will enable you to turn the cold water system off and limit further damage. The stopcock is usually located under your kitchen sink and normally looks like a tap/lever.



9) Bleed radiators

After a few months out of action, you may find that your radiators are cold at the top and hot at the bottom. This normally means the radiator needs bleeding. To make sure you're getting the most out of your heating (and money), test your radiators and bleed them as we transition into winter.



10) Use your heating timer

Using a timer for your heating can make sure your heating system runs smoothly, your house is a comfortable temperature and helps prevent your pipes from freezing and bursting.



11) Create a power cut kit

To avoid being caught in the dark, create a power cut kit. This could include torches, candles, matches, blankets, a battery-operated radio and maybe some board games for entertainment!



12) Make sure your oil tank is topped up

Using a timer for your heating can make sure your heating system runs smoothly, your house is a comfortable temperature and helps prevent your pipes from freezing and bursting.



13) Get your outdoor space ready

Making sure your garden is clear, clean and ready for winter is a good idea. Secure anything that could be swept away by the wind such as greenhouses, plant pots and wheelie bins. Keeping on top of any leaves in your garden is also a good idea so they don't build up over the autumn.



14) Brush up on drying washing indoors

This may sound strange, but drying washing indoors and avoiding condensation could be considered an art!



15) Ventilate your property

As well as drying washing properly, there are some other things you can do to prevent damp during the colder months. For example, to prevent warm air and steam entering colder rooms, close the kitchen door whilst cooking, use extractor fans in the bathroom etc.



16) Get your roof checked

Roof slates/tiles can become loose throughout the year and this could lead to leaks through the winter. It may be a good idea to get your roof inspected by a professional to make sure there are no areas that need fixing before the colder months.



17) Check your outdoor lights

As well as drying washing properly, there are some other things you can do to prevent damp during the colder months. For example, to prevent warm air and steam entering colder rooms, close the kitchen door whilst cooking, use extractor fans in the bathroom etc.



18) Brush up on your security

We've already mentioned that UK crime rates tend to be higher in the winter. For this reason, just check your doors, fences and gates are all working properly and secured.

For more articles by Adiuvo, please click here.

Formed in 2007 by ex-London Property Managers, adiuvo (from the Latin to help or assist) to initially offer a service that had, in their opinion, been severely lacking; a professional and knowledgeable office based emergency out of hours' response for Property Managers.

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Feature: Maintenance and Cleaning

Investing in the Upkeep of Your Block of Flats or Apartments

Residentsline Flats Insurance

www.residentsline.co.uk

It is easy for those managing a block of flats or apartments to fall into a cycle of reactionary repairs. This can lead to reductions in property value, resident satisfaction and a decline in general health and safety.

Proactively maintaining the cleanliness, decorative state, safety features and structural integrity of your building is crucial. Effective maintenance plans have a positive effect on property value and resident satisfaction as well as reducing overall costs.

This article explores how investing in consistent upkeep can prevent expensive repairs, reduce insurance costs, attract happy residents and boost property value.



Cleaning

This is likely to be top of the list for your residents in terms of their day-to-day experience. Living in a clean and welcoming environment will be important to them in terms of hygiene as well as giving a sense of pride when inviting guests to visit.

In this post-covid era, hygiene is of upmost importance and any shared facilities should be thoroughly cleaned. Visual records of regular cleaning can reassure residents too.

Beyond the looks and hygiene of the property, cleaning can prevent more serious issues developing simply due to the property being closely examined regularly:

- It can lead to early detection of leaks, damp and mould.
- It can prevent slips and falls.
- It can mean that maintenance issues are picked up on and resolved more quickly.
- Pest control issues can be spotted in the early stages.

Regular cleaning not only creates a healthy, pleasant living environment for residents but also contributes significantly to the long-term financial health of the property.

Internal and External Decorative Upkeep

Decorative maintenance in common areas is required for the satisfaction of current residents and to attract potential leaseholders who view the property. A run-down, out of date interior are not indicative of effective building management and can send the wrong message.

Externally, the property should be well maintained and well-lit for the sake of safety and curb appeal. Regular upkeep for the external walls will also mean early intervention for blocked gutters, creeping damp and graffiti.

Any grounds should be well kept by an experienced gardener. If residents are paying for a garden facility, then it should be accessible to them all year round. A professional gardener can make the most of what you have throughout the seasons and ensure they get value for money. Gardeners also provide another pair of eyes to spot external issues with broken pathways, weak walls, problematic trees and damaged fences.

Safety-Focussed Maintenance

It goes without saying that health and safety is of vital significance – first and foremost to protect the safety of residents. Effective maintenance in these areas also protects the building's integrity and the investments of freeholders and leaseholders alike.

Regular maintenance of sprinklers, fire alarms, entry systems and emergency lighting etc also shows insurers that you are doing what you can to mitigate any risks. With sufficient evidence of your efforts, this can lower the cost of your policy.

Structural Maintenance

Looking out for indicators of structural weakness or subsidence can make a huge difference to the cost of rectifying any issues that arise.

Be on the lookout for:

- Cracks of 3mm or more that are visible on both sides of the wall
- Cracks near doors or windows
- Cracks that are wider at the top than the bottom and run diagonally
- Doors or windows becoming jammed
- Crinkling wallpaper

Regular visual checks and making residents and contractors aware of what to look out for can help you spot issues early and minimise the impact and cost of repairs.

Planned Maintenance Programs

A planned maintenance program (PMP) can keep you ahead of the game and prevent reactive repairs becoming necessary.

Your PMP should include everything from regular day-to-day cleaning through to major projects such as re-pointing or re-roofing. With everything mapped out across the year, you will reduce your chances of nasty surprises in terms of expenditure, complaints and accidents.

The plan for your block of flats should be reviewed regularly with adjustments made as circumstances change. While it may evolve, the plan should not be adjusted by moving major projects further and further down the line for financial savings. You may find yourself with a list of hugely expensive tasks to do within one financial year and out yourself at risk of deeper problems developing as a result.

Overall, proactive maintenance will reduce costs, keep residents happy and maintain the value of the property. Reactionary repairs will of course sometimes be necessary, but staying ahead of the game with a planned program of checks and maintenance is always the best approach.

Head to the Residentsline website for information on all of our products and services or, if you'd like to speak to one of our fantastic, specialist team, give us a call on 0800 281 235.

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Feature: Cleaning and Maintenance

Legal Implications of Neglected Maintenance in Leasehold Properties

www.flatlivinginsurance.co.uk

Rather than basing coverage on the current market value of a property, a Leasehold properties operate under an agreement between the leaseholder and the freeholder: leaseholders own their property for a set period while the freeholder owns the building itself and is responsible for maintaining communal areas.cost assessment gives insurers accurate costings for the demolition, clearance and complete rebuild of a property.

