

Spring 2020/Issue 28

home



Changes to
your rent and
service charge

Flushing money away

How to avoid unnecessary repair costs.

Packing your bags?

Everything you need to know about
finding somewhere new to live.

Looking for something to do?

Our community events calendar is packed to the brim.



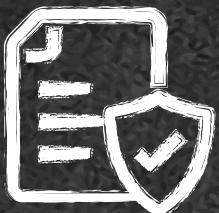
Win £50
in shopping
vouchers!

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR SHOPPING IN 4 EASY STEPS!

A2DOMINION HAS TEAMED UP WITH MY RENT REWARDS TO OFFER YOU CASHBACK TOWARDS YOUR RENT

STEP 1:

DOWNLOAD "MY RENT REWARDS" ON GOOGLE PLAY OR THE APP STORE

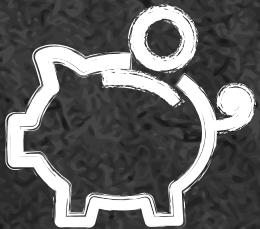


STEP 2:

SIGN UP ON THE APP AND SECURELY LINK YOUR CREDIT OR DEBIT CARDS

STEP 3:

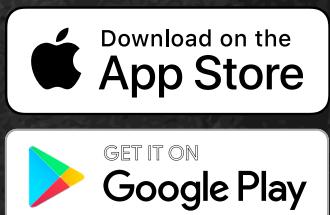
SHOP! YOU CAN EARN CASHBACK AT TESCO, ASOS, AMAZON AND 1000S MORE ACROSS THE UK AND ONLINE



STEP 4:

WATCH THE MONEY ROLL IN AND OFFSET IT AGAINST YOUR RENT!

DOWNLOAD MY RENT REWARDS TODAY AND START PAYING YOUR RENT EACH TIME YOU SHOP!



Welcome

The new year (and the new decade!) is here, which means it's time for another issue of Home.

We've got a jam-packed magazine for you with feature articles on our new rent and service charge booklets and your options for moving house.

We also take a look at what's happening in our community centres, what we're doing about fire safety, and what you shouldn't be flushing down your toilet.

We've got our world-famous quiz with your chance to win shopping vouchers, and if you haven't already, check out our new website - a2dominion.co.uk - for all the latest news and information from A2Dominion.



Sheahan Arnott
Editor

Enter our quiz
for your chance
to win £50!



04 Introducing your new rent and service charge booklet

06 What's going on?

Our community events calendar has something for you.

07 The Usual Flushpects

How you can avoid unnecessary repairs in your home.

08 Getting a move on

A quick guide to your options for moving house.

10 How fire safe are you?

Tips to protect your home and family from fire.

12 Have you visited our new website yet?

Your one-stop shop for everything you need to know and managing your account.

12 When are we open over Easter?

Answer the 3 questions in this edition of Home for your chance to win 1 of 3 £50 high street vouchers.

Get your entry in before 28 February 2020 to be in the running.

Visit a2dominion.co.uk/competitionrules for terms and conditions.

Submit your answers online at a2dominion.co.uk/competition or post them to:

Communications team
A2Dominion
The Point
37 North Wharf Road
London W2 1BD

Congratulations to our Autumn 2019 winners: Maureen Felix, Kaya Dixon and Helene Griffin.

Introducing your new rent and service charge booklet

Early each year we send out more than 27,000 rent and service charge estimates, but from this year, your rent and service charge letter will look different.

Our new rent and service charge booklet is more personalised to you, your home and your estate, and is easier to read and understand.

A better solution

Over the past few years we've looked at a range of ways to improve how we manage your service charge.

Many of them have focussed on accuracy, and we will continue to work towards achieving our goal of making sure your service charge is 100% accurate each year.

We've been improving year-on-year, and these new booklets are a major step forward in making service charges more transparent and accessible.

Clarity and transparency

This is **your** rent and service charge. You'll be able to see exactly what you're paying, whether it has gone up or down compared to last year, and why.

You won't need to read through commentary about charges that don't apply to your home - you'll see what relates to you with more detailed explanations and breakdowns.

Your booklet will have everything you need to know in one convenient place.

