



## **HOME FROM HOME HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED**

# **TENANTS' HANDBOOK**

### **OFFICE ADDRESS**

#### **Head Office**

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### **OFFICE HOURS**

The office is open:

Monday to Friday, 9.00a.m.to 4.00p.m

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# **INTRODUCTION**

## **Purpose of this Handbook**

This handbook is intended to provide up to date guidelines and information about Home from Home Housing Association services and policies, and useful advice to assist you in your home and to make the most of your tenancy.

It sets out Home from Home responsibilities as your landlord, your obligations and your tenancy rights.

It might prove useful to you, and Home from Home would encourage you, to keep this handbook in a safe place so you can refer to it, when it is necessary, at a later date.

## **Introduction to Home from Home Housing Association**

Home from Home is a black led Housing Association, providing temporary and permanent homes for the Afro-Caribbean community and other groups in Newham.

The Association was formed in 1985 when a group of local black women concerned about housing and homelessness formed a co-operative to provide for those in most housing need. In 1991 Home from Home changed its status to that of a Charitable Housing Association.

In addition to general needs Housing, Home from Home also provides supported accommodation for young mothers and babies, and a move on project for mothers with older children.

Our emphasis is on a personal approach to housing management, to maintain close contact with our tenants and to manage properties to a high standard with a view to the long term well being of both tenants and buildings.

The Association is governed by a Board made up of representatives from a wide cross section of the community. The Board, consisting of voluntary members, makes all policies and guides the work of the Association

Home from Home is registered with Homes England, a government body which provides a large part of the funds necessary to carry out our work. It regularly monitors our work and ensures that the money is spent wisely and that our policies are efficient and fair.

## **Putting the Customer First**

Home from Home is committed to providing the best possible service for our tenants. We want to improve the quality of our services and the experiences of those who are using them. We will promote a culture of excellence and openness to encourage customers to make suggestions about services, and we will learn from any experiences where customers feel we have not met their expectations.

## **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**

Home from Home H.A. has updated its Privacy Policy to comply with the GDPR which gives tenants more control over their personal data and greater transparency around how it is used.

## **Equality and Diversity**

Home from Home H.A. is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity in all areas of its work, irrespective of gender, disability, marital status, age, sexual orientation, health, religion and nationality.

Home from Home expects staff, Board members and tenants to adhere to the principles set out in this policy. In addition, other organisations with whom we work, particularly referral agents, need to operate within the framework of this policy.

## **Access to Services**

We aim to ensure that everyone has access to our services, to our offices and to information about us. We produce a wide range of information for our tenants, and we will do what is reasonable to provide information in alternative formats on request.

If we encounter difficulties meeting your request, we will discuss the best solution with you.

## **Harassment of Tenants**

We are strongly opposed to all forms of harassment and we have procedures in place for investigating complaints of racial or other harassment as a matter of priority.

Where claims of harassment are proven, action will, wherever possible, be taken against the perpetrators rather than moving the victims affected by it.

If you are subjected to any form of harassment please contact a member of the Housing team as soon as possible.

## **Section 1 – Your Tenancy**

### **Your Tenancy Agreement**

The tenancy agreement you have signed is a legal document that sets out your rights and responsibilities as a tenant and our duties as a landlord.

### **Confidentiality**

Personal information is held by the Association in strict confidence.

It will not be given to third parties without first obtaining the individual's permission to do so, unless it falls within one of the valid exceptions below:

- Where you have signed a Housing Benefit information disclosure form or Data Protection Act Disclosure of information form.
- Where you have asked a Local Council Member or Boar Member to act on your behalf.
- Where information is required by the Police and other relevant agencies.

### **Access to Information**

You have the right to see information held by us about you, that is on computer or in manual records. The Association however, cannot give out information provided in confidence by a third party. You will need to provide us with reasonable notice so that we can make the necessary arrangements to provide any information requested.

### **Security of tenure**

You have security of tenure under your tenancy agreement with us. This means you cannot be evicted from your home without a court order. We may take legal action for eviction for any breach of your conditions of tenancy e.g. failing to pay rent, or behaving in an anti-social manner.

### **Joint Tenancies**

If you have a joint tenancy you and the other joint tenant(s) are equally entitled to share possession of the whole of the property. In the same way, you are each liable for the whole rent of the premises. The association can therefore recover any rent arrear from either of the joint tenants. You should also be aware that either of the joint tenants could give notice and bring the tenancy to an end.

If you have a sole tenancy, the Association will not change the tenancy agreement if someone comes to live with you who you want to make a joint tenant. You need to inform the Association in writing and the person will be put as part of the household.

## **Rights of Succession**

A tenancy ends with the death of a tenant but it may be the case that someone living with you could take over the tenancy. This is known as succession. Details of who can succeed your tenancy are included in your tenancy agreement.

