

Tenants Handbook

The obligations of both The Agent/Landlord and Tenant are clearly defined in your Tenancy Agreement. This handbook should be read in conjunction with your Tenancy Agreement and has been produced in order for you to understand your obligations; avoid future misunderstandings and to ensure our high level of customer service.

If you have any issues with your property or rental payments please contact us on **01482 569489** or WhatsApp Messaging on **07384592028** which will be answered during office hours

If you have an out of hours emergency please telephone the office number and press one to be transferred to the person on call.

PLEASE NOTE WE WILL ONLY RESPOND TO EMERGENCIES THAT REQUIRE URGENT ASSISTANCE OUT OF OFFICE HOURS WHICH ARE 9AM – 5PM.

We have an online reporting system for you to efficiently report repairs and include photographs of the issue. You will receive an invite to PropertyFile via email at the beginning of your tenancy. You can also access all your important tenancy documents on [here!](#)

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ACCESS

The Agent will ensure that:

Where access is required for routine inspection(s)/repairs, the tenants receive notification of the date, time and purpose of the visit not less than 24 hours in advance; save in circumstances where issuance of such notice is impractical and that tenant privacy and entitlement to freedom from unnecessary intrusion is respected. Business is pursued by the Agent in a professional, courteous and diligent manner at all times.

SECURITY & INSURANCE

Where there is a burglar alarm, the code may only be changed with The Landlord/Agents permission and the Agent **MUST** be informed of the new security code. Before leaving the house, check that all windows and doors are closed and set the alarm (if applicable). It is the Tenants responsibility to insure their own personal possessions **NOT** the Landlords. Also, it would be wise to include public liability.

REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

Repairs Procedure

You are responsible, with the Landlord, for looking after and maintaining the property. This section explains briefly what your shared responsibilities are, how to report a repair and how we deal with them. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us.

Reporting Repairs

Your first point of contact is to us as Managing Agents. You should contact us during office hours either by telephone or in writing. When you report your repair please make sure that you give us a daytime contact number. The contractor will contact you direct and arrange a convenient time to call. If the contractor does not contact you or the repair is not done within the time stated, you should contact us without delay in order that we may chase it up.

Repair Response Times

In order to ensure that repairs are carried out in relation to how urgent they are, we have agreed a set of response times. All repairs are put into different categories for which the response times are as follows:-

- Emergency Repairs: We will respond to an emergency repair within **24 hours** of being reported
- Urgent Repairs: We will respond to an urgent repair within **5 working** days of it being reported
- Routine Repairs: We will respond to routine repairs within **20** working days of being reported

Emergency Repairs An emergency repair is a repair that if not dealt with quickly, could affect the health, safety or security, of either yourself or any another persons using the building. These include:

- A blocked toilet or broken WC pan
- Broken door or window which makes your home unsafe
- A burst pipe
- Electricity failure
- Loss of water supply
- Complete failure of heating system or loss of hot water (in winter, where there are old or disabled people, or small children are involved)
- Blocked drain/soil stack

Urgent Repair

This is a repair that causes a loss of an essential facility or a major inconvenience, and if left unattended could cause further inconvenience, damage or harm to other people. For example:-

- Leaking roof
- Overflow from toilet cistern
- Cracked bath or wash basin
- Loss of heating to non vulnerable tenants
- Leaking waste pipe

Routine Repair

A repair that can be left for a while, without causing too much disruption or inconvenience. For example:

- Blocked or broken gutters or drainpipes
- Minor roof repairs
- Glazing or plaster repairs
- Repairs to kitchen fittings

In an emergency – What to do

If you need the **FIRE BRIGADE, POLICE** or an **AMBULANCE** dial 999 straight away, do not contact us first.

