

A-Z Tenant Information Guide



Contacts

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Checklist – Things to do for moving-in day



- ✓ **Nominate one tenant** of your group to come to the office on check-in day to collect all keys and pick up a welcome pack
- ✓ **Minimise delays** with moving in by ensuring all **paperwork and payments** are in place for all tenants. Unfortunately if anything's missing, we cannot give out keys. Things we need are: application form and ID, signed tenancy agreement, guarantor form and ID, deposit and first month's rent in cleared funds, payment method
- ✓ **If you have been permitted** to complete a Standing Order Mandate for your rental payments please ensure you check that this is set up with your bank and they have received the mandate that has been sent to them by post
- ✓ **Contact utility companies** to set up your account (you only need to do this if you reside in a house, not flat, and will be responsible for paying the bills)

Go Green. Save Money.

Beech Properties is a green, carbon neutral company and we encourage our tenants to also be considerate to the environment. Here are some energy saving tips to help be green:



- ✓ **Turn the heating down:** As well as wasting energy having your room too hot is bad for you as it helps germs to breed and circulate. When it gets cold, why not put on a jumper rather than turning up the heating?
- ✓ **Washing machine:** Always put full loads in the washing machine as doing a half-load uses more than half the energy of a full one. Wash your clothes at 30 rather than the normal temperature; modern washing detergents are designed to get your clothes clean at this temperature and you will use around 40% less electricity this way. If you are on the Economy 10 electricity tariff always do your washing during the cheap off peak times.
- ✓ **Lights off:** when you walk out of the room turn the lights off. Use energy saving light bulbs where possible. These use up to 80% less electricity.
- ✓ **Switch off:** Switch off your TV, stereo and laptop completely when you're not using them rather than leaving them on standby. When your mobile is fresh and ready to go, unplug the charger as its still using electricity when it's not charging.

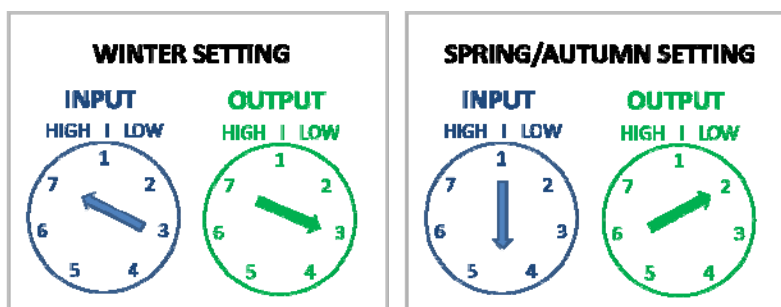
- ✓ **In the kitchen:** When making hot drinks, only **boil as much water as you need** as overfilling kettles wastes enough energy in a week to light a house for a day; **put a lid on your saucepan** to reduce the amount of heat that escapes; **allow food to cool** before putting it in the fridge and don't leave the fridge or freezer **door open** for longer than necessary.
- ✓ **Recycle:** Use the different coloured bins provided by Manchester City Council to separate your recyclable rubbish. In Rusholme, bin collection day is **Friday** so please make sure you leave your bins out the night before.
- ✓ **Close windows:** If you are in a green solar property you should leave windows closed as much as possible. Leaving them open will let valuable heat escape and increase your heating usage, especially during the cooler months. In the summer, your property will actually be cooler with the windows closed as the insulation keeps the heat out (summer) as well as in (winter). If you are in a property with **underfloor heating**, you **must keep windows** closed at all times as your green ventilation system will not work properly with them open and your electricity usage will increase. Opening windows while it's warm outside will actually make your property warmer, not cooler.
- ✓ **Cheap electricity hours:** You should try to use your appliances during cheap electricity hours as much as possible. For Economy 10, these are 0.00–05:00, 13:00–16:00, 20:00–22:00. With electricity prices up by 20% this year this really makes a big difference to your bills.

Heating (room)

There are three types of heating in our properties: storage heaters, under-floor heating or dimplex panel heaters. All are energy efficient and cheap forms of electricity if used correctly. If you're not sure which heating system you have or which energy tariff you are on please ask the office.

Storage Heaters: If you have storage heaters, these heat up during cheap electricity hours (Economy 10: 0.00–05:00, 13:00–16:00, 20:00–22:00) and then steadily release the heat. It is important to set the controls to reflect the temperature outside and the times that you are in the property to save money and keep your property at an optimum temperature.

The table below gives the **recommended settings** but, as a general rule, we recommend you keep the output setting on low so your heat release lasts until the evening when you're most likely to be in the property and it's cooler outside.



NOTE: Some heaters do not have an input dial as they are automatically set to the most efficient setting.

NEVER cover heaters with clothes or put furniture against them. It's a serious fire risk.

Many properties also have one larger **combination-type storage heater** (usually located in the living area). These also have an additional fan operated heating system, which you can use to boost your heat if it's especially cold. The fan is operated from the switch and power control at the side. It can be expensive so we recommend you do not use this too often.

Under-floor Heating: The **touch pad panels** control the heating, and the temperature and timer is pre-set to the optimum for that property. You can change the temperature by $\pm 2 / -2$ degrees.

The system uses the Economy 10 energy tariff so your **cheap electricity hours are 0.00–05:00, 13:00–16:00, 20:00–22:00**. You should try to use appliances during these times as much as possible to avoid going over your electricity allowance and being charged.



You **must keep windows closed** at all times as your green ventilation system will not work properly with them open and your electricity usage will increase. Leaving them open will let valuable heat escape, especially during the cooler months. In the summer, your property will actually be cooler with the windows closed as the insulation keeps the heat out (summer) as well as in (winter). Opening windows while it's warm outside will have the opposite effect of making your property warmer, not cooler, and increase your electricity usage while your ventilation system tries to compensate.

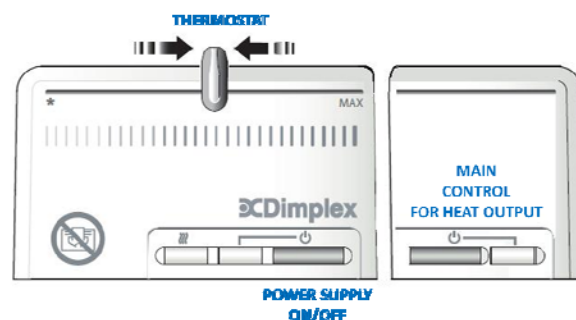
Under-floor heating is in all 'green bills included' properties and you should also follow the advice in the **Green Guide** given to you when you move in as this will help ensure that you stay within your allowance and avoid additional energy charges.

Dimplex Electric Panel Heaters:

Thermostat: You can adjust the temperature here.

Power Supply: This controls the electricity supply to the heater only. Always leave this on.

Main Control: This is the main control button for operating the heater. Press once and the indicator light will go on. This will operate the heater at the selected temperature for 2 hours at a time. After 2 hours, it will remain on a steady background heat for 24 hours. After 24 hours it will automatically switch to anti-frost mode. Do not press this button more than once within 2 hours or it will turn off the background heat.



Heating (water)

There are three types of water heating in our properties: solar, air source heat pump or electric:

Solar Water Heating: The roof's solar panels heat the property's water tank. The tank holds 250-400 litres of hot water and is automatically boosted each night to provide a full tank for the next day. If required, you can also boost it during the day using the boost button.



Air Source Heat Pump (with under-floor heating): This provides automatic hot water and is pre-set to supply the optimum setting for your property.

Electric Water Heating: This system heats and stores 10-15 litres hot water at a time. Once this is used up it re-heats automatically and it takes about 20 minutes to heat a full tank. You will also have electric showers which run separately and have an unlimited supply of hot water.

Maintenance and Repairs

Please report repairs to MT Maintenance: mt@beechproperties.co.uk / 07810 865885 (office hours only)

Access and Timescales: Please allow the maintenance team access to your home to carry out repairs. Once you have reported a problem, this is regarded as open access to your property, unless otherwise stated. We do our utmost to carry out repairs as quickly and efficiently as possible. Sometime the repair may require an extra part that we will need to wait for so please bear with us. If you are unsure on status, please contact MT Maintenance for an update.



Emergencies: In the event of a repair emergency you may also call MT Maintenance on 07810 865885 outside office hours. Please leave a voicemail message and someone will get back you. This service only covers genuine emergency repairs and misuse of this service will result in tenants being charged. Examples of possible emergencies include a burst pipe, water leak, external door/window insecure, dangerous brickwork and fire alarm activations.

City Centre: In city centre apartments, there is also a **concierge service** available to you. You will be given their contact details when you collect your keys. They are responsible for the maintenance of communal areas and have access to the latest security codes and meter readings. They are also a good contact for ladders if you need to change bulbs that are high to reach.

Condensation: If there are signs of condensation in your property these can be controlled by following these simple rules. If the problem persists, please contact MT Maintenance for further advice and guidance.

- ✓ **Dry clothes** out of doors or in a cool area of the property. If you would like a washing line in your property, please ask.
- ✓ Keep rooms **clutter free**. Don't keep bundles of clothes piled up in one place as this will prevent circulation
- ✓ Keep kitchen and bathroom **doors closed** when cooking and washing
- ✓ At first sign of condensation **wipe down** the affected area immediately with a bleached cloth
- ✓ Open doors to ventilate **cupboards and wardrobes** and don't overfill them
- ✓ Open the window in the affected room a little, especially if it is misted up (except under-floor heating properties)
- ✓ Use **extractor fans** if you have them. Make sure wall and window vents are always open
- ✓ Keep your home **well ventilated** to allow moist air to escape and fresh air to be sucked in

Fire Alarms and Equipment: Please contact MT Maintenance with any **fire alarm** problems or activations and if, for any reason, you have used your fire extinguisher or blankets. Do not attempt to reset any alarms or replace fire equipment yourself. Please also do not obstruct communal corridors or walkways, especially access to fire exits.

Hygiene and Cleanliness: Please keep the property in a clean and hygienic condition. This includes keeping your **rubbish in bins** with tight lids; **seal rubbish bags** properly when moved outside; keep floors clean by **mopping up spills** immediately; **wash dishes** promptly; keep **work surfaces clean and clutter free**; store **food in sealed containers**.

Little Jobs you can do yourself: Replace **light bulbs** (energy efficient of course!); **defrost** fridges/freezers, keep **drains** free of hair; remove **rubbish** from the property and yard; do not flush large items down the **toilet**; keep on top of the **cleaning** by setting up rotas for the household; keep **furniture, fixtures and fittings in good condition** and care.

Pest Control: If you find you have unwelcome visitors of the four legged kind, please contact MT maintenance for advice and information. Terraced houses can sometimes be more susceptible to pests due to alleyways and close proximity to neighbours. However, pests only breed in properties that are unclean so it's important that you maintain a high standard of cleanliness.

Neighbourhood – be a good neighbour

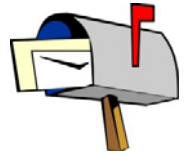
Manchester welcomes good students and it's important that you get on with your neighbours. They might be students like you, a family with young children, or older people. Whoever they are, **please be mindful** of their lifestyle. By getting on with neighbours you can look out for each other's homes, especially over the holidays!



Please avoid activities that cause nuisance or disturbance, for example playing loud music, vandalism, rubbish, dumping or offensively drunken behaviour. In particular, **please avoid excessive noise after 10pm**. If you are subject to nuisance or annoyance from your neighbours please report this to Manchester City Council on 0161 234 4612.

Post

If post is delivered to your property that is not addressed to you, **please bring it to the office**. It's likely to be for previous tenants so we will forward it on to them. If you receive post addressed to Beech Properties, please also drop it to the office. If you live in a property that is split into flats, please put all **Council Tax and Water bills in the wallet** located in the communal area or drop it the office.



