

# My Home



# My Home



## HOMELESSNESS

If you are at risk of homelessness within the next 56 days, then get in touch as soon as possible so we can help prevent you becoming homeless. You can do this using our online Housing options self-referral form.



[www.haringey.gov.uk/housing/housing-advice/homelessness/contact-us](http://www.haringey.gov.uk/housing/housing-advice/homelessness/contact-us)

## EMERGENCY HOUSING

You may qualify for emergency housing while the council investigates your situation if the council thinks you are homeless and in priority need.



Visit Customer Services at **Wood Green** or **Marcus Garvey Library**. They may then make a further appointment with the Housing Options Team. This may be on another day.

## What to take with you:

It helps if you take proof of your situation, such as:

- identity and immigration status (passport or ID card)
- why you have to leave your home (eviction notice or letter)
- details of any medical conditions (a letter from your doctor or hospital)
- details of any children (birth certificates) or pregnancy (a letter from your doctor or midwife)
- proof of income (bank statements, wage slips, proof of benefits).

The council might decide you do not qualify because they think you are not homeless or facing homelessness, or that immigration restrictions mean they cannot help. They must give you a letter, which explains the reasons for the decision.

## SOCIAL HOUSING

**Am I eligible to join the Housing Register?**

## To be eligible, you must:

- be 16 years of age or over
- not be ineligible for housing by reason of your immigration status

## In order to qualify for inclusion in the Register, you must satisfy the following:

- not have been found guilty of unacceptable behaviour
- have continuously lived in the Borough for 3 years at the time of applying
- meet the criteria to be placed in one of the Housing Needs Bands A-C
- not residing in temporary accommodation provided by another local authority at the time of applying
- not be a home-owner
- if residing in tied accommodation and you are less than 6 months away from your retirement or you have received a legal notice asking you to leave your home

If you meet these criteria, then visit the Housing Register application page.



[www.haringey.gov.uk/housing-register-application](http://www.haringey.gov.uk/housing-register-application)

## OVERCROWDING

If you are lacking two or more bedrooms and you rent your home from the council or a housing association, we may be able to help you.

You may qualify for assistance in moving to larger accommodation or, if this is not possible, we could help you with making changes to your home to lessen the effects of overcrowding through space saving.

For more information please contact Housing Solutions on:



**020 8489 1000**

## YOUR RIGHT TO RENT

You have the right to rent if you are:

- a British or Irish citizen
- a citizen of a country in the EU or EEA
- a citizen of another country and have no time limit on your permission to live in the UK (such as indefinite leave to remain)

You can have a time-limited right to rent if there is a time limit on your permission to stay in the UK. This is likely if you have a visa:

- for work
- to study
- as a husband, wife or civil partner of someone settled in the UK
- have humanitarian protection, limited leave or discretionary leave to remain in the UK.

Landlords will ask to see your passport or other official documents that prove your immigration status. They must take copies of the documents.

For a full list of acceptable documents, see Gov.uk: Right to rent documents check.

 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/right-to-rent-document-checks-a-user-guide>

A landlord or letting agent is allowed to charge you a fee for right to rent checks.

Checks are not needed for children aged under 18 (but landlords should check they are aged under 18).

If the Home Office has your documents because you have an ongoing immigration application or appeal, the landlord or letting agent can ask for a Home Office right to rent check. They will need your Home Office reference number and should get a response within 2 days.

## RENTING

There is no charge for registering with a letting agent to look at properties.

If you want to reserve a property, a letting agent may ask you to pay a holding deposit while they check your references.

Before you pay any money, ask the letting agent to confirm to you in writing how the holding deposit will be used.

### Rent payments:

You can usually pay rent weekly or monthly. If you pay your rent weekly, your landlord must provide a rent book. It is better to pay into a bank account than to pay in cash.

Your written agreement sets out the rights and responsibilities of you and your landlord. Read the agreement carefully before you sign it.

Once you have signed the tenancy agreement, most letting agents ask you to pay:

- rent in advance (usually a month's rent)
- a tenancy deposit (this is usually 4- or 6-weeks' rent)

You will also pay letting agency fees if you use a letting agent agency to find and rent a home, any moving costs and council tax.

Your landlord should confirm in writing what the tenancy deposit covers.

If you do not have money for a tenancy deposit, check if there is a rent deposit, rent guarantee or bond scheme that can help. Use the Crisis Private Rented Sector directory to search for a private rented sector (PRS) scheme in your area.

 [www.crisis.org.uk/ending-homelessness/housing-resource-centre/prs-database](http://www.crisis.org.uk/ending-homelessness/housing-resource-centre/prs-database)

## DUTY TO PROTECT YOUR TENANCY DEPOSIT

If you are an assured shorthold tenant your landlord must protect your tenancy deposit with a UK government-approved deposit protection scheme. Tenants' deposits should be returned after you leave if you have paid all the rent and caused no damage.

Check if your tenancy deposit is protected:

 [https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing\\_advice/tenancy\\_deposits/check\\_if\\_your\\_tenancy\\_deposit\\_is\\_protected](https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice/tenancy_deposits/check_if_your_tenancy_deposit_is_protected)

## TENANCY TYPES

You can usually tell what type of tenancy you have by looking at your agreement. Use Shelter's tenancy checker to check what type of tenancy you have.

 [https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing\\_advice/downloads\\_and\\_tools/tenancy\\_rights\\_checker](https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice/downloads_and_tools/tenancy_rights_checker)

Get advice if you think your agreement includes unfair terms or your landlord is holding you to something you do not think is fair. Use Shelter's directory to find a housing adviser.

## YOUR INVENTORY

A furnished property comes with basic furniture included. In an unfurnished property you may need to provide all or some of the furniture.

Your tenancy agreement may also tell you about what furniture and other fittings are provided. Use an inventory to record the condition these are in. An inventory can help if there are disputes about deductions from your tenancy deposit at the end of your tenancy.

## REPAIRING OBLIGATIONS

Landlords are responsible for repairs to the exterior and structure of a property including problems with the roof, chimneys, walls, guttering and drains.

Landlords must make sure the equipment for supplying water, gas and electricity is kept in safe working order.

If your landlord needs access to the property to inspect it and do repairs, they should give reasonable notice and arrange a suitable time to visit (unless there is an emergency). Your tenancy agreement may say how much notice they should give.

## HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION (HMO)

A House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) is a building that is occupied, as a main residence, by more than one household.

Your landlord has extra legal responsibilities if the house or flat you share with other tenants is a HMO.

Your landlord is responsible for any repairs to communal areas of your home.

They are also responsible for repairs to:

- the structure and exterior of the house – including the walls, window frames and gutters
- water and gas pipes
- electrical wiring
- basins, sinks, baths and toilets
- fixed heaters (radiators) and water heaters

### If you are a tenant and wish to report a problem with your HMO you must:

1. Have first raised the matter with your landlord in writing and given them the opportunity to respond/react. This is to protect your tenancy should enforcement action need to be taken against your landlord in the future.
2. Have your Landlord/Managing agents contact details to give to the operator
3. Have a full description of the problems you have

You can use our online form to report a problem with an HMO:

## Report a problem with a HMO

Or contact us via the details below:

 **020 8489 1335**

 **[environmentalhealth.andhousing@haringey.gov.uk](mailto:environmentalhealth.andhousing@haringey.gov.uk)**

 Visit in person during office hours: Monday to Friday 8.45am to 5pm:

Housing Improvement Team (Private Sector)  
First Floor  
River Park House  
225 Station Road  
Wood Green  
N22 8HQ

## PAY YOUR RENT ON TIME

If you fall behind with the rent, your landlord can take steps to evict you and claim any money you owe them.

Contact your landlord if you are having problems paying your rent. Do not ignore letters or phone calls from your landlord or agent. Your landlord may be willing to keep you as a tenant if the payment problems can be sorted out.

You can be taken to court and evicted if you do not pay the rent.

## CLAIM BENEFITS TO HELP PAY YOUR RENT

You can usually claim housing benefit or universal credit housing costs if you are on a low income.

 **[www.haringey.gov.uk/contact/my-account](http://www.haringey.gov.uk/contact/my-account)**

## LOOK AFTER YOUR HOME

As a tenant you must:

- report any repairs needed to your landlord
- make sure your home is well ventilated (to help avoid condensation and damp)
- do minor maintenance (such as check smoke alarms are working, change light bulbs)
- dispose of your rubbish properly

You must not damage internal decorations, furniture and equipment. You will have to pay for anything you have broken or damaged.

## END YOUR TENANCY PROPERLY


You must end your tenancy properly if you want to move out. If you do not end, you will still be liable for rent.

Contact a Shelter adviser online or by phone.