This agreement is laid out within the lease as well as being supported by UK law.

If either chooses to neglect their maintenance or cleaning responsibilities, then serious legal consequences may follow. Here we will be explaining the perils that both parties should be aware of.

Consequences for Freeholders

Freeholders have a legal duty to actively maintain and repair the structure of the building. This includes the common areas within the building such as hallways, foyers and any shared spaces as well as the exterior of the building and any grounds.

If a freeholder (or their appointed managing agent) fails to keep up with the required level of maintenance and cleanliness, leaseholders can take legal action:

Legal Consequences for Underinsurance

- **Breach of Lease**

If the level of neglect breaches the terms of a leaseholder's lease, they can take their freeholder to court or to a tribunal. This may result in the leaseholder being released from their contract early.

- **Service Charge Dispute**

Leaseholders pay a service charge – a contribution to the general upkeep of the property. For many these charges are a significant amount of money and as such, leaseholders expect that the money is well spent on their behalf.

If leaseholders feel that their service charges are being wasted, they can raise a dispute to challenge them. They can take their concerns to the First-tier Tribunal (Property Chamber) who can order the freeholder to refund part of the service charge if they are found to be in breach of their responsibilities.

- **Legal Orders for Repairs**

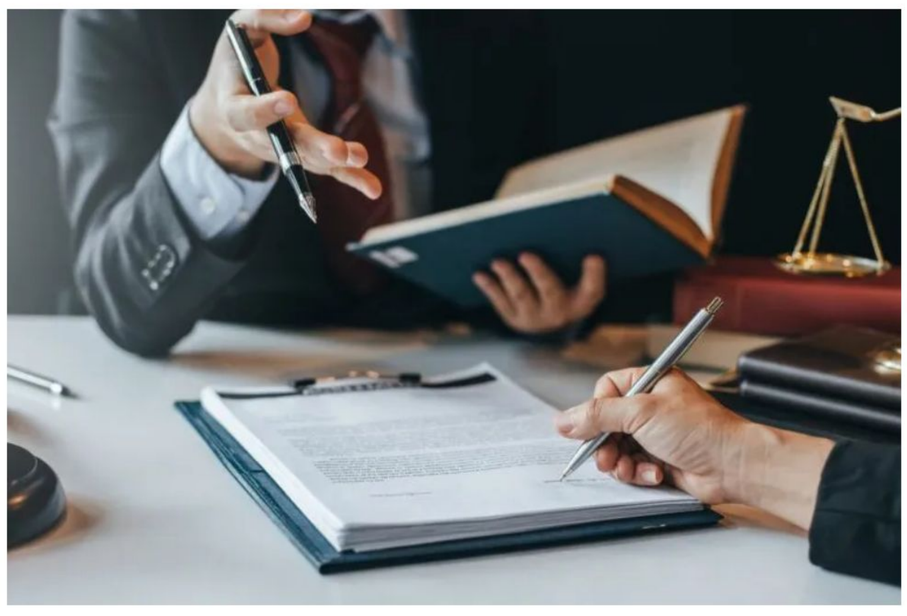
If repairs are not carried out in a timely manner Under Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, leaseholders can request a court order to force the freeholder's hand.

The court can set a deadline for the repairs to be completed or even appoint someone else to manage the property if the freeholder is a repeat offender.

- **Health and Safety Breaches**

A lack of maintenance can easily lead to safety hazards. Freeholders can be prosecuted under health and safety laws for any breaches and face hefty fines if found guilty. If neglect leads to an injury or death freeholders can also face imprisonment.

These breaches can be simple; blocked fire exits or damaged wiring, uneven paving slabs or a fallen tree. Proactive maintenance helps to avoid these basic issues and nip problems in the bud before they cause an injury.



Consequences for Leaseholders

It is easy to think that only freeholders could fall into hot water when it comes to maintenance and cleanliness, but leaseholders have their own responsibilities to consider.

Leaseholders are expected to maintain and clean the interior of their flat or apartment as well as any areas exclusively accessed by them such as balconies. It is worth double checking your lease because in some cases leaseholders are also expected to contribute to the upkeep of communal areas.

- **Breach of Lease**

Contracts work both ways, and just as leaseholders can take their freeholders to court for breach of lease, freeholders may do the same. If a freeholder believes a leaseholder is not maintaining their unit to the standard they should be, they can take legal action.

In extreme cases, the lease could be forfeited which would effectively result in eviction for the leaseholder.

- **Service Charge Increase**

Freeholders have the right to ensure that their property is being well maintained. If they have to step in to handle necessary repairs inside a leaseholder's unit, the costs can be passed to the leaseholder via their service charge.

- **Property Value**

Poor maintenance by either party can result in a reduction in curb appeal and overall property value. We are placing this one under the leaseholder's section as it may not occur to leaseholder that their inaction could have a direct impact on their own sizeable investment.

Resolving Disputes

At the outset, the aim should always be to resolve maintenance or cleanliness issues amicably. The first step should be to open a dialogue – there may be a reason behind someone's neglectful actions that can be remedied.

If talks break down, mediation is a good route to take. This is where a professional third party will manage any exchanges and help bring the dispute to a mutually beneficial conclusion.

Where mediation fails, the First-tier Tribunal will be the next port of call. They can step in to resolve disputes over service charges and maintenance responsibilities, bringing legal and financial consequences where necessary.

Conclusion

For property owners, neglectful maintenance can lead to serious legal consequences as well as causing unnecessary health and safety risks for residents. Freeholders may face legal orders and financial penalties, while leaseholders could experience increased costs or in severe cases, even lose their property. Maintaining properties appropriately, understanding the requirements of your lease and respecting the UK law are essential to avoiding these outcomes.

When issues arise, clear communication and a calm approach are vital to reaching a conclusion that suits all parties and avoids these legal and financial pitfalls.

Flat Living Insurance arranges insurance for self-managed customers only, call us on 0333 577 2044 to get a quote for your block today.

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Lift Insurance and Inspection

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Feature: Maintenance and Cleaning

The Importance of Having an Autumn/Winter Maintenance Plan for Blocks of Flats and Apartments

www.blockinabox.co.uk

As the colder months approach, it is essential for Resident Management Companies (RMCs) and leaseholders to implement a well-structured maintenance plan for their blocks of flats or apartments.

Autumn and winter specific plans ensure the safety and comfort of residents as the weather changes. They also preserve the value and appeal of the property for all stakeholders and prospective leaseholders.

