



Saffron E-News

The digital update for Saffron tenants

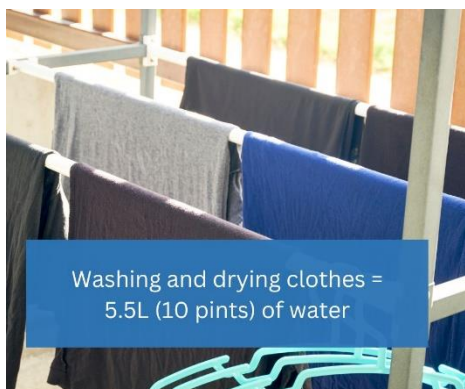
Advice on how to help manage condensation and mould in your home and how to contact us if you have concerns

Damp, condensation, or mould issues in your home can be a real issue and can come about in many different forms and for many different reasons. We have included some useful tips about how to help manage this within your home.

Mould is a fungi that can grow on a range of materials that can absorb moisture such as furniture and carpets. Mould needs moisture to grow and thrives in areas with high levels of condensation.

How to avoid condensation in your home

Water vapour can be produced through everyday activities, did you know:



You can help reduce condensation by taking the following steps:



It is unlikely a home can be condensation free, however, the above advice will help to control it.

It's important to treat mould straight away. If you have concerns about damp and mould in your home, contact us on 01508 532000 or email info@saffronhousing.co.uk.

We will:

- Work together to resolve the issue and may request photographs of the affected areas.
- Any work that we are responsible for will be identified and rectified.

We have more information on our dedicated Damp and Mould website page [here](#). We not only have our own tenant help sheet on there, but also a useful video from UK Centre for Moisture in Buildings and helpful leaflets from the NHS and Envirovent.

Two vacant homes given a new lease of life thanks to extra cash from South Norfolk District Council

We are working together with South Norfolk District Council to help fund renovations of two empty properties previously due to be sold off.

Extra 'commuted sums'* funding has been made available to deliver two high-quality three-bedroom homes available to rent, one in Wymondham and one in Stoke Holy Cross. The council is providing over £80,000 and we are providing another £36,000 towards the work.

The homes will be improved so they have lower running costs for future tenants.

Works have begun on the property in Wymondham, and when completed, will include:



- A new main roof
- A new frontage, overhang of a roof, and guttering
- The extension flat roof will be removed, the ceiling height raised, and a new roof fitted with updated insulation
- New windows
- A new front door
- A new bathroom
- A new kitchen
- The ground floor will be lifted and insulated
- Solar panels and battery storage fitted
- Many general repairs including all internal doors replaced

Director of Sustainability Jason MacCormick said: “These properties were going to be sold because they were in poor condition and had high maintenance costs. This extra funding will ensure the properties are brought up to a high standard and they will be much cheaper to run and maintain. With the rising costs of energy, we know how important it is to offer energy efficient and well insulated homes.

“We are very grateful to South Norfolk District Council for the extra funding. Work has begun in Wymondham and we’re in the process of agreeing the new specification for the property in Stoke Holy Cross. It’s an exciting project and one that will benefit two families very soon.”

South Norfolk Council Cabinet member, Alison Thomas said: “The Council understands how important it is for people to have an affordable home that is safe and warm. Investing in these properties has brought two previously derelict homes back into use and enabled two families to have a key to their own front door.”

* Commuted sums are a payment by an individual, authority, or company (developer) to the highway authority, local authority, or other body, as a contribution towards the future maintenance of the asset to be adopted or transferred. Both properties were transferred to Saffron from South Norfolk District Council in 2004.

Planting trees for the late Queen’s Green Canopy

We have recently planted 13 trees as part of the late Queen’s Green Canopy tree planting initiative, created to mark Her Majesty’s Platinum Jubilee in 2022.

Our Grounds Maintenance Team planted the saplings across our Independent Community Living and Independent Community Living Plus schemes. All have a commemorative Queen’s Green Canopy plaque, created by the Royal British Legion Industries.

Grounds Maintenance Team Leader Paul Bunce said: “We are proud to plant these trees as part of the late Queen’s Canopy. We hope as they grow over the coming years our tenants will enjoy them as part of their community.”



To find out more about the tree planting initiative, visit the official website [here](#).

Decarbonisation works transform tenants' homes

One of our tenants has praised the decarbonisation works carried out at his home as 100 other properties are set to benefit from the investment.

Last year the Government awarded £1.9m to South Norfolk and Broadland District Council to upgrade social housing provided by us. The money is being spent on improving the standard of 100 of our lowest energy rated properties between April 2022 to March 2023, making them more energy efficient and cheaper to heat. Improvements are being made to bring the properties up from an energy performance 'E rated' to 'C rated*' home, to significantly improve the heating demand of the property.