## **Right to Take in Lodgers and subletting**

You must have our written permission before taking in a lodger or **subletting** your property. You do not have a right to let your entire home to someone. This is a breach of your tenancy conditions. Your request will not be refused if it is reasonable. You will remain responsible for making sure the rent is paid, and that all other responsibilities of the tenancy agreement are kept to. You must ensure you do not overcrowd the property. **There are certain things which need to be in place before permission is granted, please call your Housing Officer for more information.** If you want a lodger or sub-tenant to leave, you must arrange this yourself. If you were to leave your home, then your lodger or sub-tenant must also leave

## **Right to Buy**

The Association's properties do not come under the Right to buy. But the Association is obliged to comply with the Voluntary Right to Buy scheme, agreed between all Housing Associations and the Government. When the policies and procedures of the Voluntary Right to Buy scheme become clearer and come into effect, The Association will consider the number of applications received from its tenants.

## **Right to Carry out Improvements**

Before carrying out any improvement or alteration to your home, you must obtain written permission from HFH. This to ensure the work will:

- Not damage your home
- Not have an effect on your neighbours and
- Not break any planning or building regulations

Provided any improvements you make have been approved, you may be entitled to compensation for them on giving up your tenancy before they are fully depreciated in value.

## **Complaints and compliments**

HFH hopes that you will be happy with the service provided, but despite HFH best efforts, tenants might in particular occasion feel not happy about a certain matter. If you wish to make a complaint about any aspect of HFH service please contact us. You can use the telephone, send an email or letter and fill in HFH complaint form.

We would also like to hear from you if you have any compliments about HFH service.

## **Your responsibilities**

When you signed your Tenancy Agreement, you agreed to keep to the terms of the agreement. These terms are meant to make sure your home is properly looked after and that all tenants can live in their homes without being disturbed by neighbours or their visitors.

If you or your visitors break any of these terms, we may take legal action against you. Some of these terms are:

- The property must be your only or main home
- You can't run a business from your home without our permission
- You must pay your rent on time
- You must keep your home in good repair and decoration
- If you have a garden, it must be kept tidy
- You must let us carry out repairs and service gas installations in your home

Anyone living in or visiting your home must not behave in an anti-social way.

This includes things like:

- Noise
- Harassment to neighbours or our staff and contractors
- Vandalism
- Illegal use or supply of drugs

Your home cannot be used for illegal or immoral purposes.

## **Ending Your Tenancy**

You must give at least four weeks' notice in writing, to expire on a Monday. You should inform us of your new address and make sure that your rent is paid up to date. We will continue to charge rent until the keys are returned and the property is vacant. You should return your keys to us no later than 12 noon on the Monday your tenancy terminates; if you return your keys later than this, you will be charged 1 weeks' rent.

## **Minimum Lettable Standard**

When we receive your written notice, we will contact you to arrange a visit to your home. This is so that we can check the condition of the property, and advise you of any action you need to take to bring the property up to our Minimum Lettable Standard.

This will include putting right any damage, any decoration needed, and ensuring the property is left clean, tidy and free of all rubbish.

You should ensure that garden sheds and lofts are also cleared. If the property does not meet our Minimum Lettable Standard when you leave, we will charge you for the removal of any items

you leave behind and any decoration, repairs or cleaning which is required to bring the property up to standard.

### **Nuisance, anti-social behaviour and harassment**

The Association views anti-social behaviour as unacceptable and will take action to assist affected tenants and residents. We take all reports of anti-social behaviour seriously, act promptly and will ensure that we keep in regular contact with the complainant whilst the investigations are being carried out.

Your tenancy agreement clearly states that you or your visitors must not perpetrate harassment or anti-social behaviour.

The types of conduct, which could be classed as ASB include:•

- Noise nuisance
- Intimidation and harassment (on any grounds, including gender; marital status; racial group; disability; age; religion; sexual orientation)
- Aggressive and threatening language or behaviour
- Actual violence against people and property
- Using a property to sell drugs or for other unlawful purposes
- Misuse of public areas• Rubbish
- Abandoned Vehicles
- Dogs/animals

Please note this list is not exhaustive. The Association will employ a broad range of measures to tackle anti-social behaviour including:

- Encouraging tenants and residents to settle matters amicably as an initial step
  - Housing Officer intervention• Referral to an independent mediation service
  - Liaising with other relevant agencies such as the Police and Environmental Health
  - Use of 'Acceptable Behaviour Contracts' and Parental Guidance Agreements or Contracts
  - Demotion of tenancies
  - Use of injunctions
  - Applying to the County Court for a possession order, which may lead to eviction
  - Pro-active preventative measures such as security lighting and door entry systems
- These lists are not exhaustive; you can obtain a copy of the full anti-social behaviour procedure by contacting our Housing team. Please help us by reporting incidents to enable the necessary action to be taken.