Value for money

The new booklets are not only clearer, and with more information relevant to you, they use less paper than the previous loose-leaf mail version.

This means they're better for the environment and cost less to produce.



What you need to know about changes to your rent

Over the past 4 years we've reduced social and affordable rents in line with the government's requirements.

But from April this year we will be increasing these rents following a new set of guidelines.

How will we calculate your rent?

The government has capped rent increases at Consumer Price Index (CPI) +1% in any year (i.e. 2.7%), and we will be raising some of our rents in line with this.

CPI is calculated by the Office of National Statistics, based on the cost of a standard group of items.

Why are we increasing rents?

We reinvest all our profits into building new places for people to live, improving our existing properties and providing services to our local communities.

Increasing some of our rents will help us cope with the growing costs of providing homes and services to the people who need them.

Before making this decision, we consulted with our Customer Advisory Panel, which represents your interests and helps inform the way we do things for our customers.

If your rent is going to change, we will let you know how much your new rent will be in your personalised rent and service charge booklet in February, or on the anniversary of your rent review.

We'll also let you know when you'll need to start paying the new amount.

What do you need to do?

You don't need to take any action now, but if you're worried about paying your rent, or would like help with managing your finances, our Tenancy Sustainment team is on hand to work with you. Call 0800 432 0077 and ask to speak to a Tenancy Sustainment Officer.

For more information about your rent, and anything else to do with your home visit my.a2dominion.co.uk.

How do we work out your service charge?

Your service charge is based on 2 main types of cost - contract costs and responsive costs.

Contract costs are easier to calculate as they're for maintenance and services we can plan for in advance, and we're locked in on price.

Responsive costs are a little trickier to calculate as these are largely to do with how our customers treat where they live, and are therefore more variable.

While some maintenance costs are unavoidable, there's a lot you can do to keep these costs low. A great example of this is bulk waste removal.

Our total spend on bulk waste removal has gone up by 25% compared to last year, due to increased amounts of fly-tipping and improper bin use.

These are costs you could avoid if you and your neighbours dispose of rubbish correctly.

Want to know more about your service charge? Visit a2dominion.co.uk/service-charge.

Over the past 2 years service charge queries have reduced by
22%

a2dominion

Mr N Surname
Address Line 1
Address Line 2
Address Line 3
Address Line 4
Address Line 5
POSTCODE

Important information about your rent and service charge.

How we've worked out your estimated service charge				
This is how much we think it will cost us to provide services such as gardening or repairs in shared areas to your home and estate during the year.				
ESTIMATED ESTATE SERVICE CHARGES				
Description	The amount we estimate last year was:	The amount we estimate for this year is:	The proportion that applies to you is:	Your share of this year's estimate is:
Bulk refuse removal - see notes below	£00,000.00	£00,000.00	00.0000%	£00,000.00
Grounds maintenance	£00,000.00	£00,000.00	00.0000%	£00,000.00
Communal repairs	£00,000.00	£00,000.00	00.0000%	£00,000.00
Total estimated charge for the year	£00,000.00	£00,000.00		£00,000.00
Monthly estate service charge				£00,000.00
ESTIMATED BLOCK SERVICE CHARGES				
Description	The amount we estimate last year was:	The amount we estimate for this year is:	The proportion that applies to you is:	Your share of this year's estimate is:
Block clearing - see notes below	£00,000.00	£00,000.00	00.0000%	£00,000.00
Bulk refuse removal	£00,000.00	£00,000.00	00.0000%	£00,000.00
Communal repairs - see notes below	£00,000.00	£00,000.00	00.0000%	£00,000.00
Insurance	£00,000.00	£00,000.00	00.0000%	£00,000.00
Lighting and electricity	£00,000.00	£00,000.00	00.0000%	£00,000.00
Management fee	£00,000.00	£00,000.00	00.0000%	£00,000.00
Total estimated charge for the year	£00,000.00	£00,000.00		£00,000.00
Monthly block service charge				£00,000.00
ESTIMATED SINKING FUND CONTRIBUTION				
Description	The amount we estimate last year was:	The amount we estimate for this year is:	The proportion that applies to you is:	Your share of this year's estimate is:
Sinking funds	£00,000.00	£00,000.00	00.0000%	£00,000.00
Total estimated contribution for the year	£00,000.00	£00,000.00		£00,000.00
Monthly block sinking fund				£00,000.00
ABOUT THE PROPORTION THAT APPLIES TO YOU				
You may notice that you appear to be paying a higher proportion for some charges, such as Examination fees, Insurance and Management fees. This is due to there being rented properties in your block. These charges still apply to all tenants, but are included as part of their rent and are not shown as a separate service charge. This is why the proportion that applies to you for some charges appears to be higher on your statement.				
Further details on your estimated service charge				
ESTATE CHARGES				
Description	Commentary text to go here ut perspiciatis unde omnis iste natus error sit voluptatem accusantium dolorem ipsum ut omnis iste natus error sit voluptatem accusantium doloremque.			