Rents and Charges

Your tenancy agreement provides full details of your obligations regarding rents and charges so please read this carefully. Your rent payment method (cheque/standing order) needs to be set up in advance before moving in to the property and this also helps you avoid any late payment charges.



If you cannot pay on time for any reason **you must inform the office in advance**. If you are having financial difficulties please ensure you speak to us as soon as possible so we can work together to reach a manageable solution.

Security

Security of your home is our utmost concern and we install a number of security measures including grills, gate locks, bicycle locks and dummy cameras. Unfortunately burglars sometimes target student residential areas, especially during **holidays** when many properties are empty. It is important therefore that you are vigilant and these simple tips will help keep your home safe:

- ✓ **Lock all doors** at all times and keep **windows closed** when you are out
- ✓ Ensure yard gates are closed and wheelie bins secured
- ✓ Make sure house and car keys are kept **out of sight**
- ✓ Never leave **valuable items** such as laptops and mobile phones on view
- ✓ Make your home **look and sound occupied** using timers for lamps and radios
- ✓ Report incidents directly to the **Police** on 0161 872 5050
- ✓ Report information anonymously to **Crimestoppers** on 0800 555 111
- ✓ If you are going home during **holidays**, please take extra care to make sure your property is left secure. We advise you to take all valuables and electrical equipment with you



Services and Utilities

The Council, electricity and water companies are provided with details of your tenancy agreement. However, if you live in a house or city centre apartment it's also worth you doing the same to ensure your account is set up correctly. If you are living in a 'Green Bills Included' property or a Rusholme property split into flats you do not need to do this as we will set up the account for you. Please refer to the separate guides given to you when you move in.

Broadband Internet: Most properties include free wireless broadband. The supplier is **Opal (Talk Talk)**. It's not mandatory for tenants to use this service and you are not charged for it. You are welcome to choose an alternative provider if you are not happy with the free service although this would be at your own expense.



Landline: Properties that have Opal broadband also have a landline telephone number. This is for free phone and emergency numbers only. Telephones are provided free of charge so if there isn't one in your property when you move in please contact the office for one.

Opal Technical Support 0800 083 3003: Opal provides technical support for your broadband so please contact them directly with your support queries. You will need to provide your telephone number and tenant password, which are both printed on your telephone. If Opal advises you to reset your router, please do not do this and contact Beech Properties instead. Resetting your router will lose all your settings and will require a visit from Beech Properties for which you will be charged.

WiFi Login: Your WiFi login details are on your wireless router, which is usually located in the communal area.

Fair Usage: Opal provides a fair usage download allowance of 100gb per month per building. If you overuse your service or exceed this limit your internet connection will be 'throttled' and your connection will automatically slow down. This slower speed will remain in place until the next period so we advise you to use your service sensibly.

Council Tax: Full-time students are exempt from paying council tax as long as you provide the Council Tax unit with proof of your student status using your student ID. You can contact Manchester City Council on 0161 907 9400 or by email to ctax.enquiries@manchester.gov.uk. We will also contact the council with your tenancy information. If you live in a Rusholme flat we will provide the council with all your details.

Electricity: Most properties are with the supplier Eon. You can **contact Eon on 0800 052 0346**. To confirm which supplier you are with, you can contact Electricity North West Ltd on 0870 7510093. You are not allowed to change your electricity supplier. You do not need to contact your electricity company if you are living in a 'green bills included' property or a Rusholme property split into flats as we will set up the account for you.

Electricity Rate/Tariff: There are two kinds of electricity rates: Economy 10 or single rate. If you want to find out which rate your property is on please have a look at your bill or ask us at the office.

If you are on **Economy 10** your cheap electricity hours are 0.00–05:00, 13:00–16:00, 20:00–22:00. If you are on a **single rate** there is no difference in pricing at different times of day, your rate remains constant.



You should try to use appliances and electrical during the cheap times as much as possible as it will save you a lot of money. With energy prices up by an average of 20% this year, this action will really make a difference.