## **Racial Harassment**

The Association considers racial harassment to be distinct from neighbour disputes and other forms of harassment and anti-social behaviour. We therefore operate a separate policy and procedure. Copies of this procedure are also available on request.

We consider racial harassment to be violence, which may be verbal or physical and which includes attacks on property as well as on a person.

This violence may be suffered by individuals or groups because of their race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins, when the complainant believes the perpetrator was acting on racial grounds and/or there is evidence of racism.

We will adopt a victim-orientated approach to dealing with reports of racial harassment.

Investigations will be carried out in a sensitive manner, and a strategy for meeting the support needs of the victim will be discussed and agreed with the complainant.

Again, we will implement a range of measures for tackling racial harassment such as possession proceedings and injunctions.

## **What must I ask permission for?**

You must request and get our permission in writing to:

- Run a business from your home
- Make improvements or alterations to your home
- Put up a shed, greenhouse, television aerial or satellite dish
- Sublet part of your home or take in a lodger
- Assign your tenancy
- Mutual exchange
- Parking caravans on our property

We have 1 month to get back to you with a decision. Do not go ahead until you have heard from us. If we have not replied within a month, please contact your local office.

Full details of your rights and responsibilities can be found in your tenancy agreement.

## **Decorating your new home**

You may decorate your home internally but bear in mind the decoration must be of a good standard. Please do not use artex and do not paint pre finished wooden doors or facings.

Do not paint over carbon monoxide or smoke detectors.

## **Security**

Make sure your windows and doors are secure when you are not at home. Please ask to see our staff and tradesmen's identity cards. Do not let anyone in who does not have company identification.

## **Insurance**

Our insurance covers the building and fixtures of your home but NOT your personal items. It is very important, if you wish, that you take out contents insurance in case of damage, fire, flood etc. We are not responsible for damage to the contents of your home unless we were negligent.

## **Gardens and external areas**

If you have sole use of a garden you are responsible for making sure it is kept tidy. We will maintain communal open spaces and charge this to tenants through the service charge.

## **SECTION 2 – Moving in**

### **When can I move in?**

Your tenancy will start on the date in your tenancy agreement. Once you have been given the keys for your new home you can start to move in right away.

### **When do I start Paying Rent?**

Your rent is always due on the first of every month, however if you move in the middle of the month we will advise you of the rent due when you sign for the property.

You are charged rent from the date your tenancy starts even if you do not move in on this date.

## **Repairs**

Your new home should have been in a good state of repair when you viewed it and you will have agreed this was the case when you signed your tenancy agreement.

## **Keys**

You will be issued with one or two sets of keys when you sign the tenancy agreement. If you need more keys or fobs, you will need to request this from your Housing Officer.

You will have to pay for any extra fobs or keys.

## **Housing Benefit/Universal Credit**

If you think you are eligible for Housing Benefit or Universal Credit, apply immediately to prevent arrears building up on your rent account. If you need advice or assistance please contact your Housing Officer.

## **Heating/Power**

You should register with an energy supplier as soon, after signing your tenancy, as possible.

If you are on a low income you may be entitled to discounts. Contact your supplier to ask about the “Warm Home discount.

## **Moving in checklist**

### **Have you...**

#### **Put your Tenancy Agreement in a safe place?**

You will be asked to produce your Tenancy Agreement if you apply for Housing Benefit or Universal Credit. It also serves as proof of where you live.

#### **Submitted a Housing Benefit Application or applied for the housing cost element of Universal Credit? (If applicable)**

Housing Benefit/Universal Credits only paid from when you apply therefore you need to make an application on or before you move in to make sure you get what you are entitled to.

Claiming Housing Benefit/Universal Credits your responsibility but we can help you with this. If you need help please let us know as soon as possible.

When you submit your claim, make sure you ask for a receipt and keep it in a safe place. You may be asked for more information in connection with your claim -please supply this so your claim can be processed.

If you have any difficulties with your Housing Benefit or Universal Credit claim please contact your Housing Officer as soon as possible.

#### **Registered with an Energy Supplier?**

We will supply meter readings at sign-up. When you call the supplier remember to ask if you are eligible for a cheaper “Warm Home” discount.

#### **Asked for permission to make any improvements or alterations to the property?**

Remember you must put all requests in writing and wait for written permission before doing the above. If you are unsure what to do, please ask—our contact details can be found at the start of this handbook.

#### **Organised Home Contents Insurance (if required)**

Remember you will need home contents insurance in case your personal belongings ever get damaged or are stolen.

#### **Changed your address?**

You must make sure that you notify the relevant organization of your change in address. Some examples are:

- Your gas supplier
- Your electricity supplier
- Water Company
- Local Council
- TV Licence
- Post Office to re-direct mail (if required)

Failure to inform these providers that you have moved could result in you having to face larger bills at a later date or even you having to pay for a service that previous tenants have used.

