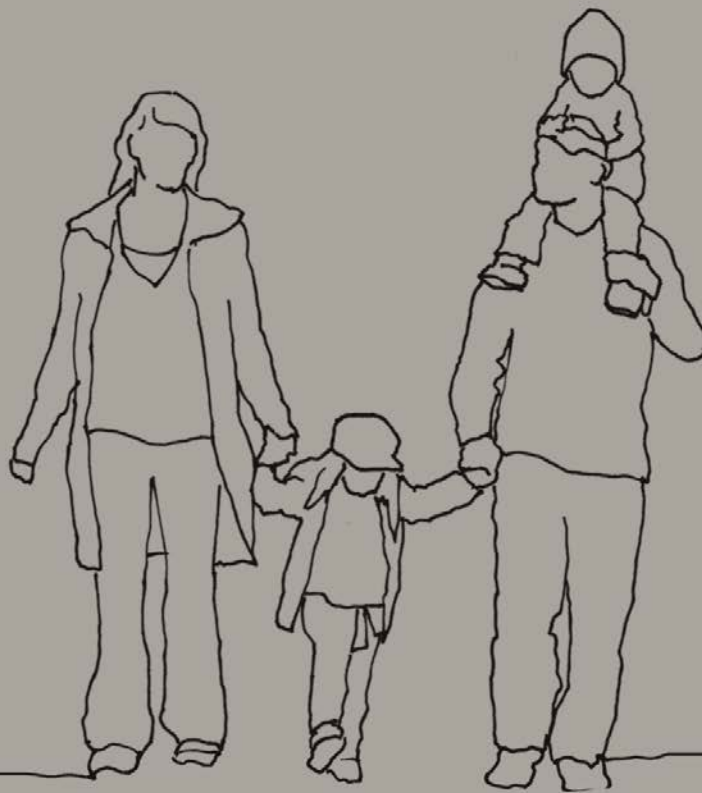




Tenant Guide



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1. Your Tenancy and Responsibilities

You have an Assured Shorthold Tenancy with us. This means that your tenancy is assured for a minimum of six months. After the first six months, your tenancy will become periodic. This means that your tenancy will continue with the same terms until either you or we serve notice.

Access – You must allow Notting Hill staff and all contractors access for maintenance and repairs.

Adaptations – You must not put up a satellite dish or attach your own shower hose. You should not use any room for bucket bathing.

Bills – It is your responsibility to set up and pay all gas, electric water, phone and internet bills. You are also responsible for paying council tax and for setting up a TV license.

Communal areas – You must not use communal areas for storage.

Decorating – You must not redecorate without our written permission. You must not hang pictures or put holes in the walls. You must not put up posters or erect shelving.

Furniture – We will not replace any furniture that is broken or damaged during your tenancy. We are only responsible for repairing white goods that we have supplied for the first 12 months of your tenancy.

Garden - You must look after the garden, if you have access to it.

Giving up your tenancy – You must give us four weeks notice if you intend to move out. You must arrange to hand your keys back to your Housing Officer. You will be charged full rent for every day that you continue to hold keys or leave belongings in the property. You will need to sign an end of tenancy form with your Housing Officer to ensure that the property is returned in the same condition that it was handed over in. All fixtures and fittings supplied must remain in the property.

Household – Only the people who are listed on your tenancy agreement are allowed to live at the property.

Insurance – It is up to you to insure your belongings. We do not provide contents insurance.

Inventory – This has been agreed and signed by you and forms part of your tenancy. Your Housing Officer will carry out regular visits to ensure that the condition of the property is maintained.

You will be liable for any missing items or changes in condition when you end your tenancy.

Keys – We will provide you with one set of keys. If you lose these, you will have to pay to get another set. You must provide us with a set of keys if you change the locks.

Maintenance – You must keep the property in good condition and take care to prevent damage from frost and condensation from occurring.

Nuisance and Anti Social Behaviour – You must treat your neighbours with respect. You must not cause any nuisance or disturbance. We will not tolerate any harassment caused by you, your family or your guests.

Permanent Housing – If you are in temporary housing, then it is up to the Council to find you permanent housing. Unfortunately, we are not able to provide you with permanent housing or decide when you will move.

Pets – You are not allowed to have pets.

Rent – You are responsible for the payment of your rent and for keeping your Housing Benefit claim in order.

Repairs – You must report all repairs to us. We will carry out some repairs. The owner of the property will be responsible for carrying out most repairs. We will contact him/her on your behalf.

Rubbish – You must dispose of rubbish properly. You must not remove window restrictors or throw anything from windows.

Security - All doors and windows must be locked when you leave the property.

