



TENANTS' GUIDE

Version 02. Issued February 2026



Whether you're a new tenant or have been with us for many years, we're so pleased that you have made your home in one of the Ernest Cook Trust's properties. You are part of a unique story that has seen the Trust's charitable activities make a real and lasting difference to many thousands of young people across the UK for over 70 years.

As a land-owning educational charity, we exist to help everyone cultivate deep-rooted connections with the land through outdoor learning and experiences in nature. We believe that land can deliver multiple benefits all at once, united by a special ability to enrich our lives and livelihoods.

As your landlord, we also recognise our duty of care to you and we want to give you the highest quality service and support. And we will share updates with you about our work in outdoor learning and land management - across all our estates and on the land around your home.

Please take a few minutes to read through this Tenants' Guide and we hope it is useful.
Please get in touch if you have any questions.



IMPORTANT CONTACT DETAILS

General Enquiries and maintenance issues

For all general enquiries regarding your property or tenancy during office hours (Monday - Friday 9am-5pm) please contact our Property Managers:

Filkins, Hatherop, Trent and Hartwell Estates

Nancy Haughton | 07350 363751 nancy.haughton@ernstcooktrust.org.uk

Fairford, Barnsley, Little Dalby and Slimbridge Estates

Jennifer Crowshaw | 07353 969491 jennifer.crowshaw@ernstcooktrust.org.uk

Emergencies

If you have an emergency at your property which requires our assistance out of office hours, please call 01285 712492 option 1

General Emergency Advice

If you find yourself in an emergency, your common sense and instincts will usually take over. However, please remember the following:

- Call 999 – if someone is injured or there is a threat to life
- Don't put yourself or others in danger
- Remain calm, think before acting
- Follow the advice of the emergency services

Gas Emergency Advice

If you smell gas anywhere in or around your home, you MUST:

- Put out all naked flames
- Call National Gas Emergencies IMMEDIATELY on 0800 111 999
- Open doors and windows to let in fresh air
- DO NOT use any electrical equipment, not even to switch off
- Wait outside the property for the engineer to arrive

Power Cut Advice

If you experience a complete loss of power:

- Check to see if your neighbours have also lost power
- Call the National Power Cut Helpline on 105
- Alternatively, contact your power supplier (refer to your Tenancy Agreement for details)

Water Supply Cut

If you experience a complete loss of cold water supply:

- Check to see if your neighbours have also lost water supply
- Call your Water supplier (refer to your Tenancy Agreement for details)

TENANT RESPONSIBILITIES

As the tenant, what are your responsibilities?

- Informing us of any repairs that need addressing as soon as possible
- Looking after your home as set out in the terms of your Tenancy Agreement
- Arranging for Contents Insurance to cover your possessions
- Paying the rent and bills for your home on time until the end of your tenancy, including your notice period
- Setting up your own accounts with utility providers; informing them when you leave the property
- Registering with your local authority with regard to council tax, electoral roll, refuse collection, recycling etc
- Arranging your own telephone and broadband connections, and TV Licence
- Keeping the inside of your home in a good state of decoration
- Keeping the inside of your home tidy, clean and in good condition
- Living in and not sub-letting your home either in whole or in part
- Not causing any nuisance or annoyance to your neighbours or to others
- Heating and ventilating your home
- Maintaining the garden: however please do not cut down or cut back large trees or well established hedges without our written permission.
- Retaining keys to all doors and windows
- Replacing broken glass panes, bath and basin plugs, toilet seats, fuses and light bulbs as and when required
- Maintaining smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms when appropriate (this is not required for mains powered devices) and testing on a regular basis
- Keeping your home vermin and pest free both inside and outside. This includes the removal of wasp nests
- Not to cause any blockage to the drains, gutters or pipes of the Property.
- To pay for the regular emptying of any septic tank, cesspit or sewage treatment plant (if the property has one) by an authorised contractor instructed by the Ernest Cook Trust unless agreed otherwise. Please refer to your Tenancy Agreement for more details
- Letting us know in writing if you are planning to vacate the property, giving the required notice period as set out in your Tenancy Agreement

LANDLORD RESPONSIBILITIES

As a Landlord our aim is to be fair and respectful and respond to enquiries and problems quickly and efficiently. We continually monitor and review our services and make improvements where necessary.

The Ernest Cook Trust's responsibilities as a Landlord:

- Keeping your property wind and watertight
- Keeping the outside structure of your property in a good state of repair including external decoration
- Keeping your property safe and secure
- Ensuring all the gas, electricity, oil, water and sanitary services are maintained
- Keeping the property fixtures and fittings operational and in a good state of repair

Your Safety is our priority

- **Gas safety and Boiler Services.** We will arrange for an annual safety inspection to be carried out by a trusted contractor. This is a legal requirement and we would appreciate your co-operation in allowing access. Please ensure there is sufficient oil in the oil tank to enable the service check to be carried out.
- **Electrical Testing and Servicing.** Every Five years we will arrange for a contractor to carry out an Electrical Installation Condition report (EICR) to check the safety of the wiring, fuseboard and outlets in the property. Again, this is a legal requirement and we would appreciate your co-operation in allowing access.
- **Open Fires & Wood Burning Stove.** We will arrange for your Chimney, log burner, wood burner, to be swept a minimum of once a year. Please burn seasoned one year-old logs or dry logs, kindling or coal. Please be aware that burning damp or green logs increases the risk of tar deposits in the chimney which cannot be removed via a chimney sweep and can greatly increase the risk of a chimney fire.
- **Smoke Alarms and Carbon Monoxide Alarms.** We will provide smoke and carbon monoxide alarms where necessary to your property. Please note that you are responsible for checking and testing these on a regular basis and replacing batteries when necessary. If there is a fault or if any have reached their expiry date, please advise us as a matter of urgency.

