

# Living in your home

**Tower  
Hamlets  
Homes**

**For Tenants**

 **Phone**  
020 7364 5015

 **Email**  
contactus@  
towerhamletshomes.org.uk

 **Website**  
[www.towerhamletshomes.org.uk](http://www.towerhamletshomes.org.uk)



# If you need help, here's how to get in touch

## Contact us



### Website

[www.towerhamletshomes.org.uk](http://www.towerhamletshomes.org.uk)

Find answers to your questions, learn about our services, find out what we can do for you and view all of our leaflets.



### Phone

020 7364 5015

### Text-phone

Call us with the help of BT Text Relay  
18001 020 7364 5015



### Email

#### For general enquiries

[contactus@towerhamletshomes.org.uk](mailto:contactus@towerhamletshomes.org.uk)

#### For rents

[rents@towerhamletshomes.org.uk](mailto:rents@towerhamletshomes.org.uk)

#### For service charges

[leasehold@towerhamletshomes.org.uk](mailto:leasehold@towerhamletshomes.org.uk)



### Write to us

PO Box 66355  
London E14 1GU

Every care has been taken to make sure that information contained in this leaflet is correct as at August 2013.

Tower Hamlets Homes manages homes and estates owned by Tower Hamlets Council.

Tower Hamlets Homes is a trading name of Tower Hamlets Homes Limited. Registered in England and Wales.

## Repairs Helpline

For when you need to report a repair or ask us about the progress of a repair that has been already reported. Someone is available 24 hours, every day.



### Phone

0800 376 1637  
(free from landlines)  
or 020 7364 5015

### Bengali/Sylheti

call between 9am and 5pm  
on 0800 376 1638 free from  
landlines or 020 7364 5151

আপনি যদি বাংলাভাষায় কোন মেরামতের কথা রিপোর্ট করতে চান তবে সকাল ৯টা থেকে বিকাল ৫টার মধ্যে 0800 376 1638 নম্বরে যা ল্যান্ডলাইন থেকে ফ্রি বা 020 7364 5151 নম্বরে ফোন করুন।



### Email

[repairs@towerhamletshomes.org.uk](mailto:repairs@towerhamletshomes.org.uk)  
(not for emergency repairs)

## Anti-social behaviour

For when you need help or advice on anti-social behaviour



### Phone

0800 917 5918  
(free from landlines)

Registered Office:  
Jack Dash House  
2 Lawn House Close  
Marsh Wall  
London E14 9YQ

Company No. 06249790.  
VAT Registration No. 912 4819 30.

## Your local Housing Office

### 1 Rushmead

Bethnal Green  
London, E2 6NE

#### Open

— 9am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday  
(except the last Wednesday  
of every month 10am to 4.30pm)  
— 9am to 12.30pm Saturday  
— Closed Bank Holidays

#### Access

Wheelchair access, hearing loop  
in reception area

### Idea Store Watney Market

Watney Market  
Commercial Road  
London, E1 2BR

#### Open

— 9am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday  
(except the last Wednesday  
of every month 10am to 4.30pm)  
— 9am to 12.30pm Saturday  
— Closed Bank Holidays

#### Access

Wheelchair access, hearing loop  
in reception area

### 542 Roman Road

London, E3 5ES

#### Open

— 9am to 7pm Monday  
— 9am to 5pm Tuesday to Friday  
— 9am to 1pm Saturday  
— Closed Bank Holidays

#### Access

Wheelchair access, hearing loop  
in reception area

In partnership  
with:



TOWER HAMLETS



## Help when you need it

If you contact us, it is the Housing Service Centre who you will talk to. These experienced and knowledgeable staff will be able to assist you with almost every enquiry, or point you in the right direction.

So if you have any questions about your tenancy such as changing your contact details or paying your rent – contact us, we're here to help. We're also here if you want advice about renting out a room, making improvements to your home, or taking out home insurance.



**This leaflet provides information for Tower Hamlets Homes tenants about your home, your tenancy and the services available to you.**

## We're here to help

We aim to provide the best possible service to all of our tenants. If you have any questions regarding your tenancy, please contact us.

The Housing Service Centre is who you will talk to if you call us. These experienced and knowledgeable staff will be able to assist you with almost every enquiry, or point you in the right direction.