Paying your bill: We advise only to pay a bill based on actual read meter readings, never estimated. This ensures no complications of usage during your tenancy and no surprises with final bills when you leave the property. If you are living in a Rusholme property split into flats you may need to liaise with tenants in your building's other flats when paying bills. Please refer to the electricity guide given to you when you move in for further information.

Gas: Most properties have no gas supply. However, if yours does, we will provide you with supplier information on check-in.

Rubbish Collection: Most properties in Rusholme have a system of individual coloured bins. **Bin day is Friday** so please leave your bins out for collection the night before. Always bring them back in afterwards to ensure they don't go missing! If you cannot find your bin when you first move in, keep an eye out on collection day as it may have been at a neighbour's. Your bin should be labeled with your property address. If it isn't, please contact MT Maintenance.

Blue bin = cardboard, paper, cartons, magazines, newspapers, waste paper (fortnightly)

Brown bin = plastic bottles, cans, tins, foil, glass bottles and jars (fortnightly)

Green bin = food and garden waste (weekly)

Black bin = non-recyclable rubbish (fortnightly)



In some areas, a **shared communal bin scheme** is in operation so you need to take your rubbish to your closest communal bin.

To order replacement bins, view your bin calendar and for more information on Manchester's refuse collection services, please visit www.manchester.gov.uk/recycling or call 0161 234 5004.

If you are in a **city centre** apartment, you will have a central area in your building where you can leave rubbish and recycling. Please ask your Concierge for the details.

Water: Your water is supplied by United Utilities. Their number is 0845 746 1100. We will provide them with details of your tenancy however if you live in a house we advise you to do the same. There are no water bills to pay if you live in a flat or 'green bills included' property so you don't need to do this.

The end of your Tenancy – Moving Out

If you wish to renew your tenancy agreement for the following year please contact the office as early as possible during your current tenancy. You will receive an email in December asking if you would like to do this. We are likely to give you first refusal if you have been a good tenant and we may even price freeze your rent if you let us know as soon as possible.

Moving-out date: If you are not renewing, you will need to vacate the property on or before the last day of your agreement. For example, if your agreement started on 1 September then your departure date is 31 August. You will need to vacate the property **by midday on the day of departure** at the latest or you will be charged.

Clean the property including your own bedroom and all communal areas. This includes floors, appliances, windows, removing marks off walls, defrosting the fridge/freezer, disposing of food, bedding and rubbish. Please remove all personal belongings from the property and yard, and put all rubbish into the rubbish bins. We recommend that you stagger your rubbish disposal over a period of a few weeks to avoid rubbish bags not fitting into the bins as you will be charged for their removal.

Please make sure that you have left **furniture and fittings** in their original place and, if you have carried out any decoration, please ensure all rooms are restored to their original colour and condition. Please do not leave any of your own furniture in the property (e.g. desks and chairs) without written permission from MT Maintenance or you will be charged for their removal. These important steps are to help you avoid deposit charges so please make sure that you follow them carefully.

Return keys to the office (all tenants' copies). This includes keys to the property as well as those to your own room. These need to be returned to the office by midday of the last day of your agreement at the latest. If the office is not open when you vacate, please put your keys in an envelope with your name on (not your address) and post through the office door mailbox.

Utilities: Please inform utility providers that you are leaving and ensure that we receive confirmation that your utility bills are paid up to the tenancy end date and meter reading taken on the last day of your tenancy agreement.

Deposit: The deposit is refundable at the end of the tenancy, once the property is vacated and an inspection carried out. Please complete a deposit release form at the office when you vacate your property. This ensures we have your correct details for returning your deposit. It will be sent to you by cheque. Release of your deposit is subject to the condition of the property, all rents and utility bills being paid in full, and all keys returned. We ask that you are patient while we process release of your deposit as we will have a large number to administer.

Replacement Tenant: You are not normally allowed to leave the tenancy before its end date. However, in special circumstances, we may allow you to do this and you will need to find a suitable replacement tenant to replace you. Please contact us for further information and advice.