

Gritting:

After a lot of consideration we have come to a decision to change our approach to gritting. We will no longer be gritting any of our roads or pathways.

Where grit bins are currently located:

- * Subject to availability, grit will be supplied throughout the winter months; November to March
- * Grit bins will be checked monthly by estate services and refilled if supplies are available
- * The grit is available for the use of all tenants for use on communal paths, roads and entrances; it is not for private use and private pathways
- * Our employees will not be responsible for gritting any areas on our estates; this includes Caretakers and Scheme Managers
- * We will not be providing any additional grit bins

If you do decide to clear snow and ice or use the grit provided as an individual or as a community please follow the guidance provided by www.gov.uk which includes the following:

- * Do it early in the day – its easier to move fresh, loose snow
- * Don't use water – it might refreeze and turn to black ice
- * Use salt if possible – it will melt the ice or snow and stop it refreezing overnight (use the salt from Mount Green bins if available bins provided by the local authority are used to keep the roads clear)
- * You can use ash and sand if you don't have enough salt – it will provide grip underfoot
- * Pay extra attention when clearing steps and steep pathways – using more salt may help

Read more at www.gov.uk/clear-snow-road-path-cycleway where you can also find out which roads and pavements your council grits in icy or snowy weather.



Stay Safe, Well & Warm This Winter



Winter is here and as the days and nights grow colder the chance of snow, frost, ice and other adverse weather increases.

Not everyone enjoys the winter months. For some people, especially those of us who are frail, vulnerable or suffer with a disability, winter can be a worry. With a little preparation however, we can all keep ourselves safe, well and warm this winter.

The government and local authorities, the Citizens Advice Bureau and other agencies such as Age UK offer lots of helpful advice and tips on how to prepare for the winter. Their advice includes:

- * Keep your house warm. Set your heating to come on at sensible time during the day / evening.

If you are having any problems with your heating system and require a repair contact our contractors:

- For Gas heating call BSW on 0800 953 1229 or out of hours on 0800 068 0566
- For Electric heating problems call Altius on 0800 917 4168

- * Wear plenty of thin layers, rather than one thick one. Wear clothes made of wool, cotton, or fleecy synthetic fibres.
- * Keep basic food items in the cupboard or freezer in case it's too cold or hazardous to go shopping. You could consider doing your food shopping online and have it delivered to your door, although there may be additional costs for this service.
- * If you use an oil filled radiator or electric panel heater during winter, open a window or internal door a little at night for ventilation. (Please do not use portable bottled gas heaters. These are forbidden under our tenancy agreements).
- * If water pipes freeze they can burst and you will need to turn the water off at the main stopcock. Please ensure you know where this is located and check it is easy to turn. If you have any problems call Altius on 0800 917 4168 or for further information on switching off your water supply see your tenants handbook.
- * This may be a good time to make sure your smoke alarm is working, you may also consider having a carbon monoxide detector fitted.

If you are struggling paying your energy bills and would like some specialist advice, My Home Energy Switch is a service provided by the National Housing Federation to help customers reduce their energy bills. This service is free and impartial. All you need to do is call 0800 0014 706 or go to www.myhomeenergyswitch.org.uk with your postcode and a current energy bill.

You may also consider some simple energy-saving tips to reduce your bills, like these from Surrey County Council :

- * Shut outside doors and close curtains at night.
- * Boil only the water you need rather than filling the kettle completely.
- * Let food cool to room temperature before you put it in the fridge or freezer.
- * Don't leave appliances like televisions on stand-by as they still use electricity; instead, switch them off properly at the set's 'off' switch.

There are also government grants and benefits available which include the Winter Fuel Payment, Cold Weather Payment and The Warm Home Discount Scheme. For further information and advice visit www.gov.uk where you can download the Government's "Keep Warm, Keep Well" brochure.

If you have any queries or concerns about any information in this leaflet please contact our Customer Service Team on 01372 379 555, or speak to your Neighbourhood or Scheme Manager.