



# Falling on stairs

## Hazard information for landlords

Falls can result in physical injury including bruising, puncture wounds, fractures and head, brain and spinal injuries. The severity of the injury is partly related to the type of fall including distance and surface material.

Whilst a fall on stairs and steps is less likely to occur than falling on a level surface, the injury sustained in this type of fall is more likely to be serious.

### Causes

Uneven or varied steps or a change of direction increases the likelihood of a misstep and a fall. Alternating treads, lack of any handrails/guards, stair covering/surface material and steepness can all increase the likelihood of fall.

Poor lighting to the base, landing and staircase can also contribute to the possibility of an occurrence. Doors that open up directly onto stairs also poses a hazard.

### Relevant Legislation

- Housing Act 2004
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985

### Legal obligations of the landlord

To keep the properties structure and exterior in good repair.

To carry out all repairs to the property in relation to the internal structure and facilities as necessary.

### Recommendations

- Make sure all staircases (internally and externally) meet the Building Regulations Part K, in terms of dimensions, pitch etc.
- Supply suitable lighting that covers all parts of the staircase.
- Provide all staircases/steps with suitable handrails to either left or right side, or both. The handrail should be at a height of between 900mm and 1000mm above the stair level.

- Make sure there is guarding up to a minimum height of 900mm above treads and is constructed in a way so as not to facilitate climbing.
- Stairs should be provided with a form of well fitting, secure, non-slip covering or treads.

To speak to the team in relation to an issue with falling on stairs in your privately rented property, email: [pshousing@dacorum.gov.uk](mailto:pshousing@dacorum.gov.uk) or telephone: **01442 228000** and ask for **Private Sector Housing** when prompted.

March 2020