



House maintenance and tradespeople in Christchurch & East Dorset factsheet

HOME SAFETY

As you get older you are more likely to have an accident in your home and your injuries are likely to be more severe. Older people can also feel vulnerable, especially if they live alone. This information sheet is aimed at helping you to identify the areas of your home that need attention and details of organisations who can offer advice.

SAFETY IN THE KITCHEN

Most household accidents happen in the kitchen, especially burns and scalds. The following steps are aimed at preventing some of the most common accidents:

- Keep saucepan handles turned inward over the cooker, but not over another heated ring. This way you avoid accidentally knocking them over.
- Over filling your kettle will make it heavier and you may drop it. Only boil enough water for the drink you are making. Try using a cordless kettle which has no wires to get tangled up. Alternatively you could replace the straight cord with a curly one.
- Move all the things that you need to within your reach so that you do not have to stretch too far.
- Make sure that you have plenty of surface space before you start doing anything with hot liquids or foods.
- Use a timer to remind you that you have left something cooking. Burnt food or pans may start a fire.
- Try to clear up straight away anything you spill on the floor. It is very easy to slip on spilt liquids or foodstuffs if you have forgotten they are there.
- If you have a gas cooker try to remember to check the pilot light regularly to make sure that it hasn't gone out.

SAFETY ON THE STAIRS AND WHEN MOVING AROUND YOUR HOME

There are a number of practical things you can do to ensure that you can move around your home safely:

- Good lighting throughout your home is essential especially on the stairs. Fit high wattage light bulbs. Using long-life bulbs will save you money over time as they don't need changing as often.
- Do not leave anything lying on the stairs. Try to vacuum the stairs regularly (be careful of the trailing wire and parts of the vacuum cleaner), or carefully clean the stairs with a dustpan and brush or cordless vacuum.

- Use the handrail every time you go up or down the stairs. Having a hand rail fitted on both sides of the stairs can make them safer to use.
- Try to ensure that your shoes and slippers are in good condition. Avoid wearing footwear that is old or worn out as these make accidents more likely to happen.
- Flat shoes with thin, non-slip soles will give you extra stability if you are at all unsteady on your feet.
- Try not to carry too much at once and get help with any heavy lifting.

SAFETY IN THE BATHROOM

Once again, by taking a few simple measures you can ensure that your bathroom is safer:

- Avoid scalding; either run the cold water tap before the hot, or run both taps together. Always test the water before getting into the bath. If you have a shower it should have a temperature selector or cut-out device which will stop the water from becoming too hot.
- Be especially careful when getting in and out of the bath. You can have a non-slip mat placed in your bath for a relatively low cost. A well placed hand rail (grab rail) will help you keep your balance while getting in and out of the bath or pulling yourself up. Equipment such as a bath seat will help you if you have great difficulty getting in and out of the bath. Contact Help & Care and ask for fact sheet "Help with Daily Living" and select the pages "Equipment for daily living".
- A fitted carpet in the bathroom is safer than vinyl flooring and loose mats.
- Always leave your bathroom door unlocked in case you do have a fall or an emergency this allows easy access for the emergency services if necessary. If you have a personal alarm or care line pendant or bracelet, remember to take it into the bathroom with you. If you have a mobile phone, take that into the bathroom, but keep it out of the water! The Help & Care fact sheet "Help with Daily Living" and select the section "Emergency Telephone Alarms" for information about care line services available.
- If you do find that you cannot get out of the bath, try to pull the plug out so that you don't get cold in the water. Try to pull some towels around you to keep warm until help arrives.
- Never use mains-powered electrical appliances in the bathroom.

GENERAL SAFETY AROUND THE HOME

There are a number of practical things you could do to make moving around your home safer.

- Think about rearranging your furniture so that you can move around your home more easily. Make sure you keep the floor and stairs free of clutter.
- Trailing electric flexes and fraying carpets may trip you up or cause a fall; make sure you keep the floor clear of these hazards.
- Keep electric fires and heaters, or mobile heaters away from bedclothes, curtains, or other furniture.
- If you have an electric blanket make sure that you regularly check for danger signs such as frayed fabric, worn flex, scorch marks. It is probably safer to buy a new blanket if your current one is damaged in any way, as it is quite difficult to find an electrician to service electric blankets. Always remember to switch off electric under blankets before you get into bed.
- In the bedroom check that your bed is at the right height. When you are sitting on the edge of the bed the soles of your feet should touch the floor and you should be able to stand up easily. It is very easy to trip when you first get out of bed so watch carefully for any trailing or loose dressing gown cords, sheets, blankets or clothes that may have fallen onto the floor. Some people can feel faint or light-headed when first getting out of bed. Take a minute or so to sit on the edge of the bed before

standing up just to get your balance.

- Always use a stepladder to change a light bulb or hang curtains, never stand on a chair. If you have difficulty doing small household jobs or repairs there are agencies able to do these jobs for you for a small cost. Contact Help & Care on 0300 111 3303 and ask about the Handiworks Plus scheme (details below).
- Take care when doing jobs where you need to raise your arms above your head or tip your head back, such as window cleaning or changing a light bulb. This sort of movement can make some people feel light-headed and dizzy. If this happens to you avoid doing these types of job and get someone to do it for you.
- When using electrical items always read the instructions carefully especially when using power tools or electric garden tools. When using garden equipment always use a power point fitted with a residual current device (RCD) as this will cut off the power if a fault develops or if the cable is accidentally cut through.
- If you are having difficulty reaching electric sockets that are at floor level you should get them moved to a more suitable position. It is possible to buy electric plugs with specially fitted grips or handles to make them easier to grasp.
- Always make sure that all chemical products in your home such as bleach, turps, caustic soda, or weed killers are clearly labelled and stored in their correct containers. Never transfer them to a bottle or container that has been previously used for something else (especially food or drink). Always store these items well away from where children may find them.

HOME SECURITY

There are several simple steps that you can take to make your home more secure and to give you peace of mind:

- Make sure that you have adequate door and window locks.
- Have a door chain and spy hole fitted to your doors.
- Use the chain every time you answer the door. Do not leave the chain on all the time as this will slow your exit in the event of a fire.
- Get a community alarm/ care line fitted so that you can call for assistance even if you cannot get to the phone.
- Be vigilant. If you see someone acting suspiciously in your neighbourhood, report it to the police and let your neighbours know.
- Items such as televisions and other valuables can be marked with your post code. One option is an ultraviolet pen which is invisible to the naked eye but shows up under ultraviolet light (these can be purchased from most DIY stores or stationers).
- If your property is recovered by the police, you are more likely to have it returned if it has been marked.

For further information about property marking and advice about home security contact your local police station on 101 non-emergency calls - IN AN EMERGENCY ALWAYS CALL 999

AGENCIES ABLE TO HELP MAKE YOUR HOME SAFE AND SECURE

Help & Care Handiworks Plus (available to residents of Bournemouth, Poole, East Dorset, Christchurch and Purbeck)

Handiworks Plus is available to anyone over the age of 18 living in the Bournemouth, Poole, Christchurch, East Dorset and Purbeck areas. Members of Handiworks Plus can call one number 0300 111 3303 and report any repairs or household maintenance issues and we will arrange for an appropriate police checked tradesperson who is skilled in their trade to carry out the work required. The Handiworks Team provide experienced, competitively priced trades people and will arrange all works on your behalf. The contractual relationship for each job is between you (the Handiworks Plus member) and the tradesperson. Handiworks Plus is a social enterprise, this means that 100% of any profits from the service provided by Handiworks Plus will fund Help and Care's charitable work. Membership of Handiworks Plus costs £30 a year. The services

available include:

- General Handyman – small building works and maintenance build flat pack furniture, fit draught proofing, put up curtain rails/blinds, moving furniture within the home, hanging mirrors and pictures, clearing gutters.
- Electrical – rectifying loss of light or power, installing and repairing sockets and lights, fixing/replacing doorbells, installing outside security lights, installing power to new areas.
- Carpentry – Door and window repairs, door furniture fitting and repairs, shelves fitted, skirting and architrave installation, repairs to sheds, fence and gate installation or repair.
- Plumbing - Tap repairs and replacement, bath and sink traps unblocked, internal leaks fixed, WC flushing faults rectified, radiators bled, baths and sinks sealed, washing machines and dishwashers plumbed in.
- Security and Safety – Window and door locks, spy holes and door chains fitted, smoke detectors, supply and fit key safes and grab rails.
- Gardening – Weeding, mowing lawns, planting flowers and shrubs, trimming hedges, pruning.
- Gas and central heating – rectifying loss of heating, rectifying loss of hot water, repair faulty radiator valves, installation of boilers, gas cookers and fires, servicing boilers and gas fires.
- Painting and decorating – internal and external painting, wallpapering, woodwork painting/staining, tiling, small areas of plastering.
- Flooring – carpet and vinyl fitted, laminate and ceramic floor tiles laid.

