

It is not practical for Willow Tree Housing Partnership Limited (WTHP) to clear pavements, pathways and car parks, for all of our properties. We do not have enough staff or the right equipment to keep everywhere clear of snow and ice. Generally, we do not clear snow and ice from communal areas, however, in some limited circumstances we may be able to help.

Salt boxes

On some estates WTHP may provide a salt box, this is provided for residents to use in case of ice and snow. Follow the advice in this leaflet if you are thinking of clearing snow and ice or spreading salt in communal areas. If we do supply a salt box, we will endeavour to make sure it is full in the autumn, but in prolonged periods of snow, it may run out and be difficult to replenish.

Clearing snow and ice yourself

Anyone can clear snow and ice from the pavement outside their home, pavements, pathways and car parks to prevent slips and falls. Follow the advice in this leaflet to clear snow and ice safely.

Tips on clearing snow and ice from pavements, paths or car parks

Do not be put off clearing paths because you are afraid someone will get injured. Remember, people walking on snow and ice have a responsibility to be careful themselves.

Do not believe the myths - it is unlikely you will be sued or held legally responsible for any injuries, if you have cleared the path carefully.

Wear warm clothes and suitable footwear. Remember cars may slip and find it hard to stop; wear bright clothes and do not take any risks with traffic.

Clear the snow and ice early in the day

It is easier to move fresh, loose snow, rather than hard snow that has compacted from people walking on it. If possible, start removing the snow and ice in the morning.

If you remove the top layer of snow in the morning, any sunshine during the day will help melt any ice beneath. Cover the path with salt before nightfall to stop it refreezing overnight.

About 1 tablespoon of salt or grit for every square meter should be ample, although you may need more for steep slopes and steps. Remember that salt can be washed away by further snow or rain and you may need to reapply it before it freezes again. Be careful not to spread salt on plants or grass as it may damage them.

If you do not have enough salt, you can also use sand or ash. These will not top the path icing over as effectively as salt, but will provide good grip underfoot.

Do not make the pathways more dangerous by causing them to refreeze. Do not use water to melt the snow, it may refreeze and turn to black ice. Black ice increases the risk of injuries as it is invisible and very slippery.

If WTHP supplies a salt bin, you can use this salt on communal areas. Do not use salt from a Highways bin as this is reserved for the roads

Preventing slips

Pay extra attention to clearing snow and ice from steps and steep pathways, you might need to use more salt on these areas.

Take care where you move the snow

Think about where you are putting the cleared snow, as you do not want to just shift the problem elsewhere. Make sure you do not pile snow over drains or gullies as this will stop the snow melting and draining away.

Make sure you make a path down the middle of the area to be cleared first, so you have a clear surface to walk on, then shovel the snow from the centre of the path to the sides.

Offer to clear your neighbours' paths

If your neighbour will have difficulty getting in and out of their home, offer to clear snow and ice around their property as well. Check on the welfare of any elderly or disabled neighbours in the cold weather. If you are worried about them, try contacting their relatives or friends, or if necessary the local council.

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