### **Received a Rent Card?**

You should receive a rent card within 10 working days after signing your tenancy agreement. If you have not received this please contact HFH Office. The rent card is one method of paying your rent.

### **SECTION 3: Your rent**

Your rent allows us to repay the loans taken out to build your home and to provide a good housing management and maintenance service.

Rents are reviewed every year, and any changes take effect from the first Monday of the month of April. We will give you one month's notice in writing of any changes to your rent.

### **How to pay your rent**

Your rent is due on or before the 1st of the month, in advance.

If you would like to pay your rent on another date, or perhaps weekly, then contact your Housing Officer to discuss. We are happy to come to a suitable arrangement with you to prevent rent arrears.

You can pay by:

- Standing Order
- Rent Card at any Post Office
- Or by bank transfer if you bank online
- 

### **Rent Statements**

You will receive a rent statement periodically throughout the year. These are purely for your information only, and details all transactions on your rent account. The last line of the statement

will tell you if your rent account is in credit or arrears. If you are in arrears you must contact the office so that we can help.

## **Service Charges**

A charge is made for any service we provide to maintain the common features of your development; for example, stair cleaning or garden maintenance for communal areas. You will be given an itemised breakdown of any service charge when you sign your tenancy agreement.

Service charges are reviewed every year and any changes take effect from the first Monday of the month of April. We will give you one month's notice in writing of any changes to your service charge.

## **Housing Benefit & Universal Credit**

You may be entitled to Housing Benefit or the Housing Cost Element of Universal Credit to help pay your rent. Even if you are working it is sometimes worthwhile making a claim, depending on your income and circumstances.

If you are in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance or Income Support you will normally receive full Housing Benefit. You can ask for this to be paid directly to HFH. If you are in receipt of Universal Credit, you will receive your housing costs paid to you. You will then be expected to pay us your rent from this money.

If you think you may be entitled to Housing Benefit or Universal Credit, you should either:

- Complete a Housing Benefit form on the day you sign your tenancy agreement and make sure you get a receipt when you hand the form in for processing at the Housing Benefit Office; or
- If you are in receipt of Universal Credit, you need to amend your claim [online. www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit](https://online.www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit).

It is vital you supply the Housing Benefit Department or the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) with all the information they require to process your claim. If you fail to do this, your claim could be cancelled and you would be personally responsible for all the rent due. If your circumstances change, in any way, you **MUST** inform Housing Benefit or the DWP. In some areas you will receive Review Forms from the Housing Benefit Department and again, your claim will be cancelled if you do not return these forms as requested. If you need help completing your Housing Benefit or Universal Credit form please contact your local office.

## **Rent Arrears**

Home from Home Housing Association has a firm policy with regard to tenants who do not pay their rent promptly. Recovering rent arrears increases the costs of running the housing service, which are then paid by tenants who do pay regularly and on time. This is neither fair nor acceptable.

If you think you may have problems and are having difficulties paying your rent please contact your Housing Officer immediately. We will come to an agreeable arrangement with you to sort this out.

If you fall behind with your rent payments, we will contact you to find out if you are having difficulties and how we can help. We try to get in touch as early as possible so we can come to an agreement to prevent arrears becoming serious.

### **What happens if I break my rent arrears agreement?**

If you break the agreement you made to pay your rent and arrears, we can:

- Take court action to recover the rent due which could mean you would lose your home
- Arrange to have the rent taken directly from your salary or benefits.

We do not want you to lose your home but rent arrears are a very serious matter.

Please contact us as soon as you think you may be having difficulties and we will try to sort it out together.

### **Council Tax**

For information on Council Tax please contact your local council offices. You are responsible for paying the council tax and water rates for your home.

If you live alone you will be entitled to a 25% discount on Council Tax

## **SECTION 4: Repairs and Maintenance**

### **Reporting a Repair**

Call Home from Home office on 020 8472 7711 for none emergency repairs during working hours from 9.00am to 5.00pm. Outside office hours please report emergencies only on: 07985 163 558.

### **Emergency Repairs**

Emergency repairs are defined by the Association as the following:

- Any fault which could lead to death or injury of occupants, visitors or public
- Any fault which could seriously endanger the health of occupants, visitors or public
- Any fault which could cause extensive damage to our property or your belongings
- Any fault which could cause serious inconvenience to you and/or your household or other residents

Examples of emergency repairs:

- Collapsed floors or ceilings
- Blocked WC (when only one in the property)
- Total loss of heating (winter months)
- Total loss of electric power (not caused by utility services)

- Burst pipes or tanks (but not weeping/leaking pipes or dripping taps)
- Blocked drains where effluent is overflowing within the property

Emergency works will normally be restricted to the immediate rectification of the fault ('make safe'), or protection of the residents and/or the dwelling, unless the defect can most efficiently be rectified at that time.