Our team of Housing Advisors can help with:



Rents and  
Service Charges



Tenancy or  
Lease queries



Caretaking



Green spaces  
on your Estate



Parking on  
your Estate



Repairs



Anti-social  
behaviour



Getting  
involved

**D**

## About your tenancy

If you have a question about your tenancy or need advice about the tenancy rules, please contact us – we’re here to help.

You become a tenant when you sign a tenancy agreement and live in the property as your home. Your tenancy agreement is a legal contract.

There are two types of tenancy agreement. If you have been a tenant for at least 12 months you’re a secure tenant. If you have been a tenant for less than 12 months, you’ll probably be a probationary tenant.

Probationary tenants have fewer rights - but as long as there are no problems during your first year with us, you automatically become a secure tenant.

If you’re not sure which agreement you have, or you have lost your copy of your tenancy rules, please ask us.

**E**

## Rights and responsibilities

Your tenancy rules tell you all about your rights and responsibilities and the rules you agreed to follow when you signed your tenancy agreement.

You have the right to	Secure	Probationary
Live peacefully in your home without being unnecessarily interrupted by us or disturbed by your neighbours.	✓	✓
Carry out your own improvements, after checking with us first.	✓	
Rent out a room, after checking with us first.	✓	
Apply to exchange or swap properties with another tenant, after checking with us first.	✓	
Buy your home under the Right to Buy scheme (certain rules apply).	✓	
Be consulted about proposed changes to the services you receive.	✓	✓
Get certain repairs fixed (see your Repairs Guide for more information).	✓	✓
Pass your tenancy on to a family member who lives with you when you die (certain rules apply).	✓	
Appeal against decisions we make that you don't agree with.	✓	✓

## E

Your main responsibilities are to	Secure	Probationary
Pay your rent and other charges on time.	✓	✓
Take care of the property and do any repairs you're responsible for.	✓	✓
Live in the property as your main and only home and let us know if you're going to be away from your home for more than a month.	✓	✓
Make sure that everyone in your household, including children and visitors, behave responsibly and don't harass, threaten or cause nuisance to your neighbours or our staff.	✓	✓
Let us know at least 28 days before you move out if you intend to end your tenancy.	✓	✓
Ask us first if you want to do something such as have a pet, rent out a room or make home improvements.	✓	✓

Our main responsibilities are to	Secure	Probationary
Consult you on any changes to your tenancy.	✓	✓
Keep your home in good repair and weather proof, and any heating, water, gas or electricity supply in working order.	✓	✓
Let you know if there are any changes to your rent or other charges at least 28 days before it's due.	✓	✓
Keep you informed about changes to what we do or how you can contact us.	✓	✓
Give you at least 24 hours notice – unless it's an emergency – before coming into your home to carry out inspections, repairs, gas safety checks or construction work.	✓	✓
Keep up-to-date contact details for you and let you see the information about you that's on file, and correct it if it's wrong.	✓	✓

## F

### Extra support if you need it

We can help you if you need extra support to live independently or to manage your tenancy. Lots of things can make people more vulnerable, both in the short term or long term – such as having a disability, misusing alcohol or drugs or simply getting older. And there are times in everyone's life when they feel more vulnerable or in need of support, such as grieving after a death of someone close or going into hospital.

If you're finding it hard coping, you can get help with claiming benefits, managing your bills, or sorting out problems with your neighbours. If you could benefit from support, talk to us – we're here to help. We'll be clear about what we can do directly to support you, or we can put you in touch with other organisations who can give you support.

Where we can, we'll use the information you want to give us to tailor our services to you where we can. For example, we can give you extra time to complete transactions, or change the way we contact you or communicate with you.

If you're already receiving support from another organisation, please tell us about it so we can check with you if there's anything else we can do to help you live securely and independently in your home. We'll ask you from time to time if there's anything else we can do to support you.

### **Safe and Secure scheme**

The 'Safe and Secure' scheme is a FREE support service that we provide to residents who would like us to be in more regular contact with them to check up on their well being.

The Housing Service Centre will help you complete the Safe and Secure registration form. You decide on the frequency of contact – weekly, six-weekly or every 12 weeks. You also decide on what action you want us to take if we are unable to make contact with you.

You can find out more about 'Safe and Secure' on our website.

### **Adaptations for older and disabled residents**



Adaptations are changes to your home to make it easier for you to get around, such as grab rails or walk-in showers. They help you stay independent and can make everyday life safer and easier.

If you feel that adaptations or equipment would help you manage things more easily, please contact Tower Hamlets Council's Occupational Therapy Team and they will advise you on how your home can be adapted to help you to live more independently. An Occupational Therapist will usually need to visit you.