Gas or fumes

- If you think that you have a gas leak, can smell gas, or think that you or any of your family are suffering ill effects caused by fumes from a gas appliance, you should take the following actions:
- If there is a **strong** smell of GAS, take the following precautions IMMEDIATELY:-
- Put out any cigarettes, don't light any naked flames (lighters/matches) and switch off electric fires
- Check that all cooker knobs are turned off
- Check if a pilot light has gone out on a cooker or boiler
- If there is a leak turn off the pilot light if you can
- Turn off the gas meter control level - located to the side of your gas meter where the supply comes in
- Do not operate electrical switches or doorbells - either on or off
- Do not switch on or off any lights/sockets or appliances
- Open all windows and doors to air your home
- Do not use your telephone or mobile telephone - It is possible that either one could cause a spark and ignite any gas in the area
- Leave your flat
- If the gas smell returns phone TRANSCO on 0800 111999 and follow the above precautions
- Inform The Agent as soon as possible about what has happened

If there is a slight smell of GAS, take the following precautions:-

- Check that all cooker knobs are turned off
- Check if a pilot light has gone out on a cooker or boiler
- If there is a leak, turn off the pilot light if you can, or turn off the gas supply (the lever is next to the meter)
- Put out cigarettes, naked flames and switch off electric fires
- Open doors and windows to air your home. Wait until the smell of gas has gone before re-lighting pilot lights

- If the smell of gas returns call TRANSCO on 0800 111 999
- The possible side effects of exposure to gas fumes include:
- Headaches
- Migraines
- Feeling light headed

Burst Pipe

- Turn off the mains water stopcock. This is typically found under the kitchen sink or near the toilet
- Turn on all your taps to drain the water in the pipes
- If water is running down a light fitting, switch it off and remove the appropriate fuse from the fuse box
- Contact The Agent.

Note - Ensure you are familiar with the Central Heating System and that there is sufficient heat in the house in cold winter periods to avoid burst pipes. Leave some heating on if you go away in the winter and inform The Agent.

Fire Safety Precautions and Steps to Follow in Case of a Fire:

Smoke alarms

- A fire can start anywhere in your home, and the easiest way to protect you and your family is to have working smoke alarms fitted. Smoke alarms provide an early warning of a fire and give you time to make your escape
- It's important to ensure smoke alarms are fitted in the right place, and you should always follow the manufacturer's fitting instructions
- Make sure you have a working smoke alarm in your main circulation area hallway/landing; advise us as soon as possible if this is not working
- Working smoke alarms should be on every level
- Test your smoke alarms monthly
- Never cover your alarms, and never disconnect or remove the batteries from your alarms

Stop fires from happening

By taking a few simple steps, you can stop fires from happening in your home.

Smoking:

- This is a non smoking property, you must smoke outside in fresh air, clear of the building, and dispose of cigarettes safely
- Make sure cigarettes are put out properly and use a proper ashtray
- Keep matches and lighters out of reach and sight of children
- If you use e-cigarettes, follow the manufacturer's instructions and use the correct charger

Cooking:

- Never leave pans unattended when cooking
- Never overfill chip pans.
- Never throw water on a chip pan fire; you should turn off the heat and close the door to the kitchen
- Never leave children alone in the kitchen whilst cooking

Electrics:

- Never overload electrical sockets

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions when using extension cables
- Do not leave items on continuous charge
- Turn off electrical appliances when not in use, and don't leave them on standby
- Follow safety guidance issued on product recalls, such as tumble dryers, washing machines, fridges, freezers, and other appliances
- Regularly remove fluff from tumble dryers

Candles:

- Candles, tea lights and incense burners should only be placed in stable, heat resistant holders
- Keep them clear of any materials that may catch fire, such as curtains, fabrics, furniture and clothes
- Never leave children alone with lit candles

Heating:

- Keep portable heaters well away from anything that can catch alight, such as furniture and bedding
- Never use damaged or defective heaters, and always follow the manufacturer's safety advice

Housekeeping:

- Never leave rubbish, waste or any belongings in the common stairways or corridors; this could affect you and your neighbour's safety

Stay safe when you go to bed

- Close all doors, as this helps to prevent fire and smoke spreading
- Switch off and unplug electrical appliances, such as TVs
- Check that cookers and heaters are turned off
- Make sure candles and tea lights are extinguished
- Avoid charging mobile phones, e-cigarettes, etc. overnight
- Don't store or charge mobility scooters on the only route out of the property, such as the hallway. Overnight, scooters should be kept in a separate room, such as the lounge or a second bedroom

