

Your rights and responsibilities

Information for Leaseholders

**Tower
Hamlets
Homes**

Leaseholder and Tower Hamlets Homes (THH) responsibilities:

Your leasehold contract is an agreement between you and Tower Hamlets Council.

THH is the managing agent acting for the Council and is responsible for maintaining shared parts and services connected to your home. THH seeks payment, called a service charge, in advance from you every year, on behalf of the Council.

In general your responsibilities are to:

- Pay your service charges including ground rent.
- Keep your home in good condition and repair.
- Use your home as a private flat.
- Be responsible for your visitors.
- Be a good neighbour by not causing annoyance.
- Repair and maintain the interior of your property.
- Ensure your property does not damage the structure and shared areas of the estate and ensure your home has a fire rated door fitted if it opens onto a shared area.
- Not carry out any alterations to your home (other than fixtures and fittings) without written permission. If in doubt ask us.
- Not put up aerials, satellite dishes and so on without our written permission.
- Get our written permission if you want to keep an animal in your home.
- Inform us if you wish to sublet your property and provide necessary certificates to ensure you are meeting your obligations as a responsible landlord.
- Repay the required amount of discount if you sell your home within five years if you purchased under the Right to Buy.

Our responsibilities are to:

- Keep the condition and structure of your home in good repair.
- Maintain the services to your flat, building and estate; for example, by providing caretaking and gardening services.
- Give adequate notice if we need access to your flat to carry out works other than in emergency situations.
- Ensure that the structure and communal areas in your block are insured against fire and damage.



Rights and responsibilities included within your lease are:

Paying service charges

Leaseholders need to pay annual ground rent and service charges – service charges are a contribution towards services or works provided to the block or estate where your property is located. Visit thh.org.uk/leaseholders for details on how to pay service charges.

Sub-letting

You must tell us if you want to sub-let your property, and provide your correspondence address and contact details. You must sign a deed of covenant agreeing to comply with the requirements of the lease. You will be responsible for paying the service charges, maintaining the property and for the behaviour of your tenants, their family members and visitors. You will also

be responsible for gas safety checks in your home and producing an annual gas certificate.

Alterations

Alterations to the structure or fabric of the property (both internal and external) cannot be made without obtaining written approval from THH. Our permission is needed before beginning any proposed alterations. Visit: thh.org.uk/LeaseholdAlterations

Access

THH staff or their contractors have the right to enter properties to carry out inspections, repairs and maintenance works, including for communal services that run through them. We will normally give you at least 48 hours' notice before doing this. In the event of an emergency we may have to force entry.

Selling, purchasing and re-mortgaging

You can sell your property whenever you wish to. However, if a purchase was made under the Right to Buy scheme and the sale is within the discount repayment period, you will be required to repay some, or sometimes all of the discount you received. If you have purchased then your solicitor must send us a Notice of Assignment and Charge (if applicable) within one month of the purchase.

Repairs

THH is responsible for maintaining the structure of the building you live in and for communal areas around the estate and you must pay your share of the cost. You are responsible for maintaining the inside of your property, including decorating

regularly; maintaining the internal plumbing; electrical wiring; gas pipes; boilers and central heating (unless you are connected to a communal heating system).

In addition, you must have a gas safety check carried out each year. You can report a communal repair at **my.thh.org.uk**

Insurance

The Council arranges insurance cover for the buildings THH manages. You need to arrange cover for your contents. The cover provided by the Council is for the structure of your property and communal areas and includes accidental damage such as fire, storm, flood damage and subsidence.

Nuisance

You must not cause a nuisance from your property. This includes things like playing televisions and radios at unreasonable levels, harassing neighbours, using the property for illegal purposes, failing to control any pets, and obstructing communal areas with any items. These can result in a breach of lease and may result in legal action.

Use of property

Your property can only be used for residential purposes. Holding a sale, auction or running a business from the property is not allowed.

Buying the freehold

If you meet certain qualifying criteria you have the right to purchase the freehold of the building.

This is called Leasehold or Collective Enfranchisement.

Statutory rights

We recommend that you read and understand the conditions of your lease. Leaseholders' rights include:

- extending the terms of your lease;
- setting up a Tenants' and Residents' Association (TRA);
- setting up a Tenant Management Organisation; and
- viewing accounts and relevant documents used to calculate service charges.

You can challenge service charges by contacting Leaseholder Services. You can also make an application to the First Tier Property Tribunal, **rplondon@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk**, phone **0207 446 7700**.



This document is for guidance purposes only.

This information in this leaflet is a summary and does not replace your lease. If any difficulty or dispute arises in connection with your lease you should seek independent advice. (From an organisation like the leasehold advisory service www.lease-advice.org)