KEY SAFES

Handiworks Plus are also able to fit a Key Safe to your property for the fee of £70. Key Safes are particularly useful for elderly or disabled people who may have carers, family members, or friends visiting their home on a regular basis. The door key can be contained within the a small safe on the outside of the property with trusted visitors and carers being given the pass code to access the safe to let themselves into the property, therefore keeping your home safe and secure. For further information contact Handiworks Plus on 0300 111 3303.

DORSET COUNTY COUNCIL AREAS

If you live in areas covered by Dorset County Council and need advice about Handyman schemes in your area contact:

Dorset Accessible Home Service: Tel 0333 00 300 10 – services may then be carried out by:

Milbrook Healthcare

Dorset Home Improvement Agency

Milenium House

2A Sunrise Business Park

Blandford Forum

Dorset

DT11 8ST

Email: dorsethiacontactus@milbrookhealthcare.co.uk

www.milbrookhealthcare.co.uk/en/

Fire and gas safety

The most important thing to install is a smoke alarm/detector. Choose one with the British Standard number BS 5446 and the 'Horseshoe' mark. Smoke detectors are on sale at most DIY stores.

Dorset Fire and Rescue Service will offer help and advice about buying a smoke/fire alarm. They are also run campaigns when they will install a device for you. For further details contact:

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service

Five Rivers Health & Wellbeing Centre

Hulse Road

Salisbury

SP1 3NR

Tel:01722 691000

Email: enquiries@dwfire.org.uk

www.dwfire.org.uk

General Fire Safety

- If you have a chip pan or deep fat fryer do not fill it more than one third full. Never leave the pan unattended and do not put food into the pan if the oil begins to smoke. If the pan does catch fire, turn off the heat if you can. Cover the pan with a damp cloth or tea towel to smother the flames. Never throw water onto the fire.
- If you have an open fire you should always keep a fireguard round it. Never rest clothes or newspapers on the guard.
- Never leave a lit cigarette unattended and do not smoke in a chair if you think you are likely to doze off to sleep in it. Never smoke in bed.
- If you do discover a fire in your home, do not try to save your belongings. Get yourself and everyone else out of the house and call the fire service for help. Never go back into a burning building.

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Around 40 people die each year from carbon monoxide poisoning caused by faulty or poorly installed gas appliances. The gas has no smell or taste. Gas powered heating systems should be serviced every year to ensure that they run safely and reliably. You should also make sure that the flue or chimney is checked annually to remove any blockages otherwise a blockage can cause dangerous gases to build up. This can be fatal.

Carbon Monoxide (CO) is a silent killer, too many people die each year in the UK from CO poisoning, and many others become chronically ill. The main symptoms are very similar to flu; headaches, drowsiness, pains in the chest or stomach. CO poisoning can also affect a persons mental state making the victim appear to be suffering confusion or even dementia. People most at risk are the elderly, young children, people who may already have long term health conditions.

The problem is caused by poorly fitted or poorly maintained gas appliances such as gas fires and central heating boilers. A lack of ventilation around the appliance can aggravate the situation. There are four simple rules for safe gas use:

- Always use a GAS SAFE registered gas installer, ask to see their ID card.
- Make sure your appliances are checked for safety every year.
- Be aware of the danger signs such as; sooting or stain marks on or around the appliance, a yellow or orange lazy flame where they are normally crisp and blue, condensation in the room where the appliance is installed.
- Don't do DIY on gas appliances or supplies.

To find a GAS SAFE registered heating engineer close to your home contact:

GAS SAFE

PO Box 6804

Basingstoke

RG24 4NB

Tel: 0800 408 5500

Textphone for the hard of hearing: 0800 408 0606

Email: enquiries@gassaferegister.co.uk

www.gassaferegister.co.uk

Carbon Monoxide detectors are available at all good DIY retailers or Plumbers Suppliers. They are also available through some Telecare companies who also supply Carelines, contact Help & Care and ask for fact sheet No. 22 – Carelines to find out which carelines are available in your area.

Home Energy Care Register (British Gas)

The Home Energy Register is a Priority Service Register for all British Gas and/or electricity customers who are elderly, disabled or chronically sick. It enables us to record any specific requirements you have and helps us to provide you with the right services appropriate to your needs.

What are the benefits?

- Password scheme for added security – only genuine British Gas representatives visiting your home will be able to identify themselves with this pre-arranged password.
- Specially designed appliance controls and adaptors – for customers with dexterity or visual impairment.
- Advice booklets – these are all in a specified alternative format such as large print, Braille or cassette.
- Talking bill service; enlarged bills; Braille bills – if you receive your bill in an alternative format such as large print or Braille, you will also receive a quarterly tape – ‘Newslink’- providing information on the products and services offered to British Gas customers.
- Free yearly gas safety check – by request, if you are of pensionable age, disabled or chronically sick and you live alone or with other people, all of whom are also of pensionable age, disabled, chronically sick or under 18 years of age.
- Moving your gas and/or electricity meters – if their position makes them difficult to use.
- Priority attention for general enquiries – quick response to any concerns you may have about your gas and/or electricity supplies.
- Priority in case of emergencies/notification of gas escapes and electricity supply interruptions.
- The nominee scheme – your gas and/or electricity bills can be sent to a nominated person of your choice.

To join the scheme contact: 0845 955 5404 – open 24hrs, every day of the year.

Textphone: 18001 0845 955 5202 – lines open Mon – Fri 8am – 8pm, Sat 8am – 6pm.

TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

Keeping yourself fit and active, taking regular exercise such as a walk or doing some gardening will increase your strength and balance, making you less likely to fall.

Try to have regular check ups with your optician to ensure your vision is good. Eating a well balanced diet with plenty of calcium and vitamin D will help to keep your bones healthy and reduce the risk of injury. Tell your GP if you start having falls or are feeling unsteady. Your GP will be able to investigate why you are having falls, prescribe or change medication if necessary, refer you to other agencies or specialists able to help you such as; a chiropodist to help you feel more comfortable

on your feet thereby improving your steadiness; the Community Nurse or Physiotherapist who can advise you on falls prevention.

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR PROBLEMS

Anti-social behaviour is 'acting in a manner that caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm and distress to one or more persons not of the same household' This includes acts such as criminal damage, alcohol misuse, neighbour disputes, intimidation and harassment. If you are affected by anyone behaving anti-socially in your neighbourhood contact your local Anti-social behaviour officer on the following numbers:

Christchurch – Anti-Social Behaviour Reduction Officer 01202 495044 Email: antisocial.behaviour@christchurch.gov.uk
www.dorsetforyou.com

Further useful information

Help & Care have a range of fact sheet titles to help you live more independently.

British Gas Energy Trust – Dorset's Healthy Homes Project

Loans and small grants to help towards energy efficiency improvements such as heating, help with fuel bills, debt relief orders and other needs. Anyone requiring assistance should ring Joanna Keats on 01305 216403 or mobile 07421994591 or email: bget@dorsetcommunityaction.org.uk

Buy with Confidence

A local authority trading standards endorsed website listing registered and vetted tradespeople
<http://www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk/sitepages/bwchome.aspx> .

Citizens Advice Bureau

Dorset Adviceline: tel 03444 111 444

For information and advice about switching tariffs, fuel and water debt advice, debt advice, consumer energy issues, Warmhome Discount, benefits advice.

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/how-we-provide-advice/advice/search-for-your-local-citizens-advice/?q=BH11+8HJ&q2>

Energy Saving Trust

Tel: 0300 123 1234
www.energysavingtrust.org.uk

Advice about energy saving devices and products within your home. Information and advice about how to apply for grants to help you meet the cost of making your home more energy efficient.

Health Through Warmth (HTW)

HTW is an RWE Npower community initiative set up by npower in 2000 working together with the NHS and National Energy Action (NEA), the national fuel poverty charity. HTW offers help to vulnerable people living in England and Wales who have long term, cold related illnesses and need assistance to fund and install heating and insulation in their homes. For further information contact:

Npower Health Through Warmth Team

Tel: 0845 070 2809

Fax: 0845 120 7195

Email: healththroughwarmth@npower.com

www.npower.com/health-through-warmth

Public Health – Dorset Healthy Homes Scheme

Tel: 0300 003 7023

Assistance with cavity wall and loft insulation. Applicants need to be over 65, suffer with a cardiovascular or respiratory illness, or live with a disability, be on certain benefits, be pregnant or have a child under 5. Contact for more information about qualifying criteria.

Victim Support Dorset

Unit A19 Arena Business Centre

Holyrood Close

Poole

BH17 7FJ

Tel: 01202 606200

Fax: 01202 606201

Email: vsdorset@victimsupport.org.uk

www.victimsupport.org.uk

National Victim Supportline: 0845 30 30 900

Victim Support is the national independent charity for people affected by crime – victims and witnesses, their families and friends – we are here to help. Trained staff and volunteers offer free and confidential information, support and practical help following a crime, such as burglary, assault, harassment, domestic violence, rape and murder. Victim Support can offer:

- Someone to talk to in confidence.
- Emotional support and practical help.
- Information on the police, court procedures and criminal justice system.
- Support and information while attending court.
- Help with criminal injuries compensation and insurance claims.
- Contact with – and referral to – other relevant organisations.
- Advice on crime prevention.
- Help with housing or benefit problems



DEALING WITH UNINVITED CALLERS TO YOUR HOME

From time to time, alarming stories about “bogus callers” appear in the media. These can be very unsettling, especially when living alone. This information sheet gives some ideas about how to deal with uninvited callers, how to remain confident and feel safe.