The Council will tell us if you would benefit from an adaptation. If it's appropriate for us to do the work, we will contact you to arrange to carry out these works within 5 weeks. We will let you know who is dealing with your case and who the contractor will be. We will make sure you have access to basic facilities while we carry out the work.

If you are a tenant aged over 65 we will provide some adaptations on request such as fitting lever taps or raising electrical sockets.

### **Occupational Therapy Early Intervention Team**

**Phone**  
020 7364 5948

**Email**  
occupationaltherapy@towerhamlets.gov.uk

### **Tower Hamlets Homes**

**Phone**  
020 7364 5015

## Tackling anti-social behaviour

It is the right of every resident to feel safe and secure in their home. We work closely with our partners such as the Police and Tower Hamlets Council to eliminate antisocial behaviour and reduce the likelihood of it happening in the future.

We will support any resident who is suffering anti-social behaviour and take action against those who behave in an anti-social way.

Examples of anti-social behaviour include:

- noise nuisance
- graffiti
- drug use
- vandalism
- disorder

If you are experiencing antisocial behaviour or are worried about nuisance activity where you live, please let us know. We can investigate your report and work with our partners to help you sort it out. We will also keep in touch with you so that you know what is happening.

Tower Hamlets Homes is committed to tackling anti-social behaviour in the neighbourhoods and homes we manage.

While we cannot solve anti-social behaviour we do have a number of ways to deal with it and a range of powers that we can use against those who cause or create anti-social behaviour.

Acting in an anti-social way is a breach of the terms of your tenancy or lease. If you persistently act in an antisocial way we will work with the Council and the Police and take action that could lead to you being arrested or losing your home.

If you are concerned for your safety, contact the police immediately on 999.

### Anti-social behaviour



#### Phone

0800 917 5918  
24 hour freephone number to report any kind of anti-social behaviour.

### Police non-emergency



#### Phone

101

## Security around your home



### Door entry systems

To help maintain security and prevent unwanted visitors in a block of flats:

- Make sure that the door locks behind you.
- Never leave the entrance door propped open.
- Try not to let strangers follow you in, even if they appear genuine.
- Don't release the door for everyone who buzzes. Only release it when you know who it is.

### Visitors to your home

To maintain your personal safety at home:

- If you have a door viewer (spy hole), check who's at the door, before opening it.
- If you have a chain, keep it on when you open the door.
- If you don't know the visitor, ask to see some form of identification, and check it carefully.
- If you are unsure, ask the visitor to wait outside and telephone the organisation they claim to represent.

All our staff and contractors carry identification – if someone can't produce an identity card, **DO NOT** let them into your home – contact us straight away or call 999 and ask for the police.

We can also give our repairs staff a password of your choice to give you for your peace of mind – let us know if you want this when you report a repair.



## Security tips around your home

### Top home security tips

**Mark your  
valuables**

**Close your  
curtains**

**Fit a timer  
to a lamp**

**Ask your  
neighbour  
to keep an  
eye out**

Take a few simple precautions by following our handy tips to help keep your home safe from burglary and theft:

- Mark valuable items with your postcode and house number, or keep a note of serial numbers.
- Close your curtains and leave a light on in a main room when you go out in the evening.
- Fit a timer device to a living-room lamp to make the house look as if someone is in when you go away. Let us know if you are going away for more than a month.
- Arrange with a neighbour you trust to keep an eye on each other's houses or think about setting up a neighbourhood watch scheme.
- Check that all windows and doors are closed when you go out.
- Keep any store shed or garage locked if you have one.
- Don't leave your keys or any money where a stranger might find them, see them or reach them through the letter box.

If you are concerned for your safety contact the Police immediately on 999. The police non-emergency number is 101.

## Fire safety

### Preventing fires in your home

Fires are dangerous and can cause serious injury to health. Be aware of fire safety in your home and help avoid danger.

Here are some handy tips to keep you safe:

- Fit smoke alarms on each level of your home and test them once a week. The London Fire Brigade provides FREE home fire safety checks and smoke detectors. Contact London Fire Brigade to book an appointment or to find out more.
- Make a fire action plan so people know how and where to escape.
- Take care in the kitchen – most fires start here, so never leave your cooking unattended and take extra care when cooking with hot oil.
- Never leave lit candles unattended.
- Make sure cigarettes are stubbed out and disposed of carefully and never smoke in bed.
- Don't overload electrical sockets.
- Keep matches away from children.