Here we will be running through the key components that make for an effective plan and explaining why this seasonal upkeep so important.



Safety First

Harsh weather conditions and shorter days during the winter months can cause specific safety issues. High winds, heavy rain, snow and ice all present their own risks.

Weak fences can fall, icy pathways cause slip hazards and effective, efficient lighting becomes more important than ever. Regular visual inspections as well as providing residents with an easy way to report concerns are vital.

Externally, pathways and steps should be gritted and the handrails checked for integrity. Lighting should be a priority, especially over any trip-hazards. Internally, sufficient matting ahead of hard flooring should be provided and broken or faulty windows and doors should be dealt with immediately.

Preventing accidents is a priority first and foremost for the safety of leaseholders, but it also protects against any potential legal liability should a fall occur.

Comfort for Residents

Draughty windows can leave residents uncomfortable during the coldest months. For more vulnerable residents, a lack of sufficient heating can cause serious health issues.

Scheduling maintenance for improving insulation and sealing any gaps in windows or doors will ensure a suitable level of comfort and resident satisfaction.

Cost Savings and Efficiency

Comfort and safety aside, cost savings and energy efficiency will be high on the list of requirements. Preventative maintenance is the best way to reduce the likelihood of expensive reactive repairs, while opting for modern energy efficient lighting can reduce energy bills significantly.

Regular checks of gutters and flat roofs, scheduled maintenance for heating systems and the introduction of motion detecting LED lighting can all bring costs down significantly. By addressing small issues early, RMCs can avoid major financial burdens later on.

Preserving Property Value and Appeal

The winter months can take their toll on a property's curb appeal as well as potentially creating a negative first impression internally. Lighting plays a large role in keeping the building bright and airy on gloomy days and maintaining the paintwork, cleanliness and damp proofing will also be paramount.

Paint touch-ups, window checks and roof repairs will keep the building in good condition as well as creating the right first impression. This is crucial for attracting new leaseholders and maintaining a sense of pride in existing residents.

Health Concerns: Mould and Damp Prevention

The combination of lower temperatures and increased humidity can lead to mould and damp problems. These issues can create hugely expensive issues for the property and make life miserable for residents. They can also be very dangerous to the health of leaseholders who may not be able to combat the issue alone.

Managers should be checking for leaks or rising damp that could be attributed to mould and leaseholders should be made aware of the actions they can take to avoid a recurrence. Proper ventilation is key, as is an efficient heating system. Installing and maintaining extractor fans in bathrooms and kitchens can further help reduce the risk of moisture accumulation.

Conclusion

Season specific maintenance is key to a happy resident community and the preservation of the building. Harsh weather conditions can take their toll on the property as well as the mental and physical health of its residents – property managers have a huge part to play in reducing the impact.

An autumn and winter maintenance plan improves safety and resident comfort, saves on repair costs and preserves property value. Alongside this, it also keeps property managers legally compliant.

For services to help you manage your block of flats, click here.

Block in a Box has been created to assist self-managed Residents' Management Companies, Right to Manage Companies and Residents' Associations, their blocks of flats and the leaseholders that live in them by providing a mix-and-match toolbox supplying all the services you need.

We designed it with a steering committee of directors and association members to provide something that would truly help.

Blockinabox.co.uk | info@blockinabox.co.uk | 0333 015 4145

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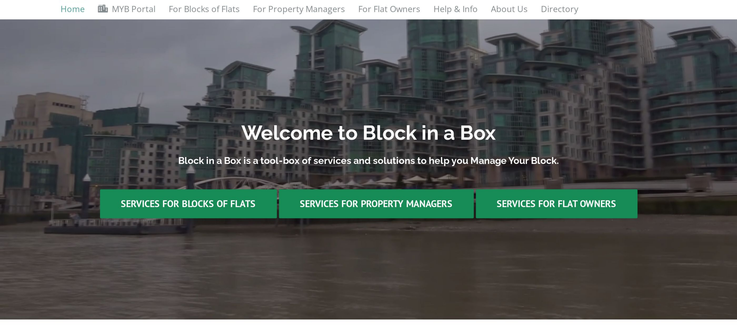

Welcome to Block in a Box

Block in a Box is a tool-box of services and solutions to help you Manage Your Block.

SERVICES FOR BLOCKS OF FLATS | SERVICES FOR PROPERTY MANAGERS | SERVICES FOR FLAT OWNERS

View Our Services and Products



3D Surveys



Aerial Surveys



Accounting Solutions



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Asbestos Survey and Management



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Cladding Consultancy



Commercial Property Surveying



Contractor Accreditation



Cyber Security Training



Decarbonisation



Directors and Officers Liability



Drone Surveys



Electric Charging Points



Emergency Assistance



Enfranchisement



EV Connected



EWS1 Forms



Fire Door Inspection



Fire Risk Assessments

Flat Living



Fire Risk Appraisal of External Walls



Fire Safety Information Posters

FPRA



Health and Safety



Health and Safety Awareness Training



Health and Safety Risk Assessments



Higher-Risk Building Registration



Historic Building Repair



Housing Associations



Insurance Solutions



Insurance Works Surveying



Landlord Home Emergency



Lease Extensions



Lease Variation



Legal Solutions



Legionella Risk Management



License to Alter



Lift Wrapping



Neighbourly Advice: Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing



Out of Hours Helpline

Party Walls

Planned Maintenance Program

Pre-Purchase Building Surveys

Quantity Surveying

Reinstatement Cost Assessments

Representative for Cladding Remediation Funding

Retrofit and Green Upgrades

Right to Manage

Rights of Light

RMC Director Training

Rooftop Extensions

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Section 20 Major Works

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Feature: Maintenance and Cleaning

The Impact of Regular Cleaning and Maintenance on Leasehold Property Values

London Flats Insurance

www.londonflatsinsurance.co.uk

020 7993 3034

Property values are influenced by some universal factors: size, location, state of repair etc. But leasehold properties are unique in their additional contributing factors.

These properties are home to multiple leaseholders, sometimes hundreds. Wear and tear in common areas and damage to common facilities is unavoidable which makes proactive upkeep very important.

Here we will be discussing how keeping on top of cleaning and general maintenance can go a long way to preserving or even increasing the value of a leasehold property.

How is Value Tied to Cleanliness and Maintenance?



You may think that the value of a property essentially comes down to its bricks, mortar and location. For many freehold properties this is largely true as owners will expect to make their own cosmetic changes and to bear the cost of doing so.

Leasehold properties are entirely different. Prospective leaseholders will view the common areas of the building as a litmus test for the management of the building as a whole. They know that the décor and cleanliness of the common areas will be largely out of their control.