An uninvited doorstep caller is any person you do not know and were not expecting. Do not be fooled by appearances. It may be a well dressed man selling a product or perhaps a woman whose car has broken down, even a person in uniform may not be what they seem. Although these people are probably genuine callers it is not a good idea to allow them into your home. If a person asks to use the telephone, advise that you can't let them in but will be happy to make a call on their behalf, if they are sincere they will appreciate your caution and be happy to wait outside.

Use the door chain whenever you answer the door. If you do not have a chain you can arrange for one to be fitted. For more information contact Help & Care on 0300 111 3303. Help & Care fact sheet Home Safety may also be useful to you. If you feel any cause for alarm, remember that you do not need to answer the door at all! Do not leave the chain on all the time as this will slow you down if you need to escape in the event of a fire.

Cold calling

This is when a company sends a salesperson door to door in the hope that you will be interested in their product. Most people who call door to door are selling a genuine product.

If you are interested in what they are selling take a card and call the office for an appointment. Don't agree to buy anything, or sign any paperwork unless you are sure that you wish to buy the product. A genuine company will be happy to give you time to reflect and to provide a written quotation. There is no obligation to let anyone into your home. If you don't want the product say so clearly and without hesitation.

Callers from the gas, electricity or water utility companies

Major suppliers of services often have special schemes in place to protect older or less able people, from false representatives. Contact you supplier for details. Help & Care fact sheet No. 15 – How to make a complaint, may also be useful call 0300 111 3303 to request a copy.

If a worker calls to read your meter or to fix a fault that you are unaware of, ask them for their identification before allowing them into your home. Check the card carefully. If you are not sure about it take the card inside and call the company concerned. It would be advisable to check the number on the card in the telephone directory or with Directory Enquiries (tel: 118 118) to ensure that the number is a genuine organisation. If you are satisfied with the authenticity, telephone and ask the organisation if they have sent anyone to your house, and for that person's name. If they have not sent anyone, ask them if there could be any other company working in your area. If it still appears that the person is not a genuine caller, ask them to leave and call the police to alert them. It does not matter if it turns out to be a false alarm.

What if the caller won't go away or I feel threatened?

Never feel pressured into paying for something that you do not want. If the caller will not leave, try telling them that you are busy now but will call them back. Do not sign anything in the hope that they will leave.

If you are concerned for your personal safety dial 999 and ask for the police. Most importantly remember to put your own safety first. In the unlikely event of a bogus trader forcing their way into your home, do not try to remove them or to protect your belongings. Leave the house immediately and call for help from the neighbours.

UNWANTED MAIL OR TELEPHONE CALLS

Telephone Sales

A wide variety of companies telephone people at home, promoting their products, or asking when it would be convenient for a representative to visit.

If you wish to reduce these unsolicited calls, you can register your telephone number with 'The Telephone Preference Service'. This service, which is offered free of charge, will reduce the number of unwanted calls that you receive. To register contact:

Registration Line – 0845 070 0707
Or write to:
Telephone Preference Service (TPS)
DMA House
70 Margaret Street
London
W1W 8SS
Tel: 02072 913300
Email: tps@dma.org.uk
www.tpsonline.org.uk

Direct Mail

A direct mail shot is a personally addressed communication to a home or office address. For many companies this is a valuable way to advertise their business. You may find the information sent to you helpful, and if you are not interested you can throw it away.

If you wish to avoid being sent the information you can register with 'The Mailing Preference Service'. Once your application has been processed your name will be removed from 90% of all mailing lists. Remember that this will only stop personally addressed advertising and not circulars delivered door-to-door or newspaper inserts.
For more information or a registration form contact:

Registration Line: 0845 703 4599

MPS – Mailing Preference Service

DMA House
70 Margaret Street
London
W1W 8SS
Admin tel: 02072 913310
Email: mps@dma.org.uk
www.mpsonline.org.uk

TRADING STANDARDS

If you feel that a company has exerted unnecessary pressure or has threatened you in any way, you can report them to your local Trading Standards Office. They will investigate the complaint and will act if they feel that an offence has been committed.

Dorset County Council

Trading Standards

Colliton Annexe

County Hall

Dorchester

Dorset

DT1 1XJ

Tel: 01305 (01202) 224012

Fax: 01305 (01202) 224297

Email: tradingstandards@dorsetcc.gov.uk

www.dorsetforyou.com

Line open: Monday – Thursday 8.40am – 5.20pm, Friday: 8.40am – 4pm.

NUISANCE TELEPHONE CALLS

These can be very distressing but try not to react. Do not give them the satisfaction of upsetting you or making you angry. The best way to deal with them is to lay the handset down beside the telephone and go and do something else for a while. Let them say what they want, they will soon realise you are not listening. After a while return to the phone and gently put the receiver down without checking to see if they are still there. Do not get into conversation with the caller, if they call back after you have replaced the receiver don't speak first but remain totally silent.

A genuine new caller will speak as soon as you pick up the phone. If the nuisance calls are persistent or you feel threatened call the Nuisance Call Advice Line operated by BT on: 0800 661 441 (other networks have their own numbers, check with your telephone suppliers details). You could also ask your telephone supplier about their call minding services and setting your phone to display when known friends and family are calling. Then when any other call is displayed on your handset you can decide whether or not to answer it.

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- Carpentry – Door and window repairs, door furniture fitting and repairs, shelves fitted, skirting and architrave installation, repairs to sheds, fence and gate installation or repair.
- Plumbing - Tap repairs and replacement, bath and sink traps unblocked, internal leaks fixed, WC flushing faults rectified, radiators bled, baths and sinks sealed, washing machines and dishwashers plumbed in.
- Security and Safety – Window and door locks, spy holes and door chains fitted, smoke detectors, supply and fit key safes
- Gardening – Weeding, mowing lawns, planting flowers and shrubs, trimming hedges, pruning.

- Gas and central heating – rectifying loss of heating, rectifying loss of hot water, repair faulty radiator valves, installation of boilers, gas cookers and fires, servicing boilers and gas fires.
- Painting and decorating – internal and external painting, wallpapering, woodwork painting/staining, tiling, small areas of plastering.
- Flooring – carpet and vinyl fitted, laminate and ceramic floor tiles laid.

Carelines or emergency telephone alarms

Carelines exist to enable older people, disabled and other vulnerable parties to lead independent lives in their own homes. Carelines can provide peace of mind to both the client and their families, in the knowledge that there is someone to contact in an emergency 24 hours a day. If you would like details of carelines available in your area contact Help & Care on 0300 111 3303.

OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

Citizens Advice Bureau

The Citizens Advice Bureau aims to:

- Provide the advice people need for the problems they face
- To improve the policies and practices that affect peoples lives

The service provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities. For further information contact your local office on the contact telephone number below:

Christchurch – 01202 482023

Ferndown – 01202 893838

Wimborne – 01202 884738

Wessex Energy Advice Centre

8 Park Place
65 North Road
Poole
BH12 2BW
Tel: 01202 209410
www.yglife.co.uk
www.wessex.energy

For advice about energy efficiency, insulation and heating grants.

Victim Support Dorset

Unit A19 Arena Business Centre
Holyrood Close
Poole
BH17 7FJ
Tel: 01202 606200
Fax: 01202 606201

Email: vsdorset@victimsupport.org.uk
www.victimsupport.org.uk

National Victim Supportline: 0845 30 30 900

Victim Support is the national independent charity for people affected by crime – victims and witnesses, their families and friends – we are here to help. Trained staff and volunteers offer free and confidential information, support and practical help following a crime, such as burglary, assault, harassment, domestic violence, rape and murder. Victim Support can offer:

- Someone to talk to in confidence
- Emotional support and practical help
- Information on the police, court procedures and criminal justice system
- Support and information while attending court
- Help with criminal injuries compensation and insurance claims
- Contact with – and referral to – other relevant organisations
- Advice on crime prevention
- Help with housing or benefit problems



HELP & CARE CONTACT DETAILS

Help us to help you

As a charitable organisation Help & Care relies heavily on the donations and goodwill of the local community. However large or small, every gift makes a difference!

Please contact us using the contact details below if you would like information about:

- *How to make a one off donation or*
- *How to set up a regular monthly donation or*
- *How to remember us in your Will*

Help & Care contact details

Help & Care offer a range of services and factsheets to older people, carers, and disabled people across Dorset. If you would like to know more about our information and support services, Advocacy, and our Handiworks Plus services, or you would like a copy of this factsheet in your own language, large print, Braille, or on audio tape or compact disc please contact us on the details below.

