

ARNEWAY HOUSING CO-OPERATIVE LIMITED

HANDBOOK - A TENANT'S GUIDELINES

JUNE 2017

Welcome to Arneway Housing Co-operative Limited Member Tenancy Guide.

Arneway Housing Co-op was originally founded in 1979. We are a non-profit making organisation with charitable status. We are registered with the Government's Department for Communities & Local Government. As a Registered Housing Association we receive public money to help provide homes for people in housing need. The Department for Communities & Local Government sets guidelines for how we should operate & they monitor our performance as they do for all Registered Housing Associations.

For more information from: <https://www.gov.uk/housing-association-homes/apply-for-a-home>

We provide homes for rent in around the London Borough of Brent local authority areas within North West London & within the West London Region. All of our properties are managed from our Head Office at The Designworks, Park Parade, Harlesden London, NW10 4HT, located in the centre of Harlesden.

In the event of an unresolved complaint your final recourse is to The Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) who looks at complaints about registered providers of social housing, for example housing associations, & other landlords, managers & agents. The service is free, independent & impartial. You may contact the Ombudsman at any stage of a dispute, however, their remit is as a final resort arbitrator/resolution body.

You may find more information from: <http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk>

Introduction

This guide provides answers to some of the questions you may have about your tenancy & how we work. It does not form part of the tenancy agreement that you & Arneway Housing Co-operative Limited which is a separate legal document.

Arneway provides on occasion provides services & that might include things that are not included in this guide. If you have questions please communicate with the office. From time to time we might update

sections of this guide. You can always access the latest version, together with a list of what has changed on our website at www.arnewayhousing.co.uk If you don't have access to the internet then contact the Arneway Office to make sure you can have the most up to date version.

Arneway residents is assigned a housing officer. H/she is your main point of contact – the person you go to first when you need something from us. Your housing officer will be the person you can trust to help you to get the best outcome in the event of an issue.

A Housing Co-operative aims to provide good well maintained affordable housing to its members, & in return the members must also play their part in working with the Housing Services Manager & the Management Committee to maintain a service. After all the Co-operative has evolved over many years due to the past goodwill of previous members & the various Management Committees who have served the membership well. Everyone who becomes a member owes a duty to those who follow.

To ensure that the Co-op continues to thrive all members should agree to achieve this, we will:

Put the interests of the Co-op first in all our work.

Develop lasting communities by involving residents improving the quality of life for all members.

Provide the maximum number of well-maintained homes which our members can afford regulated by the Department of Communities & Local Government.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government>

Maintain & improve our housing by means of a cost-effective & planned maintenance service.

Promote equal opportunities in all our activities; In partnership with statutory & voluntary organisations, work to provide high quality, cost-effective accommodation with support services appropriate to tenants who have particular needs. Through prudent risk management & sound financial planning, making the most of financial resources.

On request Arneway will:

Visit you in your home, get to know you & explain clearly what we can offer.

Make sure you understand your responsibilities under your agreement with us.

Help you to sort out any issues in your home or with your tenancy – particularly things to do with your rent, repairs, your tenancy or any problems you are having in your home.

Give you information about other local, voluntary or statutory services which might be useful to you.

The Co-operative will answer questions when visiting you in your home, or via by email, text, post or by WhatsApp when you have registered with the office.

If you ring office & an officer is unavailable, you can always leave a message & s/he will get back to you as soon as they can within one working day, please always leave a number where they can get hold of you. They will also give you details in their voicemail message of someone to contact if you have an emergency.

If you need to report an emergency repair when the office is closed, phone 020 8965 5537 to get the number of our emergency repairs service.

Our commitments to you:

Make it easy to communicate with us.

We will answer your call quickly.

Treat you with courtesy,

We will return phone messages within one working day.

We will respond to all letters & emails within five working days of receiving them.

When you have contact with us, we will listen & will try to understand what is most important to you.

We will help you to resolve your issue or problem as quickly as possible, keeping you informed about progress & offering you choices where we can.

Offer you help & advice.

We want you to have confidence in us so we will always try to set realistic expectations, whilst always doing what we say we will.

When we fail to meet this service promise, we will acknowledge this honestly & get your service back on track fast.

We welcome feedback on how we're performing so please feel free to contact the office, or by submitting an email, postal, text or WhatsApp message with your experiences.