Dusty, out of date interiors, a broken-down lift and a flickering lightbulb do not exactly paint a picture of excellence. Their first impression is key and they will need to feel that they can trust the building manager before committing to their lease and the resulting service charges.

External decoration and lighting as well as neat gardens will provide curb appeal. Well lit, clean and modern interiors will reassure leaseholders of the abilities of the management as well as providing a comforting home environment that existing leaseholders will be proud to help maintain.

Cleaning

Regular cleaning is an obvious necessity due to the footfall you would expect in the common areas of a residential block of flats. Regardless of the care taken by residents, these areas will be well used and put through some serious wear and tear.

Shared spaces should be cleaned at least weekly and shared facilities such as gyms or pools should be cleaned daily. Displaying visual confirmation of each clean on a notice board can be reassuring for leaseholders – especially in this post-pandemic era.

Maintenance



Effective maintenance will reduce your costs overall. Reactive repairs are sometimes unavoidable, but regular checks, surveys and inspections will root out any issues nice and early and before costs can skyrocket.

Of course you have the legal requirements to consider, but besides these obvious necessities you can check regularly for:

- Broken windows
- Uneven pathways
- Lifting or stained carpets
- Lightbulbs to replace
- Lifts behaving badly
- Woodwork that needs painting
- Marks on the walls

A simple walk around once a week could keep you on top of things and able to maintain the comfort of your residents and the value of the block.

You could also avoid huge costs if issues such as subsidence or structural instability are caught early. For this you need to keep an eye out for cracks in the wall of more than 3mm in width, cracks that appear on both sides of a wall and gaps in window or doorframes as well as windows or doors that can no longer close.

All Eyes on Deck

Proactive cleaning and maintenance schedules are effective in their own right, but they also mean you have more eyes on the ground (and walls, lightbulbs, fire doors… you get the gist).

Cleaners may spot a crack in the wall that looks concerning or a fire door that is not closing properly. Gardeners might alert you to a fence panel that needs replacing. Window cleaners can spot an overflowing gutter.

Each person that is taking care of the common areas of the building can keep an eye out for issues, allowing you to nip them in the bud before they cause a bigger issue or lead to complaints.

Making sure that your residents know how to contact you about little worries will also help. They can let you know if a lightbulb is out or if there has been a spillage – it all helps to create a harmonious relationship and a welcoming, comfortable space.

Residents that enjoy a clean and well-maintained environment are also more likely to treat that environment with respect, helping to reduce the likelihood of any issues in the first place.

To visit London Flats Insurances website, click here.

At London Flats Insurance, we only provide policies for blocks of flats and apartments, which means that we are specialists in this field. We know that each block of flats is different, which is why every flats insurance policy we offer is tailor-made to suit you, your block and its residents. Plus, we always work with A-rated insurance companies, so you can be sure that our insurance policies are a great solution when insuring your block of flats.

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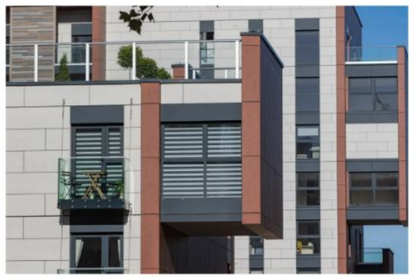

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Feature: Maintenance and Cleaning

Lift Maintenance and Insurance

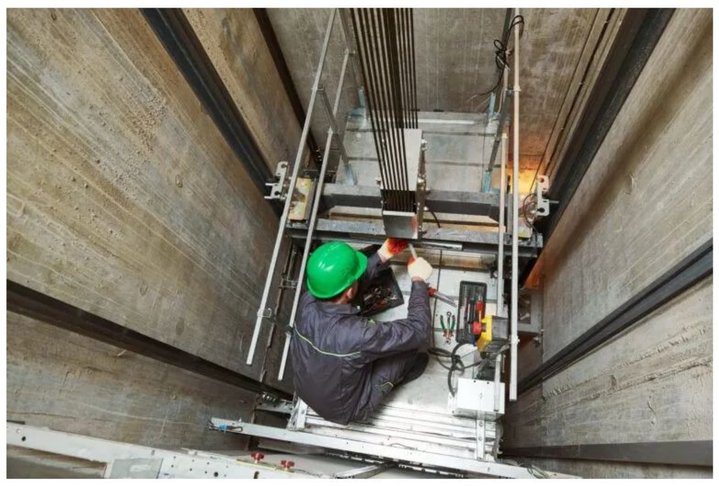
ManageYourBlock™

www.manageyourblock.co.uk

tel: 0333 577 9070

Lifts are a vital facility for some residents and a welcome convenience for others. As well as ensuring compliance with insurance regulations, effective maintenance is essential to reducing breakdowns and avoiding accidents.

This article will outline the steps you should be taking to ensure the safe use and longevity of your lift, as well as to potentially reduce your insurance premiums.



The Importance of Lift Maintenance

Neglected lifts can lead to serious accidents involving entrapment or injury as well as stress for those whose access to the outside world is hindered or cut off entirely by breakdowns.

Lift maintenance is vital for the safety and satisfaction of your residents, but it is also a legal responsibility. As a Resident Management Company director or officer, you are an 'owner or operator', meaning you are legally required to have your lifts inspected by a competent person once every 6 months.

It is also paramount in terms of your insurance. Your buildings insurance policy will insure your lift in the event of damage caused through 'insured perils' such as fire, accidental damage or malicious damage, but this cover does not extend to general breakdowns or maintenance works.

Your 6-monthly inspections and any maintenance works suggested by your competent person are the key to warding off any catastrophic breakdowns and therefore any unexpected costs.

Lift Inspections

Under the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER) you must have your lift "thoroughly examined by a 'Competent Person' who will assess the safe operation of your lift".

These inspections are often referred to as Insurance Inspections and they need to be repeated every 6 months as well as prior to new equipment going into service and after any major alterations.

A "thorough examination" is defined as a "systematic and detailed inspection of the lift and all its associated equipment". The aim of the inspection is to identify any current defects as well as anything that may become dangerous in the future.

The competent person must report any issues to you as you have the legal duty to rectify them. They must also report some issues or circumstances to the relevant enforcing authority (such as the Health and Safety Executive or the Local Authority).

Signs of a Malfunctioning Lift

Other than an obvious breakdown, here are a few signs to look out for that may indicate your lift isn't functioning as it should be:

- The lift is not perfectly in line with the landing floor when stationary
- The doors open and close a few times before the lift moves
- Residents report noises that indicate the lift may be touching the walls of the lift shaft when in motion
- Unusual noises or heat coming from the machine room
- The lift indicates an incorrect floor designation when called

If any of the above are reported, an inspection should be carried out as soon as possible to avoid any further issues or outages.

