



# Tenants handbook

a guide for tenants of North Glasgow Housing Association

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## Welcome to North Glasgow Housing Association

We hope that you will enjoy being a tenant with North Glasgow Housing Association. We aim to provide an excellent service and this handbook has been produced to help you get the best out of your home and your tenancy.

Audio versions of this document can be made available for tenants who are visually impaired or who have reading difficulties. We can also arrange to have information translated into different languages, either on tape or in writing.

Please contact your local office to access these services or to discuss your own individual requirements.



You can contact North Glasgow Housing Association in person at our local offices, by telephone, fax or online.

### Registered Office:

Ned Donaldson House,  
50 Reidhouse Street,  
Springburn,  
Glasgow, G21 4LS.

**Tel:** 0141 560 6000

**Fax:** 0141 560 6005

**Possilpark Office,**  
252 Saracen Street,  
Glasgow, G22 5LF

**Tel:** 0141 336 1300

**Fax:** 0141 560 6005

**Web:** [www.northglasgowha.com](http://www.northglasgowha.com)

**E-mail:** [info@northglasgowha.com](mailto:info@northglasgowha.com)

### Office opening times:

Monday to Friday 9.00am - 4.00 pm.

If you are unable to visit our offices we can arrange a home visit, simply contact your local office during working hours.

### Report a Repair

Call FREE on 0800 595 595

### Sheltered Housing

Barloch Street	0141 336 5417
Carron Cres.	0141 558 6505
Gourlay Street	0141 558 5325
Hawthorn Street	0141 336 4313 and 0141 336 6518
Kemp Street	0141 558 8349

### Concierge

Croftbank St	0141 558 5631
Lenzie Place	0141 558 8264
Broadholm St	0141 336 4786
Fernbank St	0141 558 0789

### Useful Numbers:

- Gas Escapes: 0800 111 999
- Bulk uplift: 0141 287 9700
- Roads/lighting: 0800 373 635
- Police: 0141 532 4100
- Noise Service 0141 287 6688
- Scottish Water 0845 601 8855
- Scottish Power 0845 272 7999
- NHS 24 08454 24 24 24
- Stobhill Hosp. 0141 201 3000
- Springburn Health Centre 0141 531 6700
- Possilpark Health Centre 0141 531 6120

## About the Association

North Glasgow Housing Association is a registered charity. It is a not-for-profit organisation owned and controlled by its shareholders. The Association was established by local people in 1976 to take over and regenerate the old Victorian tenements in Mansel and St Monance Streets in Springburn that had fallen into serious disrepair. These houses have now just been renovated for the second time.



Over the years the Association has built up its stock by renovating tenements, building new houses and stock transfers from Glasgow City Council, Scottish Homes and GHA. The Association is one of over 200 registered Housing Associations in Scotland. We receive public funding from Glasgow City Council and private funding from banks and building societies to build and refurbish housing for rent to people with a housing need.

The Association has over 5,000 properties suitable for rent to single people, families, older people and people with particular needs. We manage around 100 shared ownership properties and provide a factoring service to approximately 600 owner-occupiers.

We employ 100+ committed and trained members of staff to deal with Housing services, repairs and maintenance, development, HR, Finance, Performance, Strategy and Governance.

## Become a member of the Association

Anyone living or working in our area can become a member and get involved by buying a £1 share. As a member you may attend and vote at General Meetings, stand for election to the Management Committee and take part in the affairs of the Association. No dividend is received however members can take part in and make decisions on the management and future of the Association.

A Management Committee of 19 members elected from our membership oversees the day-to-day management of the Association. Shareholders are encouraged to stand for election to our Management Committee. Occasionally vacancies occur and if you are interested in serving on the Association's Management Committee phone 0141 560 6000 or e-mail [joinus@northglasgowha.com](mailto:joinus@northglasgowha.com) for more information.

The Association is committed to providing information and training for its members to help them fully take part in our work. Our more experienced members will talk you through all the issues and help you to take a full part as a committee member. Joining the Association and its committees is also an ideal way to get to know other residents, to become involved in improving our community and join a network of over 10,000 voluntary members throughout Scotland.

Committee members are invited to represent the association regularly at conferences and training events

## General Information

All tenants sign a Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement setting out your rights and responsibilities as a tenant of North Glasgow Housing Association. If you have been a tenant since before 1989 the Rent officer will set your rent. All other tenants have their rent set by the Association.