### Fires INSIDE your home

If there is smoke – keep low, keep calm, and get everyone out as quickly as possible. Call 999 and ask for the Fire Service.

### Fires OUTSIDE your home

If you can't escape or the fire is outside your home:

- Get everyone into one room, it's best if it has a window that opens and a phone.
- Close all the doors and wait to be rescued.
- Put bedding or towels along the bottom of the door to prevent smoke and fumes from getting into the room.
- Open a window and stay near it for fresh air, and alert firefighters when they arrive.
- If you have a phone, call the fire brigade. If you don't have a phone, shout for help so someone can phone for you.

### London Fire Brigade

 **Phone**  
0800 028 44 28

 **Email**  
smokealarms@london-fire.gov.uk

### Repairs Helpline

 **Phone**  
020 7364 5015 (option 1)

### Streetline

 **Phone**  
020 7364 5004

### Crime-stoppers

 **Phone**  
0800 555 111

## Preventing fires outside your home

Please remember your home can be at risk of fire if items are stored or left outside your front door, in communal areas or corridors. These act as easy fuel for fires and are one of the biggest fire hazards. If it is set on fire, rubbish near windows, doors or in communal areas can trap you in your home.

- Keep the landings, stairwells and common areas free from obstructions, such as cycles and pushchairs.
- Do report any damage to fire extinguishers or fire blankets to our Repairs Helpline.
- Do have unwanted furniture or kitchen appliances removed by calling Streetline. Each collection will cost £15 and covers up to five items.
- Do put recycling out on collection day only.
- Do put general rubbish safely into the chutes provided.

Keeping your block tidy reduces the fire risk and also makes your neighbourhood a nicer place to live.

If you see someone deliberately setting a fire phone 999 or Crime-stoppers.

### Repairs Helpline

 **Phone**  
020 7364 5015

### Streetline

 **Phone**  
020 7364 5004

### Crime-stoppers

 **Phone**  
0800 555 111



**Do not store or leave items outside your front door, in communal areas or corridors.**



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**Remove unwanted furniture or kitchen appliances by calling 020 7364 5004.**

**General rubbish – put it safely into the chutes provided.**

**Recycling – only put it out on collection day or in the bins provided.**

## Gas safety checks

If maintained properly, gas appliances are normally safe. If they are not looked after they can become deadly for you, your family and your neighbours.

We will carry out an annual gas service and safety check of your gas boiler free of charge. We must do this every year by law. Our fully-qualified Gas Safe staff also check that your radiators and hot water are working properly.

Before your annual safety check is due, we will write to you with an appointment. Please make sure someone's at home to let our Gas Safety staff in. If you can't make the appointment, please ring the number we give you to arrange a time that's convenient for you. If our staff can't get in to carry out the safety check we may have to take legal action to gain access to your home.

After the annual safety check, we will give you a copy of the gas safety certificate within 28 days for your peace of mind. If the service reveals a problem, we will tell you what work needs to be done, and when someone will come to fix it.

### Your gas safety

Leaking gas can cause an explosion, and gas appliances that are not working correctly can produce poisonous and deadly fumes. We recommend that you never block up any air vents in your home and that you fit a carbon monoxide alarm to warn you of a carbon monoxide build-up in your home.

If there is a strong smell of gas, or you think there might be a leak, contact the National Grid Emergency Line immediately and:

- Turn off the gas supply at the main gas meter if this is in your property.
- Open the doors and windows.
- Don't switch anything electrical on or off, including the lights, as this could cause an explosion.
- Don't smoke, strike matches or light candles.

### Liquid petroleum gas and paraffin heaters

Under the terms of your tenancy agreement or lease you **must not** store or use any form of bottled gas or paraffin heaters. It can be extremely dangerous and any breach of this rule will be treated very seriously.



#### Repairs Helpline

 **Phone**  
020 7364 5015

#### Gas Safe Register

 **Phone**  
0800 408 5500

 **Website**  
[www.gassaferegister.co.uk](http://www.gassaferegister.co.uk)

#### National Grid Emergency Line

 **Phone**  
0800 111 999

## Electrical safety

Electricity can be dangerous, but by taking some simple steps you can reduce the risk to you and your neighbours.