Lift Maintenance and Your Insurance

Insurers will be able to keep your premiums to a minimum if you can prove that you are proactive in the care and maintenance of your lift. Evidence of your inspections carried out every 6 months and any follow up works should be provided as well as evidence of any other regular inspections and their findings.

If you would like to make sure you are doing what is best for your residents and your insurer, Residentsline offer a Lift Insurance and Inspection policy. This brings your requirements for suitable insurance cover and your bi-annual inspections under one policy.

Working with Aviva, this policy is available for just £392.80 per annum for a lift covering up to 5 floors. If you are working with a building of 6 stories or more, a bespoke quote can be arranged.

Coverage includes the necessary inspections, meaning the cost of your policy is kept as low as possible as Residentsline will be assured of your compliance with regulations and therefore the safe running of your lift.

For an exact quote for the needs of your block, you can complete the short online form here or call 0800 281 235 to speak to the team.

For more from Manage Your Block, click here.

Manage your Block has been created to assist Residents' Management Companies, Right to Manage Companies and Residents Associations to self-manage their block.

It's a secure, easy-to-use portal that offers access to your block's details at the touch of a button. Designed to make your life easier, it saves you time and offers a fast and efficient interface to connect you, your residents, and your block.

manageyourblock.co.uk | info@manageyourblock.co.uk | 0333 577 9070

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ManageYourBlock™

Self management software for blocks of flats!

VISIT OUR WEBSITE



An **online portal** designed for RMC's, Directors and Owners of apartment blocks. With Manage Your Block, you can update, control and navigate your documents all in a user-friendly hub. This is accessible through any device at a touch of a button 24/7 personalised to suit your needs.

Who is Manage Your Block For?

Manage Your Block is a nifty online portal specifically designed for anybody managing a block of flats, including:

- Residents' Management Companies
- Right to Manage Companies
- Residents Associations

Do you want to make managing your block easier? Consider our trusted software solution used by thousands of professionals nationwide!

Tel: 03335779070 Email: info@manageyourblock.co.uk

OUR FEATURES

Diary

Set diary reminders to ensure you don't forget anything.

Documents

Securely hold all your block's documents in one place. Examples of what you may want to store include: copy leases, financial records, fire evacuation procedures, along with other day-to-day procedural documents.

Notes

Make sure you have an audit trail by adding notes for anything important.

Quotes

Request quotes from your preferred contractors or use one of our recommended specialists. You can also issue work orders to accept quotes.

Save

Our trustworthy online space lets you keep your most important documents safe, and you will have access day and night, wherever you are.

Contractors

Keep a list of your key contractors, for example, plumbers, decorators, gardeners, window cleaners in one place.

Contacts

All the owners and residents in your block can be added to your contact list, so you can keep track and update it. You'll always have all of this contact info at your fingertips.

Calendar

Record key dates and reminders, for example insurance renewal date, health & safety risk assessment due date, date to send out service charges.

Alerts

Broken down lift? Power shortage? Local crime issues? Provide instant alerts out to all residents with one simple alert.

Directors and Officers Liability Insurance

Katrina Jones from Residentsline, investigates the importance of Directors' and Officers' Liability Insurance for your Residents' Management Company and outlines possible claim examples.

The Importance of Directors and Officers Liability Insurance



As a member of a Residents' Management Company, you bear a multitude of responsibilities aimed at ensuring the seamless operation of your block of flats.

These responsibilities encompass finance and accounting, service charges, insurance needs, maintenance, inspections, and overseeing major works and reparations. Managing such a comprehensive list demands meticulous planning and experience, making it susceptible to occasional errors.

It is crucial to acknowledge that, although mistakes are an inherent part of any management role, errors leading to incidents such as damage or personal injury can result in legal actions being taken against the Residents' Management Company. This liability falls on the directors and officers of the Residents' Management Company, who are held accountable for decisions made in their official capacity.

This may seem unfair. After all, being a director or an officer of a Residents' Management Company is a voluntary role which requires a lot of time and effort on behalf of the residents in the block. As such, it can be difficult to understand how directors and officers can be penalised so heavily. Regardless, the fact remains that directors and officers require suitable protection in case of legal action being taken against them. Nevertheless, the reality is that directors and officers necessitate adequate protection in the event of legal actions.

Claim Examples

- Tenants of a block of flats brought legal action against the Residents' Management Company for failing to appoint a building company in a timely fashion. The external brickwork of the building needed reparation, as damage had been caused following a heavy rainstorm. This had been reported to the committee, however, repair work had not been commenced several months later when a subsequent rainstorm caused further damage.
- A Residents' Management Company faced an allegation of wrongful termination after it fired an employee for gross misconduct.
- A Residents' Management Company Director faced being sued as a result of a property being devalued following their decision to paint the exterior of the building an unusual colour.
- At a party in one of the flats, an over-crowded balcony collapsed, seriously injuring several people. A claim against the Insurance Company is incepted with a potential cost of £7.25 million, however the RMC only has £5 million Property Owners Liability cover in place. The individual flat owners are distressed as this amount is well below the potential cost of the claim. The flat owners believe that the RMC was wrong to reduce the cover and they bring legal action against the responsible director to make up the shortfall.
- An officer pays a contractor to fix their roof with RMC funds before the works have started. Subsequently, the contractor absconds with the money, never to be seen again. There is an exposure to potential legal action being brought by the individual flat owners following the loss of RMC funds due to a mistake made by an RMC member.



Directors' and Officers' Liability Insurance

Directors and Officers Liability Insurance coverage extends protection to members of Residents' Management Companies, shielding them from legal liabilities. Underwritten by AVIVA Insurance, our policy protects directors and officers against the cost of potential claims for alleged wrongful acts.

These may include:

- Breach of trust
- Breach of duty
- Neglect/error/omission
- Misstatement
- Libel and slander
- Breach of warranty of authority
- Wrongful trading

Residentsline's Directors and Officers Liability Insurance provides a comprehensive solution to protect your directors.

Protect Your Directors with Residentsline and use our easy-to-use portal to get a quote and be covered today! Click here to get a quote.

At Residentsline, our flats insurance policies are tailored to your needs; created for all sizes and types of blocks of flats and apartments. Our insurance cover also includes the option to include directors and officer's liability insurance, terrorism insurance, lift cover or legal expenses protection as part of your policy or as a separate policy if desired.

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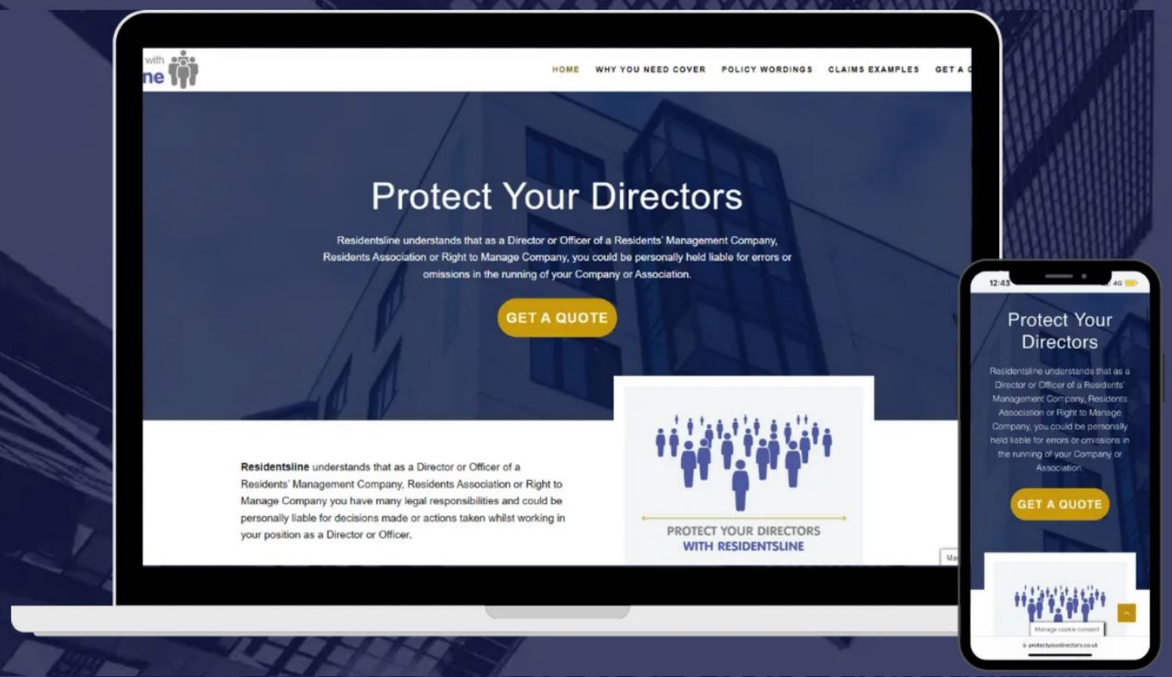
One mistake or misjudgement could end up being expensive. Get a quote for Directors & Officers Liability Insurance with us today, a specialist insurance broker you can trust.



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When it comes to Home Emergency insurance, it can be difficult to decide whether purchasing a policy is really worth it. After all, you're more likely to need it in some situations than others.

In the unfortunate event you experience a home emergency, most standard home insurance policies won't cover you for emergency call-out fees or the initial costs of making your house safe or secure immediately after an incident. Make sure you've got comprehensive cover for better financial protection.



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Home Emergency Insurance for Homeowners



Home Emergency Insurance for Landlords

Why take out Emergency Home Landlord cover?

Peace of mind - Emergency Home cover provides reassurance that if an unexpected issue arises, help is only a call away.

Financial protection - Home emergencies come with a lot of unexpected costs, particularly call out fees. Emergency Home Landlord cover can help mitigate these costs and prevent unexpected financial burdens.

Cover for various emergencies - Emergency Home Landlord cover typically includes a wide range of potential issues, such as electrical failures, plumbing problems, roof damage and pest infestations.

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Home Emergency Insurance for Landlords

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Protect your appliances from under £16 per year

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With premiums from less than £16 a year, you can get dedicated Multiple Appliance Insurance cover to make sure you're financially protected in the event of a breakdown.

Receive a quote in 90 seconds!

Multiple Appliance Insurance



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BY
BLOCK



"Stella was great throughout the whole process. She was very easy to speak to, always answered my calls and emails promptly. Excellent service!"

- Melissa Bagot

"With Alice's help and using the information she gave me I have secured a role with an amazing company and I couldn't be more grateful. If you're looking for someone with a wealth of knowledge and a real passion for what they do I couldn't recommend Alice enough"

- Max Braun

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Are you looking for a new role, maybe a step up the career ladder? Take a look at a range vacancies in the block management sector from Block Recruit.

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Location: Central London

Salary: £32,000 - £35,000

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Portfolio Manager

Location: Cambridgeshire

Salary: £27,000 per annum, OTE £30,000

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Block Manager

Location: West Sussex

Salary: £30,000 - £37,000 + £3,000 car allowance (£40K Max)

Tell me more

Property Manager AST

Location: Hertfordshire

Salary: £25,000 - £28,000 (depending on experience)

Tell me more

Night Concierge

Location: South West London

Salary: £27,000 - £29,000 (DOE)

Tell me more

Senior Property Manager

Location: Hertfordshire (Hybrid: 3 days from home, 2 days from office)

Salary: Up to £65,000

Tell me more

Mobile Estate Caretaker

Location: Central London

Salary: £30,000 – £35,000 DOE

Tell me more

Block Manager

Location: Central London

Salary: £48,000 – £50,000

Tell me more

Block Recruit

Block Recruit specialise in providing property professionals to all areas of the block management industry in the UK.

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BLOCK RECRUIT

Upcoming TPI Training Courses

TC103: Property Transfers – Implications For Property Managers



Dates

10 - 11 October 2024

Who should attend?

Legal staff who need to understand the requirements of the lease in the transfer of property.

Property managers whose input is required during the property transfer.

It may also be suitable for any other members of staff who are involved in property transfer and Company Secretary duties.

This course would also be suitable for those in lettings moving into residential leasehold management.

Book your place

TC1: Introduction to Residential Property Management



Dates

11 November 2024

3 - 4 December 2024

Who should attend?

This introductory course is ideal for those new to the sector with less than six month's experience in residential property management and those moving from letting to residential leasehold management.

Book your place

TC97: Reserve Fund or Not to Reserve Fund?