By telephone: 0300 111 3303

By fax: 01202 432299

Opening hours are: Monday - Thursday 9am -5pm and Friday 10am - 4.30pm. Answering machine available outside these hours.

Textphone for hard of hearing: 01202 416047

Email: contact@helpandcare.org.uk

Website: www.helpandcare.org.uk

Use the "Contact" form within the website to let us know how best we can help you.

Contact by post: Help & Care, The Pokesdown Centre, 896 Christchurch Road, Bournemouth, BH7 6DL

You can also make an appointment to call in and see us at The Pokesdown Centre, Bournemouth.

This information has been researched and produced by Help & Care and was believed to be correct at the time of production. Inclusion does not imply a recommendation by Help & Care.

Last IS Review in May 2009. Next total review due Sept 2011.

Latest amendment added: February 2017.



DISPOSING OF UNWANTED ITEMS IN CHRISTCHURCH AND EAST DORSET

CHRISTCHURCH

Refuse Collection

Household refuse is collected weekly. The householder is responsible for ensuring that all refuse is bagged securely or in a suitable dustbin or wheelie bin. If you have a wheelie bin all refuse must be bagged before going into the wheelie bin, but all bags must be removed from the wheelie bin by the householder prior to collection and placed at the edge of the property for collection. This is because the dust cart does not have the necessary equipment to lift wheelie bins to be emptied.

If your refuse contains broken glass or ceramics this must be clearly marked 'Broken Glass' and well wrapped in suitable refuse sacks. Garden waste can be collected if it is placed in a Christchurch Borough Council green bag. Garden waste (36p) must be put in a brown council paper sack and placed at the kerbside on the day of your garden waste collection.

Kerbside recycling in Christchurch

Recycling collections are on a fortnightly basis. Items you can put in your box include:

- Newspapers/Magazines/ Junk mail
- Office/ Notepaper
- Unbroken glass bottles and jars (all colours)
- Food tins and drink cans
- Household aerosols (polish, air freshener)
- Catalogues, telephone directories etc.
- Envelopes

Items you cannot put in the box:

- Plastics (including bottles, containers or bags).
- Drink or milk cartons
- Cardboard (including cereal boxes, cardboard packaging etc)
- Window, Pyrex or drinking glasses.

For further information or if your refuse bin or recycling bin has missed collection contact the 'Missed Bin Hotline' on: 01202 495000 or 01202 495062 email: enquiries@dorsetwastepartnership.gov.uk
www.dorsetforyou.com

Garden Waste – Christchurch

Garden waste to be recycled is not accepted by as part of the standard domestic collection service. Garden waste is accepted at:

Christchurch Household Recycling Centre

Wilverly Road
Somerford
Christchurch
BH23 3RU

Opening hours: 1st April – 31st October 9am – 6pm
1st Nov – 31st March 9am – 5pm
Closed: Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Years Day.

Here it is recycled into compost by Eco Composting.

Christchurch offers a charged Garden Waste service to every household. To use this service garden waste must be put in a brown council paper sack, which can be purchased for 36p each. For further details contact: 01202 495000.

Clinical waste

It is very unusual for householders to need to deal with clinical waste. Most households that are likely to produce clinical waste will have been advised of supporting collection services by their GP or local hospital. In general the following guidelines are in place:

- Sharps (eg. Needles) – local GPs have sharps boxes, as do local police stations. You should contact your local police station or GP directly.
- Nappies/incontinence pads – can be safely disposed of through the normal refuse collection service.
- Out of date medicines – should be returned to the local chemists for proper disposal.
- Other household clinical waste – contact your GP or local hospital for advice about collection. Contact Medical Transport Services on 01202 851322.

Bulky household waste

District and Borough Councils can arrange for collection of large or bulky items for disposal. This cannot include garden waste or builder's rubble but can include:

- White goods
- Soft furnishings
- Other furniture
- Garage/ shed contents, garden furniture

There is usually a charge for this service, normally in the region of £30 - £50. Confirm with your local council by contacting:

Christchurch – 01202 495094

The goods need to be easily accessible to the contractors when they call to collect, either in the front garden or on a drive.

The contractors will not remove items from inside the property, and do not do house or garage clearance. They will only collect items that have been indicated, when you called to arrange collection. Anything 'added to the pile' will remain uncollected.

EAST DORSET

Refuse Collection

Normal household waste is collected from properties in East Dorset in plastic or paper sacks. Your sacks should be left within easy reach at the front of your property within 3 metres of the roadside. Please leave sacks out by 7am on your normal day of collection. Refuse will be collected on all bank holidays (if they correspond with your normal collection day), except Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

If you do not know your next collection day, call on 01202 886201.

Help collecting your refuse

If you are unable to carry your refuse out to the kerbside due to disability or you are elderly, and you are unable to find someone to help you, you can arrange to have your refuse collected from your door. Contact the council on 01202 886201 and ask about Assisted Collection, or email: contracts@eastdorset.gov.uk , website: www.dorsetforyou.com

Collection of large waste items

Bulky waste items can be collected from your home, (waste that will not fit in a black sack or weighing more than 25kg). A charge will be made for this service.

RECYCLING IN EAST DORSET

Brown Bin

The Brown Bin scheme serves over 18,700 properties in the Verwood, St Leonard's, St Ives, West Moors, Ashley Heath, Avon Castle, Southern Ferndown and West Parley. The waste is collected weekly (not bank holidays), items you can put into your brown bin include:

- Food waste
- Cardboard
- Garden waste

This waste is then taken to be turned into compost to be used by local gardeners, farmers, landscapers.

Green Bag and Box scheme

This kerbside recycling scheme is available to over 90% of the households in East Dorset. Residents are able to recycle newspapers, magazines, office paper, glass bottles & jars, cans and plastic bottles via 'green bag' and 'collection boxes' collected every fortnight.

There is no collection on Bank Holiday Mondays but there will be a collection the following Saturday instead. There are no collections on Good Friday. For further details contact:

Recycling Officer

Council Offices

Furzehill
Wimborne
BH21 4HN
Tel: 01202 886201
Email: contacts@eastdorset.gov.uk
www.dorsetforyou.com

BULKY HOUSEHOLD WASTE - EAST DORSET

In East Dorset bulky household waste is collected by the council. They will collect items such as:

- Fridges / freezers
- Washing machines
- Furniture
- Garage / shed contents (but not garden waste or builder's rubble).

There is a charge for this collection service. For further details contact: 01202 886201
Email: contracts@eastdorset.gov.uk
www.dorsetforyou.com

Alternatively you can take your items to:

Wimborne Household Recycling Centre

Brook Road
Wimborne
BH21 2HH
Tel: 01305 225002

Opening times: 1st April – 31st October 9am – 6pm
1st November – 31st March 9am – 5pm
Closed: Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Years Day.

White Goods

If you are having a new fridge, freezer, washing machine, or cooker delivered ask the company you are buying from if the delivery service will also take the old appliance away for disposal. If they are unable to do this then ask that they at least remove your old appliance into the front garden so that you can arrange for it to be collected.

LOCAL ORGANISATIONS ABLE TO HELP RECYCLE LARGE ITEMS

British Heart Foundation

Furniture & Electrical Store
470 – 472 Wimborne Road
Winton
Bournemouth
BH9 2EY
Tel: 08444 417 9468

Please donate any good quality furniture and electrical goods to help raise funds to fight heart and circulatory disease. Contact the number above to arrange free collection or book online at www.bhf.org.uk/collection . They also offer a house clearance service (charges may apply).

Dorset Lodge

10 Suffolk Road
Bournemouth
Tel: 01202 317723

This organisation helps with the resettlement of prisoners and will take unwanted items and redistribute them.

Dorset Reclaim

85 Stanley Road
Springbourne
Bournemouth
Dorset
BH1 4SD
Tel: 01202 773384
Email: ray@dorsetreclaim.org.uk

and

3 Didcott Road
Nuffield Industrial Estate
Poole
Tel: 01202 679080 – (main) 01202 679350 – (Bulky Household Waste)
Email: george@dorsetreclaim.org.uk
www.dorsetreclaim.org.uk

Dorset Reclaim's aim is to provide low cost furniture and electrical goods to people on benefits and local people on restricted incomes. Open Monday – Thursday 9.30am – 4.30pm and Friday 9.30am – 4pm, contact them if you have good quality items of furniture or white goods that you believe someone else could make good use of. Dorset Reclaim will arrange to come and assess and collect the goods. They will also remove any old electrical goods that are damaged or faulty for a nominal fee. They are also able to take good quality home making items such as carpets, curtains, crockery and cutlery. Area covered: whole of Dorset.

June Strawson Payne Trust

Contact: Lillian Jefferies
3 Twynham Ave
Christchurch
Dorset
BH23 1QU
Tel: 01202 485978
Email: alicky@tiscali.co.uk
Part of the 'Furniture Re-use Network'.