Mr and Mrs Mayhew live in a 2 bed bungalow in Harleston. The full programme of upgrades they have had includes:

- New windows and doors
- A new air source heat pump
- Improved ventilation

Mr Mayhew said: "It has made a huge difference to us. Before we had storage heaters and they were so expensive to run that we could only afford to heat one, and even then, it didn't get very warm. Now the bungalow is lovely and warm. The windows are amazing, and the new heating system is fantastic technology. We are well impressed."

Director of Sustainability Jason MacCormick, said: "This has been a huge project with a lot of learning for both ourselves and our contractors as we work with the latest technology to provide quality and sustainable homes for our tenants. To make the properties as efficient as possible, the homes need to have the whole package of improvements. Once the works are completed a property's efficiency will be monitored for a year so we can see how much energy is being used and how much money is being saved on household bills."

We are now bidding for a second wave of funding as part of Independent East, to continue the decarbonisation programme. Independent East is an informal alliance of like-minded community focused Housing Associations in East Anglia, including Saffron Housing, Broadland Housing Association, Freebridge Community Housing, Havebury Housing Partnership and Orwell Housing.

Jason MacCormick added: "If we're successful then we will expand the programme to include improvements on up to 434 D, E, F and G rated properties over the next two years. As the cost of living continues to rise, this will benefit hundreds more of our tenants and families, giving them warmer homes, which will be cheaper to heat."





We are due to hear whether they have been successful for the next wave of funding by March 2023.

*Properties are rated between A-G, with the A rating being extremely efficient while G ratings are given to very energy inefficient buildings.

You said, we did

Each month we carry out Customer Satisfaction surveys which are a great way of gaining feedback from our tenants so we can see where we are doing things well or perhaps where we can improve. The surveys ask questions about our key frontline services, such as our Customer Contact Centre, Anti-Social Behaviour and Housing Management.

The table below includes some of your feedback from those surveys and the actions we have taken as a result. We always like to hear from our tenants, so if you would like to send us feedback, including a compliment, please fill out the feedback form on the 'Get in touch' website page [here](#).

You said...	... We did.
 <p>You would like Saffron to have of more presence in your neighbourhood.</p>	<p>We arranged a community clear up day and Community Triangle in Loddon with representatives from Saffron, the police and parish council attending.</p>
 <p>There is a lack of pride in the community.</p>	<p>Saffron have completed a number of home visits to tenants in the Loddon area, to discuss how to keep their community clean, gardens tidy and neighbourhood a safe place to live.</p>
 <p>Sometimes it takes a while to get through.</p>	<p>Did you know we have a 'queuebuster' call back system?</p> <p>After 60 seconds of waiting to speak to an advisor you are given the option for a call back, which will hold your space in the queue and save you waiting on the phone.</p> <p>We continue to receive positive feedback on this service with one tenant saying: "It is nice that you can get a call back when the lines are busy."</p>
 <p>The website is not very user friendly, I mainly have email to contact Saffron.</p>	<p>We have a new website coming soon.</p> <p>We hosted a tenant workshop in October and received some honest and constructive feedback about the new design of the website and how the pages will fit together. During February we will start some further testing which will involve our staff, Board and tenants testing specific parts of the new site and provide any general feedback.</p> <p>We will provide another update about the new website in the next Saffron E-News.</p>

Repairs Policy changes

The Repairs Review continues, and we are pleased to give further updates following the last Saffron e-news in October. The new 'follow on' process, where an initial repair requires further work, has now started and we are already seeing a reduction in the time taken to complete these types of repairs.

We have reviewed our processes to make sure they all have the same standards, to ensure tenants receive a consistent level of service. For example, with blown windows and repairs works for tenants who have certain vulnerabilities, such as lock or door chain changes for those at risk of domestic abuse. We also provide support to tenants who have mobility issues or visual impairments and can't safely carry out some tenant responsibility works themselves. A new process and relevant policies have been updated to reflect these changes.

We have reviewed the scripts our Customer Contact Team use so they ask the right questions to tenants when diagnosing a repair. These will go live soon.

We have also been working to improve the system that schedules the repair jobs. This should see a reduction in travel time for craftworkers between jobs and more time on the jobs. As part of this we have also introduced designated craftworker areas which means you are more likely to see the same craftworkers for similar type jobs.

It has been really important to us that we engaged with tenants throughout the Repairs Review and changes have been made in consultation with the Service Quality Committee*, who have provided valuable feedback about the services we deliver. If you have any queries about the review or would like to be involved with shaping our services, please email getinvolved@saffronhousing.co.uk.

*The role of the SQC is to receive feedback from Saffron Community Members (including the Tenant Scrutiny Group and Tenant Communication & Support Group), and to monitor and oversee continuous improvements to the quality of our services and our tenants' experience.



Saffron E-News Survey

Thank you to everyone who took the time to fill out the survey in the October issue of Saffron E-News where we asked you a few questions about the digital version of our tenant newsletter. Some of the results are shown in the graphic to the right. We really value your feedback and will use it as we look at future e-editions. If you have any further suggestions, please email communications@saffronhousing.co.uk.