Washing machine – you can install your own washing machine, if there is already provision for you to do so. This must be done by a qualified plumber. You are not allowed to make any alterations to the property (such as cutting the work top or removing kitchen units) to fit a washing machine.

2. Reporting Repairs and Emergencies

You should always contact your Housing Officer if you have a repairs issue.

In some instances, we will arrange for contractors to attend and carry out the repairs required.

In the majority of cases, the private owner of your property will be responsible for completing the repair. You are not required to contact the private owner yourself. We will always contact the owner to advise him or her of the repair on your behalf.

If any repair is deemed to be caused by you, your family or your guests, then it is your responsibility to arrange and pay for the repair. If you do not arrange a repair, we will arrange one and charge you.

Reporting a repair

You can easily report a repair by:

- Contacting your Housing Officer by phone between 9.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.
- Texting your Housing Officer your address and a short message
- Emailing your Housing Officer with details of your repair

Your Housing Officer will respond to your message as soon as possible.

Emergency repairs

If you have an emergency and cannot contact your Housing Officer, then please call the office to report your repair.

An emergency is an urgent repair that cannot wait. For example, an uncontrollable leak; dangerous electrics; or unsecured door, following a break in, are all classed as emergencies.

Call 084 4567 1074 to report an emergency out-of-hours repair.

Please note: you will be charged for any out-of-hours repairs that are not deemed to be emergencies.

Advice for emergencies

Fire

If there is a fire, leave the building and dial 999. Do not try to save any personal possessions.

Gas, water and electricity

When you first move in, locate your water stop cock, gas stop cock and mains electricity switch so you do not have to waste time searching for them in an emergency.

Electricity

If you have no electricity, it is likely to be a power outage. Call your supplier to find out what the issue is and when they will be switching the electricity back on.

If you have an electrical fault that you think could be dangerous (for example, a water leak that is leaking into the electrics) during office hours then you should call your Housing Officer. If you have a dangerous electric fault outside of office hours then you should call our emergency repairs on 0844 567 1074.

Gas

If you smell gas or suspect a carbon monoxide leak call The National Grid immediately on 0800 111 999.

Water leak

If you have an uncontrollable leak or burst pipe, turn your water supply off at the stop cock immediately and call your Housing officer between 9.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

You should contact our emergency repairs line on 0844 5687 1074 if the leak is uncontrollable and happens outside of office hours.

The Contractors Code of Practice

The contractors we employ must work to certain standards whilst they are in your property. These are:

- Carry identification**
- Leave your house clean and tidy**
- Be polite to you, your family and guests**

Please contact your Housing Officer if you have a complaint about one of our contactors.

3. Common Repairs - Who is Responsible?

Repair	How long should it take?	What to do
Blockages – sinks/basins/baths	This should be fixed within seven days. If the blockage is causing raw sewage to come up, then this will be attended to within four hours.	Call your Housing Officer. He/she will arrange for a plumber to fix the blockage. You will be charged, if the blockage is found to be caused by you (for example, by pouring fat down the drains).
Blockages – toilet	This should be fixed within seven days. If you only have one toilet in the property then this will then be attended to within four hours.	Call your Housing Officer. He/she will arrange for a plumber to fix the blockage. You will be charged, if the blockage is found to be caused by you (for example, children’s toys or excess paper).
Broken fridges, ovens, hobs	The appliance will be repaired or replaced within seven days, if it is our responsibility.	Call your Housing Officer. If your appliance breaks down within the first year of your tenancy we will arrange for it to be repaired or replaced. If your appliance breaks down after the one year, it will be your responsibility to repair or replace it.
Broken internal doors or kitchen units	This should be fixed within 28 days.	Call your Housing Officer. He/she will investigate the problem. If the doors or units have been broken by you then you will be responsible for replacing or repairing them to a good standard. If you do not do this, we will do the work and charge you.
Broken light bulbs	If there is a fault with the connection then it should be fixed within seven days.	It is your responsibility to replace light bulbs. You should call your Housing Officer if there is a fault with the connection. Either Notting Hill or the property owner will be responsible for fixing the problem. You should call your Housing Officer again if you are not contacted within seven days to arrange a repair.