Outside office hours, you will be able to telephone emergency repair requests directly to our standby service, which will respond appropriately. Any further work will be ordered and carried out within the appropriate timescales.

**You may be recharged when an emergency repair request is made which is clearly not an emergency.**

## **Repair Services**

HFH repair service consists of two categories which cover all types of repairs, which are:

- **Emergencies.**

24 hour maximum response to make safe or emergency repair

- **Appointments.**

A repair order will be raised and passed on to the appropriate contractor. The contractor will contact you to arrange a convenient appointment within 21 working days, depending on the urgency of the repair.

## **Rechargeable Repairs**

HFH is not responsible for repairs which are your responsibility. In addition, HFH is not responsible for repairs when the damage is caused by you, any member of your household, any visitor to your home or by any appliance that belongs to you.

If you request us to do a repair which is either your responsibility or has been caused by willful damage or negligence, you will be informed of this at the time of reporting. You can organise for any such work to be done yourself, although this must be to HFH standards.

If you wish HFH to carry out the work, an invoice will be sent to you once the work has been completed and you must make the full payment in a period of 4 weeks.

## **Pest Control**

HFH is not responsible for pest control in or around your home. You can arrange for a pest control company to come and treat the pests, for a charge. You may also contact your local Environmental Health department for advice.

## **REPAIR RESPONSIBILITIES**

| <b>REPAIR</b>                           | <b>DESCRIPTION</b>                                                                                 | <b>RESPONSIBILITY</b> |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Bath</b>                             | <b>Bath unit</b>                                                                                   | <b>HFH</b>            |
| <b>Bath</b>                             | <b>Bath wastes including blockages</b>                                                             | <b>HFH</b>            |
| <b>Bath</b>                             | <b>Bath taps – Excluding Washers</b>                                                               | <b>HFH</b>            |
| <b>Bath</b>                             | <b>Bath tap washers</b>                                                                            | <b>Tenant</b>         |
| <b>Bath</b>                             | <b>Plug &amp; chain</b>                                                                            | <b>Tenant</b>         |
| <b>Bath</b>                             | <b>Sealant</b>                                                                                     | <b>Tenant</b>         |
| <b>Bathroom fixtures &amp; fittings</b> | <b>Not including: WC Seats, Towel rails, toilet roll holders etc.</b>                              | <b>HFH</b>            |
| <b>Chimneys</b>                         |                                                                                                    | <b>HFH</b>            |
| <b>Communal Areas</b>                   |                                                                                                    | <b>HFH</b>            |
| <b>Decoration</b>                       | <b>External</b>                                                                                    | <b>HFH</b>            |
| <b>Decoration</b>                       | <b>Internal</b>                                                                                    | <b>HFH</b>            |
| <b>Domestic Appliances</b>              | <b>E.g. Cookers, washing machines, dishwashers, fridges, freezers, fans, electric heaters etc.</b> | <b>Tenant</b>         |
| <b>Doors</b>                            | <b>External, including frames hinges and handles</b>                                               | <b>HFH</b>            |
| <b>Doors</b>                            | <b>Internal, including frames hinges and handles</b>                                               | <b>Tenant</b>         |
| <b>Drains</b>                           |                                                                                                    | <b>HFH</b>            |
| <b>Floor covering</b>                   | <b>Including adapting doors to accommodate carpets</b>                                             | <b>Tenant</b>         |
| <b>Fences and Gates</b>                 |                                                                                                    | <b>HFH</b>            |
| <b>Fixtures and fittings</b>            | <b>E.g. coat hooks, curtains, curtain rails</b>                                                    | <b>Tenant</b>         |
| <b>Garden Maintenance</b>               | <b>Including dustbins and the supply of replacement dustbins and refuse areas</b>                  | <b>Tenant</b>         |
| <b>Gas</b>                              | <b>Leak</b>                                                                                        | <b>HFH</b>            |
| <b>Glazing</b>                          | <b>Re-glazing is a tenant's responsibility.<br/>If your glazing is broken due to</b>               | <b>Tenant</b>         |