Dates

10 December 2024

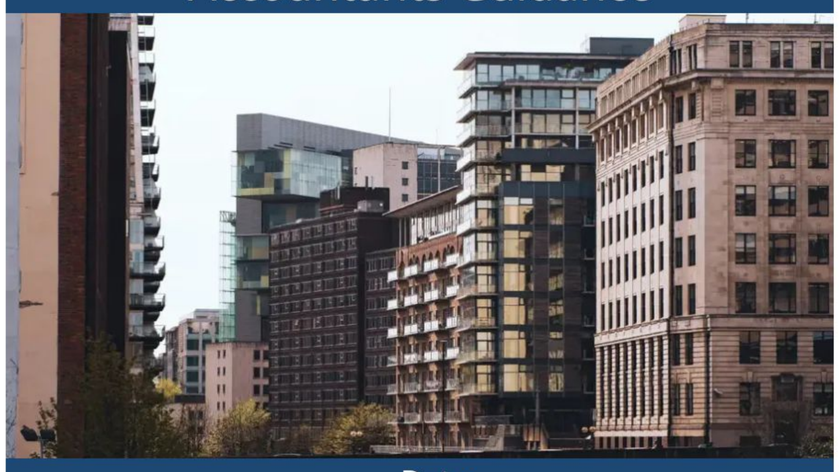
Who should attend

Property managers who will be required to work with clients in a financial capacity.

This course would also be suitable for those in lettings moving into residential leasehold management.

Book your place

TC11: Residential Service Charge Accountants Guidance



Date:

18 November 2024

Who should attend?

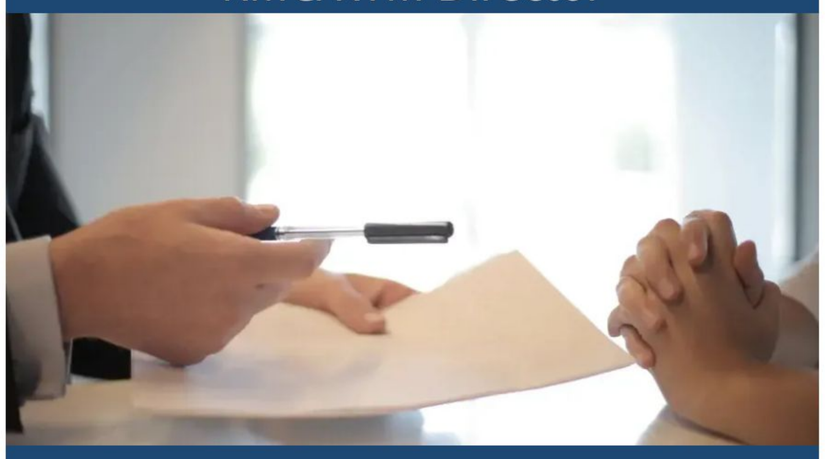
Accounts staff who need to understand the requirements of lease and law in the production of accounts

Property managers whose input is required during the service charge year from their clients

It may also be suitable for senior managers who are responsible for the corporate strategy within their accounts department

Book your place

TC114: Introduction to Being an RMC/RTM Director



Date:

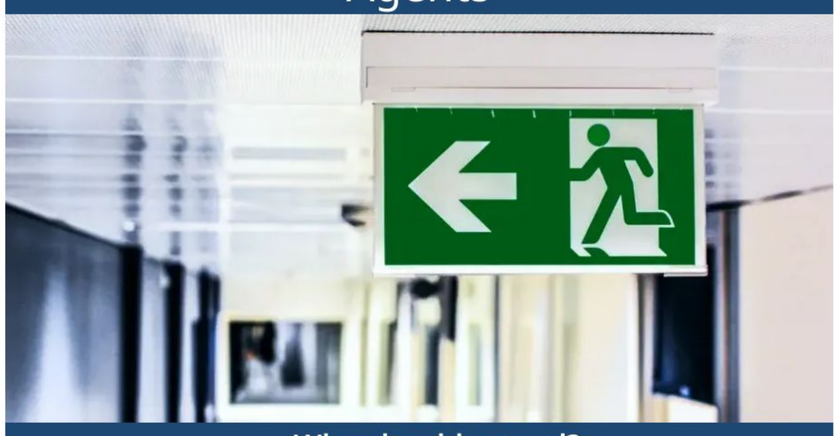
19 November 2024

Course Contents

Each flat owner is typically a member or shareholder in the RMC and members are appointed from amongst their number to become Directors. The RMCs are then run by these Directors. The duties of the company towards each Leaseholder are set out in the Leases for each flat. There is a mix of contractual duties, such as repairs, maintenance, insurance, and service charge accounting, and statutory duties, including setting reasonable levels of service charges and consulting on major works.

Book your place

TC80: Advanced Health and Safety Management for Residential Managing Agents



Who should attend?

This advanced course is suitable for senior property managers/business heads who manage health and safety within their organisation, or are able to influence the way health and safety is managed within their organisation and on behalf of their clients.

Course Contents

An advanced Online Webinar, (3 hours a day over 2 consecutive days), for directors and senior managers who are responsible for undertaking the management of health and safety risk within their own organisation and on behalf of their clients to ensure that they comply with current health and safety law.

Submit interest of this course here

To view TPI's full list of training courses, **click here**.

Get in touch

Website: https://www.tpi.org.uk/

The Property Institute

Upcoming Events

TPI Annual Conference 2024



Date: Thursday 24th October 2024

The Property Institute Annual Conference 2024 attracts key decision-makers from TPI Company and Individuals members as well as Government representatives and key sector stakeholders.

Delegates get an in-depth look at the issues of block management and updates on the latest matters from leading industry figures as well as the opportunity to debate major topics.

Book now!

FIRE Conference 2024



Date: Thursday 24th October 2024

A one-day conference for anyone involved in fire safety to come together to discuss and debate the major challenges affecting the sector.

Organised collaboratively between the Fire Protection Association (FPA), Institution of Fire Engineers (IFE), the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), and the Fire Sector Federation (FSF), this annual event will be in person or online.

Register here

TPI SAVE THE DATES - 2024



Birmingham - 7th November

Manchester - 12th November

Bristol - 26th November

London - 5th December

Find the list of event here!

The Property Management Awards 2024



Date: Thursday 21st November 2024

Save the Date for our 15th annual Property Management Awards which will be taking place on Thursday 21 November 2024!

News on the Block are excited to announce that the 15th annual Property Management Awards in association with Impero Facilities, will be taking place on 21 November 2024.

The awards recognise excellence in the property management industry, and last year's event was the biggest to date, with over 1000 people from across the industry in attendance.

Book now!

Leasehold London 2025



Date: 19th March 2025

Save the Date for Leasehold London 2025!

Early Bird tickets are now available to purchase.

The early bird rate will end on 30 November 2024.

Book now!