'Keep Coming Back'

181 Seabourne Road
Southbourne
Bournemouth
Tel: 07917 422117

'Keep Coming Back' is a relatively new organisation, our initial goal and primary aim is to provide recycled and restored basic furniture to vulnerable adults, while at the same time providing support with moving in and settling into a new home. 'Keep Coming Back' will furnish flats for £50. Please donate furniture, electrical goods, household goods and clothing.

Salvation Army – Christchurch

350 Lymington Road
Highcliffe
Christchurch
Dorset
BH23 5EY
Tel: 01425 275198

Charity shop accepts clothing and small items such as books, CDs, DVDs for resale (not furniture or electrical goods).

Salvation Army – Community

695 – 697 Christchurch Road
Boscombe
Bournemouth
BH7 6AF
Tel: 01202 390485

Accepts donations of clothing, furniture for those in need. Do not take electrical goods and all soft furnishings must have a fire safe label attached.

Salvation Army – Winton

The Place Next Door
1 Latimer Road
Winton
BH9 1JY
Tel: 01202 517989

Accept donations of clothing and furniture for those in need. May be able to help with the removal of some larger items of furniture. Do not take electrical goods and all soft furnishings must have a fire safe label attached.

CLOTHES AND TEXTILES

There are numerous charity shops that will accept clean old clothes, textiles, shoes, bric-a-brac, books, CDs, DVDs, etc. Look in your local Yellow Pages or along your High Street to see where they are located.

COMPUTERS

If you want to donate or recycle your old computer it is advisable to delete all the files on the hard-drive to prevent misuse of your details in the future. Contact the following organisations if you wish to recycle:

Admiral Systems and Peripherals

70 North Road
Poole
01202 715570

Out of Afrika is a charity that will make good use of your old working computer to help equip schools in Africa with technology. Contact: www.outofafrika.org.uk or email: Julie@outofafrika.org

LIBRARIES

Libraries have sites where you can take unwanted printer cartridges for refilling and recycling.

TELEPHONE DIRECTORIES

If you want to stop receiving copies of the BT Phonebook, Thomson Directory or Yellow Pages you can cancel your delivery at www.junkbuster.org.uk .

Alternatively you can contact:

BT - to cancel phonebook: tel: 0800 833 400

Thomson Local – email: info@thomsonlocal.com giving your name and address

Yellow Pages: tel 0800 671 444

USEFUL WEBSITES AND WASTE DISPOSAL COMPANIES

Charity Retail: www.charityretail.org.uk

Recycling appeal: www.recyclingappeal.com - collects mobile phones and printer cartridges.

Recycle More: www.recycle-more.co.uk

Recycle Now: www.recyclenow.com

Recycled Products: www.recycledproducts.org.uk

Rubbish Clearance: <http://www.rubbishclearancebournemouth.co.uk/> a local independent company who are able to clear rubbish and large items from your house or garden. They will also transport large items if you want to recycle your old furniture etc. to charity or move from A to B. Based in and around Bournemouth but willing to travel to wider Dorset.

Tools with a Mission: www.twam.co.uk enables people to earn a living and to support themselves in the Third World.

WRAP: www.wrap.org.uk

Waste Online: www.wasteonline.org.uk



MOVING HOUSE

Moving home can be a traumatic time in anyone's life, and there are certainly many things to consider when thinking of making a move. This information focuses on the help available to older people or those who have a disability, although some of the information may also be relevant to anyone who is moving home.

Advocacy Advice

Help and Care employ Advocates who may be able to help you explore your options, including moving to Sheltered Accommodation or Assisted Living properties where support is available through the services of a Warden or on-site care staff. The Advocate can also help with finding a Residential or Nursing Care home, if you decide this is what you need. Contact Help & Care on 0300 111 3303 for further information.

Fact Sheets

Help & Care also have a range of fact sheets available containing information to help maintain your independence and remain in your own home as long as possible, in particular:

Carers Rights and Assessments

Carers Allowance

Support Groups for Carers

Day Care

Money Matters

Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Payment

Legal Matters, including Power of Attorney

Care in the Home

Help with daily living

If you would like to receive a copy please contact Help & Care on 0300 111 3303. Our Fact Sheets can also be viewed on our website www.helpandcare.org.uk

If you currently have a Social Services Care Manager, or are living in Warden Assisted property these people will also be able to advise and facilitate your move.

GENERAL ADVICE AND INFORMATION

Visiting a prospective new home

Visiting a prospective new home can be an exciting and enjoyable experience but it is worthwhile taking steps to ensure your own safety while viewing a property. Most Estate Agents, Letting Agents, or Landlords will arrange to meet you at the property and show you around. If possible try to take a family member or friend with you, this also has the added advantage of having someone else to help remember details about the property and possibly ask questions you may not have considered asking the agent.

If no family member or friend is available you may be able to ask for a volunteer from a local volunteer agency, charity or support group, church group, or doctor's surgery to go with you. Listed below are some organisations that may be able to supply a volunteer to visit with you:

Help & Care (Bournemouth, Poole, Christchurch, some of East Dorset)
tel: 0300 111 3303 – ask for Volunteers Co-ordinator.

Age Concern

Christchurch: - Tel: 01202 488311

Ferndown & District: - 01425 475874

PACKING UP AND MOVING OUT

Draw up a list of the items that need to be packed, those that can be disassembled, and furniture that can go 'whole'. Don't forget curtains and blinds, shelves and pictures. The removal company will pack your things for you but this will mean an extra charge, ask for an estimate before committing to this. Below are some points to remember when packing:

- Use sturdy durable boxes.
- Try not to pack in too many items, you may not be able to lift or move the box afterwards.
- Take care when packing breakables. Remember to wrap in tissue or bubble wrap.
- Remember to keep important documents separate (i.e. driving licence, passport and so on), you may need to refer to them before you are able to unpack.
- Don't forget to check the attic/loft move the items downstairs prior to packing and try to dispose of any unwanted items before moving day.

Electrical Equipment

- Electrical equipment should all be disconnected prior to the arrival of the removal company
- The drums of automatic washing machines should be secured to avoid damage with the proper brackets obtained from the local authorised retailers.
- Fridges and fridge freezers should be washed out with a strong solution of bicarbonate of soda and hot water – NOT DETERGENT. THEY SHOULD THEN BE DRIED OUT THOROUGHLY.
- Equipment such as TVs, Hi-fi, video, DVD players, and computers are best moved in their original packing (if possible). Secure carefully any free moving pieces of this equipment such as the pick-up arm of Hi-fi record decks.
- Don't forget to label the cables as you remove them from the back of your TV or computer so that it is easy to re-connect when you are putting it back together.

Food Stuffs

- If you have a freezer full of food, try to use it up prior to moving.
- If this is impossible, on the day, pack everything into large freezer/plastic bags so that the items can be lifted out and replaced once the move is over.
- Don't forget to ask friends to help store frozen items as well. This can be especially helpful as fridges and fridge freezers need up to 24hrs to 'settle' following a move before food can be placed back into them.

Contents of garages and garden sheds

- These should be sorted out well in advance and any rubbish thrown away.
- Tools should be bundled together and tied for ease of carrying.
- Dangerous chemicals and liquids should be securely sealed with tape to prevent spillage.

Care of pets while moving home

- When moving, your pet should travel with you. The mildest tempered animal can become upset when it can see the family being moved.
- It will comfort the animal (cats & dogs) if they can have something with a familiar scent on it and can hear familiar voices, rather than travelling with someone they don't know or having to stay in kennels.
- Humane travel cages or cardboard carry cases (for smaller animals) are available from most pet retailers for a reasonable price and will prove useful later on if you need to transport your pet again maybe to the vet or on holiday.

Access to property

- A few days in advance of the move, ask your neighbours if they would be mindful of leaving enough space outside the property for the removal lorry when parking their cars.
- Be sure to check access to your new property to advise the removal company particularly if you are moving into a flat where access to a lift will be needed if possible.
- Make sure you are absolutely certain of the correct moving dates both from your old property and into your new property and that the correct keys are exchanged beforehand. Good communication with the Estate Agent or Letting Agent/Landlord is essential here.

Help & Care Handiworks Plus (available to residents of Bournemouth, Poole, East Dorset, Christchurch and Purbeck)

Handiworks Plus is available to anyone over the age of 18 living in the Bournemouth, Poole, Christchurch, East Dorset and Purbeck areas. Members of Handiworks Plus can call one number 0300 111 3303 and report any repairs or household maintenance issues and we will arrange for an appropriate police checked tradesperson who is skilled in their trade to carry out the work required. The Handiworks Team provide experienced, competitively priced tradespeople and will arrange all works on your behalf. The contractual relationship for each job is between you (the Handiworks Plus member) and the tradesperson. Handiworks Plus is a social enterprise, this means that 100% of any profits from the service provided by Handiworks Plus will fund Help and Care's charitable work. Membership of Handiworks Plus costs £30 a year. The services available include:

- General Handyman – small building works and maintenance build flat pack furniture, fit draught proofing, put up curtain rails/blinds, moving furniture within the home, hanging mirrors and pictures, clearing gutters.
- Electrical – rectifying loss of light or power, installing and repairing sockets and lights, fixing/replacing doorbells, installing

outside security lights, installing power to new areas.