Page 3

Investing in our communities

What's going on?

From our weekly Advice Plus services, to after-school programmes to free health checks for older people, you're sure to find something for you in our community events calendar.

Last year over 5,800 of you took part in our local activities.

The best way to find out what's happening in your area is to follow your local A2Dominion community centre page on Facebook.

You'll get the latest on our wide range of events, as well as news and ways for you and your family to get involved in our community programmes.

The Beethoven Centre

Third Ave
Queen's Park
London, W10 4JL
facebook.com/BeethovenCentre

Stanwell Rose Community Centre

Mulberry Ave
Stanwell, TW19 7SF
facebook.com/StanwellRoseCommunity

Swanfield Park Community Centre

Swanfield Park Drive
Chichester, PO19 6GH
facebook.com/CommunitiesAtA2Dominion

The Honeywell Centre

Wraysbury Drive
West Drayton, UB7 7FG
facebook.com/CommunitiesAtA2Dominion

Havelock Community Centre

17 Trubshaw Road
Southall, UB2 4XW
facebook.com/TheHavelockCentre

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	DIGITAL D.I.Y.	BINGO - STANWELL	FRIDAY CLUB - STANWELL	7
8	KNT & NATTER - STANWELL	SOCIABLE SENIORS - BEETHOVEN	MULTISPORTS - BEETHOVEN	12	STREET DANCE - HAVELOCK	14
15	HOMEWORK CLUB - GREEN MAN LANE	CREATIVE DANCE - BEETHOVEN	YOGA - BEETHOVEN	CAPOEIRA - STANWELL	YOUTH CLUB - SWANFIELD	21
22	U3-ART CLUB - SWANFIELD	HEALTHY WALKS - BEETHOVEN	DIGITAL D.I.Y.	JUDO - HAVELOCK	FRIDAY CLUB - STANWELL	ENTERPRISE PROGRAMME FINAL
29	RADIO CLUB - SWANFIELD	COFFEE CLUB - SWANFIELD				

THIS CALENDAR IS MEANT AS A GUIDE ONLY, AS THE DATES, LOCATIONS OR ACTIVITIES MAY CHANGE.

KEEP UP TO DATE WITH EVERYTHING HAPPENING IN YOUR COMMUNITY AT [FACEBOOK.COM/COMMUNITIESATA2DOMINION](https://facebook.com/COMMUNITIESATA2DOMINION).

