

Request to open up an existing chimney.

With the rise in heating fuel costs and further increases expected, requests from our tenants to open previously closed fireplace openings in existing chimneys are likely to increase. While an open fire seems very appealing, especially if you have access to free or cheap fuel, **the opening of chimneys is not permitted in our homes.**




This is because:

- Most of our homes are in smoke control areas, meaning no coal or wood can be burnt, only smokeless fuel.
- Smokeless fuel is 25-35% more expensive when compared to gas, and more expensive than other fuel types such as oil and electric.
- Open fires / log burners only heat one room. A lack of whole-house heating can lead to damp and mould in other rooms.
- Any chimney opened would need an inspection to ensure that it is safe to use. It would also require regular sweeping. This needs to be undertaken by a qualified contractor. We will not pay for this work.
- Creating a fireplace for a solid fuel fire or burner must be undertaken to relevant regulations, this is specialist work and if incorrectly undertaken can be dangerous.
- Burning solid fuel is bad for the environment and sales of house coal and wet wood have been banned since 2021.
- Wood burning stoves and coal fires are the largest source of fine particulate matter (PM2.5) and small particles of air pollution which find their way into the body's lungs and blood. This is damaging to health.
- Emissions are higher from solid fuels than other types of heat such as gas etc.
- An open fire that does not burn correctly is dangerous, as carbon monoxide is produced for burning solid fuel. Even in small quantities this can be fatal, so it is essential that the correct type of fuel is burnt in the correct way.

The use of open fires, even when burning smokeless fuel, does not support our vision for a sustainable future. As we move towards a sustainable future, we are planning significant investment in upgrading insulation throughout our properties. This will include new doors and windows and will ensure that our homes use less energy and emit less carbon.

To achieve the huge goal of Net Zero Housing stock by 2050, we will be upgrading heating systems using best-in-class technology. This will require significant investigation, tenant



engagement and investment. These considerations must be very carefully evaluated prior to any heating upgrade programme being rolled out.

For further information or updates on our sustainability journey please visit our website or social media channels

If you have any questions or comments on any of the above or are struggling with utility costs, please contact wellbeing@twenty11.co.uk