- Carpentry – Door and window repairs, door furniture fitting and repairs, shelves fitted, skirting and architrave installation, repairs to sheds, fence and gate installation or repair.
- Plumbing - Tap repairs and replacement, bath and sink traps unblocked, internal leaks fixed, WC flushing faults rectified, radiators bled, baths and sinks sealed, washing machines and dishwashers plumbed in.
- Security and Safety – Window and door locks, spy holes and door chains fitted, smoke detectors, supply and fit key safes, grab rails.
- Gardening – Weeding, mowing lawns, planting flowers and shrubs, trimming hedges, pruning.
- Gas and central heating – rectifying loss of heating, rectifying loss of hot water, repair faulty radiator valves, installation of boilers, gas cookers and fires, servicing boilers and gas fires.
- Painting and decorating – internal and external painting, wallpapering, woodwork painting/staining, tiling, small areas of plastering.
- Flooring – carpet and vinyl fitted, laminate and ceramic floor tiles laid.

CHECKLIST OF PEOPLE TO INFORM THAT YOU ARE MOVING – INCLUDE THE DATE OF YOUR MOVE

Try to plan your move as far in advance as possible, and when you are certain of your moving date begin to inform people so that all your necessary bills and correspondence can be delivered to your new home and friends and relatives can contact you. It is also important to inform your GP, Dentist, and if necessary Social Services (if you are receiving care) particularly if you are moving out of the area. You may need to register with a new GP and Dentist when you arrive at your new home, and any care needs you have with Social Services may need to be transferred to a new authority. Below is a list of some of the people you may need to inform of your move:

- If you are currently renting, your present Landlord/Housing Association
- Family and friends
- Local authority – for Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax, the Electoral Register (for voting)
- Utilities such as water, gas, and electricity suppliers – remember to arrange cut-off and reconnection dates and times.
- Your GP, Dentist, Social Services Care Manager
- Your Bank, Building Society, Credit Card companies, Store Card, loan or Hire Purchase companies
- Insurance (life, car, household contents etc.) companies, Pension companies
- Telephone and TV channel suppliers (Sky, Virgin Media, British Telecom), and mobile phone companies
- The DVLA (if you own a car)
- Blue Badge Scheme (local town hall if you have a permit)
- Any pre-paid arrangements with local pharmacists if you medication supplied on a regular basis. Some meal providers if you have your meals delivered.
- Care agencies who may do shopping or housework for you
- Milkman/woman if you have your milk delivered

- Local newsagent if you have newspapers delivered
- Any clubs or support groups you belong to who may send you mail
- The Post Office to redirect mail. You will be charged for this and can choose how long you wish this service to last, anything from 1 month to 1 year.

FORM FILLING AND MONEY MATTERS

When you decide to move home this can mean a lot of extra correspondence to deal with involving filling in forms or understanding money matters. Once again a volunteer from a local agency may be able to help you. Contact the following organisations if you would like someone to help you:

Help & Care (Bournemouth, Poole, Christchurch, some of East Dorset)
tel: 0300 111 3303 – ask for Volunteers Co-ordinator.

Benefits

If you need help and advice about benefit matters contact the Pension Service on 0345 6060265 or log on to www.gov.uk to arrange for a Visiting Officer to visit you at home.

HELP FINDING LOW COST ITEMS OF FURNITURE

Dorset Reclaim (Bournemouth)

69 Windham Road
Bournemouth
BH1 4RN
Tel: 01202 773384
Gen Enq: 01202 394963
Fax: 01202 772091

Dorset Reclaim (Poole)

3 Didcot Road
Nuffield Industrial Estate
Poole
BH17 0GD

Dorset Reclaim's aim is to provide low cost furniture to people on benefits and local people on restricted incomes. Open Monday – Friday 10am – 4.00pm contact them if you have good quality items of furniture or white goods that you believe someone else could make good use of, or you are looking for items for yourself. Dorset Reclaim will arrange to come and assess and collect the goods.

OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

British Gas Energy Trust – Dorset's Healthy Homes Project

Loans and small grants to help towards energy efficiency improvements such as heating, help with fuel bills, debt relief orders and other needs. For further information contact Joanna Keats on 01305 216403 or 07421 994591, email:

bget@dorsetcommunityaction.org.uk

Energy Saving Trust

Tel: 0300 123 1234

www.energysavingtrust.org.uk

Advice about energy saving devices and products within your home. Information and advice about how to apply for grants to help you meet the cost of making your home more energy efficient.

Health Through Warmth (HTW)

HTW is an RWE Npower community initiative set up by npower in 2000 working together with the NHS and National Energy Action (NEA), the national fuel poverty charity. HTW offers help to vulnerable people living in England and Wales who have long term, cold related illnesses and need assistance to fund and install heating and insulation in their homes. For further information contact:

Npower Health Through Warmth Team

Tel: 0845 070 2809

Fax: 0845 120 7195

Email: healththroughwarmth@npower.com

www.npower.com/health-through-warmth

Public Health – Dorset Healthy Homes Scheme

Tel: 0300 003 7023

Assistance with cavity wall and loft insulation. Applicants need to be over 65, suffer with a cardiovascular or respiratory illness, or live with a disability, be on certain benefits, be pregnant or have a child under 5. Contact for more information about qualifying criteria.



FINDING A TRADESPERSON

When choosing a contractor to carry out work to their property, many people look for a tradesperson who has a reliable reputation. It is important to feel able to trust not only their standard of work but also their integrity. Most contractors are honest, skilled professionals who will give you good advice. The following information is a guide to dealing with contractors, enabling you to make informed decisions about what you want to do. There is also advice about what to do if you find yourself dealing with a disreputable firm.

ARE YOU THINKING OF HAVING SOME WORK DONE?

If you have decided to have alterations done on your property it is a good idea to discuss your plans with a relative or friend. It is always helpful to get a second opinion and you will have the peace of mind that somebody else is aware of your plans.

WHO ARE YOU GOING TO EMPLOY TO DO THE JOB?

One way to find a contractor is to ask your family, friends or neighbours whether they can recommend anyone who may have recently done work for them and did a good job for a reasonable price. Make sure that the tradesperson you decide to contract to do the job is adequately insured with Public Liability Insurance and is willing to give you a written quote for how much the job may cost and how long the job is likely to take to complete. Ask to be invoiced at the end of the job, or if you are having particularly large alterations made to your property ask to be invoiced at each stage of the process where you are required to release funds. The invoices should also show any V.A.T. that maybe due.

LOCAL HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCIES

Help & Care Handiwork Plus (available to residents of Bournemouth, Poole, East Dorset, Christchurch and Purbeck)

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- General Handyman – small building works and maintenance, build flat pack furniture, fit draught proofing, put up curtain rails/blinds, moving furniture within the home, hanging mirrors and pictures, clearing gutters.
- Electrical – rectifying loss of light or power, installing and repairing sockets and lights, fixing/replacing doorbells, installing outside security lights, installing power to new areas.
- Carpentry – Door and window repairs, door furniture fitting and repairs, shelves fitted, skirting and architrave installation, repairs to sheds, fence and gate installation or repair.
- Plumbing - Tap repairs and replacement, bath and sink traps unblocked, internal leaks fixed, WC flushing faults rectified, radiators bled, baths and sinks sealed, washing machines and dishwashers plumbed in.

- Security and Safety – Window and door locks, spy holes and door chains fitted, smoke detectors, supply and fit key safes, grab rails.
- Gardening – Weeding, mowing lawns, planting flowers and shrubs, trimming hedges, pruning.
- Gas and central heating – rectifying loss of heating, rectifying loss of hot water, repair faulty radiator valves, installation of boilers, gas cookers and fires, servicing boilers and gas fires.
- Painting and decorating – internal and external painting, wallpapering, woodwork painting/staining, tiling, small areas of plastering.
- Flooring – carpet and vinyl fitted, laminate and ceramic floor tiles laid.

LOCAL AUTHORITY HELP AND ADVICE ABOUT SMALL HOME REPAIRS AND OTHER ADAPTATIONS

Information about organisations able to help with small home repairs, or details about eligibility for grants or loans for larger adaptations is available from your local authority. For further information contact:

Dorset County Council: Dorset Accessible Homes Service: - tel 0333 00 30010

<https://www.mylifemycare.com/Home-adaptations>

Information is also available from:

Millbrook Healthcare

Dorset Home Improvement Agency
 Millennium House
 2A Sunrise Business Park
 Blandford Forum
 Dorset
 DT11 8ST
 Tel: 0333 777 3693
 Email: dorsethiacontactus@millbrookhealthcare.co.uk
www.millbrookhealthcare.co.uk/en/

Millbrook are contracted to offer advice on and carryout adaptation work throughout the county of Dorset.

POINTS TO CONSIDER BEFORE HAVING WORK DONE

Is the work really necessary, will I be paying too much?