### Plugs and sockets

For plugs and sockets, keep an eye out for the following:

- Hot plugs or sockets, scorch marks, fuses that often blow, or flickering lights – they are all signs of loose wiring or other electrical problems.
- Badly wired plugs – any coloured wires sticking out could come loose and debris could also get into the plug.
- Overloaded sockets – plugging too many electrical appliances into one socket can lead to overheating.
- Use sockets safely – it's better to use a multi-socket adapter on a lead than a block adaptor.

### Heaters

When using a plug-in heater you should:

- Keep it clear of curtains and furniture.
- Only sit at least three feet (one metre) away from it.
- Buy it from a reputable shop.
- Never dry washing on or near it.

### Cables and leads

The risks with cables and leads include:

- Getting frayed and damaged – make sure the outer covering of all power leads is in good condition and replace if necessary.
- Being badly positioned – they shouldn't be anywhere that they could be tripped over, or near water, cookers or other sources of heat.
- Running them under rugs or carpets where they can wear through without anyone noticing – position them elsewhere.

### Appliances

All electrical equipment you buy should have the CE, BEAB and BS safety marks. When using electrical appliances, you should never:

- Get them wet – this includes plugs and sockets, so don't put a vase of flowers on top of the TV, for example.
- Leave them on at night – unless they are designed to be left on, like freezers.
- Put anything in the microwave that is made of metal, or has a metallic finish or parts.

### Second hand goods

Beware when buying second hand goods; they may be old and worn out. If you do buy a second hand appliance you should get it safety tested by a qualified expert before you use it.

### Maintenance

Electrical appliances, especially ones that run at high speeds and contain motors, such as washing machines, should be serviced once a year by a qualified electrician.

### Fuses

When you're fitting or replacing a fuse, it's important to use the right fuse for the appliance. Check the manual or look for a sticker on the appliance to find out its wattage and then use the correct fuse.

### Electrical Safety Council



Website  
[www.esc.org.uk](http://www.esc.org.uk)

# M

## Asbestos safety

Many homes contain asbestos, which is usually safe if it is undisturbed. If we have to deal with asbestos when carrying out a repair, we will make sure that your home is safe and that our contractors are fully trained and equipped to complete the work.

When you move into your new home, we will tell you if asbestos can be found in your home. When we carry out major improvements to homes, we will remove any asbestos or seal it in safely.

If you're carrying out DIY you should not remove or disturb asbestos. If you are unsure, please contact your Housing Service Centre who will be happy to advise you.

For more information on asbestos pick up a copy of our asbestos leaflet from your local Housing Office or read it on our website.



# N

## Emergencies

In an emergency, such as a fire, threat to life or damage to your home, phone 999 straight away.

If you have a housing or repair emergency in the evening or at the weekend please call our Repairs Helpline where we can offer you help and advice.

When a specialist response is needed out of hours, our Repairs Helpline will refer residents to service experts such as homelessness or environmental health, or to the emergency services – Police, Ambulance or Fire Service.

Please remember that our out of hours repairs service is a 'make safe' service only where there is genuine danger to residents or property. Follow-up repairs to tenant properties are usually completed the next day. Check your *Repairs guide* for more details.

Special arrangements are also in place to help vulnerable residents outside of working hours. If in doubt, please call our Repairs Helpline.

### Repairs Helpline



**Phone**  
020 7364 5015



## Water safety

To help avoid accidents and prevent damage caused by flooding, here are some handy tips:

- Make sure washing machines or dishwashers are plumbed in properly.
- Make sure your bath doesn't overflow – this is a common cause of flooding which can damage your home and your neighbours homes and belongings.
- Be careful with hot water – check the heat of the water before getting into a bath or shower.
- Take extra care when stepping out of a bath or shower onto a wet floor.

If you are going away during the winter months, avoid burst pipes or water leaks by remembering to:

- Turn off the main stopcock.
- Turn off any immersion heater.
- Turn down your central heating controls and leave your heating on low for a few hours a day to avoid pipes freezing.
- Ask a friend or family member to check on your home regularly.



**P**

## Safety tips around your home

Many things around your home can cause accidents but there are some simple things you can do to help prevent them.

Here are some handy tips to help keep you safe:

- Keep items you use daily in places that are easy to reach.
- Store heavy items on low shelves.
- Keep cleaning products and other dangerous materials in a secure, child-proof place.
- Tidy away toys and other items when not in use to prevent accidents and throw away damaged toys and any other objects.
- Keep medicines and vitamins in their original containers in a secure, child-proof place and return leftover medicines to the chemist.
- Think about fitting corner guards to any sharp edges around your home.