What to do in the event of a fire

- Make an escape plan, be prepared, don't wait until it happens, and make sure everyone knows how to get out safely
- Always make sure doors and any escape windows can be easily opened in an emergency. Make sure any keys are available and kept where everyone can find them
- Don't store combustible materials in hallways, landings or balconies which could obstruct your escape
- If your smoke alarms operate or you discover a fire, follow your escape plan
- Close the door of the room where the fire is
- Make sure everyone is alerted and leave the building as quickly as possible
- Make sure your entrance door is closed behind you
- Make your way out of the building
- Call the fire and rescue service by dialing 999 or 112. Give them your address and wait until they confirm this back to you

What to do in the event of a fire in another flat or other part of the building (where a 'stay put' policy is in force)

- Most flats are designed and constructed to restrict the spread of fire. Therefore, a fire should not spread from one flat to another. Stairways and corridors are also constructed of fire-resisting materials, which makes them safe to use in the event of a

fire elsewhere in the building

- If you become aware of a fire in another flat or elsewhere in the building, you should be safe to remain in your flat while the fire and rescue service deal with the fire
 - However, you should always leave your flat if it becomes affected by smoke or fire, and if told to leave by the fire and rescue service. If you are in any doubt and feel unsafe in your flat, and it's safe to use the common escape stairway, you should make your way out of the building. If you are in the common parts of the building and you become aware of a fire, leave the building immediately and phone the fire and rescue service

Electricity

If the power to your home and your neighbour's home suddenly goes off, contact your electricity supplier

- If the power to an appliance goes off check the plug and fuse box. Should all your sockets trip the main switch, fully unplug all devices and appliances – TV's, fridge, lamps etc and reset the switch. Plug everything back in one by one and you should be able to determine the faulty appliance. Reminder: If you have a key meter remember to check that you have credit.

Repairs Responsibilities of the Landlord/Agent

We are responsible for the upkeep of:

- The structure of the building
- The outside of your home, which includes the communal areas
- The plumbing, electrical and heating systems that were originally provided by us (not including those that you have installed yourself).

This includes:

- The roof, drains, gutters and outside pipes
- Outside walls, doors, window sills, window frames & glass
- Outside painting and decoration
- Internal walls, skirting boards, doors & door frames, door jambs, thresholds, floors and ceilings (but not internal painting & decorating)
- Major internal plasterwork
- Flues, chimneys and chimney stacks (but not cleaning the chimneys)
- Fences, pathways, boundary walls, steps, ramps and stair-lifts
- Garages and outbuildings (where provided by us)
- Common entrances, stairways, lifts and lighting
- Rubbish chutes
- Water pipes & tanks, gas pipes and electrical wiring
- Electrical sockets and smoke detectors (where fitted by us), light fittings (but not plugs or other fittings that are not fitted by us)
- Basins, sinks, baths, toilets, flushing systems and waste pipes
- Water heaters, boilers, fireplaces, fitted fires and radiators
- Re-tiling in bathrooms and kitchens

Please Note: There are certain repairs that if caused by you, a member of your household or a visitor to your home, may result in us asking you to pay for the cost of making the repair (for instance, broken windows or doors).

Tenant's Repair Responsibilities

You are responsible for:

- Internal decoration – **You must always get permission from the Agent before commencing with any redecorating but this will not be unreasonably withheld.**
- Minor repairs
- Maintenance of appliances and fittings installed by you that do not belong to the Landlord (unless we have agreed to adopt them).

This includes:

- Painting and decorating the inside of your home (see above)
- Altering doors for carpets
- Replacing lost or damaged keys (We will charge you for the actual cost of replacing keys and fobs)
- Repairing small plaster cracks
- Replacing electric plugs, fuses & light bulbs
- The upkeep of your own garden
- Plumbing in your own washing machine
- Replacing the toilet seat
- Bath and sink plugs.

If repairs are necessary to any of the Landlord's furniture or fittings, contact the Agent immediately. Do not make your own arrangements to have the repairs done as you may have to pay for them and any damage incurred. You should also report repairs to us that are our responsibility to carry out.