 **Shelter in Marcus Garvey Library on Tuesdays between 10 and 4.**

Find out more about tenancy issues

To find out more about tenancy issues, please contact our Housing Operations Customer Contact Centre on:

 **020 8489 5611**  
(lines are open Mondays to Fridays, 8am to 6pm).

## EVICTION

**Your landlord must give you either a Section 8 or a Section 21 notice to end your tenancy.**

If you receive a Section 21 or Section 8 Notice or your landlord asks you to leave your property you should seek housing support at the customer services at either **Wood Green** or **Marcus Garvey library**.

You can also call the Shelter emergency helpline.

 **0808 800 4444**

### What is illegal eviction?

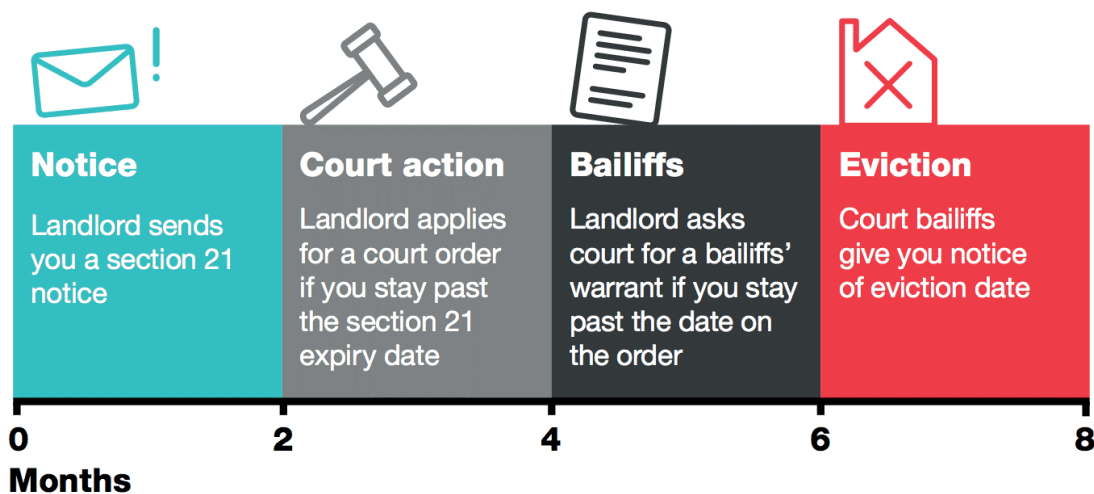
Landlords must follow the correct procedures to evict private tenants and lodgers.

It is illegal for your landlord to:

- force you to leave by threatening or harassing you
- physically remove you
- stop you from getting into certain parts of your home
- change the locks while you are out

## 3 steps to eviction your landlord must follow

- 1** Written notice to leave your home, usually a 'Section 21' that gives you two months
- 2** Your landlord must take you to court and get an order for you to leave
- 3** Only a bailiff can evict you. They must have a valid warrant from the court



## REPAIRS

### Report a damp problem to your landlord:

Tell your landlord about the damp problem and any:

- repair issues in the property
- damage to furniture and belongings
- impact on your health

Once you have reported the problem, your landlord should organise an inspection and carry out any repairs they are responsible for.

You can contact environmental health or the housing standards team at the council if your landlord does not fix the damp problem.

Your landlord is responsible for dealing with infestations of pests and vermin if:

- it was caused by a disrepair issue such as a hole in the wall
- your tenancy agreement says your landlord should make sure the property is fit to live in
- you live in a furnished home and the pests were there before your tenancy started

Report problems caused by pests and vermin to your landlord as soon as possible. Allow your landlord reasonable time to do the work once you have reported the problem.

### Environmental health inspections:

The council should arrange a visit to inspect your home. This is sometimes called a HHSRS or hazard assessment

How to contact environmental health

Report via MyAccount:

 [www.haringey.gov.uk/contact/my-account](http://www.haringey.gov.uk/contact/my-account)

### Gas safety in rented homes

Your landlord must make sure that gas appliances in your home are safe and regularly checked.

### Who to contact in a gas emergency?

Call the National Gas Emergency Service immediately if you smell gas or think there is a gas leak.

 **0800 111 999**

Landlord's responsibility for gas safety

Landlords have gas safety responsibilities under the law. This applies to private, council and housing association landlords.

Your landlord must make sure that the gas supply and appliances in your home:

- are in a safe condition
- are fitted or repaired by a Gas Safe registered engineer
- have a gas safety check every 12 months by a Gas Safe registered engineer. Always ask to see the engineer's Gas Safe ID card.

## GAS SAFETY RECORD

A Gas Safe registered engineer gives your landlord a gas safety record after inspecting your home. If the record shows there are problems that affect gas safety, the landlord must get the problems repaired.

Use Shelter's template letter to write to your landlord to ask for a gas safety record.

### How to complain about gas safety

You can complain to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) if your landlord would not carry out gas safety checks.

## ELECTRICAL SAFETY

All landlords are legally required to make sure the wiring and any electrical appliances they provide in a rented home are safe. This applies if you are a private, housing association or council tenant.

Your landlord should arrange regular basic safety checks for the electrics and appliances such as cookers, washing machines and fridges.

If you live in a house in multiple occupation (HMO), your landlord must have the electrics checked every five years.

Get advice from Electrical Safety First on electrical safety in the home.

Ask your landlord about electrical safety

Tell your landlord immediately about any problems with appliances or the electrics. You should also email or write to them to confirm the details.

## FIRE SAFETY ADVICE FOR TENANTS

### Reporting a fire

 Call the Fire Service on **999** to report a fire.

### Smoke alarms

Most private landlords must make sure that working smoke alarms are fitted on each floor of their rented properties.

You are responsible for checking the alarm works after you move in.

### Complain to the council about fire safety

If you are worried about fire safety in your home, you can ask your local council's environmental health department to inspect your home for health and safety hazards.

### Fire safety in shared homes

Shared houses that are licensed by the council as houses in multiple occupancy (HMOs) must have extra fire safety equipment and facilities.

As a condition of their licence, landlords can be required to have fire doors, protected escape routes, fire extinguishers or blankets.

## FOR COUNCIL TENANTS

### Homesforharingey repairs:

 **02084895611**

 **repairs@homesforharingey.org**

To book repairs and make rent payments.

 **www.homesforharingey.org/seemydata**

Report a repair at a time convenient to you through the "My Haringey Home" app. <https://www.homesforharingey.org/my-haringey-home-app>

## HOUSEHOLD BILLS

There are certain utilities and services that you will need in your home such as water, electricity and internet.

They are not usually included in your rent.

Instead you have to pay 'bills' to cover the costs from the

day you move into your home.

To pay a bill, one adult living in your household needs to be registered with the service provider and is responsible for making payments – they are called the 'account holder'.

From the day you move into your home, you will need to contact the suppliers to inform them you have moved in and register an account with them.

Which bills do I have to pay?

### Essential services:

- Water
- Energy (electricity and gas)
- Council tax

### Non-essential services:

- TV licence
- Home phone services
- Internet services

### TV Licence

You need to have a licence to watch or record programmes as they are being shown on TV or in real-time on a tablet, computer or laptop.

It is illegal to watch or record TV programmes in real-time without this, if caught you could be fined or taken to court.

The licence costs approximately £150 a year and you will normally need once licence per home. This is a fixed fee.

To pay for a TV licence you will need to register online.

 <https://www.tvlicensing.co.uk/>

### House phone and internet bills

There are several companies in the UK who provide home phone and internet services (Wi-Fi). You may use the same provider as previous tenants, or switch to a different company

### Energy: Electricity and Gas

Your landlord should tell you who your energy provider is when you move in. There are a number of companies that provide energy in the UK. Most people will continue with the same provider as previous tenants, but you may be able to change provider e.g. for a cheaper deal, if your landlord agrees to this.

- Your energy bills will depend on your plan and consumption
- Your bills are likely to be higher in the winter when you will use more heating. You may want to consider putting money aside during the summer to pay for larger bills in

the winter.

- You will have a meter in your home to track your energy consumption. You can ask your landlord if you are unsure where it is located.

### **Standard meter:**

Most homes in the UK have a standard meter, which means you pay for what you use at the end of the month. You should record your meter reading every month and inform your provider online or by phone.

If you don't provide readings, your supplier will calculate your bills by estimating what you use.

### **Prepayment or pay-as-you-go meters**

Some homes will have a prepayment meter, which means you will need to pay for your energy before you use it. This is usually done by adding money to a 'key' or smart card, which is then inserted into the meter to provide energy. When the money on the card runs out, you can top-up to add more.

## **Water**

Your landlord will tell you the name of the water company supplying your area when you move in.

Water bills can be metered or unmetered. Metered bills allow you to pay for the exact amount of water you use, while unmetered bills require you to pay a fixed amount.

Unmetered bills are calculated based on the size of your house and other factors. They are normally more expensive than what you would pay if you used a meter. You have the right to ask your water company to switch you to metered billing.

Most people rely on the water company to take their meter readings for them because the meters are not easy to access.

### **How much should I expect to pay?**

Your bills will depend on the area you live in, how many people are in your household, your provider and your usage.