**Q**

## Making improvements to your home

### Home improvements

We're happy for you to improve your home, but please ask us before you start any work. We'll normally agree, but if we say no, we'll give you the reason in writing.

Don't forget you may need planning permission to make certain improvements. You can get advice about planning and building control by contacting Tower Hamlets Council.

You may be entitled to be reimbursed for some types of home improvement when you move out. We can give you a list of what kinds of improvements these are. The amount paid is based on the original cost of the improvement and how long it has been in use. Please contact us for more information.

### Tower Hamlets Council



**Phone**  
020 7364 5000



## Condensation and damp

### Laminate flooring

Before you install laminate flooring, please check with us to find out if it's right for your home. If you live in a flat, this type of flooring can cause noise nuisance to your neighbours and we may ask you to remove it if the sound insulation is insufficient.

### Satellite dishes

You're not permitted to erect a satellite dish on your block without written consent from us. Sometimes, you may also be required to obtain planning permission in addition to our written consent.

If you wish to erect a satellite dish on your block then you should contact us for permission. Any dishes put up without written permission will be removed and you'll be charged for this.

Condensation can cause damage to your property and, in the long run, could cause permanent damage to some parts of the structure of the building.

It can be difficult to tell the difference between condensation and damp. As a rule, condensation is likely to occur in areas where there is not much movement, such as in corners, cupboards or bathrooms.

You can take a number of steps to prevent condensation in your home. Try to reduce the moisture produced in your home by closing the kitchen door when cooking, and drying clothes in the bathroom with the door closed.

Ventilate your home from time to time by opening windows at both sides of the property.

If you're worried about condensation, please ask us for further advice or visit our website.



## Saving energy and money

Here's some handy tips to help you go green and save money at the same time:

Use energy-saving light bulbs. They last longer and can save you up to £30 a year. Use these in the lights that are on the most to save the most energy, usually your living room and kitchen.

Turn your central-heating thermostat down by just 1°C. It could save you up to 10% on your fuel bills. Turn down the thermostat on individual radiators.

Close all your curtains at night to prevent heat escaping through your windows. Leave a window open slightly if you have problems with condensation in your home.

If you buy a new appliance, like a fridge, make sure it has a good energy-efficiency rating. 'A' is the best. 'G' is the worst.

Put aluminium foil behind radiators to keep the heat from being lost through the walls. You can buy special foil from DIY shops.

### Energy saving tips

**Use energy-saving light bulbs**

**Turn your thermostat down by 1°C**

**Close your curtains at night**

**Put aluminium foil behind radiators**

**Visit the Energy Saving Trust website for more ideas**

#### Energy Saving Trust



Website

[www.energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk)

## Living in your home

### Keys and fobs

You were given keys when you moved into your home. We don't keep spare keys so please arrange to get any spare keys cut that you need.

If you have a door entry system you'll also have been given an electronic key fob. If you lose this please contact us as soon as possible for a replacement (charges apply).

If you lock yourself out or lose your keys, we'll help you get back in but we do have to charge you the cost of getting in, replacing the lock or repairing any damage.

### Insurance

We strongly recommend that you take out contents insurance for your home. This will protect your personal possessions in the event of flood, fire, damage or burglary. A leading insurer, Jardine Lloyd Thompson, offers a scheme for Tower Hamlets Homes residents. Please contact them to find out more.

### Pets

A pet that's well-behaved, properly looked-after and safe, can bring pleasure and company to its owner, but please check with us first if you want to keep a pet. As long as it's appropriate for the type of home you live in and will not annoy or frighten other people, we won't usually say no. Permission can be revoked if the pet is causing nuisance or annoyance to other residents.

### Pest control



If you have problems with pests, such as insects, cockroaches, rodents or bed bugs please contact the Council's Pest Control Team. They can give you free advice on treatment and information on how to keep your house free from pests.

### TV licences

If you own or operate a television in your property, then you are required by law to have a television licence. It is your responsibility to organise this.

### Jardine Lloyd Thompson – Crystal Insurance Scheme

 **Phone**  
0845 601 7007

### Council's Pest Control Team

 **Phone**  
020 7364 5008

### TV Licence

 **Website**  
[www.tvlicensing.co.uk](http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk)

 **Phone**  
0844 800 6790

**Minicom**  
0844 800 6778

## Changes to your tenancy

### **Change of personal details**

If any of your details change such as your name or phone number or if someone is living with you, let us know as soon as possible. The information you give us will only be used by us, and will be kept confidential.