## Conduct of your tenancy

- You are responsible for the conduct of your family, anyone living with you and your visitors in and around your home. North Glasgow Housing Association want all of our tenants and residents to be able to live in a clean, safe and secure environment without nuisance or annoyance from neighbours or damage to the property. We will take action against tenants guilty of anti-social behaviour.
- Anti-social behaviour means causing or likely to cause, distress, nuisance or annoyance to any person or causing damage to anyone's property. Harassment of a person includes causing the person alarm or distress.
- You must not make excessive noise.
- You must not leave your rubbish in unauthorised places.
- You must not behave in an abusive manner towards any of our employees, agents or contractors who have contact with you and your visitors concerning any matter arising from your occupancy of the house in terms of this agreement.
- You must not use or carry offensive weapons.
- You must not use or sell unlawful drugs or sell alcohol.

Anti-social behaviour will not be ignored and North Glasgow Housing Association Ltd will start legal proceedings against any tenant who regularly engages in anti-social behaviour which could result in the loss of their home.

## Your Rent and Service Charges

Your rent is calculated monthly and should be paid in advance before the 28th of the month.

### The rent you pay is used in four main ways to:

- pay for repairs and maintenance to your home.

- set aside some money each year to pay for larger repairs.
- manage the Association and your home.
- repay any money we have borrowed to build or improve your home.

If you have transferred to the Association from another landlord as part of a stock transfer then any rent increases may have been agreed as part of the transfer process.

Rent increases normally take effect from 28<sup>th</sup> March each year. You will receive written notice of any increase around the end of February.

Where the Association provide additional services, for example stair and close cleaning or garden maintenance, a service charge is made. This should be paid monthly with your rent. You will receive a breakdown of your rent and service charges so that it is clear what you have to pay.

## You can pay your rent:

- by **Direct Debit**. We can provide you with a form, just complete and return it to us and we can set this up with your bank.
- in **cash/card** at any PayPoint or post office with your Allpay card.
- by **phoning** 0844 557 8321 (24hrs) with your Allpay Card.
- **online** at our website with your Allpay card.
- by **chip and pin** at our offices
- by **Direct Payments** – if you are receiving Housing Benefit this can be paid directly to the Association.
- **by post** – you can send cheques and postal orders to our offices – remember to write your name, address and reference number on the back. Do not send cash through the post.
- by collecting **pay-in slips** from your local office and paying cash at the Clydesdale Bank, Springburn or the Royal Bank of Scotland, Possilpark at no charge. Other banks and branches may charge.



## Help with your Rent

If you are on Income Support or have a low income you may be entitled to Housing Benefit. This can cover all or part of your rent depending on your household income and how much rent you pay. North Glasgow Housing Association Ltd has a Welfare Benefits Officer who will be happy to assist you with applications for housing benefit or other entitlements.

Remember, if you receive Housing Benefit and your circumstances change you must let your Housing Officer know immediately as this can affect the amount of benefit you receive.

## Rent Team



The association has a dedicated Rent Team who monitor accounts to ensure rent is being paid, but they are also there to assist you if you find yourself in financial difficulties. There is a Welfare Benefits Officer within the team who can advise/assist on a number of matters (i.e. DWP Benefits and/or appeals, Housing/Council Tax Benefits etc).

The Welfare Benefits Officer is in the Possilpark office on Mondays and Tuesdays and is based in our Springburn office Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Should you wish to make an appointment with the Welfare Benefits Officer please telephone either office to arrange this.

If your query is urgent and cannot wait for an appointment, please speak to any member of the Rent Team, who will do their best to help/advise you.

The association also works in partnership with North Glasgow Advice Centre who hold a surgery in our Springburn office each Thursday afternoon between 1.30pm and 4.30pm, except for the last Thursday in every month, when they are based in our Possilpark Office. They offer a wide range of services including general Money Advice, budgeting skills, reducing debt etc.

Access to this service is by appointment and you can arrange this by contacting either of our offices (0141-336-1300 for Possilpark or 0141-560-6000 for Springburn) or you can contact North Glasgow Advice Centre direct on (0141-770-7869).

Remember, paying your rent is important and 'keeps the roof over your head'. If you need any help/advice on paying your rent or any other money matters, please don't leave it until it is too late! Contact us as soon as possible and we will help you in any way we can.

## Supporting our tenants

The association employs Tenancy Support Officers whose role is to support tenants to run and manage their home. They can offer advice on how best to furnish a home, where to look, assist them in sourcing furniture and arrange a starter pack suitable to their requirements once they have been allocated a property.