Standards and Timescales

If you are not happy with the repair or if we have not responded within the times we have set, you should contact the Agent. Every effort will be made to put things right, however, if you are still dissatisfied, you have the right to complain in accordance with our complaints procedure

MANAGEMENT OF DISPUTES

- Where disputes between The Agent and tenants occur, reasonableness and promptness in dealing with the issues by both parties is the key to the amicable and effective resolution of problems.
- The Agent undertake to:
- Respond reasonably and promptly to tenants or tenant representatives in regard to any complaints or difficulties raised by tenants.
- Make written response to correspondence from tenants of their chosen representative within four weeks.
- Ensure that all settlements and agreements reached are honoured within three weeks of such settlement being agreed.

COMPLAINTS

The Agents undertake to:

- Within four weeks of receipt of any written complaint from a tenant or a local resident, or their representative. The Agent shall use best endeavours to rectify any breach or, in the alternative, enter into correspondence with any tenants or their representative where such an allegation is contested.

Anti-Social Behaviour

The Agent and Tenant acknowledge that residents have a right to peace, quiet and security in their homes. Common and Statutory Law protects this right and it is also an obligation placed on residents through their tenancy agreement. However, often small minorities of residents cause problems for their neighbours and these can, if not tackled promptly, have serious effects on the well being of those affected. This sort of behaviour is now commonly classified as anti-social behaviour. The National Social the Agents Crime and Nuisance Group defines anti-social behaviour as: “The term anti-social behaviour is very broad. It includes all types of behaviour, which by definition is anti-social in nature but also includes behaviour that falls short of criminality, but seriously impairs the quality of life for local people. It is behaviour of the minority that blights the life of the majority, deeply affecting those people who are subjected to it. It is a problem which has many causes, and thus, by necessity, it is one which requires a wide range of responses if it is to be successfully tackled”.

Given this definition, it is not possible to draw up a definitive list of behaviour or actions that constitute such anti-social behaviour. Each complaint made to The Agent will therefore be considered in a prompt and effective manner recognising the need to adopt a complainant orientated approach whilst seeking the most appropriate remedies given the facts of each case. This Anti-Social Behaviour Procedure is designed to ensure an effective response is made to all complaints about alleged anti-social behaviour.

Noise and Nuisance

We are committed to ensuring that all tenants and leaseholders enjoy their right to peace, quiet and security in their homes. We will take firm and prompt action in dealing with disruptive tenants and any other persons causing a nuisance or harassment. Noise is the most common form of nuisance. It is a term of your Tenancy Agreement that you will “Not to do anything at the premises (including the playing of excessively loud music) which is a nuisance or annoyance or causes damage to the premises or adjacent or adjoining premises or neighbours or might reasonably be considered to be anti-social behaviour.” If your neighbour is causing you a nuisance you should firstly try to discuss it with them in such a way as to avoid conflict. In most cases they may not be aware that they are disturbing you. If the nuisance continues, report it to your Local Police station or Council who will deal with it in accordance with their policy and procedures on Noise & Nuisance. There are certain steps that you can take to avoid causing unnecessary noise and nuisance:-

- Keep your TV, radio or Hi-fi etc, at a low volume, especially at night (use earphones if you like loud music)
- Try not to slam doors
- Avoid revving cars, vans or motorbikes, especially late at night
- Avoid Do It Yourself (DIY) maintenance at unsociable hours (inform your neighbour in advance of what you’re doing)
- Keep pets under control

- Warn people in advance if you are having a party (try to keep the volume down)
- Noisy parties and other constant noise problems are best dealt with by the local Council's Environmental Health Officers. They have the power to not only take legal action, but also confiscate Hi-fi equipment responsible for making the noise.

