

Factsheet 5: About your tenancy agreement

Our promise to you

- We will meet all our obligations to provide you with a safe home, for example by organising gas safety tests.
- We will publish the dates of scheme inspections and give you the opportunity to accompany staff when they visit.
- If you request a document in another language, large print, Braille, or on audio CD, we will provide it within 10 working days.

Starter tenancy

What is a starter tenancy?

Starter tenancies are issued to all our new residents and they are known as an Assured Shorthold Tenancy Agreement, and this runs for a trial period of 12 months.

If there are no problems during the trial period we will then grant a Periodic Assured Tenancy, which offers residents all the usual benefits and security to stay in a property.

If there is a problem that we cannot work with you to resolve, we will give you notice to end the tenancy. We have to obtain a court order to evict you from your home if you do not leave at the end of the notice period, but a court has to grant us a possession order if we apply for one.

Why use starter tenancies?

We are committed to tackling

anti-social behaviour (ASB) and starter tenancies are one way of dealing with this problem. During this time it is easier for us to take action against the small minority who may cause problems. A troublemaker can make life a misery for everyone else and we are determined to work with our communities to protect them from this problem.

All tenancies

What happens if I break the tenancy conditions?

You will be visited by a staff member and your behaviour will be discussed. This may result in us serving you with a notice to end your tenancy.

We may subsequently take action to evict you from your home, or alternatively we might pursue other legal action such as an injunction, where you may stay in your home

but you must stop doing something, such as committing anti-social behaviour.

What type of behaviour would be considered a problem?

- rent arrears
- being a nuisance neighbour
- failing to look after your home and garden
- any illegal activity which takes place in your home, such as drug taking, whether it is you or a visitor
- anybody using violence towards another member of the household, the neighbourhood or to Great Places staff and/or its contractors
- if a member of the household commits an arrestable offence within the neighbourhood
- if you provided false information when you applied for a home

- dumping
- noise

Eviction

Eviction is a last resort and we will work with you to try and resolve any problems before asking for a court order. However if necessary we will take legal action against residents.

Succession

Your partner or a family member may have the right to take over your tenancy if you die, provided they have lived with you for 12 months up to the time of death. This is called "Succession".

Succession can only take place once and your family must contact the association within a month of the death. If succession results in you under-occupying your home or means that you might be occupying a home that would be better suited to another family's needs, for

example an adapted property where you do not require the adaptations, Great Places has grounds for possession. We may seek possession of your home, but would offer you suitable alternative accommodation to meet your needs.

Home improvements

You have the right to make home improvements but you must ask Great Places for written permission before you start work. You must only use qualified tradesmen and we will ask to inspect any work after completion.

Lodgers

You can take in lodgers but you require our written permission beforehand.

Pets

Your tenancy agreement states that you are not allowed to keep pets, however the association will relax this rule in some circumstances

where it is felt that the property is suitable to house your pet and the pet is unlikely to cause a nuisance to neighbours. Please contact your neighbourhood co-ordinator for more details and to discuss your individual circumstances.

Consultation and information

We will consult you if we are making major changes to the services we provide. You also have the right to see information we hold about you, although you must make this request in writing.

Independent advice

You can get independent advice about your tenancy agreement by contacting the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), Community Legal Service or a solicitor.