In return we expect you to:

Pay your rent when it is due on time & on a regular basis.

Keep to the terms of your tenancy agreement.

Keep your home, common areas & any garden in a clean and/or tidy condition.

Carry out repairs that are your responsible for: See below for details "**Who is responsible for what?**".

Allow our staff & contractors access to your home to carry out repairs & inspections as required.

Not threaten or harass or be aggressive to neighbours, Co-operative staff or contractors, & ensure that nobody visiting your home do so.

To contribute to the Co-op affairs by volunteering for the various Committees, Details are stipulated in your Tenancy Agreement. Further information is available from your housing officer.

To attend General Meetings & behave in a proper manner at all meetings & abide by the Chair of the meetings.

Equal opportunities

We provide the best quality homes & services we can to a wide range of residents who represent various cultures, races, religions, sexes, ages, abilities, sexualities & gender identities.

We are committed to equal opportunities & expect all board members, staff, contractors, member residents, & those who provide us with goods & services to follow our equal opportunities policy.

Please ask the office if you would like to see a copy.

About your tenancy

The tenancy agreement you have signed is a contract between you & the Arneway Housing Co-operative. It contains a range of rights & responsibilities, many of which we describe in other parts of this guide.

The tenancy is on a week by week basis as stipulated in your agreement **(DA PLEASE CONFIRM)**.

We will always talk to you about our plans to do major work to your home & take note of your comments.

Whenever we paint your home, change your kitchen units or improve your bathroom, we aim to offer choices on colours & layout.

Where we set aside money annually to improve your living environment, we will aim to spend the money on improvements that mean something to you.

We aim to visit the area where you live at least once a year.

You should read the terms of your tenancy carefully to ensure you understand your responsibilities as a tenant, & our responsibilities as your landlord.

If you contravene the Housing Co-operatives rules of strict SINGLE OCCUPANCY OR SUBLETTING EVICTION CAN BE EXPECTED. Also we will ask the courts for a possession order if you have seriously & persistently broken your tenancy conditions (for example, by not paying rent or by causing extreme nuisance to your neighbours or subletting and/or condoning multiple occupancy).

All properties are pet free & should remain so during the tenancy. Any damage to the property caused by any pet / animal will leave you liable for remedy. If you fail to remedy the situation a court order will be obtained to seek your eviction and/or financial redress. **(DA PLEASE ADVISE)**

We will always try to sort out problems without having to take legal action. However, we will take legal action if you do not cooperate or you break agreements. We will also take legal action to repossess your home if you are no longer living in it or illegally subletting to someone else. This means that we have to get an order for possession from the courts, any all all costs, plus interest will be reclaimed for you.

Improving our services:

We will carry out customer surveys periodically to get your views & will let you know the results.

Whenever we want to review our service we will consult with you.

We will respond positively to any suggestions for improving services.

We will talk to, & involve you in any best value reviews which reconsider how services are delivered.

We will put in place any agreed service improvements.

We will treat everyone equally & let you have your say.

Involving you

We will publish & promote our Resident Involvement Strategy.

We will provide you a residents newsletter that gives you news on our business.

We will provide & support the publication of local estate/scheme newsletters.

We will provide you with a local Residents Forum so that you can be directly involved in our work.

We will lend support to any community regeneration project that affects you, your family & your home.

When things go wrong

We will try & put things right straight away if you are not happy with our service.

We will publicise & ask you if you want to use our complaints procedure & will award compensation, in some cases, if our service has failed.

Leaving your home & giving up your tenancy

If you are leaving your home, you should give your housing officer **(DA?)** weeks' notice in writing.

You should leave your old home in a good state of decoration & repair & remove all furniture & belongings, also remembering to clean the accommodation prior to leaving.

This means:

Repair any minor faults that are your responsibility (for example, fill in holes in the walls where you have removed shelves or pictures).

The decorations should be of a standard that the next tenant can move in & live in the home without needing to decorate. Decoration should be refreshed every five years.

Empty the home of all your belongings & rubbish.

The home should be clean, especially kitchen units, windows, baths & sinks.

Property check out

We will inspect your home before you leave & may recharge you for carrying out any work that is your responsibility.