|                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                             |               |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
|                                   | burglary/vandalism, HFH would recommend that you report this to the Police. Please forward to HFH details of the crime reference number from the police. HFH will only board over the damaged glazing area. |               |
| <b>Guttering</b>                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>HFH</b>    |
| <b>Handrails</b>                  | <b>Where fitted by HFH</b>                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>HFH</b>    |
| <b>Heating</b>                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>HFH</b>    |
| <b>Heating</b>                    | <b>Bleeding Radiators</b>                                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>Tenant</b> |
| <b>Kitchens</b>                   | <b>Wall cupboards, re-secure</b>                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>HFH</b>    |
| <b>Kitchens</b>                   | <b>Wall cupboards, refit door (only after inspection)</b>                                                                                                                                                   | <b>HFH</b>    |
| <b>Kitchens</b>                   | <b>Worktops including burns, scratches, chipped melamine</b>                                                                                                                                                | <b>Tenant</b> |
| <b>Kitchens</b>                   | <b>Base unit doors (after inspection)</b>                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>HFH</b>    |
| <b>Kitchens</b>                   | <b>Drawers(only after inspection)</b>                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>HFH</b>    |
| <b>Kitchens</b>                   | <b>Extractor fan (excluding filter)</b>                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>HFH</b>    |
| <b>Kitchens</b>                   | <b>Shelves to units</b>                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>HFH</b>    |
| <b>Letter boxes</b>               |                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>Tenant</b> |
| <b>Light fittings</b>             | <b>Except light bulbs, dimmer switches, fuses, fluorescent tubes, starts and non-standard light fitting fitted by the tenant</b>                                                                            | <b>HFH</b>    |
| <b>Locks External doors</b>       | <b>HFH will only make good defective locks</b>                                                                                                                                                              | <b>HFH</b>    |
| <b>Loss of keys</b>               | <b>External / internal doors to dwelling</b>                                                                                                                                                                | <b>Tenant</b> |
| <b>Loss of keys</b>               | <b>Including repairs to force entry for any reason, and broken keys in lock</b>                                                                                                                             | <b>Tenant</b> |
| <b>Over bath showers</b>          | <b>If fitted by tenant</b>                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>Tenant</b> |
| <b>Paths</b>                      | <b>Including steps, footpaths and ramps</b>                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>HFH</b>    |
| <b>Plastering</b>                 | <b>Internal &amp; external (after inspection)</b>                                                                                                                                                           | <b>HFH</b>    |
| <b>Plumbing repairs and leaks</b> | <b>Except for washing machine, dishwasher and radiators</b>                                                                                                                                                 | <b>HFH</b>    |
| <b>Rain water gullies</b>         |                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>HFH</b>    |
| <b>Roofs</b>                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>HFH</b>    |
| <b>Showers</b>                    | <b>Excluding shower curtain and rail</b>                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>HFH</b>    |
| <b>Sinks</b>                      | <b>Sink unit (only after inspection)</b>                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>HFH</b>    |
| <b>Sinks</b>                      | <b>Blockages</b>                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>Tenant</b> |
| <b>Sinks</b>                      | <b>Sink taps excluding washers</b>                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>HFH</b>    |

|                               |                                                                    |               |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Sinks</b>                  | <b>Sink tap washer</b>                                             | <b>Tenant</b> |
| <b>Sinks</b>                  | <b>Plug and chain</b>                                              | <b>Tenant</b> |
| <b>Skirting boards</b>        |                                                                    | <b>HFH</b>    |
| <b>Smoke/CO2 detectors</b>    |                                                                    | <b>HFH</b>    |
| <b>Stairs</b>                 |                                                                    | <b>HFH</b>    |
| <b>Switches and sockets</b>   | <b>Except dimmer switches and non-standard fitted by tenant</b>    | <b>HFH</b>    |
| <b>Telephone points</b>       |                                                                    | <b>Tenant</b> |
| <b>Tiling</b>                 | <b>Only after inspection</b>                                       | <b>HFH</b>    |
| <b>TV aerial</b>              |                                                                    | <b>Tenant</b> |
| <b>TV Sockets</b>             | <b>Except non-standard fitted by tenant</b>                        | <b>HFH</b>    |
| <b>Wash hand basins</b>       | <b>Wash hand basin unit (only after inspection)</b>                | <b>HFH</b>    |
| <b>Wash hand basins</b>       | <b>Blockages</b>                                                   | <b>Tenant</b> |
| <b>Wash hand basins</b>       | <b>Taps excluding washers</b>                                      | <b>HFH</b>    |
| <b>Wash hand basins</b>       | <b>Tap washers</b>                                                 | <b>Tenant</b> |
| <b>Wash hand basins</b>       | <b>Plug and chain</b>                                              | <b>Tenant</b> |
| <b>WC, Cistern &amp; seat</b> | <b>WC &amp; Cistern (only after inspection)</b>                    | <b>HFH</b>    |
| <b>WC, Cistern &amp; seat</b> | <b>WC Seat</b>                                                     | <b>Tenant</b> |
| <b>WC</b>                     | <b>Blockage</b>                                                    | <b>HFH</b>    |
| <b>Windows</b>                | <b>Including window sills, frames etc. (only after inspection)</b> | <b>HFH</b>    |

In addition, you are responsible for any work necessary because of the fault, neglect or misuse by you or your household, or where equipment or alterations were fitted or carried out by you (or under your discretion).