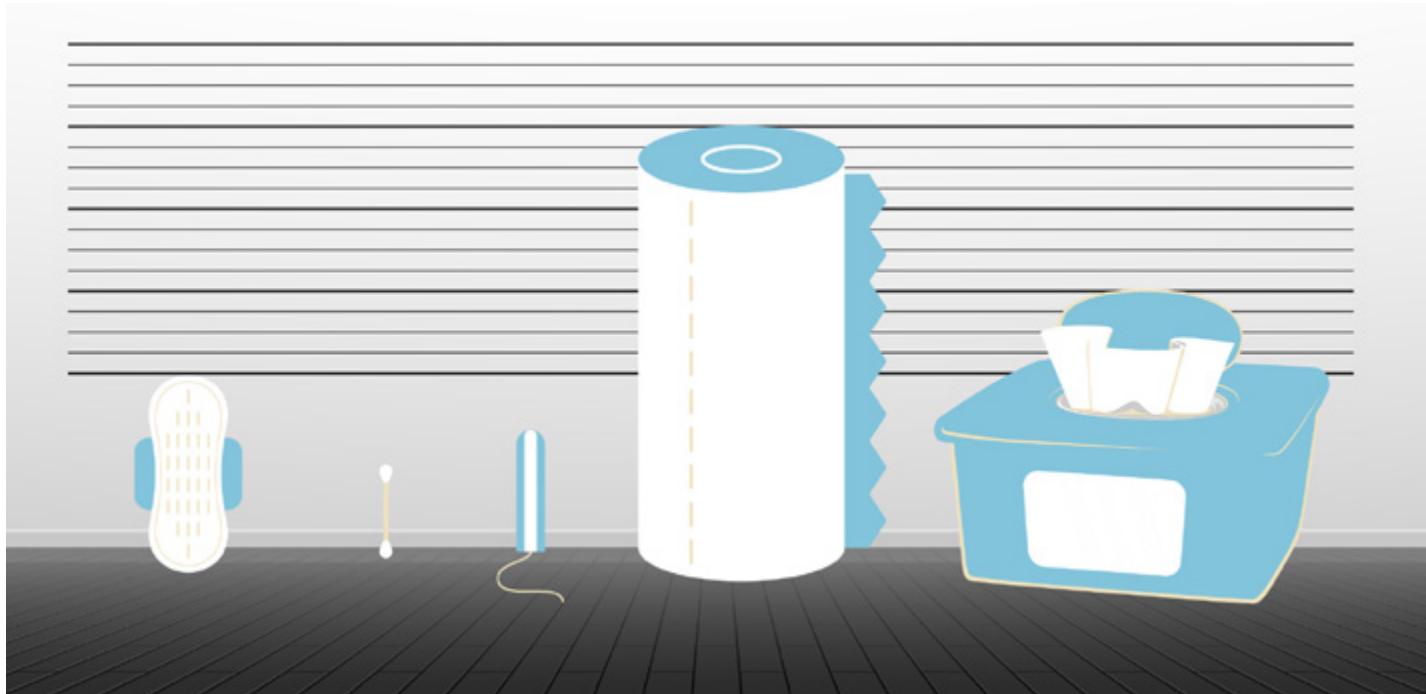
Staines Advice Plus sessions

Our weekly Advice Plus sessions in Staines are no longer being held at Staines Library. For more information on our advice services in the area, contact **community.investment@a2dominion.co.uk** or call **0800 432 0077**.

The Usual Flushpects

Quiz question

How many of the “flushable” wipes tested in a 2018 BBC study passed industry disintegration tests? Find out how to enter on page 3.



Each year, we spend millions of pounds repairing or fixing “avoidable problems” – problems caused by people misusing their property - and these costs have to be covered within service charges.

Toilet blockages and backsurges are among the most disruptive, unpleasant and avoidable of these problems.

Last year we spent
£1.35m
fixing bathroom blockages
and backsurges due to
non-flushable items.

Backsurges happen when water (and anything else carried in it) can't flow along a pipe as it should due to a blockage, and returns whence it came, causing a great deal of mess and inconvenience in your convenience.

Aside from the obvious side effects, back surges can damage your property, are expensive to fix and clean up after, and our repair staff can't always attend and deal with the blockage immediately.

If you live in an apartment block, you might not even realise there's been a backsurge, as it may show up in someone else's toilet, bath, sink, shower or anywhere else with pipes.

The Unflushables

More than half the plumbing blockages in the UK each year are caused by flushing items down the toilet that shouldn't be flushed including: feminine hygiene products, wet wipes, baby wipes, nappies, kitchen roll,