Tenancy Support Officers can also arrange visits by G-HEAT and others who advise tenants on the most economical way to use their heating and ensure that they are on the correct tariffs with the utility companies to ensure no large bills are accrued.

## Difficulties paying your Rent

It is important that you pay your rent on time. If you are finding it difficult to pay or have fallen into arrears the most important thing to do is to contact your Housing Officer.

Most problems with rent arrears can be sorted if early action is taken. If you are in arrears we can agree a suitable arrangement to pay off the debt. All discussions will be treated confidentially.

Remember, if you do not contact us or keep to arrangements made, the Association may be forced to take legal action that could result in you losing your home.

## Tenants Rewards

The Tenants Rewards scheme is designed to acknowledge the part that responsible tenants play in paying their rent on time and helping to sustain the investment in their homes. An Annual Garden Competition, Good Neighbour Awards and Quarterly prize draws are other benefits of the Tenants Rewards Scheme.

TENANTS who are aged over 60 years or have a disability automatically qualify to receive FREE contents insurance cover up to £15,000. The free insurance is part of the Association's tenants reward scheme.

## Repairs

The responsibility for looking after your home is shared between you and the Association. We are committed to providing a high quality service and completing repairs within timescales. This section tells you what you can expect from us and how to get the best from the service.

### Our responsibilities include:

- The structure and fabric of your house.
- Fixtures and fittings supplied by the Association, for instance, kitchen units.
- Installations provided by the Association, for instance, central heating.

- Common areas e.g. bin areas.

**Remember if any of the above are damaged because of your negligence, the cost of the repair or replacement will be charged to you.**

### Your responsibilities include:

- Anything that belongs to you.
- Internal decoration.
- Light bulbs, fluorescent tubes and starters, fuses and sink plugs.
- Blocked sinks and waste pipes if caused by your negligence.
- Replacing batteries in smoke detectors.
- Replacing locks and keys if you lose your keys.
- Make good damage caused by your appliance, for instance, your washing machine floods.
- Replacing broken window unless reported to the Police as criminal damage.
- Any deliberate damage or vandalism by you, a member of your household or a visitor to your home
- Television equipment owned or rented by you including digital receivers.

### You can report a repair by:

- Calling 0800 595 595
- Calling into your local office.
- Telephoning one of our offices.
- Writing to the Association.
- Speaking to a member of staff.
- By e-mailing:  
[repairs@northglasgowha.com](mailto:repairs@northglasgowha.com)

When reporting a repair please give as much information as possible about the repair required and access arrangements.

We will inform you regarding details of the work ordered, the timescale within which we will complete the repair and the name of the contractor who will carry out the work. Repairs are classified into three categories with different timescales.

**Emergency Repairs** – These are repairs that present immediate risks to your safety, security or health or could lead to serious damage to the property. Examples include:

- Flooding.
- Total electric failure.
- Fires.
- Major structural damage.
- Blocked drains causing flooding to the property.
- Blocked toilet when there is no other toilet to use in the house.
- Lack of heating in winter.

We aim to attend and make safe all emergencies within 4 hours and complete any follow up work within 24 hours

**Urgent repairs** – This applies to any repair that needs to be completed quickly but is not an immediate risk to health or the safety of the property. Examples include:

- Partial loss of electricity.
- Leaking roof.
- Loss of water or heating in the summer.

We aim to complete urgent repairs within 3 working days of them being reported

**Routine repairs** – These are everyday repairs. Examples include:

- Plasterwork.
- Repairs to kitchen units.
- Joinery repairs.

Our target for routine repairs is to complete them, within 5 working days of being reported.

## Fire Alarms

We have fitted smoke alarms in your home to help detect fires before they become dangerous. Remember to test your smoke alarm at least once a week. If it is not working make sure you test the batteries before contacting the Association.

## Right to Repair

The Association operates a Right to Repair Policy whereby if work is not carried out within the agreed time scale the tenant could qualify for compensation. For further details please contact your local office.

## Burst Pipes

You can help us by finding out where the mains water stopcock is. If you are not sure, please ask and we will come and show you. If you have a leak turn your water off at the stopcock.

## Power Cuts

First try unplugging all your electrical appliances and resetting the trip switch (if installed). If this does not work, then do one of the following:

- Check to see if the power cut affects other people in your street. If yes, then contact Scottish power by phoning 0845 27 27 999.
- If the problem only affects your home, then call the Association.

## Cyclical Maintenance

In addition to the reported repairs we operate a programme of cyclical maintenance – this means that we will carry out work at set periods such as servicing gas heating appliances annually, inspecting roofs and cleaning gutters of tenement flats annually, terraced and semi detached properties every 2 years and inspect electrics every ten years.