You are responsible for reporting repairs as soon as they become apparent. You are also responsible to be present for any internal repair appointment in order to give the contractor access, or to make suitable arrangements with the contractor for access, or give at least one working day's notice to the contractor to make an alternative appointment.

### **Annual Servicing**

The Association has a legal responsibility to carry out a gas safety check in your home every twelve months. It is a criminal offence if we fail to carry this check out. This important check is carried out to make sure that the appliances we provide in your home are working correctly and are safe.

When your gas fire or boiler needs checking, our GAS SAFE registered contractors will contact you and arrange to visit and carry out this work, which is free. If you are not at home, they will leave a card asking you to contact them to make a further appointment. It is very important that you telephone immediately, even if you think a gas safety check has recently been completed.

As part of the annual service and gas safety check, we will also check gas cookers and gas fires owned by you – however, any repairs required will be your responsibility.

Most tenants co-operate with us and the gas safety check is carried out quickly and efficiently. However, there are a small number who do not allow us access into their homes to carry out this work. If you do not respond to our requests to carry out the annual gas safety check, we will have no option but to apply to the courts to grant us access to carry out the check. This will be an unnecessary convenience for both you and the Association, and you may have to pay the court costs.

Your safety is our main priority, please respond promptly to any calling cards or letters from us, our servicing contractors or our solicitors

## **Safety in the Home**

### **Fire precautions**

- Check your battery operated smoke alarms once a week, and replace the battery if necessary
- Have a fire plan – know how to escape safely
- Don't drink alcohol and fry – never leave chip pans unattended
- Put out all cigarettes safely – don't throw them into bins
- In the event of fire – **GET OUT, CALL THE FIRE BRIGADE AND STAY OUT**

### **If you smell gas**

- Open doors and windows
- Turn the gas off at the meter
- Don't smoke or use naked flames
- Don't use electrical switches
- Call National Grid on 0800 111999
- Call us as soon as you can afterwards
- **DO NOT BLOCK UP OR CLOSE VENTS**

### **Electrical Safety**

- Unplug appliances when you are not using them
- Do not overload sockets – only use one appliance at a time in each socket
- Make sure you use the correct size fuse in plugs
- If electrics are affected by water leakage **DO NOT TOUCH** and turn electricity supply at the consumer unit main switch and contact us immediately.

## **Who's at the door?**

For your own safety and security, ALWAYS ask to see ID cards before allowing anyone into your home, and check them carefully. Association staff should always show their ID without being asked.

## **Section 5: Energy Efficiency**

### **Energy Efficiency In Your Own Home**

#### **Electrical Goods**

When replacing your electric cooker, fridge, freezer, fridge/freezer, washing machine, dishwasher or kettle, look for the Energy Efficiency Recommended Logos. Products are rated from 'A' (most efficient) to 'G' (least efficient). If your appliance is over 10 years old consider replacing it as it could be costing you up to 40% per year more in electricity compared to an 'A' rated appliance.

The following handy tips which will reduce your energy use and cost you nothing to do:

#### **Fridge & Freezers**

- Avoid leaving fridge and freezer doors open
- Do not put hot or warm food in them
- Defrost your fridge regularly to keep it running efficiently and cheaply
- If it frosts up quickly get your door seals checked
- Don't position them next to your cooker or boiler, if it has to go here ensure that there is a good well ventilated gap between appliances
- A freezer is more efficient when full, fill any unused voids with empty sealed containers, a chest freezer is more efficient as the cold air inside it doesn't fall out when the door is opened.

#### **Washing Machines & Dishwashers•**

- Wash with a full load•
- Try to use a low temperature setting, reducing from a 60 to a 40 degree wash will save a third of the energy per wash
- Whenever you can, dry clothes on an outside line, this will cost you nothing•
- If you have to use a tumble dryer then:-
- Ensure that it's vented externally or it could cause condensation
- Buy one with an electronic moisture sensor control which is most efficient or a temperature sensor control. Timer control only models are the least efficient.
- Reverse-action dryers can save energy when drying large items of fabric
- There is little difference in energy consumption between condensing tumble dryers and air vented dryers
- Don't put really wet clothes into a tumble dryer: wring out or spin-dry first
- Make sure filters are always clear of fluff
- If clothes are to be ironed remove them before they are completely dry, avoid over drying – use the moisture sensor control if available.

## **Televisions, videos, stereos, computers, cordless and mobile phones, electric toothbrushes or anything with a neon standby light**

- Products still use energy when left on standby, so avoid leaving them on this setting•
- Remember not to leave appliances on charge unnecessarily
- Check any operation manuals to make sure switching off won't reset the appliance's memory

## **Cooking**

- Choose the right size pan for cooking food, a flat pan base is preferable (the base should just cover an electric cooking ring). With gas the flame only needs to heat the bottom of the pan, and not spread up the sides
- Keep lids on pans when cooking• Don't use more water than you need in a pan this will waste energy and could spoil the food

## **Kettles**

- Make sure water covers the elements of your electric kettle, only heat the amount of water you need. Jug-type kettles need less water as they have smaller elements.
- If everyone in the UK did this enough energy would be saved to power every street light

## **Taps**

- In just one day, a dripping hot tap can waste enough water to fill a bath – make sure they're turned off.