Harassment and Violence

We will not tolerate and will take prompt and effective action against ALL forms of violence and harassment. We advise the police are contacted immediately and informed of any situations whereby persons are responsible for inflicting physical and or verbal abuse, or intimidating residents, their families and visitors to the property. We define harassment as "anti-social behaviour" resulting in the persecution or intimidation of a person or group because of prejudice or discrimination. This includes verbal as well as physical attacks, and attacks on property as well as people. We advise the police are contacted immediately and informed of any situations whereby any forms of violence (including domestic) and harassment occurring within in the vicinity of the property. We reserve our right to take legal action against any person or persons responsible for inflicting physical and/or verbal abuse, or intimidating residents, their families, visitors and members of staff.

If you are the victim of any form of harassment from a neighbour, another tenant a visitor to the property or a member of staff, you should report it immediately, both to the police and your Agent either by phone, letter or by calling in to the office. You should also consider seeking Legal advice. All reports of harassment will be treated sensitively and confidentially.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT CONDENSATION AND MOULD

Black mould is a common problem in homes across the UK, usually due to living habits. This information affects ALL properties so please read through it carefully.

Mould is a serious problem

It is a serious problem because of the health risks associated with mould spores. The mould *fungi* have been identified as the source of many health problems, including infections, asthma, allergies and sinusitis. Moulds produce allergens, irritants, and in some cases, toxins that may cause reactions in humans.

Be sure you understand mould

Many people do not understand that mould and mildew is not the same as damp. When people first see the ugly black spores they contact the Landlord or the Letting Agent to report the property is damp but in most cases it is NOT damp and the property itself is not to blame. 9 times out of 10 the mould spores are caused from simple lack of ventilation, which ends up damaging the property and potentially causing health problems.

Attached is a letter from the local council which confirms we have signed up to the “Preventing Damp and Mould Local Initiative” which includes links to the council website which gives a detailed explanation of the causes and prevention of mould. Please read through the information carefully and familiarise yourself with the advice and tips contained therein.

YOU are responsible

As a tenant you need to understand that YOU are responsible for ensuring the property is adequately ventilated. You must clean any mould immediately, this is not your landlord's responsibility. Please follow the advice on the black mould removal and prevention to prevent your landlord claiming against your deposit for costs of treating the mould.

What to do if you find black mould

1. **Ventilate:** Provide adequate ventilation during disinfecting and wear rubber gloves.
2. **Remove contaminated items:** As you remove affected items from the property be sure not to walk them through the property, or if you must, find the shortest way to get them outside
3. **Clean:** Remove mould and clean infected areas immediately. You can buy mildew removing products or use bleach with a disinfectant.
4. **Dry:** Dry the surfaces as soon as possible. Use fans and/or natural ventilation or a dehumidifier if you have one.
5. **Replace Items** Depending on the extend of the mould damage, you can clean and retrieve items that are non porous ie: plastics. If they are porous (books, clothing etc) the black mould spores could be lodged in the fibres, and if you retrieve them, they risk contaminating other items. It is best to ensure the condensation is cleaned immediately before mould can form.



Preventing Damp and Mould Local Initiative

Local Letting and Managing Agent Engagement with the local Housing Regulators

Landlords and Tenants

Both Authorities are pleased to inform you, that your Letting and/or Managing Agent have “signed up” to a joint initiative to prevent damp and mould in private rented homes.

Both Council’s private sector housing enforcement teams believe that strengthening links with local Agents can only be beneficial in stopping Tenants renting unsafe and unhealthy homes, and in assisting Landlords in prevention and legislative compliance.

Your Agent will be contacting you confirming their sign up. By attaching this notice they re-emphasise and encourage their Tenants and Landlords to work together with them in order to identify, report, investigate (within 14 days where possible) and then remedy the causes of any damp and mould issues in your rental home, in a timely and informal manner.

A list of Letting Agents who have joined the scheme are available on:

ERYC website at <https://www.eastriding.gov.uk/housing/housingadvice/condensation-damp-and-mould/>

Hull CC website at [Local agents signed up to prevent damp and mould | Condensation, damp and mould advice for the private sector | Hull](#)

Both webpages contain links to the latest Government and Council guidance about working together to prevent damp and mould; and also how to report matters to your respective Local Authority if suggested practices are not followed, and as a result, damp and mould concerns seem unresolved.

This initiative is part of the Government’s Healthy Homes project which is funded through HM Treasury’s shared outcome fund.