A good way to find out is to get at least three quotes from different companies. This way you should pick up on very high prices and negotiate the best deal. Do not judge on price alone. Consider the service that they are providing and how they have responded to your call. Although it is important to ensure that you are not paying over the odds, remember that the cheapest option is not always the best.

Are you expecting a visit from a contractor or workman?

- Make a list of all the questions that you want to ask and the areas you want to cover. By doing this you can be sure that you won't forget anything. Write down the points that you want to remember from the meeting. Take your time making notes and do not hurry your decision, if you are feeling under pressure you are more likely to forget important details.
- Make sure that you know the name of the person who is coming to see you so that you can check when they arrive. Be sure to ask for their name before you open the door. Some companies operate a code name system. When you call to make an

appointment you agree upon a word or name that only you and the company know. This ensures that when the person arrives at your door you can be positive about who you are letting in.

- If you are dealing with a larger company they may well carry identification. Check this carefully before letting the person in. If you are not sure, take the card inside and telephone the company to check. Do not telephone the number on the card that the caller has given you, but check to see if you can find the company number in Yellow Pages or the Telephone Directory and call that number. This is because bogus callers may well have an accomplice waiting on the number they have given you to deceive you when you call to check. Calling the number in the phonebook you know you are getting through to the company concerned. A legitimate caller will not mind waiting on the doorstep for a few minutes.
- If you need extra support, ask a relative or friend to be with you.
- If you are unsure about anything, ask the contractor to explain and remember that you do not have to decide there and then. Agree with the contractor a time to call back if you want to consider your decision.

BEFORE AGREEING TO ANY WORK

Ask for a full written quote listing all work to be carried out. The quote should include V.A.T. so that you know the final cost. A quote should also include the following points:

- Delivery times and a completion date.
- All costs – installation charges, full details of parts, materials and labour.
- Guarantees – these should be in writing. A guarantee is in addition to, not instead of, your legal rights.

Make sure you have obtained quotes from at least three different companies so that you can choose the most reasonable offer. You can also get the benefit of three different opinions.

ESTIMATES AND QUOTES – DIFFERENCE

Sometimes due to the way some building materials are supplied the contractor may only be able to make an informed guess as to how much the job will cost, this is an estimate. Estimates are no guarantee of a final price so specify in writing that you want to be warned in advance of any extra expense.

As indicated above a quote will be an itemised list of the tasks needed to do the job, including materials, labour, and where possible the time span of how long it will take to complete the job. This will be the price this contractor will do the work for should you decide to ask them to do so.

RESEARCH COMPANY DETAILS

Make a note of the details of the company:

- Name, address and telephone number of firm/contractor
- Is the company a member of a professional body?
- Does the company have adequate insurance in case something goes wrong?
- How long have they been in business?

PAYING MONEY IN ADVANCE

You may have to pay some money in advance to purchase materials in which case you should pay by cheque or credit card. Do not pay cash as there will be no proof that the money has been paid. If you pay by cheque there will be a record of the transaction and some credit companies will offer protection if the company fails to deliver the service. Always get a full written

receipt for any transaction. Do not pay the full amount until the job is completed and you are satisfied with the work done.

BEFORE SIGNING THE CONTRACT

Before signing any contract documents, give yourself plenty of time to read all the small print. If necessary, take a copy of the contract home to read thoroughly. Ensure that it covers the areas that you feel are important. If you are not sure, ask for the opinion of a family member or friend. Keep a photocopy of all documents, especially those you have signed. Do not be afraid to ask questions or get a second opinion.

It is a good idea to discuss your plans with your family or friends. They may have some helpful suggestions. Make sure they are aware of what you are having done, when, how much it will cost and who is doing the work. You could also let the contractor know that your family or friends are aware of the situation.

WHILE WORK IS BEING CARRIED OUT

Keep yourself informed of progress. Ask questions about what is being done. If the contractor tells you that the job is more extensive than expected, remember that you do not have to agree with what you are told and have the right to ask for a second opinion. If further work is needed get another, or revised, written quote for the extra work.

WHEN THE WORK IS FINISHED

Are you happy with the job?

In most cases you will be pleased with the work carried out. If this is the case, try to keep hold of the company's details. You may want to use them again or recommend them to friends and relatives. Only pay for completed works after you have inspected them. Get a detailed bill and receipt with the company's name and address.

But what if I am not happy with the job?

The first thing to do in this case is to contact the company that carried out the work. In most cases any problems can be sorted by maintaining good communication with all parties involved. Explain why you are not satisfied and ask them to rectify the situation. If they are members of a trade association contact the association as most of them have free complaints and arbitration procedures. If you are planning to withhold payment or even to sue for damages it is vital that you get professional advice from a solicitor or your local Citizens Advice Bureau immediately.

Who can I complain to?

Once again your first port of call should be the company who did the work. Make your complaint in writing explaining all the reasons why you are not happy. Remember to keep a copy of all correspondence with the company and your solicitor.

If you feel that the company have broken the law, contact your local Trading Standards Office. They will investigate the complaint and will act if they feel that an offence has been committed. Local Trading Standards Office details are:

Dorset County Council

Trading Standards

Colliton Annexe

County Hall

Dorchester

Dorset

DT1 1XJ

Tel: 01305 (01202) 224012

Fax: 01305 (01202) 224297

Email: tradingstandards@dorsetcc.gov.uk
www.dorsetforyou.com

Line open: Monday – Thursday 8.40am – 5.20pm.
Friday: 8.40am – 4pm.

DO YOU NEED HELP WITH THE PROCESS OF MAKING A COMPLAINT?

If you are over 65 and a resident of Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole, or East Dorset the Help and Care Advocacy Service can offer you practical support to present your views. The service is available to people who live alone or have no one to speak on their behalf. For further information contact the Information Gateway at Help & Care on 0300 111 3303. The Help & Care fact sheet

"How to make a complaint", may also be useful to you.

NATIONAL TRADE ASSOCIATIONS

Federation of Master Builders (Southern counties office)

51 St Mary's Road
Tonbridge
Kent, TN9 2LE
Tel: 01732 771553
Fax: 01732 363658
Email: southerncounties@fmb.org.uk
www.findabuilder.co.uk

Builders must meet specific criteria to become members.

Glass and Glazing Federation (GGF)

54 Ayres Street
London
SE1 1EU
Tel: 020 7939 9101
Fax: 0870 042 4266
Email: info@ggf.org.uk
www.ggf.org.uk

The Federation deals with companies trading in the glass and glazing industry including double glazing and conservatories. All their members have been vetted to ensure a quality service.

Chartered Institute of Plumbing and Heating Engineers (CIPHE)

64 Station Lane
Hornchurch
Essex
RM12 6NB
Tel: 01708 472791
Fax: 01708 448987
Email: info@ciphe.org.uk
www.ciphe.org.uk

Painting and Decorating Association

32 Coton Road

Nuneaton

Warwickshire

CV11 5TW

Tel: 024 7635 3776

Fax: 024 7635 4513

Email: info@paintingdecoratingassociation.co.uk

www.paintingdecoratingassociation.co.uk

Their members are qualified and fully insured. They will act as an arbitrator in the event of a complaint about a members work.

OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

Buy with Confidence - [://www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk](http://www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk) is a government sponsored website giving details of local tradespeople in your area. Details have been checked by local authority trading standards offices.

Wessex Energy Advice Centre

8 Park Place

6 North Road

Poole

BH14 0LY

Tel: 01202 209410

www.yglife.co.uk

www.wessex.energy

For advice about energy efficiency, insulation and heating grants.



GARDENING ADVICE

LESS MAINTENANCE CAN MEAN LESS STRESS

Caring for a garden should be an enjoyable activity that calms the mind and brings you closer to the natural world. To achieve this try to minimise the tasks that you do not enjoy, or that you cannot cope with. It may be that your life circumstances have changed, due to health or injury. This is a time to re-think how you care for a garden, and what you hope to get from gardening. Most importantly, remember that it is your garden, and it is up to you what sort of garden you create, and how much work you want to put into it.

This information aims to provide some ideas on low-maintenance gardens, how to adapt a garden to meet your needs, and how to create a garden that encourages wildlife (which can help you with your gardening chores). Many people believe that as they get older, or their health changes, gardening is something that they can no longer enjoy. Even the smallest of spaces can allow a few pots for cultivation, and nurturing plants can be a therapeutic activity that contributes towards recovery following illness.

LET NATURE DO THE WORK

To minimise the work involved in gardening, take advantage of nature's own pest controls. Grow plants that encourage animals and birds into your garden, and enjoy that contact with the natural world. Ladybirds are well known for their capacity for eating greenfly, lacewings and hoverflies do the same. Frogs are wonderful slug killers, and you do not need a huge pond to introduce frogs into your garden. A small (1 foot) hole, lined with plastic, is sufficient for frogs to exist. Even a large bowl or old sink will do the job. Add some oxygenating pondweed, and even some tiny fish, and you will have a micro pond that will encourage wildlife and keep down slugs.