### **Adding someone to your tenancy**

If you're the only tenant but your partner wants to share the rights and responsibilities of your tenancy, please contact us. Certain rules apply and we'll talk these through with you.

### **Divorce, separation and dissolution of civil partnership**

If you're involved in a divorce or separation, your tenancy rights may change. We don't have the power to decide who can live in your home – only the couple involved in the divorce or separation, or a property transfer order made by the court, can make this decision.



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### **Inheriting a tenancy**

If you die, a partner or close relative who has been living with you can inherit your tenancy (also known as succession). We can advise if someone living with you can inherit your tenancy. Certain rules apply – please contact us for more information.

When a tenant dies, someone should contact us as soon as possible to see how we can help. They should also provide a copy of the death certificate, along with details of anyone responsible for dealing with their affairs.

### **Renting out a room**

You can rent out a bedroom but please check with us first. We won't usually say no but if we do we'll give you our reasons in writing. It won't affect the rent you pay but it may affect any benefit claims. You can earn a certain amount a year tax free but please think carefully about whether it's right for you.

We can't act on your behalf if you want someone to leave your home and if you end your tenancy you must make sure no-one is left in your home when you move out.

### **Going away**

You should tell us if you plan to be away from your home for more than four weeks. We'll need to know when you plan to come back and how to contact you in case of emergency. Remember, you need to make arrangements for paying your rent while you're away, and it's a good idea to have a friend or relative who can check on your home.

You should also check your insurance policy, as it may not cover items that are left in a house for more than 30 days while you are away.

If you plan to be away for more than three months or want someone to look after your home while you're away you'll need to ask us first or you may lose your rights as a tenant.

### **Squatting and illegal subletting**

Sometimes tenants move out and rent their property to another person. Sometimes people will see an empty property and move in, knowing they shouldn't be living there. These are types of housing fraud known as 'illegal subletting' or 'squatting'.

If you think housing fraud is going on please tell us so we can take action quickly. Your call is treated confidentially and we investigate all reports.

## Moving home

### Moving home



If you want to move to another rented home with another social landlord in Tower Hamlets you will need to join the housing list. Please contact Tower Hamlets Council's Lettings service for an application form and to find out more.

Once accepted onto the housing list you can bid for homes advertised each week in East End Life, or by using the automated telephone bidding line or the Tower Hamlets Homeseekers website.

### Moving to a smaller home

If you feel your home is getting too big to manage we can help you move to a smaller home. If you move to a smaller home your rent, council tax and energy costs should also be lower and you may even be able to get a cash grant, as well as help with moving expenses. Please contact us to find out more.

### Home ownership options

#### Buying your own home

You can buy your home from us as long as you've been a tenant for at least five years. Some homes such as those built for people with disabilities can't be bought.

If you're interested in buying your home please contact us and we'll explain how the scheme works and answer your questions.

We're on hand if you want to meet with us and go through the offer with you, explain what options you have, the costs of becoming a home owner and the buying process.

#### Other housing options

You can now take advantage of a new simplified house hunting scheme for affordable home ownership and rented properties in London. There are several schemes that could help you to own part or all of a home including part buy, part rent (also called shared ownership).

Contact First Steps to register and to find out more.

### Tower Hamlets Council's Lettings service

 **Phone**  
020 7364 2826

 **Email**  
lettings@towerhamlets.gov.uk

### Tower Hamlets Home Seekers

 **Phone**  
Automated bidding line  
0845 270 2400

 **Website**  
[www.thhs.org.uk](http://www.thhs.org.uk)

 **FIRST STEPS**  
to home ownership in London

### First Steps

 **Phone**  
020 8920 7777

 **Website**  
[www.firststepslondon.org](http://www.firststepslondon.org)

**Home  
too big?**

**We'll  
help you  
move**

## Swapping your home

**HomeSwapper** 

A Home Swap (also known as a mutual exchange) is when two tenants exchange homes. HomeSwapper helps you find your ideal mutual exchange, searching for potential matches with thousands of other people with tenancies from all over the country. You can get updates and possible matches by email, text message or your on-site account. Registration is free, easy and secure on their website.

Once you've found someone to swap with, you must ask our permission before you move. We won't usually say no but if we do we'll give you our reasons in writing.

It's very important that you arrange to look over the other property before you make a decision to move. When you swap, you must accept the other property as it is left. If you owe rent you won't be able to move until it is paid. Please remember it's illegal to pay anyone to persuade them to exchange tenancies with you.

