

Community  
Legal Service



# COVENTRY LAW CENTRE

## HOUSING LAW LEAFLETS

### HOUSING DISREPAIR

This leaflet is intended to assist tenants whose rented premises are in disrepair and whose landlord does not appear to want to carry out those repairs.

#### Seeking Advice & Assistance

This leaflet is intended to give general guidance only and is not to be treated as giving specific advice in respect of particular cases.

If you would like advice from Coventry Law Centre please contact:

Coventry Law Centre  
The Bridge  
Broadgate  
Coventry CV1 1NG

Tel: 024 76223053

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Although every effort is made to ensure the information in this leaflet is accurate and up to date, it should not be treated as a complete and authoritative statement of the law and does not constitute legal advice - we cannot be held liable for any inaccuracies and their consequences. The information in this leaflet is written for people resident in, or affected by, the laws of England and Wales only.

## **HOW TO GET REPAIRS DONE**

### **What your landlord must do**

Your landlord must keep in good condition the structure and exterior of the property and must ensure that items such as the heating system and the hot water supply work properly. Examples of things, which your landlord should put right, might include leaking roofs, damp, rotten window frames, central heating, which is not working. Note that this is not an exhaustive list. Generally, tenants are responsible for the decorations inside the property.

### **What to do if your landlord does not carry out repairs**

You should tell your landlord what needs doing. If you write to your landlord, keep a copy of the letters you send. If you speak to him about your concerns then keep a record of the time and date of the conversation and of what was said.

If your landlord still does not do anything then an option available to you is to complain to the Council's Environmental Services Department. They are located in Spire House in Coventry city centre. They have powers to make your landlord carry out certain repairs. If you go to see them, they should take note of what you say, inspect the property and tell your landlord what he must do. If he still does not do it you should tell them again. They do have powers to have the work carried out themselves and send a bill to your landlord, so long as the property is in a sufficiently bad condition but they will not do this where the repairs are relatively trivial.

Another option is to take your landlord to Court. Different types of Court action are available and the type of action which is appropriate may well depend on the particular type of that exists. You should always take legal advice prior to taking Court action. As well as ordering repairs to be carried out, a Court might be prepared to award you compensation.

If your landlord is a social landlord, then it may be that you could also consider lodging a complaint with the Housing Ombudsman. If your landlord is a local authority then you should contact the Local Government Ombudsman. Coventry City Council does not have any housing stock. The Housing Ombudsman can be contacted at [www.ihos.org.uk](http://www.ihos.org.uk) or by telephone on 0845 7125 973 or by writing to Norman House, 105-109 Strand, London WC2R 0AA.

### **A Warning**

If you complain this may annoy your landlord to such an extent that he will want to evict you. A landlord cannot throw you out simply because you force him to do repairs but if you have an assured shorthold tenancy (note that Housing Association tenants are unlikely to have this type of tenancy but private sector tenants may well have) then your landlord will be able to evict you when your agreement expires so long as he complies with certain legal formalities. If you are not sure what sort of tenancy you have or if you think there may be a problem of this nature then you should seek advice prior to approaching your landlord.