## **Lighting**

- Remember to turn off lights when rooms are not in use•
- Try to use energy saving light bulbs – especially in areas where they'll be left on for long periods of time. They can save you money as they use a quarter of the energy of a traditional light bulb to create the same amount of light, they are initially more expensive but can last up to 12 times longer - check the light bulb packaging for details. If every house in the UK had one energy saving bulb enough energy would be saved to light 2 million homes.
- If you've got outside lighting, check that it's sensor or daylight controlled or ensure it's only on when needed•
- Adjust your curtains or blinds to your windows to let in the maximum amount of daylight•
- If you've got street lighting report to your local Council if the lights are not working or on during daylight hours.

## **Central heating**

- You can cut your heating costs by up to 17% by controlling your heating more effectively by looking at individual room temperatures, temperature of stored hot water, and on/off times for heating and hot water, this includes switching off the boiler when heating is no longer required
- Using a low setting for a long time is cheaper and more comfortable than turning heating off and on
- Turning down your thermostat by 1 degree centigrade can cut 10% off your fuel bills

- If you're going away from home in winter leave the heating on with the thermostat on a low setting this will provide protection from freezing at a minimum cost
- Avoid furniture and curtains being in front of radiators or heaters
- Always close your curtains at dusk to reduce heat escaping
- Should you need a new boiler, you could be offered a combi boiler as a replacement. You should consider this as this type of boiler only heats the water you use and therefore saves energy in not having to store hot water.
- Inform the repairs desk if your hot water cylinder is not lagged or lagging is damaged, or if insulation or lagging is missing in your roof void. This could be as a result of it not being refitted following repair work.

## **Water Consumption & Conservation**

Many properties now have water supplied through a meter. Reducing the amounts of water you use in your home could save you money and save a valuable resource:

- Keep a check on your meter reading, a burst may not be noticed if concealed, water could be leaking away and costing you money without you being aware of it
- Always report property leaks, overflows running and dripping taps immediately to the repairs clerk, remember to turn off any valves to reduce the problem
- Report any outside bursts on the water main to Thames Water on 0800 714 614

**Below are some tips on water conservation in your home, most of them are common sense measures.**

### **Bathroom**

- If you have a shower in your home use it rather than the bath, if you haven't a fitted shower a cheaper alternative can be the flexible hose type shower fitted to the taps (Power showers can use more water than a bath)
- If you have a bath, run it at the required temperature rather than filling with over hot water then having to cool it down
- When using the hand basin, put in the plug and run sufficient water only
- When brushing your teeth use a cup or glass for the water you need•
- Consider getting spray taps or inserts fitted to your wash hand basin this could reduce water wastage here by up to 70%
- If you have a dual flush cistern on your WC only use the Full flush to dispose of solids, if you have an old large cistern its capacity can be reduced by the careful insertion of a plastic bottle or bag.

### **Kitchens**

- Try not to rinse things under a running tap - use a bowl of water instead
- Use a bowl in your sink and recycle the water from it outside in your garden

### **Gardens**

- Fit a water butt to your external rainwater pipe and use this water for watering plants etc
- Use a watering can in your garden rather than a hosepipe

## USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

| <b>Name</b>                                  | <b>Phone Number</b> |
|----------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Home from Home H.A. Office                   | 020 8472 7711       |
| Home from Home H.A. Fax                      | 020 8472 7718       |
| Home from Home H.A. Email Address            | mail@hfhhousing.org |
| Home from Home (Emergency repairs only)      | 07985 163 558       |
|                                              |                     |
| LBN Local Service Centre                     | 020 8430 2000       |
| LBN – Noise Complaint (Operator)             | 020 8430 2000       |
| LBN – Environmental Department (Operator)    | 020 8430 2000       |
| LBN – Housing Benefits (Operator)            | 020 8430 2000       |
| LBN – Council Tax Department (Operator)      | 020 8430 2000       |
| LBN – Household Refuse Collection (Operator) | 020 8430 2000       |
|                                              |                     |
| GAS Emergency                                | 0800 111 999        |
| UK Power Networks                            | 0800 316 3105       |
| Thames Water                                 | 08459 200 800       |
|                                              |                     |
| Police / FB / Ambulance                      | 999                 |
| Police non-emergency                         | 101                 |
| NHS emergency                                | 111                 |
|                                              |                     |
|                                              |                     |
|                                              |                     |