**Home Swapper**



**Website**

[www.homeswapper.co.uk](http://www.homeswapper.co.uk)

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## Ending your tenancy and moving out

Because a tenancy is a legal contract, you must give us 28 days notice when you want to leave. Rent is payable for the whole of this period. To help, we'll give you a final rent account for your tenancy and a handy 'before you go' checklist.

During the first two weeks of your notice period we'll visit you at home to check the condition of the property and to agree with you any repairs you are responsible for. We'll discuss what happens next and tell you how to return your keys.

Please remember you have to pay us for removing any rubbish left in your property, or for any damage that has not been repaired – we'll let you know if this applies to you and how to pay within a week of you moving out.

### **When we will end your tenancy**

Sometimes we have to end your tenancy and ask you to move. This might be because we're carrying out major construction works or you have inherited your tenancy and your home has more bedrooms than you need.

If we have to ask you to move for one of these reasons, we'll always offer you another home suitable for your needs.

We'll also end your tenancy if you break one of the tenancy rules that you agreed to follow when you signed your tenancy agreement. This might be because you have not paid your rent or are causing a nuisance to your neighbours or renting out your home while you live somewhere else.

If we have to end your tenancy for any of the above reasons we'll do so through the courts to make sure you have a fair hearing.

## Want to know more?

Here's how to find out more about the services we provide and what we can offer you.



### Talk to us

The Housing Service Centre is who you will talk to if you call us. Our Housing Advisors will be able to assist you with almost every enquiry, or point you in the right direction.



### Pick up our range of leaflets and publications

They give you more information on all of our services. You can find these in our reception areas, on our website or by contacting a housing adviser.



### Read our service standards

They set out what we do so you know what to expect. We have a service standard for each of the services we provide. These are available on our website and in our offices, or you can ask a member of staff for more information.



### Visit our website

You can find lots of information about what we do, how we are performing, and our latest news and information. All of our leaflets and publications are also available to read or print, as well as local information such as neighbourhood inspection timetables.



### Check out your newsletters

They contain news and information about our service and are delivered straight to your door.



### Look at your local noticeboard

It has details on how to contact us, the latest neighbourhood inspection results, and information on how we're doing.



### Like us on Facebook

Our Facebook page has lots of up-to-date information on what we're doing and what events are going. Find us at [facebook.com/towerhamletshomes](https://facebook.com/towerhamletshomes)



### Follow us on twitter

Our twitter link is [@THHomes](https://twitter.com/THHomes)

## Translations

This leaflet tells you more about your rights and responsibilities as a tenant and some advice on living in your home.

If you need help to understand it or if you have any questions, please contact us by telephone, email or visit one of our offices. We can arrange alternative formats including large print, and provide written information in your own language. We can also offer a meeting with a member of staff and an interpreter.

### Translations



**Phone**  
020 7364 5015



**Email**  
contactus  
@towerhamletshomes.org.uk

### Bengali

এই প্রচারপত্রটি ভাড়াটে হিসেবে আপনার অধিকার এবং দায়িত্ব সম্পর্কে জানাচ্ছে এবং আপনার বাড়ীতে বাস করার বিষয়ে কিছু উপদেশ দিচ্ছে। আপনার যদি এটি বুঝতে কোন সাহায্য লাগে বা কোন প্রশ্ন থাকে তবে দয়া করে আমাদের টেলিফোন, ইমেল করুন বা আমাদের কোন একটি অফিসে আসুন। আমরা আলোচনার জন্য কর্মীদের কোন সদস্য এবং একজন দোভাষীর ব্যবস্থা করতে পারবো বা আপনার নিজের ভাষায় লিখিতভাবে তথ্য দিতে পারবো।

### Somali

Warsidahan waxa uu kuu sii sharaxayaa xaquuqdaada iyo waajibaadkaaga ijaarka, iyo weliba talo sidii aad ugu noolaan lahayd gurigaaga. Hadii aad kaalmo u baahato si aad u fahanto, ama hadii aad hayso wax su'aalo ah, fadlan nagala soo xiriir telefoonka, email-ka ama soo booqo mid ka mida xafiiskanaga. Waxana aad la kulmi kartaa mid ka mida xubnaha shaqaalaha iyo weliba turjubaan, ama waxa aanu ku siin karnaa macluumaad qoraala oo ku qoran luqadaada.