Repair	How long should it take?	What to do
Broken toilet seat	N/A	It is your responsibility to replace any toilet seat that is broken.
Dripping/leaking taps	This should be fixed wither within seven or 28 days depending on the severity of the drip or leak.	Call your Housing Officer. He/she may wish to investigate the problem before reporting it. You should call your Housing Officer again if you are not contacted within seven days to arrange a repair.
Electrical faults – broken switches/sockets	This should be fixed wither within seven or 28 days depending on how many switches/sockets are affected.	Call your Housing Officer. He/she may wish to investigate the problem before reporting it. You should call your Housing Officer again if you are not contacted within seven days to arrange a repair.
Faulty smoke alarm	If there is a fault with the alarm then this should be fixed within 24 hours.	It is your responsibility to test and replace smoke alarm batteries. You should call your Housing Officer if there is a fault with the alarm. Either Notting Hill or the property owner will be responsible for fixing the problem. You should call your Housing Officer again if you are not contacted within seven days to arrange a repair.
Faulty windows, sash cords.	This should take seven or 28 days to repair depending on the nature of the problem.	Call your Housing Officer. He/she may wish to investigate the problem before reporting it. You should call your Housing Officer again if you are not contacted within seven days to arrange a repair.
Leaks from sinks/basins/taps	This should be fixed within seven days.	Call your Housing Officer. He/she may wish to investigate the problem before reporting it. You should call your Housing Officer again if you are not contacted within seven days to arrange a repair.

Repair	How long should it take?	What to do
No heating/hot water between 1st April and 31st October	This should be fixed within seven days.	Call your Housing Officer. Either Notting Hill or the property owner will be responsible for fixing the problem. You should call your Housing Officer again if you are not contacted within seven days to arrange a repair.
No heating/hot water between 1st November and 31st March	Your heating should be fixed within 24 hours and your hot water should be repaired within seven days. In the event of the contractor not being able to repair your heating within 24 hours, you will be supplied with electric heaters.	Call your Housing Officer. Either Notting Hill or the property owner will be responsible for fixing the problem. You should call your Housing Officer again if you are not contacted within 24 hours to arrange a repair.
Roof leak	The property owner should repair the roof within seven or 28 days, depending on the severity of the leak.	Call your Housing Officer. He/she will report the problem to the property owner. You should call your Housing Officer again if the property owner does not contact you within seven days to arrange a repair.
Washing machine	The appliance will be repaired or replaced within seven days, if it is the property owner's responsibility.	Call your Housing Officer. If there was a washing machine installed when you moved in to the property than the owner is responsible for repairing or replacing it. If you installed the washing machine yourself, then you will be responsible for repairing or replacing it.

4. Tips for Property Maintenance

Pest Control

Mice/Rats

We expect you to first try treating the issue yourself. You can purchase an ultra sonic pest repellent, or block holes with wire wool. It's important to make sure that food and leftovers which attract rodents are not left on counters or the floor.

Cockroaches

To prevent cockroaches you need to ensure that your home is clean and that food and leftovers which attract cockroaches are not left on counters or the floor. You can treat cockroaches with bug spray and sticky traps or by filling holes where you think the cockroaches may be coming from.

Bedbugs

You can treat bedbugs with inexpensive, specialist powder. Washing your clothes in boiling water and ensuring that your home and carpets are clean and will also help keep bedbugs from multiplying.

After you have tried these methods you should contact your Housing Officer. He/she will make sure that your lifestyle is not contributing to the problem. He/she will then:

- Offer advice on how to control pests

- Request a surveyor to inspect the property in extreme circumstances
- Decide if pest control needs to be contacted and advise you further

Condensation

Condensation can make your home damp. This can cause mould to grow and respiratory illness. Many condensation problems are caused by lifestyle. You need to keep your home both warm and well ventilated to help avoid condensation. Here are some tips to stop condensation:

- Where possible, dry your clothes outdoors, or indoors with a window open to stop moisture building up
- Open your windows for short periods of time to ventilate rooms
- Cover pans when cooking – or ensure your extractor fan is on
- Switch the extractor fan on when taking a shower or bath. If you do not have a fan in the bathroom, then open a window. Always close the door during and after having a shower or bath.
- If you see moisture regularly on your walls and windows, wipe this down and ring out the cloth (don't dry it on the radiator). Alternatively, buy damp strips that collect condensation.
- Don't block air vents or air bricks in your home

Gas Safety

Gas safety inspections are very important. These inspections must be carried out annually to ensure all gas appliances are safe to use. You and your family may be at risk if we do not carry out an inspection. We will send you a reminder to let you know your next check is due. We will then contact you to book an appointment. You can also contact us, as soon as you get the reminder. Please make sure that you are at home for this important safety check.

