

Guide to your Tenancy Agreement

Your tenancy agreement is a document about living in your home.



It tells you:

- The rules for living there.
- What your responsibilities are.
- What your landlord's responsibilities are.
- What rights you have.

The tenancy agreement is between **Dartford Borough Council** who is the landlord (who owns your home)...
...and **you** the tenant(s).

Your first name:

Your last name:

Your first name:

Your last name:

If you are the only tenant, you are called a '**sole** tenant'.

If you and other people share the tenancy, you are called a '**joint** tenant'.

What you are renting

You are renting:

- A bungalow
- A maisonette
- A flat
- A house with one living room
- A house with two living rooms

It has:

- One bedroom
- Two bedrooms
- Three bedrooms
- Four bedrooms
- A front garden
- A back garden

We will tick the box that applies to you



Your home is at

.....

Your tenancy begins on

Monday

The tenancy agreement gives you the right to live in this home as long as you:

- Pay the rent on time.
- Look after your home and look after your garden (if you have one).
- Do not let yourself or anyone visiting or staying with you annoy, bully or frighten anyone.
- Keep to all the other rules in the agreement.

The type of tenancy you have

When you sign your tenancy agreement you are an **'introductory** tenant' for one year.

This first year is like a trial period.

It is very important that you keep to all the rules of your tenancy agreement during this period.

If you do not keep to the rules, you will risk losing your home.

If you do keep to the rules during your first year you will then become a **'secure** tenant'.



Your rights

As a **secure** tenant you will be given rights that you did not have as an introductory tenant, such as the right to:

- ✓ Buy your home
- ✓ Swap homes with another tenant
- ✓ Take in lodgers
- ✓ Sublet part of your home
- ✓ Carry out some home improvements
- ✓ Get compensation if certain repairs are not carried out in time with good reason

Your landlord will not unreasonably refuse consent when you ask for it.

Your rent

Rent is what you pay to live in your home. It pays for your landlord to look after your home and for any repairs that need to be done.



How much is your rent?

The rent is £..... each week.

How much is your service charge?

There may be other charges for services such as cleaning around your home.

The charge for services is £..... each week.

How much is your support charge?

You may also pay an extra charge for the support you need while you live in your home. The support charge is £..... each week.

Total £..... each week

You must pay your rent every week.

The rent and charge for services usually stay the same for a year.

You will be given one month's notice if the rent or service charges are going to change. Your rent and service charge will usually change on the first Monday of every April.

If you are on housing benefit and for example...

- You start a job
- Someone comes to live with you
- Someone who is living with you leaves your home

...the amount of housing benefit you are entitled to may change.

It is very important to tell the housing benefit section as soon as this happens.

How can you pay your rent?

There are different ways you can pay your rent:

- You may be able to claim housing benefit to help pay some or all of your rent
- By Direct Debit
- By cash
- By cheque
- By standing order
- By debit or credit card



Where can you pay your rent?

- At the Civic Centre or the cash office at Swanscombe Town Council
- By telephone 01322 343760 or touch tone 0845 634 3001
- Online www.dartford.gov.uk
- By swipe card at the Post Office or anywhere that displays a Payzone symbol
- By post to the Civic Centre, Home Gardens, Dartford, Kent DA1 1DR



Household insurance

Household insurance covers you in case your personal belongings are damaged or stolen.



It is important that you are insured.

For example, if your home is flooded and your belongings are damaged, your landlord will not pay to replace them.

But if you are insured you may be able to make a claim to the insurance company for any losses.

Talk to your housing officer to find out more about getting household insurance.

What your landlord must do

- Keep your home in good repair. This includes making sure the heating, plumbing and lighting work all the time, and that your gas appliances are serviced once a year.
- Tell you what sort of repair work they are going to do and give you notice if they want to inspect your home or carry out any repairs or improvements.
- Tell you and give you notice of any changes to the rules of your tenancy or any new services that they may want to give you.
- If you live in a flat, maintain and inspect the shared areas.

- Tell you how you can complain if you are not happy about something.

What you the tenant must do

- Live in your home.
- Keep your home clean and tidy.
- Put your rubbish in the bins and do not leave it lying around.
- Tell your landlord if something is broken or needs repairing.
- Let your landlord in to do repairs or work, including letting them in to service your gas appliances once a year.
- You are responsible for decorating your home.



What you the tenant must not do

- You must not annoy, bully or frighten anyone in your neighbourhood. You must also make sure that anyone who lives with you or visits you does not do this.
- You must make sure that any noise is kept to a reasonable volume.
- You must not do anything that breaks the law, in your home or in the neighbourhood where you live.



You must ask your landlord for consent if...



- You want to keep any pets.
- You want to do anything to your home, such as put up a satellite dish, a garden shed or garage, dig a pond or plant a tree.
- You want anyone else to live with you.
- You are going to be away from home for more than 42 days.

Moving out

- You must send your landlord a letter to tell them if you want to leave your home for good.
- This letter must give 28 days notice that you want to leave. You must make sure that the letter is sent in time or you may have to pay extra rent.
- If you have a joint tenancy you must tell the other tenant you intend to end the tenancy.

When you move out you must

- Remove all your belongings and rubbish.
- Leave everything clean and tidy.
- Return all the keys to your landlord including any shed keys and window locks



What happens if you break the rules in your agreement?



If you break the rules in your tenancy agreement your landlord will speak to you to give you a chance to explain what you have done. If the matter cannot be resolved, as a last resort, your landlord may decide that it wants you to leave your home.

This is a very serious step to take and you will be told before this happens.

You can only be made to leave after a court hearing where a judge has approved the landlord's request.

If you are an **introductory** tenant the judge can only check that the landlord has followed its own rules and that you have broken your agreement.

More information or help

This guide explains the main parts of your tenancy agreement. **It does not replace your original tenancy agreement** so please look at this for full details of what it says.

If you need any more information or help about your tenancy agreement, speak to your housing officer:

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Tel:

