



home
group



Your tenancy agreement

Customer guide

www.homegroup.org.uk

Your tenancy agreement

Your tenancy agreement is the legal document that sets out the details of the agreement between you (the tenant) and us (the landlord). It includes:

- the services you can expect from us
- your rights as a tenant
- your responsibilities

It is a very important document so make sure you keep it in a safe and secure place.

If we ever need to change any of the details in your agreement, we will ask you what you think of the changes before we make them and, in the case of assured tenants, obtain your written consent (excluding changes to rent and service charges).

Further information about consultation and involvement is given in the **How we work** section.

Lodgers and sub-letting

In Scotland, customers can sublet the whole of their property with our permission.

Call our customer service centre on 0345 141 4663 or visit www.homegroup.org.uk for more information.

We need to know about any changes in your household circumstances so we can keep our records up to date. We can also advise you of any effect it could have on your housing benefit claim; sometimes, rent from a lodger may reduce the amount you get.

Giving your tenancy to someone else

You may not give your tenancy to anyone else unless:

- there is an order from the court following divorce or separation proceedings, or
- we approve a mutual exchange or swap

You must never sell your tenancy to anyone else. You may have the right to sign over your tenancy to someone who lives with you, such as a husband, wife, civil partner or member of your family. You will need our written permission before you can do this. In some cases the other person must have been living with you for a minimum of the previous 12 months.



What happens to your tenancy if you die?

If there is a joint tenancy then the surviving tenant will retain their existing rights, by taking on the whole tenancy.

In a sole tenancy there is a right for somebody else to succeed to your tenancy.

Only one succession of a tenancy is allowed. A joint tenant taking on the whole tenancy when the other tenant dies is called 'survivorship' and counts as one succession.

We may need to consider whether the size of property still meets the needs of your family. If you take on a tenancy after the tenant has died and the property is too big for your household, we may ask you to move to a smaller property.

In line with our commitment to equality and diversity we will treat applications from heterosexual, transgender, lesbian and gay couples in exactly the same way.

Buying your home

There are a number of schemes to help people currently renting to buy their home. If you're interested in home ownership, these schemes could help you achieve your dream.

You'll need to meet certain criteria first. You can find out more on our website www.homegroup.org.uk/homeownership

The schemes are:

Right to Acquire

If you've been a tenant of a local authority (local council) for more than three years at any point in your tenancy then you may be eligible for this scheme.

To qualify you'll also need to be:

- a permanent Home Group customer with an assured tenancy
- in a home that was built or acquired by Home Group after 1st April 1997
- renting a property for a total of three years from a local authority or council
- in the property that is your only or main home

Right to Buy

This government scheme helps eligible council and housing association tenants in England to buy their home with a discount, depending on what tenancy you have. You qualify to apply to buy a home under Right to Buy if you are:

- a permanent Home Group customer with a secure tenancy
- a customer with us or any other social landlord for longer than five years
- you live in the property that is your only or main home

Voluntary Right to Buy (vRTB)

This government scheme is an extension to Right to Buy for housing association tenants. It's on hold at the moment so we cannot accept applications at this time.

The government will be extending a pilot scheme and once this is complete the national scheme will be launched. We'll be able to publish guidelines then.

If you are interested in finding out more about vRTB you can contact Home Group customer service centre to express an interest in the scheme (your details will be held securely until we can notify you of the criteria).

Keeping information about you safe

Your information is always kept safe, secure and confidential. We will not tell anyone else this information unless there are very good reasons for doing so, for example because we have a legal duty to do so or we want to prevent fraud.

You have the right to inspect information that we hold about you. We will not be able to show you information provided in confidence to us or on topics that we consider would be harmful to disclose

Contact our customer service centre or visit www.homegroup.org.uk to find out more.

Your responsibilities

Living in your home

You will only keep your tenancy if you live in the property as your only or main home.

If we find that you have abandoned or moved out of the property, we will take steps to end your tenancy and let the property to someone else. You must not get your tenancy by making a false statement.

Sometimes you may need to leave your home for a while, for example to go into hospital. You should always let us know:

- where you will be
- how long you will be away
- who will be looking after your home
- how the rent will be paid

You must pay your rent, any water rates and service charges on time. For more details see your tenancy agreement; if you are away for more than 4 weeks.

Paying your rent

You are responsible for paying your rent in full and on time. If you have any queries about your rent or think you may have difficulty paying on time, please contact our customer service centre team on **0345 141 4663**; they are here to help.

Harassment

Home Group condemns harassment and will take the strongest possible action against anyone causing it. We define harassment as the deliberate interference with the peace, comfort or safety of any persons on the grounds of race, colour, religion, sexual orientation, disability, age, gender, nationality, ethnic origin, gender reassignment or any other identified factor.

Actions that might be defined as harassment include:

- verbal abuse
- threatening or intimidating behaviour
- arson or attempted arson
- graffiti
- damage to property
- physical abuse or assault

Your tenancy agreement forbids harassment in any form.

We will take action where necessary.

If you feel you are being harassed, please contact our customer service centre immediately on **0345 141 4663**.

Nuisance

Nuisance covers many types of behaviour that can disturb your enjoyment of your home. This can include excessive noise, problems with pets and accumulating rubbish.

Your tenancy agreement states that you, members of your household and visitors must not do anything likely to cause nuisance to other people in the area.

If you are experiencing nuisance, please contact our customer service centre.

Other responsibilities

You must also:

- pay your rent on time
- use your home for residential purposes only
- keep your home in good condition
- not use your home for any illegal or immoral purpose
- not engage in any criminal activities
- allow us to access your home when required, for example to complete gas servicing



Domestic abuse

The term domestic abuse refers to abuse suffered in a home environment.

It can include:

- threat of or physical violence
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse
- excessive financial controls
- social isolation
- any behaviour that feels like bullying

The law allows us to apply to court to end the tenancy of a person who has used or threatened violence that has made his or her partner leave home.

Support services

If you are in need of support to help you sustain your home, please contact our customer service centre.

Discover more

www.homegroup.org.uk

Contact us

There are many ways to find answers to your queries, report repairs and make the most of being a Home Group customer.



Website

Visit us online to view your rent statement, make a payment, view and update your personal details, or use live chat to report a repair.

www.homegroup.org.uk

Call us on 0345 141 4663

To report a repair, make a payment, or to make any other enquiries.

Let's get social