## Investment Programme

We also operate a comprehensive investment programme where major property elements such as windows, central heating, kitchens and bathrooms are replaced at the end of their life cycle.



## Gas Servicing

The Association will service your gas fires, central heating and boilers every year. This is an essential safety check and you must give our contractor access to carry out the work. This regular check ensures the safety of your family and your neighbours.

## Our Contractors

All the contractors we use have been vetted to ensure that they meet the standards we expect. We also insist that they follow a Code of Conduct that includes:

- Appointments – the contractor will arrange access and follow any specific arrangements that you have given.
- Identification – all our contractors must carry identification which you should ask to see before letting them into your home.
- They must carry a copy of the official works order unless responding to an emergency.
- Politeness – all our contractors are expected to behave in a polite and courteous fashion.
- Respect for your home – disruption should be kept to a minimum and your home left clean and tidy.
- Health and safety – we expect the contractor to comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act. Particular care should be taken if there are young or vulnerable people in your home.
- Equal Opportunities – there should be no discrimination or favour to any particular person, family or group.

## Carrying out Alterations and Improvements

You have a right to carry out alterations and improvements to your home but you must get our written permission before starting any work. Permission is normally granted as long as it does not affect the safety of the property or reduce its value. We will need to make sure that the work is carried out to a

good standard and that it complies with building and planning regulations.

## Improvements which may be carried out by tenants include:

- Installing a shower
- Putting up a garden shed or fence
- Changing light switches and sockets
- Building patios and porches
- Changing internal doors

Your rent will not increase because of an improvement you have carried out. In some cases we will pay you compensation for the work you have carried out when you leave your house. We will tell you if this applies to you when we give you permission to carry out the work.

## Alternative Accommodation

In the future your housing need can change and you may want to transfer to another North Glasgow HA house more suitable for you. We operate a points system for transfers, the more urgent your need, the more points you get.

An application form and a leaflet explaining our points system is available at your local office. Your Housing Officer will be able to advise you about the availability of suitable housing.

## Ending your Tenancy

You are required to give one month's notice in writing if you wish to end your tenancy. We require your name, address, date of leaving and forwarding address. A form is available at your local office for completion or you may send in a letter.

We will arrange to inspect your home before you leave and you may be asked to make good any repairs that are your responsibility. You must leave your home in a good condition or you will be charged for the work required to bring it up to standard.

On the day you leave you should return your keys to the local office. If you do not do this the Association will need to change the locks and you will be charged for that work.

Remember to inform the gas and electricity companies and the council tax office of your new address.

Prior to ending your tenancy you should provide access to applicants wishing to view the property. Your Housing Officer will accompany potential applicants.

If a tenant ends their tenancy by following the proper procedure the association will reward the tenant with a “goodbye” gift.

## Special Needs Housing

The Association provide a number of houses built specially to meet particular housing needs of tenants. Our wheelchair accessible housing is specially designed for people who have mobility problems or who are confined to a wheelchair. These houses are adapted to ensure:

- No barriers at the entrance to impede access;
- Wide doors to allow wheelchairs to pass through;
- Specially designed kitchens and bathrooms.

If you have a special housing need please contact your local office. We may be able to adapt your existing home or assist you with additional support to meet your needs.

## Help with your housing and related problems

The Association’s staff are trained to give confidential advice and assistance on a wide range of housing problems including

- Welfare and Housing Benefits advice to tenants who have rent or financial problems.
- Assistance with housing in the event of marital or relationship breakdown.

- harassment or nuisance from a neighbour.

If you would like to discuss any problems with one of our staff contact your local office to arrange an appointment

## Sheltered Housing

The Association has four sheltered housing complexes and one very sheltered housing complex. These are located in Barloch Street and Hawthorn Street in Possilpark and Kemp Street, Gourlay Street and Carron Crescent in Springburn.

Sheltered housing is designed for older people who are able to live independently but want the added security of knowing that help is available when it’s needed.

Sheltered housing has the special design features you find in all our houses along with some extra facilities. These include:

- A common room for meeting other residents and holding social activities
- Laundry facilities for use by residents;
- A guest bedroom for use by family or friends (not Carron Crescent)
- A warden service.

Wardens are usually around most days to provide advice, support and assistance to residents. Their role is to act as a "good neighbour" helping to organise social activities and events and to assist in an emergency. They are not trained nurses or home helps although they may be able to help residents to get help from other services when required.