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Cyber Security Training

intelectGroup eLearning

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Neighbourly Advice: Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing

McQuade Neighbourly Matters

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MIRU

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Enfranchisement

BRADY SOLICITORS

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Fire Risk Appraisal of External Walls, Higher-Risk Building Registration and Representative for Cladding Remediation Funding

FRC an RSK company

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FPRA

FPRA FEDERATION OF PRIVATE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS

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Historic Building Repair, Housing Assoiations, Party Walls, Planned Maintenance Programs and License to Alter

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FlatLiving Insurance

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Rope Access Surveys and Safety Testing

RopeAccess Surveys

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Smartlink45 Prepayment Meters

SmartLink45®

Find out more

Utilities

RMC utilities specialists in resident management energy

Find out more

Water leak detection and solutions

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ALEP ASSOCIATION OF LEASEHOLD ENFRANCHISEMENT PRACTITIONERS

ALEP - the voice of the enfranchisement sector promoting best practice

Leasehold enfranchisement includes the processes of lease extension, freehold acquisition and correction of management problems within leasehold properties.

The Association of Leasehold Enfranchisement Practitioners (ALEP) serves as the leading organisation representing professionals working in this sector.

Established in 2007, ALEP was formed to bring together firms working within leasehold enfranchisement under one, all-encompassing membership organisation. Barristers, managing agents, project managers, solicitors and valuers all form part of the ALEP community.

Our Work

One of ALEP's key aims is to work with member firms within this sector to raise and maintain standards across the board. The Association holds regular seminars and networking sessions, as well as its popular annual Conference and Lecture events, all with the objective of bringing the sector together to share ideas, discuss key issues and encourage best practice.

ALEP also acts as the 'voice of the sector' and represents its members' views to the wider industry, the media and to the general public. More recently, ALEP is proud to have been invited by the government to contribute to several consultations concerning the future of leasehold enfranchisement.

Our Members

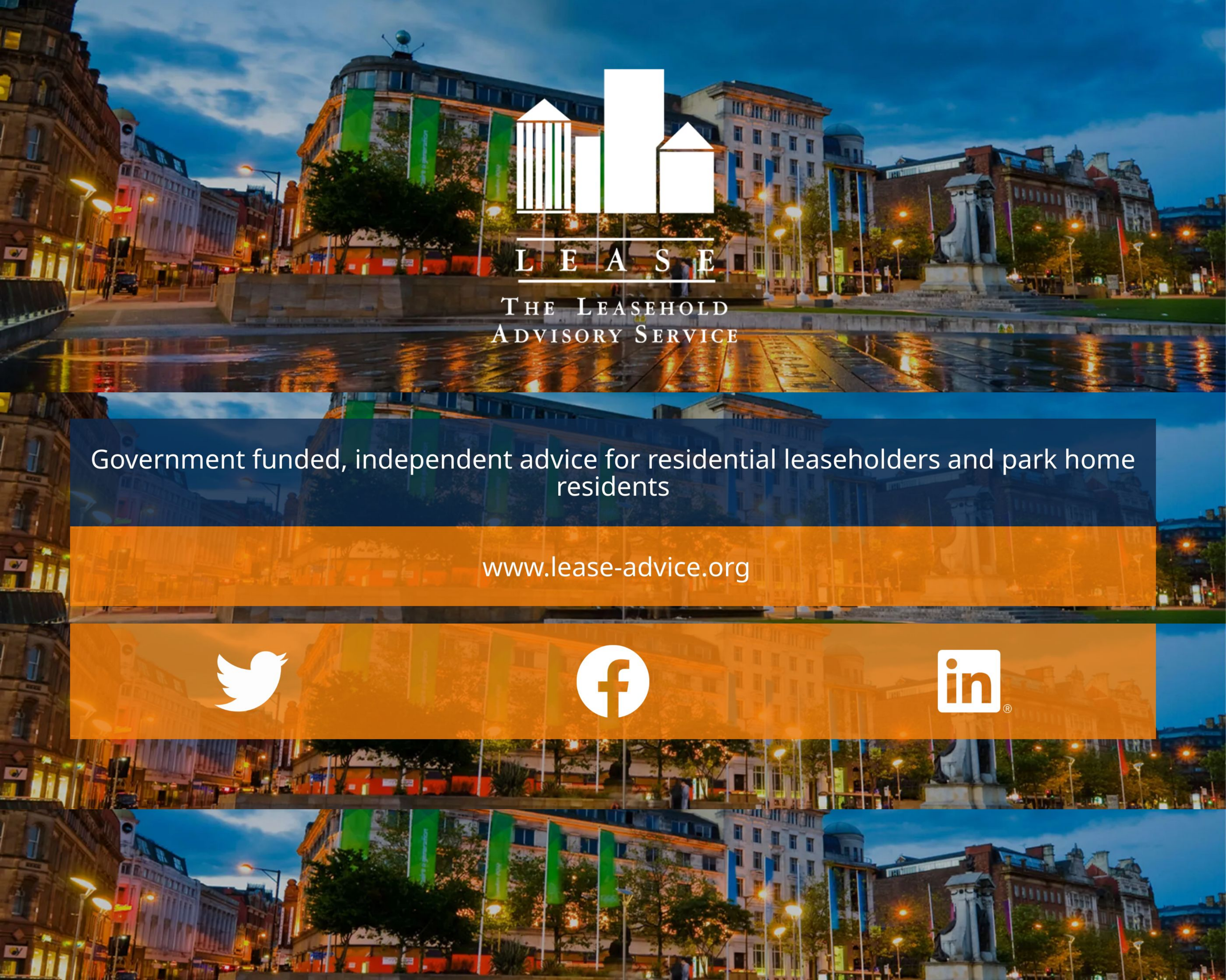
ALEP has 260 highly respected member companies and individual barristers – this equates to just under a total of 1,000 professionals – all of whom operate within the enfranchisement sector and who regularly come together to network, compare notes and agree best practice.

ALEP accreditation acts as a badge of assurance for leaseholders and freeholders alike when looking for professionals to handle their enfranchisement transactions. All members are vetted to ensure they are experienced in dealing with the various and complicated issues surrounding leasehold enfranchisement.

Areas ALEP members can help with include:

- Extending a lease
- Leaseholder vs. freeholder disputes and resolutions
- Informal lease extension implications
- Marriage value
- Collective enfranchisement
- First-tier Tribunals
- Leasehold Valuation Tribunals
- Over-inflated ground rent, service charges and insurance

For more information and to find an ALEP member in your area please visit: www.alep.org.uk



Government funded, independent advice for residential leaseholders and park home residents

www.lease-advice.org

We hope you enjoyed this issue of Flat Living Magazine

You can read more on the Flat Living website which has over 1,500 articles for Residents Management Companies, Directors and Managing Agents.

Flat Living Website

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Help, Information, Advice and Guidance for Those that Live in, Own or Manage Blocks of Flats.

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