

# **your** tenancy explained



# Your Tenancy Explained

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The tenancy agreement you signed at the beginning of your tenancy is a legal contract between you and Three Rivers. The tenancy agreement sets out the rights and obligations of both tenant and landlord.

Please read your Tenancy Agreement for your full list of rights and responsibilities.

**Here are some of the items in your tenancy agreement.**

## Your Responsibilities as a Tenant

The following list outlines your main responsibilities as a tenant. However, you should consult your tenancy agreement for your full list of obligations and responsibilities as a Three Rivers tenant.

- You must pay your rent and service charges on time (either weekly or monthly in advance).
- You must live in the property as your 'principal home' apart from holidays, hospital stays and other reasonable absences.
- You must look after your home including internal decorations, some minor repairs and to keep your garden tidy if you have one.
- You should report repairs immediately to us and to allow staff and contractors access to your home to inspect and carry out repairs.
- You must ensure that you, your family, friends, visitors and pets do not cause an annoyance, disturbance or nuisance to your neighbours.

## Our Responsibilities as a Landlord

- We will not interfere with your occupation of your home. You have the right to occupy and live peacefully in your home from the start of your tenancy, except when access is needed to inspect the condition of your home to carry out repairs or where the courts have made a possession (eviction) order.
- We will, apart from internal decoration and some minor repairs, look after the repairs and maintenance of your home and the communal areas (shared areas in flats).
- We will, through newsletters, individual letters and meetings, inform and seek your view on major changes in services, policies and other changes that may affect your tenancy.

Contact Customer Services Team  
24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year on:

0191 384 1122

## Secure and Assured Tenancies

There are two types of tenancy agreement. You will either have a secure or an assured tenancy. If you signed your first tenancy with Three Rivers before 15th January 1989, you will have signed a secure tenancy even if you have moved since then and signed another agreement. If your first tenancy with Three Rivers was after the 14th January 1989, you will have signed an assured tenancy.

The majority of tenants' rights and responsibilities are the same for both secure and assured tenants, but there are some differences as described below:

- Each year assured tenants' rents are reviewed. Any change in rent will come into force in April.
- Secure tenants' rents are set every two years by an independent rent officer. This is known as a "fair rent".
- To change any aspect of the Assured Tenancy Agreement (except rent), we have to obtain your written approval first whereas with the secure tenancy, we only have to take your view into account.

The secure and assured tenancy agreements give you security of tenure. In other words, you have the right to live in the property and use it as your own home. Three Rivers would want you to live in your home for as long as you wish (unless you have an Assured Shorthold Tenancy). We can only remove you from your home under certain circumstances, which are detailed in your tenancy agreement.

## Assured Shorthold Tenancy

Some residents will be given an Assured Shorthold Tenancy. These are fixed term agreements, which means they last only for a set period of time. If you have been given an assured shorthold tenancy, this will have been made clear to you when you moved in.

## Security of Tenancy

When you sign up to a secure or assured tenancy, you have security of tenure. This means you have the right to remain in your home provided you do not break the terms of your tenancy agreement.

We can only end your tenancy agreement if we obtain a Court Order for the possession of your home. It is our policy to seek possession as a last resort, and then only for a serious breach of the conditions of your agreement. Before we can apply for a Court Order, we must serve a Notice of Seeking Possession giving information on the earliest date that proceedings may start and the reason(s) for the action. We will only serve a Notice to Seek Possession after making every effort to resolve the situation or problem.

## Joint Tenancies

Joint tenancies are offered to couples or other adults sharing a home. Joint tenants have equal rights and are equally responsible for all the conditions of the tenancy agreement.

So, for example, each tenant is responsible for the rent and any arrears if one of the joint tenants leaves, then the remaining tenant can apply to become a sole tenant.

If your marriage or relationship has deteriorated to the point where you no longer want to live together, we would urge you to seek advice before you think about giving up your home. Three Rivers cannot get involved where both tenants want to remain in the house and become the sole tenant. Only the courts can decide this.

So if you cannot agree between yourselves, you should seek legal advice.

Three Rivers may be able to provide a home for a partner who has to leave a shared tenancy. Please contact the Customer Services on 0191 384 1122 if you find yourself in this situation.

## Lodgers and Sub-letting

You may take in lodgers or sub-let part of your home if you get our written permission and it does not cause overcrowding.

If you are in receipt of housing benefit, allowing someone to share your home will affect your benefit. You will need to inform the Housing Benefit office of your local council.

## Assignment

As an assured tenant, you may have the right to pass your tenancy to another person. Transferring your tenancy to another person is known as an assignment.

For example, you may want to:

- add your partner's name to the tenancy as he/she has moved in or as a result of marriage.
- remove a name from the tenancy if one tenant (joint tenancy) leaves property as a result of split or divorce.
- add your child or other members of the household to the tenancy.

If you want to pass your tenancy to another person, you will need to contact Three Rivers first. This is so that we can give you written approval and your tenancy details can be changed properly.

If you require further information about passing your tenancy to another person, please contact Customer Services on 0191 384 1122.

## Succession

Succession means passing the tenancy on to someone else when you die.

As long as your tenancy was not passed on to you, you can pass on your tenancy in the following circumstances:

- If you die, your tenancy will be passed onto your husband, wife or the person you were in a relationship with as long as the property was their main or only home.
- If your tenancy does not go to your partner, then we may give a member of the family your tenancy as long as they have lived in the property for 12 months.
- If there is a dispute about who should get the tenancy and no agreement can be reached, we can decide who the new tenant will be.
- If you succeed to a property that is unsuitable for your needs, (for example, you take on a disabled adapted property that you would not be normally eligible or you are a single person living in a three bedroomed house) we may require you to move to another suitable property.

**We can produce this information leaflet in alternative formats and languages.**

**If you would like information in another language or format, or require the services of an interpreter, please contact us on: 0191 384 1122.**

إذا أردت هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى أو بصيغة أخرى، أو إذا كنت بحاجة إلى خدمات المترجم، نرجو الاتصال بنا.

আপনি যদি অন্য কোন ভাষায় অথবা ধরনে এই তথ্য চান, অথবা কোন দোভাষীর সার্ভিসেস-এর প্রয়োজন হয়, তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে আমাদের কে যোগাযোগ করুন।

若您想要此資訊的另一語言版本或另一形式，或者需要傳譯員的協助，請聯絡我們。

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ, ਜਾਂ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ ਸਮਝਣ ਸਮਝਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਕਿਸੇ ਇੰਟਰਪ੍ਰੀਟਰ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਗੱਲ ਕਰੋ।

اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دوسری زبان یا شکل میں درکار ہوں، یا آپ کو ایک انٹریپرٹیر کی سروسز کی ضرورت ہو تو ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

## Contact Addresses

Head Office - Durham  
Three Rivers House  
Abbeywoods Business Park  
Pity Me, Durham  
DH1 5TG

Open: 9.00am - 5.00pm  
Monday to Friday

Sherburn Road Office  
62/63 Bede Avenue  
Sherburn Road Estate  
Durham  
DH1 2EN

Open: 10.00am - 1.00pm  
Monday to Friday

Hartlepool Area Office  
Central Buildings  
Church Street  
Hartlepool  
TS24 7EB

Open: 10.00am - 1.00pm  
Monday to Friday

## Contact Customer Services Team

24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year

# 0191 384 1122

customer.services@threerivershousing.co.uk

Visit our website for more information on [www.threerivershousing.co.uk](http://www.threerivershousing.co.uk)



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