

Your Tenancy



Moving in

We want to make the process of getting your new home as easy as possible, and we really want you to keep your home, which is why, when you sign up with us, you'll be taken through a **Tenancy Sign-up checklist**. When you get an offer of a home, you'll know which type of tenancy that you're being offered (Assured, Assured Protected or Starter).

We want you to be able to afford your new home, and we certainly don't want you to get into trouble with your money, that may put your home at risk, so we will ask you to complete an **Income and Expenditure Form**. We'll look at both how much money is coming in and how much is going out and whether that property would be right for you. If you get or are eligible for Housing Benefit, we'll make sure that you have access to the right paperwork and that it's been completed.

We also carry out a **Pre-Tenancy Assessment** to understand your needs, such as disabilities, mobility problems, and any other extra support that you may require for you to stay in your home and to see if that home would be suitable for you.

Sometimes in a property there are items that have been left by previous tenants that Rooftop won't be responsible for. For example, if a property had a new kitchen put in by the previous tenant Rooftop wouldn't be responsible for its repair and upkeep. Things like this will be detailed in the **Handover Checklist** that you'd be asked to sign so that you're aware of your responsibilities.



The final piece of paperwork is what we call the “**Core Form**” which records the ages of those in the household and other details. Completing the form is a regulatory requirement.

On the day you move in your keys will be handed to you and you will need to take meter readings as soon as you can.

The structure of your home is insured by Rooftop, but the contents of it (your personal possessions, furniture, carpets etc) are not. We strongly advise all our customers to take out contents insurance in case of damage by, flood, fire, break in, etc.

Your tenancy agreement explained

We provide lots of different homes to various people and households dependant on their needs.

Therefore we have different tenure types depending on the type of property you are moving into. The main type of tenancy we use is an Assured Tenancy, issued after a successful Starter Tenancy period.

If you are unsure of the Tenancy Agreement that you have, please contact us:

enquiries@rooftopgroup.org



Your rights

Your **tenancy agreement** outlines your specific rights, but these normally include:

- **Respect:** You should be treated fairly, effectively, and sensitively.
- **Adjustments:** Your landlord should make reasonable adjustments to services to meet the needs of disabled customers.
- **Allocations:** Homes should be let in a fair and transparent way.
- **Quiet enjoyment:** You should be able to enjoy your home without disturbance from us or contractors operating on our behalf.
- **Repairs:** You have the right to request certain repairs.
- **Lodgers and subletting:** You can take in a lodger or sublet part of your home.
- **Transfer:** You can apply for a transfer to another property.
- **Assigning a tenancy:** In specific cases, you can Assign your tenancy.
- **Home swap:** You can swap homes with another Assured tenant.
- **Right to buy:** Customers on a Protected / Lifetime Assured Tenancy have the right to buy their home.
- **Home improvements:** You can make alterations to your home (with our written permission).

Your responsibilities

To maintain your tenancy, **you must:**

- **Pay your rent:** Regularly pay any rent and service charges.
- **Home care:** Look after your home.
- **Comply with your agreement:** Stick to the terms of your tenancy agreement.
- **Seek permission for changes:** Obtain permission for any changes (e.g. pets).
- **Make repairs:** Address repairs that are your responsibility.
- **Report damage and repairs:** Report damage to your landlord and replace items you've damaged as quickly as reasonably possible.
- **Avoid anti-social behaviour:** Ensure that you and others in your home do not cause antisocial behaviour.
- **Allow access:** Give us access to your home so that we can meet our health and safety obligations.

Remember, understanding your rights and fulfilling your responsibilities are a key part of maintaining your policy.

Moving out

Following our guide to moving out will help get you ready to move on, and to get the property ready to go to another Rooftop tenant, so that their experience of having a new home can begin as well as possible. If at any time you need help completing the steps for moving out, or you'd like more information about the process then get in touch with your Neighbourhood Housing Officer.

When you end your Rooftop tenancy you must give us four weeks' notice of ending the tenancy.

You will need to supply us with a forwarding address. If you want to end a tenancy on behalf of a tenant there is a form that we will need you to complete.

It's always a good idea to get in contact with the Income Team to make sure you've paid off your rent account. If you leave your home with debt (whether it's rent, utilities, or recharged repairs) this can stop you getting a home with another housing association. We do contact customers who leave with debts to recover the money owed to us.

Once you're ready to move out, your home must be clean and tidy, that includes taking out all your belongings and getting rid of any rubbish. There is a Leaving Your Home Checklist to make your move easier.

If we need to make repairs to the property or dispose of unwanted property or rubbish before someone new moves in, you will be charged for the cost. You also need to remove any unauthorised home improvements, particularly things like conservatories without planning permission... and yes that does happen.

Return all keys and / or entry fobs, including ones to any communal areas, and gas and electricity or cards if you have them. The gas and electricity also need to be in credit when you leave.

If you have any difficulty with these steps, or you need more information, please contact your Neighbourhood Officer or fill in our simple contact form and we'll get back to you.

And with all of that done you can move on from your home and help another local family find a place to call their own.

Leaving your home checklist

Inside your home

- ☐ All door keys to be handed back to us, including any fobs registered to the property.
- ☐ Furniture, appliances and goods must be removed.
- ☐ All fitted cupboards and kitchen units must be clean and empty.
- ☐ Clear the loft of all your belongings.
- ☐ Any electrical fittings you have put in must be removed by a qualified electrician and either made safe or the original fittings replaced. Eg: chandeliers, brass/chrome light switches.
- ☐ Any damage to doors, windows, walls, banisters, kitchen units etc. which is not 'fair wear and tear' must be repaired.
- ☐ All decorations should be of a satisfactory standard and fit for a new tenant to move in.
- ☐ Your home should be clean throughout.
- ☐ Any repairs that are your responsibility need to be carried out.
- ☐ Curtains, blinds, carpets and other floor coverings you have fitted must be removed.
- ☐ Leave operating instructions for equipment (boiler, gas fire etc.) all in one place.
- ☐ Pay all utility bills up to the date your tenancy ends.
- ☐ Leave the smart meter remote unit in the home.
- ☐ All flooring to be cleaned and free from grease and dirt.
- ☐ Glazed wall tiles to be cleaned and free from grease.

Outside your home

- ☐ All grass and hedges and shrubs must be cut/pruned back.
- ☐ Gardens must be cleared of rubbish or and personal items.
- ☐ Fences and gates must be in sound condition and any damage repaired.
- ☐ All animal excrement to be cleared up.
- ☐ Have any external electrics you have fitted removed and made safe by a qualified electrician.
- ☐ Empty the wheelie bins.
- ☐ Remove compost heaps, compost containers etc.
- ☐ All sheds and outbuildings owned by Rooftop Housing Group must be empty and clean.
- ☐ All sheds, greenhouses and other outbuildings that you own need to be removed.
- ☐ Empty and fill in any garden ponds and return the area to its pre-pond condition.

Alterations you have made

If you have our written permission (through our Permission Application process) and the Building Inspector feels the condition, health and safety aspects and suitability give no **cause for concern**, you can leave them in place. If you have made any alterations **without** our written permission, you will need to return it to its original condition. In some cases, our Building Inspector may provide written permission for the alteration to stay in place.

Bulky Items

If you have any unwanted bulky items, please make sure they are moved. Visit your local council website to find out more or give them a call for more information.



Mutual exchange

A mutual exchange is where two tenants wish to swap homes. People move for many reasons, maybe your current home is too large or too small or perhaps you want a change of scenery. This is an option for you if you don't have priority banding to move home through the normal allocations process. You can swap homes with any council tenant or Housing Association tenant in the UK providing you and they have the right to mutual exchange and both parties wish to swap.

You can only swap your home if:

- You aren't in arrears with your rent.
- The other person's landlord is happy for the exchange to happen.
- You won't be overcrowded or have more space than you need in your new home.
- There is no ongoing legal action relating to your tenancy.
- Your property is in an appropriate condition.

To find another person to swap with, we encourage our customers to utilise sites such as **HomeSwapper** and **Facebook**. Both offer a free service if you are a Rooftop tenant.



To register for HomeSwapper, simply follow the instructions on their website and sign up to their services.



To utilise Facebook, search for Mutual Exchange in "Groups" and browse the selection of groups set up to assist those seeking an exchange.