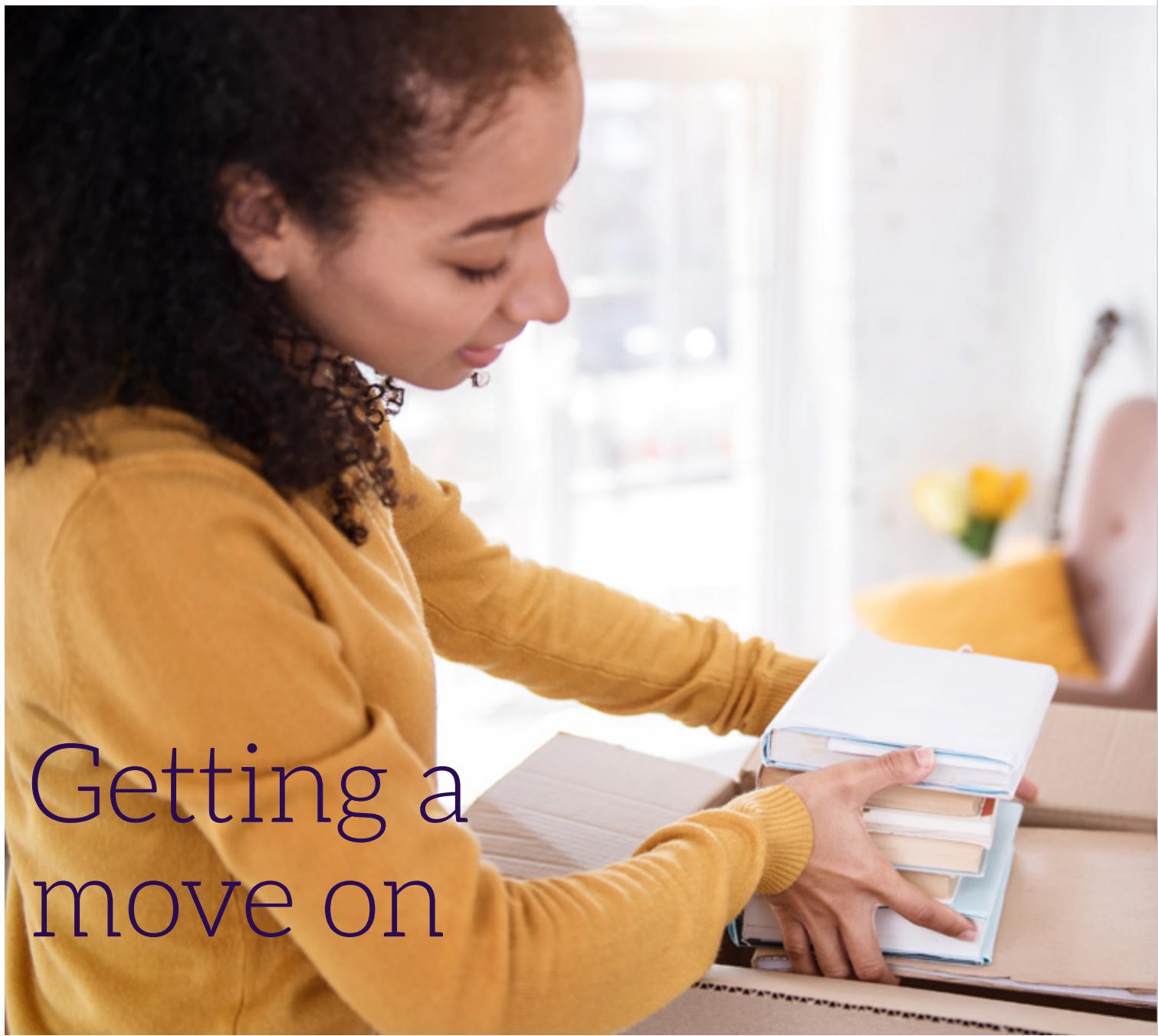
cotton wool, make-up wipes and anti-bacterial surface wipes.

And although some wet wipes are sold as “flushable”, a BBC investigation in November 2018 found that none of the wet wipes sold in the UK passed the water industry's disintegration tests.

Toilet paper, on the other hand, is designed to break down quickly in water and move easily through the plumbing system without creating blockages.

So the golden rule is don't flush anything down your loo that's not supposed to be flushed, and help avoid any nasty surprises - financial or otherwise.

Got a blockage in your WC? Or need something else fixed? You can request a repair online at my.a2dominion.co.uk.



Getting a move on

There are lots of reasons why you might want or need to move house.

Whether you need more room or you're downsizing, you want to be closer to family or further away from work, or you just want a change of scenery, there's a range of ways to find a new lease and a new lease of life.

We've had a look at a few of them for you.

Your local authority

You can contact a local authority if you want to be added to their housing register and possibly move into their area.

There's no guarantee that they'll accept your application as each local authority has different criteria.

Some local authorities also use a choice-based lettings scheme (CBL) to allocate properties, and you can find out more about these on the next page.

Homeswapper

Homeswapper is a free website where you can exchange properties with tenants from other housing providers or local authorities.

There are also incentives available if you're moving to a smaller home. Visit homeswapper.co.uk to find out more.

Quiz question

Who is A2Dominion's CBL partner?
Find out how to enter on page 3.

Shared ownership

Shared ownership is a great option if you and your family want to move away from renting and onto the property ladder.

You'll buy as little as 25% of your home, and you'll rent the remaining amount from us.

This means you'll pay less rent on the property than you normally would, and we'll keep renting it to you as long as you own your share. It also means you'll need a smaller deposit when you buy your share.

You can buy more shares in your property until you own the freehold on your home and you no longer pay us rent. This process is called staircasing.

And we'll support you throughout your whole journey, from helping you with paperwork to connecting you with financial advisors and surveyors.

Visit a2dominion.co.uk/shared-ownership for more information. You can also see what shared ownership properties we currently have for sale.

So you're moving out...

You may have some items in your tenancy agreement specifically for your property, but if you're moving out of your home you will need to:

- Give us 1 calendar month's notice that you're leaving.
- Arrange a visit from our maintenance team to check the property. You'll need to make any repairs you're responsible for before you leave.
- Tell your service providers, such as gas, water and internet, that you're moving and take any readings they request.
- Remove your furniture, possessions and rubbish, and clean the property.
- Make sure your rent and service charges are all paid.
- Return any keys, fobs, permits and payment cards to us. We'll let you know where to leave your keys when we confirm your leaving date.

For more information about moving house, CBL, shared ownership, or anything else to do with your tenancy visit a2dominion.co.uk/help.

Choice-based lettings schemes

Choice-based letting schemes (CBL) allow you to bid for council and housing association properties if you are on the housing waiting list.

You can use a CBL to find a new home, whether or not it is an A2Dominion property.

Homehunt - homehunt.co.uk

We have a partnership with Homehunt, a nation-wide CBL, designed to give more people greater access to affordable rented properties.

You can apply for any home you are eligible for on Homehunt, no matter who the provider is.

Seaside & Country Homes

The Seaside & Country homes scheme is specifically for people looking to escape the hustle and bustle of the city.

At least one member of your household needs to be 55 or older, while anyone under 55 will need to be a partner, joint tenant or registered carer. You can find more information at london.gov.uk

Housing Moves - housingmoves.org

Housing Moves is the Mayor of London's housing mobility scheme, and allows people to move outside their current London borough or housing provider.

Locata - locata.org.uk

Locata is a CBL for people wanting to move into or around Hillingdon, Harrow, Brent and Ealing.

Searchmoves - searchmoves.co.uk

Like Locata, Searchmoves is for people looking for a home specifically in Spelthorne or Elmbridge.

How fire safe are you?



Fire safety in your home starts with you, and making sure your family and your home are protected is easier than you might think.

We've compiled a list of things you can do, and not do, to take charge of fire prevention and fire safety.

Quiz question

How often should you test your smoke detectors?
Find out how to enter on page 3.

Know what to do if there is a fire

Depending on your home, you may need to leave your home, or you might need to stay put until you're told otherwise.

Fire doors slow and stop the spread of fire, so it's important to keep these closed as much as you can.

Keep communal spaces clear

We have zero-tolerance policy when it comes to items in communal areas.

And although it may seem like doormats or other small items aren't fire hazards, we need to make sure escape routes and access routes are clear in an emergency.

Be socket safe

Don't overload your power sockets, and use an RCD socket if you can.

Leaving your phone (or other items) charging overnight can cause them to

overheat and become a fire risk, aside from being bad for the device's battery.

Don't put yourself at risk

Everyday chores like cooking and doing the laundry can be mundane, but it's important to do them safely.

This includes not hanging washing over heaters or radiators, and not leaving items on the stove or in the oven unattended. Don't leave your slow cooker on overnight, or while you're not at home.

Alarms save lives

Whether you have battery-operated or hard-wired smoke detectors, it's important to check they are working correctly each month, and they have new batteries every 6 months.

Visit a2dominion.co.uk to keep up to date on everything we're doing, and everything you can do, about fire safety.

HOW TO TEST YOUR SMOKE ALARMS



ASK SOMEONE TO STAND IN THE ROOMS YOU AREN'T TESTING THE ALARM IN. YOU NEED TO BE ABLE TO HEAR THE ALARM IN EVERY ROOM.

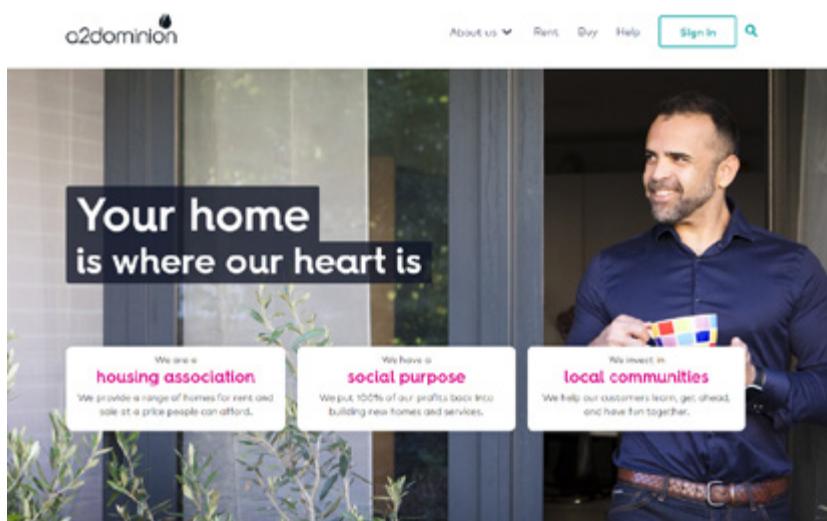
PRESS AND HOLD THE TEST BUTTON FOR A FEW SECONDS OR UNTIL THE ALARM SOUNDS. IF THE SOUND IS WEAK, OR IT'S BEEN MORE THAN 6 MONTHS SINCE YOU LAST CHANGED THE BATTERY, YOU'LL NEED A NEW BATTERY.



**SMOKE DETECTORS SAVE LIVES.
TEST YOUR SMOKE AND
CARBON MONOXIDE
DETECTORS TODAY.**

**VISIT A2DOMINION.CO.UK FOR
MORE FIRE SAFETY TIPS**

Have you visited our new website yet?



Our new-look customer website launched in early November, and is your one-stop shop for information about your home, reporting issues, and news from A2Dominion.

We've designed our new website with you in mind. It's never been easier to manage your A2Dominion account or get the answers you need whether you're at home or on the move.

The website is cleaner and simpler, helping you find what you're looking for, and what the next steps are once you've found it.

We'll be continuing to improve our online platforms over the next 2 years, so be sure to check in regularly and keep up to date with everything we're doing across our communities.

Visit a2dominion.co.uk to find out how we can better help you.

When are we open over Easter?

Our main and local offices will be closed for Easter on Friday 10 April and Monday 13 April 2020. We re-open at 8:30am on Tuesday 14 April 2020.

Think you'll need to call us over the Easter period? Our customer contact centre will be also closed on the dates above, but it will be open on Thursday 9 April and Tuesday 14 April between 8:30am and 5:30pm.

During normal office hours, please call us on **0800 432 0077**. In an emergency please call on **0800 316 9880** when our customer contact centre is closed.

We expect to be busy on Tuesday 14 April. If your query is not urgent, you may want to call later in the week to avoid waiting in a queue.

We'll also be closed for the bank holiday on Friday 8 May 2020 and will re-open as usual on Monday 11 May.

Contact us

Manage your home the easy way. Simply visit our website and sign into your account to:

- Check your statements
- Pay bills online
- Request a repair
- View repairs history
- Tell us about an issue
- Update your details

Register today for instant access:

my.a2dominion.co.uk

For all other enquiries:

Online

a2dominion.co.uk/contact-us

Twitter

@A2DominionHelp

Phone

0800 432 0077
(Monday to Friday,
8:30am to 5:30pm)

Write

A2Dominion
113 Uxbridge Road
Ealing
London, W5 5TL

 /a2dominionhelp

 /a2dominion