GENERAL ADVICE & PROBLEM SOLVING

We have compiled this list of general advice to help with the regular enquiries and problems you may encounter as one of our tenants. Not all items listed will be relevant to your property. This list is not exhaustive and is intended as a simple guide.

Heating

If the heating stops working, we ask that you carry out the following fault finding checks before contacting the Property Manager:

Conventional Boilers

- For Oil Boilers - is there oil in the tank?
- Thermostat - check that it is set to at least 19°C
- Pilot light - is it lit for a gas boiler?
- Boiler switch - is it turned on at the electric socket?
- Fuses - has the fuse in the boiler's electrical plug blown?
- Programme time - has it been set to the correct day/date/time and is it working?
- 'Lock Out' valve - make sure this valve is depressed. (This is usually red)

Combi Boilers

- Oil - is there oil in the tank?
- Pressure bar - check the pressure reading, it should be reading at least 1
- 'Lock Out' valve - make sure this valve is depressed. (This is usually red)

Oil Tanks

- Please ensure that there is oil in the tank at all times.
- If the oil is allowed to run low or dry and your boiler stops working, the pipes will need to be flushed through after delivery - the cost of this will be recharged to you. We recommend that you have at least 30cm /12" of oil at all times
- Please ensure that you check the oil level in the tank regularly (weekly or fortnightly) especially during cold weather. The most effective way of checking the oil level, even if you have a monitor, is by dipping a long clean bamboo cane into the tank, and measuring the level of oil
- Please note that at busy times of the year it can take several days for oil to be delivered. If you are concerned that your oil tank is leaking, or need help measuring, please contact the Property Manager

Radiators

Radiators will, from time to time require bleeding to keep the heating system working efficiently. It is your responsibility to bleed the radiators -please contact us if you need advice on how to do this.

Freezing Pipes

To avoid burst pipes:

- Keep the property comfortably warm throughout the day and night
- If your boiler stops working in freezing temperatures, it is likely the condensate pipe is frozen (the pipe – normally plastic- which runs externally from the boiler to a drainage system). If it safe to do so, pour warm (not boiling) water along the pipe and reset your boiler.
- If you leave your property unattended for more than 2 weeks please notify the Property Manager. You will be required to turn off the water at the stopcock and/or drain down the hot and cold water systems

Burst Pipes

If you have a burst pipe:

- Turn off the water supply at the stopcock
- Switch off the electricity supply at the mains if water may come into contact with it
- Switch off any water heaters
- Switch off the central heating system
- Telephone your Water Supplier emergency helpline (as appropriate)
- Warn neighbours who might suffer damage
- Telephone the Property Manager to advise

Water

Some properties are supplied with hard water which can cause limescale to build up in water pipes and appliances. We recommend that you de-scale sanitaryware (taps, WC, shower heads etc) regularly to prevent them from failing. There are many cleaning products available on the market for limescale removal. Cost effective alternatives include white vinegar, lemon juice or caustic soda. Always take care when handling these cleaning products - wear rubber gloves and follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Waste products

When substances other than waste water are flushed down the drains, problems can occur. For example, fats and oils can solidify causing smells and blockages, or using excess washing powder can clog the pipes. Please do not put the following items down drains:

- Waste food
- Sanitary products
- Disposable nappies and wipes
- Cotton wool and buds
- Bandages and dressings
- Fats, oils and grease
- Paints and solvents
- Fuel

Where the property has a Septic Tank, Cesspit or Water Treatment Plant

- Try to stick to the same dishwasher and washing machine products. Liquids over powders are suggested
- Spread the use of your dishwasher and washing machine throughout the week
- Avoid the excessive use of cleaning products/chemicals such as bleach and disinfectants where possible. These cause the natural bacterias to degrade and can prevent your system functioning properly
- Do not ignore the signs that there is an issue with your system. The presence of a smell, water backing up and not draining away from sinks and shower, toilets rising or soggy ground around your tank. Report these, or any unusual noises to the Ernest Cook Trust immediately
- Avoid putting food wastes down your sink – coffee grounds, milk, pulses etc

MOULD & DAMP PREVENTION GUIDE

Living with damp or mould is unpleasant and can pose health risks. As your landlord, we are committed to supporting you in maintaining a safe and healthy home. Please follow the guidance below to help prevent and manage damp and mould.

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|  | Cleaning Mould At the first sign of mould, clean the affected area using a mould-specific spray. |  | Report Phone or email and report any mould so we can inspect it and deal with the issue quickly. |
|  | Heating Maintain a consistent indoor temperature. Avoid large fluctuations, as they can increase condensation and promote mould growth. |  | Baths & Showers After bathing or showering, leave the extractor fan running to remove excess moisture from the air. |
|  | Windows Keep trickle vents open year-round to ensure continuous airflow. Close curtains at night to retain warmth. |  | Drying Clothes Avoid drying clothes indoors. If necessary, use a well-ventilated room to minimize humidity. |
|  | Cooking Where possible, use extractor hoods, or open windows when cooking to reduce the build up of steam and humidity. |  | Ventilation Open windows regularly to allow fresh air to circulate. Proper ventilation helps reduce humidity and condensation. |
| | |  | Dehumidification Use moisture absorbers or a dehumidifier in areas prone to condensation to help control humidity levels. |



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