Once you have found a someone to swap with, please contact us to log your request. Your Neighbourhood Housing Officer will begin the process and determine whether you meet the correct criteria to exchange. Should you not meet the correct criteria, we will confirm our reasoning in writing to you. Once you have made an application, we will have 42 days to accept or deny your request.

Downsizing

Because the demand for family accommodation is so great, and to assist us make best use of our properties, where a customer is wishing to move because their home is too big for their needs, we will work with that customer to provide incentives to move to a smaller property. This may particularly assist customers negatively impacted by the bedroom subsidy who cannot afford to remain in existing accommodation.

If eligible, we may assist with moving costs, purchasing of items to help set up your new home, or the clearing of small rent arrears from accounts to become eligible to move.

Incentives vary depending on needs, there are eligibility criteria, and there are certain exclusions to the scheme. If you are interested in finding out more information, please contact your Neighbourhood Housing Officer.



Frequently asked questions (FAQs)



Parking

Parking arrangements vary across our homes and many of our properties were built before car ownership was as common as it is today. As a result, many homes do not have a garage, off road parking, or a dedicated parking space.

Please observe the highway code and show consideration to your neighbours.

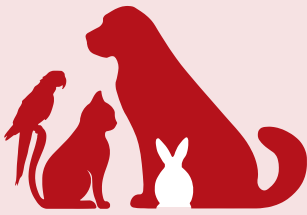
- Make sure that you do not block any roadways, access areas or footpaths
- Do not use parking for commercial vehicles (those weighing 3.5t or more)

If there are issues with parking in your area, please talk to your neighbours or contact your local council – as landlords we have no powers to manage parking on public roads.



Running a Business from Home

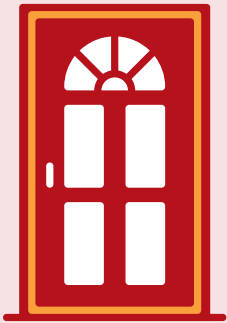
If you have an office-based job and wish to work from your home, this is permitted under your tenancy. If you wish to run a business from home, or use your home as a business premises (for example, to store stock) you must ask us for permission in writing first. Permission will not normally be withheld; however, it does depend on the nature of the business and each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis.



Having Pets in Your Home

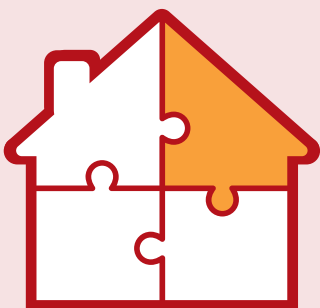
We normally allow pets in your home, but you must notify us in writing in advance and you are responsible for any damage caused by your pets.

If we do refuse permission this will usually be because we are balancing your rights with those of your neighbours - for example if your pet is noisy, or you live in buildings with communal areas. If we refuse to give you permission, you can appeal or raise a complaint about our decision.



Door Locks and Key Replacements

If you lose your keys or lock yourself out of your home, we can usually provide replacements or send a locksmith to help you gain access to your home. In most cases you will be charged for these services. If we need to force entry on your behalf, the cost of any repairs will also be charged to you.



Subletting

If you have a protected, assured, or periodic shorthold tenancy then you have the right to sublet part of your accommodation (for example, a bedroom), if you have requested our consent in advance. We will not normally withhold our consent or attach conditions to our consent. If you wish to sublet, please get in touch with your Neighbourhood Housing Officer.

How to contact us



You can email us at:
enquiries@rooftopgroup.org



Or call us on: **01386 420 800**



Or write to us at:
Rooftop Housing Association
70 High Street
Evesham
Worcestershire
WR11 4YD

Service requests, complaints, and the Housing Ombudsman

It is important to us that you are happy with the service we provide, but sometimes things do go wrong. When this happens, we want to ensure we put things right promptly and that we learn from your experiences.

Our approach is based on the
Housing Ombudsman's dispute
resolution principles

- Be fair
- Put things right
- Learn from outcomes

Any staff member can raise a complaint for you. Alternatively, you can email us at **enquiries@rooftopgroup.org**.

If you aren't happy with the outcome of a complaint, you can ask the Housing Ombudsman to intervene on your behalf.



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