You should:

- Book an appointment for your annual gas safety check when you get the reminder
- Always check the engineer's Gas Safety ID card
- Fit an audible carbon monoxide alarm
- Ensure that you test and change the batteries in your smoke alarm regularly
- Check for warning signs that your appliances are not working correctly. These include lazy yellow flames, black marks or stains around the appliances

The six main signs of carbon monoxide poisoning are:

- Headaches
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Breathlessness

- Collapse
- Loss of conscious

**If you smell gas or suspect a carbon monoxide leak then
call the National Grid on
0800 111 999**

5. At The End Of The Lease

We lease the property that you live in from a private owner. When the lease between us and the private owner ends, we will either renew it, or hand the property back.

If we renew the lease, you can remain in the property until the owner or the local authority decides not to renew the lease again.

Handing back the property

If the lease ends and the owner decides not to renew with us then we have to hand back the property.

We will let you know four to six months beforehand, if the lease with the owner is coming to an end and you have to move out. We will also tell the council.

The local authority that referred you to us will decide what alternative housing arrangements to make for you; ultimately, the final decision about your housing lies with the council.

You should speak to your Housing Officer if you have any queries about the legal documents that we send you. You can also get independent advice from your local Citizen's Advice Bureau or your local authority housing department.

It is important that the property is handed back in the same condition that it was given to you. You must make sure that all personal belongings are removed and that any furniture is put back as it was at the start of the tenancy. You must also make sure that the property is clean and that any damage is repaired.

We will charge you for any works that are required to repair damage caused by you or any cleaning or clearing that is required as a result of your personal belongings.

6. Access to Personal Information and Data Protection

Under the Data Protection Act 1998, you have a right to check any details we hold about you on our computer records.

However, we are not able to let you see information that we are given by your doctor, social worker and so on, unless you have their permission.

Your records are available upon request with a cheque for £10 made out to 'Notting Hill Housing Trust' to cover our administration fees. We can only give you up to 50 pages of information.

If you spot an error, you may request that information on your records is corrected, omitted or added.

All the information we hold about our customers is confidential. We will not give your details to anyone else without your permission. There are a few exceptions, including sharing information with specific authorities and agencies (such as the police or local councils) to:

- support local strategies to reduce crime and disorder;
- help prevent and detect crime; and
- meet other legal responsibilities.

We may give limited information to Housing Benefit offices and the Department for Work and Pensions to help you if you are claiming benefits. We will also give limited information to gas, electricity and water companies.

Only where necessary, we may also give your details to other members of staff, contractors and the person who owns your home, so that we can provide a service to you.

7. Compliments, Complaints and Comments

How to make a compliment

We'd love to hear from you if you have any compliments, suggestions or comments about the service that we provide.

Phone:
Contact your Housing Officer

Email:
Contact your Housing Officer

By post:
Write to us at: Comments, Notting Hill Housing Home Options,
47-49 Durham Street, Vauxhall, London, SE11 5JA

How to make a complaint

We aim to provide an excellent service but sometimes we get it wrong. On those occasions, we are committed to responding to complaints and putting things right as soon as possible.

There are several ways that you can contact us if you are unhappy with the service we have provided and would like to make a complaint:

Phone:
Contact your Housing Officer

Email:
Contact your Housing Officer

Alternatively, you can email our complaints handling team at complaints@nhhg.org.uk.

By post:
Write to us at: Performance Team, Notting Hill Housing Home Options, 47-49 Durham Street, Vauxhall, London, SE11 5JA

On-line:

Fill in a complaints form:

<http://www.nottinghillhousing.org.uk/about-us/making-a-complaint>

For information on our complaints procedure please go to:

<http://www.nottinghillhousing.org.uk/about-us/making-a-complaint/our-complaints-process>

8. How Can I Get Involved?

There are various ways you can get involved in how we work. We regularly carry out resident surveys and sometimes hold focus groups. We also keep a register of people who want to get involved with helping us on specific projects, such as reviewing our repairs service, or important documents, like this customer guide.

The ways you can get involved are always changing, so if you would like more information please phone the Resident Involvement Team on 020 8357 5010. You can also email us at homeoptionsresidents@nhhg.org.uk

9. Our Service Standards

Standard	Measure	Minimum standard
We offer a good overall service.	Percentage of customers who are satisfied with our overall service.	70%
We offer a good repairs service.	Percentage of customers who are satisfied with our overall repairs service when they have a repair completed in the last 12 months.	70%
We are easy to do business with.	Percentage of customers who find it easy to get hold of the right person.	70%
We resolve enquiries efficiently.	Percentage of customers who were satisfied with the final outcome of their last query.	65%
We respond positively when you have a problem or complaint.	Percentage of customers who feel we are good at responding when they have a problem or complaint.	60%
We listen to your views and respond to them.	Percentage of customers satisfied that NHH listens to their views and acts upon them.	60%

You can find out more about our service standards at:

www.nottinghillhousing.org.uk/servicestandards