## Very Sheltered Housing

Very sheltered housing is an exciting concept, which promotes independence but provides dedicated support for older and vulnerable tenants via Housing support staff. It is part of a move towards providing a home for life.

It is a type of housing built with the needs of older people with support needs in mind.

The design and variety of accommodation, along with the facilities and services provided, create a living environment where people can lead independent lives whilst enjoying security, comfort and peace of mind. Whether you enjoy privacy or wish to make friends, very sheltered housing has something to offer everyone. Hawthorn very sheltered housing, consists of 58 self-contained flats across 100 Hawthorn Street and Hawthorn Court.

Support services are implemented in line with the National Care Standards and monitored and regulated by the Care Commission. The National Care Standards are based on the principals of: Dignity, Privacy, Choice, Safety, Realising Potential, Equality and diversity. Social Work Service and the Scottish Housing Regulator also review our service to ensure we provide quality services, value for money and equal opportunities.

## General Information

### Safety in the Home

Most accidents occur in the home. A few simple precautions will help to keep you and your family safe.

- Try not to leave electrical cables and flexes trailing
- Remember to keep medicines and other hazardous substances out of the reach of children
- When cooking never leave pot handles sticking out over the edge of the cooker
- Use steps to reach high areas rather than standing on chairs or other unstable objects
- Be careful when doing DIY and home repairs - use a circuit breaker for any power tools.

### If you SMELL GAS:

- Put out any cigarettes or naked flames

- Switch off all gas appliances and turn gas off at the mains (usually beside your gas meter)
- Do not turn on any lights or electrical switches
- Open doors and windows to let the gas escape
- Phone Transco on their emergency number 0800 111 999

If you own any gas appliances make sure they are repaired and serviced by an approved trades person.

## Home Security

To help you to feel secure in your home, we suggest you follow some precautions against break-ins and burglaries:

- Always lock windows & doors.
- If you are going away for more than a day or two cancel any deliveries of milk and papers.
- Don't leave valuables lying around where they can be seen and try not to keep large amounts of cash in your home
- If you have a door entry system make sure the main entrance is always kept locked and secure
- Ask for identification before inviting anyone into your home - if you feel unsure or suspicious don't let them in. If you feel threatened don't hesitate to call the police
- Neighbourhood Watch schemes can add to the overall safety of an area - if you are interested, contact the local police or Crime Prevention Officer who will give you information about setting up a scheme.

## Fire Prevention

Some of the most common causes of fire can be easily avoided.

- Empty ashtrays into a metal bin
- Disconnect all electrical appliances that you don't need to leave on overnight
- Don't smoke in bed

- Don't leave clothes drying near the fire
- If there is a fire in your house
  - Close the door of the room where the fire is to stop the flames spreading
  - Get everyone out immediately, warning neighbours and others in the building.
  - Call 999 for Fire Service, give your exact address, don't go back into the house until Fire-fighters advise it is safe

## Winter Precautions

During cold weather there is a risk of your pipes freezing and bursting. If there is period of heavy frost you may find it useful to follow these suggestions:

- Try to keep heat circulating in all rooms
- Repair/report any dripping taps or pipes. Find out where your main stopcock is so you know where to find it if you have any leaks
- If your pipes do freeze telephone a plumber (phone 0800 595 595)
- Turn off the water at the stop cock or tap
- Switch off your immersion heater or boiler
- Turn on taps in sinks and baths
- Turn on as much heating as you can

Follow the same procedure for a burst pipe. Remember to switch off the electricity at the mains if water comes into contact with any electrical fitting.

## Insurance

Although North Glasgow Housing Association will insure the common structure of the building against any damage, this is only for the common fabric of the building and does not include cover for your internal decoration, personal belongings or other contents of your home.

As part of our Tenants Reward Scheme tenants aged 60 and over and any tenants who are disabled are automatically covered by our free contents insurance cover up to £15,000 provided by Farr Insurance.

For tenants that don't qualify for this cover we **strongly** recommend that you take out

comprehensive insurance for house contents to cover your belongings from theft, fire, flood damage and loss. The association can offer you two types of cover:

- Standard
- Full accidental damage

Both options have no policy excess and provide "new for old" cover.

If you are interested in this cover please contact your local office for more details.

## Complaints Procedure

The Association has produced a leaflet giving full details of our Complaints Procedure and a copy can be obtained by contacting one of our offices.



**New North Glasgow:  
a great place to live, learn,  
work, visit and invest in**

## Notes

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## Notes