PLANTS FOR WILDLIFE

- Buddleia (Butterfly bush) – leaves and flowers are food for Butterflies.
- Anything with berries will feed birds which can be especially good in winter.
- Plants with wide, open flowers encourage Hoverflies and Bees.
- Nettles are essential food for certain Butterflies.
- A pile of old logs and twigs provide winter refuge for a host of beneficial insects.

Wild flowers and native plants are ideally suited to their situation, and will require little or no attention. They will encourage bees, birds and butterflies into your garden. Some wildflowers are now so rare in the countryside that they only survive thanks to gardeners giving up a small part of their garden.

ADAPT YOUR GARDEN TO MEET YOUR NEEDS

Decide what you want from a garden, and then build a garden to meet your needs. Ask yourself:

- Do you really need a large lawn? Lawns require more care than any part of a garden.
- Have you considered using hard landscaping (gravel etc.) with a few choice pots? Even a sunny windowsill allows space to cultivate a few special plants.

HELP & CARE HANDIWORKS PLUS (AVAILABLE TO RESIDENTS OF BOURNEMOUTH, POOLE, EAST DORSET, CHRISTCHURCH AND PURBECK)

Handiworks Plus is available to anyone over the age of 18 living in the Bournemouth, Poole, Christchurch, East Dorset and Purbeck areas. Members of Handiworks Plus can call one number 0300 111 3303 and report any repairs or household maintenance issues and we will arrange for an appropriate police checked tradesperson who is skilled in their trade to carry out the work required.

The Handiworks Team provide experienced, competitively priced trades people and will arrange all works on your behalf. The contractual relationship for each job is between you (the Handiworks Plus member) and the tradesperson. Handiworks Plus is a social enterprise, this means that 100% of any profits from the service provided by Handiworks Plus will fund Help and Care's charitable work. Membership of Handiworks Plus costs £30 a year. The services available include:

- General Handyman – small building works and maintenance, build flat pack furniture, fit draught proofing, put up curtain rails/blinds, moving furniture within the home, hanging mirrors and pictures, clearing gutters.
- Electrical – rectifying loss of light or power, installing and repairing sockets and lights, fixing/replacing doorbells, installing outside security lights, installing power to new areas.
- Carpentry – Door and window repairs, door furniture fitting and repairs, shelves fitted, skirting and architrave installation, repairs to sheds, fence and gate installation or repair.
- Plumbing – Tap repairs and replacement, bath and sink traps unblocked, internal leaks fixed, WC flushing faults rectified, radiators bled, baths and sinks sealed, washing machines and dishwashers plumbed in.
- Security and Safety – Window and door locks, spy holes and door chains fitted, smoke detectors, supply and fit key safes, grab rails.
- Gardening – Weeding, mowing lawns, planting flowers and shrubs, trimming hedges, pruning. Arrangements can be made with our CRB checked gardeners to do regular work.
- Gas and central heating – rectifying loss of heating, rectifying loss of hot water, repair faulty radiator valves, installation of boilers, gas cookers and fires, servicing boilers and gas fires.
- Painting and decorating – internal and external painting, wallpapering, woodwork painting/staining, tiling, small areas of plastering.
- Flooring – carpet and vinyl fitted, laminate and ceramic floor tiles laid.

ROOTS - VIA HELP & CARE

Roots is a local, honest, professional gardening service provided by a supervised group of volunteer trainees recovering from mental distress. Roots is a social enterprise and any profit made is gifted to Help and Care so that the charity can continue to provide help and support to people in the local community. The team work five days a week and is supervised by a Garden Services Worker.

Who can use Roots?

- Older people who can no longer manage their garden due to various reasons such as health and disability.
- Organisations and businesses in need of gardening and ground maintenance

Services include:

- Mowing lawns
- Strimming edges
- Hedge trimming
- Moderate pruning of small trees and shrubs
- Planting and weeding
- Sweeping up leaves
- Turfing
- Laying of small paving stones

Roots can also help with garden alterations to reduce garden maintenance or to enable people to maintain their own gardens. For further information and details of charges contact Roots at Help & Care on 0300 111 3303.

SENSORY GARDENS

A sensory garden is a garden that is created specifically to stimulate some or all of our senses. They are usually aimed at people who have some of their senses impaired, for example a garden may be particularly fragrant and have striking juxtapositions of colour for people who have a visual impairment. Sensory gardens do not have to be exclusively for those whose senses are impaired. One of the joys of gardening is the sensory enjoyment of the scents, colours and foliage of different plants.

GARDENING ON A BUDGET

Many gardeners welcome the opportunity to share their passion with others. If you are gardening on a tight budget, it may be worth joining a local gardening group. This will enable you to swap plant cuttings, seeds, and other ideas with other gardeners. Look out for car boot sales and fetes where you may find bargains. Visits to municipal tips can provide a variety of unusual containers for plants, at very little cost, and at some tips you are able to purchase eco-friendly mulch for your garden.

LOW MAINTENANCE ADVICE FOR YOUR GARDEN

- Raised beds and containers help to reduce strain to your back and require less digging. Try to situate them near to a water supply to avoid carrying heavy watering cans over long distances.
- Lawns tend to require intensive maintenance, could you reduce the size of your lawn, or let part of it grow long to create a wild flower meadow area?
- Ground cover: any plant can be grown as ground cover. If a plant is growing in the right conditions it will thrive and force out other plants. Growing plants in tight clumps or drifts, leaving no space for weeds to establish.

Most importantly, enjoy your garden. Make it a space that works for you, and make caring for it an enjoyable and rewarding activity.

LOCAL GARDENING CLUBS AND ORGANISATIONS

Allotments – Christchurch

Christchurch Borough Council currently provides allotments on five sites around the borough. All sites are enclosed and have a dip tank water supply. Find out about allotments available in your area by contacting Christine Mockett.

Tel: 01202 495066
Email: c.mockett@christchurch&eastdorset.gov.uk
www.dorsetforyou.com/allotments/christchurch

Allotments – East Dorset

Allotments in East Dorset are administered by the local town or parish council. To find out the contact details visit your local library or the website: www.dorsetforyou.com

Hardy Plant Society (Dorset Group)

Colehill Memorial Hall
Cannon Hill Road
Wimborne
BH21 2LR
Email: dorset@hardy-plant.org.uk
www.hardy-plant.org.uk

The Hardy Plant Society exists to stimulate interest in growing hardy herbaceous plants. A friendly society which offers members the opportunity to meet other keen gardeners, share ideas and information. Meetings are held at Colehill Memorial Hall (see address above). The group organises celebrity lectures, special events and coach trips. For further details, contact Elaine Lofthouse, Tel: 01258 451580.

Sturminster Marshall Gardening Club

Brings together all those with an interest in gardening, a varied programme of talks and visits. Meets at Old School, Church Street, Sturminster Marshall on first Friday of the month at 7.30pm. For further details, contact: Sue Crowfoot, Tel: 01258 857606.

Wimborne Horticultural Society

For all who love gardening. 12 talks and 2 shows per year. Meets at the Allendale Community Centre on the 2nd Monday of the month at 7.30pm.

Meet January – March at 2pm

Membership £5 per person, £8 for 2 people.

For further details, contact Mr J Gillingham, Tel: 01202 887006
www.wimbornehorticulturalsociety.btck.co.uk

Useful local organisations

The Leonardo Trust

5 Duneats Rd
Broadstone
Dorset
BH18 8AA
Tel: 01202 698325
Email: info@leonardotrust.org
www.leonardotrust.org

The Leonardo Trust is an Independent charity set up to provide help and support for those who care for another person full - time , in their own home, within Dorset. The trust may be able to assist with funds for one-off gardening work that will benefit the carer.

USEFUL NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Thrive

The Geoffrey Udall Centre
Beech Hill
Reading
Berkshire
RG7 2AT
Tel: 0118 988 5688
Fax: 0118 988 5677
Email: info@thrive.org.uk
www.thrive.org.uk

Gardening can help anyone with a disability. Through its research, education and promotional activities Thrive aims to show how, why and where people with a disability can benefit.

GARDENING MAGAZINES AVAILABLE ON TAPE

There are a number of gardening magazines that are available on tape and CD for people who are blind or visually impaired. Most audio publications are now available online, including over 200 newspaper and magazines for a subscription.

The Talking Newspaper Association

National Recording Centre
Heathfield
East Sussex
TN21 8DB
Tel: 01435 866102
Email: info@tnauk.org.uk

Weekly: Amateur Gardening

Monthlies: BBC Gardeners World; Garden Answers; The Garden RHS; Which Gardening; and Homes and Gardens.

National Association of Flower Arrangement Societies CNAFAS

Osborne House
12 Devonshire Square
London
EC2M4TE
Tel: 0207 2475567
www.nagas.org.uk

Lists UK clubs offering education and events to promote art and personal enjoyment of flower arranging. The website links to Dorset and Guernsey and Wessex and Jersey (Christchurch area).

