**Section 5 - Plumbing, Leaks and Boilers!**

Potential for leaks – common things to look out for

Gas Leaks

Replacing Boilers and External Flues

Plumbing and Leaks Checklist

Royal Standard House and City Point were developed some 20 years ago. Bathrooms and kitchens will almost certainly need regular maintenance to avoid unnecessary leaks. If you have a leak in your apartment it could cause you considerable inconvenience, damage and expense, especially since not all leaks are covered by our buildings insurance.

IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO PROPERLY MAINTAIN YOUR APARTMENT AND LOOK OUT FOR, AND DEAL WITH, ANY EVIDENCE OF LEAKS.

Potential for Leaks - Common Things to Look Out For

Many serious leaks are the result of residents ignoring signs of slow leaks. Indeed, slow leaks have already caused over £20k worth of damage in a single apartment in several cases. You are strongly advised to check bathrooms fittings and kitchen appliances regularly. There is a £2,000 excess on the insurance policy regarding leaks. Please make sure you have your own contents and accidental damage cover.

In the kitchen

* Damp or drips under sink fittings or next to appliances (washing machines or dishwashers).
* Floors becoming ‘spongy’ or uneven

In the bathrooms

* Silicon seals may degrade or come away from tiles allowing water seep in and down to floors and fittings (showers are especially vulnerable)
* Check washers and joints in cisterns – leaks may appear around base of WC
* Check pipework and joints for any drips or damp patches

In the water tank area

* Damp or drips around water tank valves and onto floor

Do not ignore:-

* Smell of damp plasterboard
* Spongy floor (especially in the kitchen.

Many serious leaks are the result of residents ignoring signs of slow leaks. Indeed, slow leaks have already caused over £20k worth of damage in a single apartment in several cases. You are strongly advised to check fittings and kitchen appliances regularly.

Some of the signs to look out for and investigate are: -

* Floors becoming ‘spongy’ or uneven
* Smell of damp plasterboard
* Water drips around WC base
* Damp or drips around water tank valves
* Silicon seals coming apart from tiles – especially around showers
* Damp or drips on under sink fittings or next to appliances.

Gas Leaks

Most boilers are now 20 years old and faults may occur! You should have your gas boiler checked annually. A gas safety check MUST be carried out by a Gas Safe Registered engineer.

WARNING: Gas leaks have been reported several times on site and the gas emergency service will disconnect any apartment with a gas leak immediately and without question (leaving you without central heating and hot water).

If you smell gas in your apartment or in any communal area please ring the managing agents or the gas safety national number 0800 11 999.

Replacing Central Heating Boilers and External Flues

If you are going to replace your central heating system please contact the Managing Agents in the first instance – you will need to have permission from them.

As far as the City Council are concerned:-

* The **internal work** in replacing existing boilers will not require City Council planning permission or listed building consent. However, to comply with Building Regulations, gas central heating boilers should be fitted by a “Competent Person” registered with “Gas Safe” (the successor to the CORGI scheme).
* However,any **External changes** consequent upon replacement of the boilers **may require listed building consent**, depending upon their impact upon the appearance of the building. From a conservation point of view, the City Council will be looking to minimise the impact of these changes, compared to the impact of the existing external flues and pipes, which are of a standard design and occupy regular positions across the front elevation such that their impact is relatively minor.
* **Replacement external fittings** which comply with the following guidelines **will not require listed building consent or planning permission** from the City Council:

1. The new flue must be located in the same position as the existing flue.
2. The flue shall not project further than 50% beyond the existing flue in relation to the brickwork.
3. The flue shall not be of greater diameter than the existing.
4. The flue and any associated collar must be coloured black, dark grey or dark brown. White fittings will require listed building consent.
5. There will be no other external pipework; this will mean that disposal of condensate has to be affected internally.
6. The new flue must be fitted by a “clean cut” in the brickwork, making good of damaged surfaces by means of mortar cladding will not be acceptable.

* Fittings which cannot comply with these guidelines **may require listed building consent** from the City Council, but examples which depart significantly from the appearance of the existing or others introduced in accordance with these guidelines are unlikely to be acceptable.

**The Directors of RSH&CP Co Ltd have agreed that these regulations, should apply to both Royal Standard House and City Point.**

References to Listed Building and Planning Permission apply to RSH alone. Both buildings are subject to Building Regulations.

**Plumbing and Leaks Checklist**

This is a list of suggested checks for leaseholders to use for good maintenance of kitchen and bathroom areas where leaks are most likely to arise. Please note – this is not an exhaustive list. If you are at all concerned about anything you should call in a plumber.

**Kitchen**

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| --- | --- |
| Sink | Check hot and cold feed pipework to tap(s)  Check waste fittings and overflow  Check seal round sink bowl(s) |
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| Washing machine | Check hot and cold feed pipework  Check isolation valves capping off hot feed if required  Check outlet condition and clips  Check condition of flexible hoses  Check condition of door seal |
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| Dishwasher | Check hot and cold feed pipework  Check isolation valves capping off hot feed if required  Check outlet condition and clips  Check condition of flexible hoses  Check condition of door seal |
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| Under cupboards | Check condition of flooring for leaks |

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| --- | --- |
| Boiler | Check stop tap to apartment (inside and outside)  Check water meter  Check cold feed pipework and hot outlet to boiler  Check filling point to boiler and cap off if required  Check header tank for water loss  Check hot water cylinder  Check drain cocks for tightness  Check inside thermostat housing and around element  Check flooring under boiler for sign of leaks |
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**Bathroom(s)**

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| --- | --- |
| Sinks | Check hot and cold feed pipework to tap(s)  Check seals to taps and condition of sealant  Check isolation valves  Check waste fittings and overflow  Check seal to wall /seal round inset bowl(s)  Check under fitted units for leaks |
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| Showers | Check pipework to shower valve  Check seal with shower fascia  Check shower head and arm/rose  Check grouting to tiles  **Check sealant around shower tray**  **Check shower trap**  Check outlet pipework where accessible  Check condition of shower screen and seals  Check flooring under shower |
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| Baths | Check hot and cold feed pipework to tap(s)  Check seals to taps and condition of sealant  Check isolation valves  Check waste fittings and overflow  Check seal round bath to wall tiles  Check over-bath screens and sealant  Check under bath for leaks |
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| Toilets | Check cold feed pipework to cistern  Check isolation valves  Check operation of ball valves  Check connection from cistern to pan  Check connection from pan to soil stack  Check for cracked pan  Check flooring round pan for leaks |
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| Water Tank | Check flooring for leaks  Check all pipes accessible for water, drips, signs of corrosion |

**General**

* Check round all doors and windows for signs of water ingress (damp patches, stains)
* Check fan is working

**November 2022**