Furnishings: All properties come unfurnished & inventories / property checks will be carried out at the beginning & end of tenancies to confirm the condition of all aspects of the accommodation.

Paying the rent: All tenancies must set up a standing order, this may be updated & other terms may be available. This document will be updated on that occasion.

Ending tenancies: To end an your tenancy you need to advise Arneway Housing Co-operative Limited, who will then arrange for things like inventory prior to your departure. Tenancies may be ended by Arneway if a resident's circumstances change & they are no longer eligible for the property.

Rent & other charges

Your tenancy agreement will tell you how much your rent is at the start of your tenancy. This figure will change as we review your rent yearly.

You must pay your rent each week or month in advance dependent on the terms of your tenancy agreement. If you have a weekly tenancy you can pay every fortnight or every month if you want, but you must make sure your rent account balance is always one week in credit.

It is your responsibility to make sure that your rent is paid regularly & on time.

Upon request we will send you a statement of what you have paid. If you are in good standing this can be requested electronically. If you are in arrears, statements will be raised & posted. to the property. We will retain proof of posting & it will be used as part of the submission for any litigation, ie Court proceedings.

Arneway Housing Association will regularly over the course of a year, You should check these against your own record of payments & raise any questions with your housing officer.

If you have difficulties paying your rent

It is a condition of your tenancy that your rent is paid regularly & in advance. Your home is at risk if you do not pay your rent. However, we appreciate that you may have difficulties paying your rent from time to time, & we will do everything we can to help you.

Rent arrears

Please contact your housing office who will be able to offer advice & help you. If you have rent arrears (missed payments) & cannot pay these straight away, you may be able to make an arrangement to pay them over a period of time.

Financial difficulties and / or hardship

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO COMMUNICATE WITH ARNEWAY IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING ANY FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES OR FINANCIAL HARDSHIP.

Service charges

We sometimes provide services to tenants that incur an extra charge, like:

Cleaning shared areas.

Entry phones.

Heating and/or hot water.

Lifts.

Sinking fund. This may be introduced to deal with improvements at some point.

Your tenancy agreement will list the services that are covered by your service charge.

If you receive Housing Benefit this may not cover some charges such as heating & hot water provided to your home, so you may have to pay some charges yourself.

Housing Benefit

If you are on a low income or if you receive other welfare benefits, you may be entitled to help with paying your rent. Contact the Housing Benefit Department of your local council for information on how to claim & how much you may be entitled to. Managing your Housing Benefit claim is your responsibility & it can be complicated. If you are not sure about any aspect of your claim, ask your housing officer who will be able to offer advice & support.

If you are waiting for your Housing Benefit claim to be assessed or are receiving Housing Benefit, it is still your legal responsibility to make sure your rent is paid in full. This means that if the rent is not paid (whether or not it is your fault) you still owe us the missing rent. Also, if Housing Benefit does not cover all of your rent, you are responsible for paying the difference.

Please check that payments are being made & take action if there is a problem, or contact your housing officer.

You must tell the Housing Benefit Department about any change in your circumstances, including:

Changes in your income.

Rent increases.

If you are going away for more than a few weeks.

If enters or leave full-time education.

If you fail to report changes, your local council may pay you too much benefit (which you will have to pay back) & treat it as deliberate fraud.

Your Local Authority Housing Benefit Department can send you a letter at any time requesting details and evidence from you. Make sure you reply in the timescale they set or you may not receive the money to which you are entitled. If it's possible we advise you to get a receipt for any evidence or documents you submit.

Losing your home is not the only risk you face if you fall behind with your rent:

Court orders can affect your credit rating & you may not be able to borrow money.

You will have to pay the cost of any court hearing.

We will not usually transfer you, or allow you to mutually exchange until you have paid the arrears.

If you lose your home your local council may not rehouse you because you have made yourself 'intentionally homeless'.

Banks, building societies or other lending agencies can ask us for references on your payments, & a poor reference may mean you cannot get a mortgage or other loan,

Emergencies

It is important that you identify where your water stopcock, gas shut off valve & mains electricity switch are when you move into your home so that you do not have to waste time searching for them in an emergency. If you cannot find the stopcock, valve shut off or electricity mains switch & cannot find someone to help you, or contact your housing officer for advice.

Fire

If there is a fire in your home, get out of the building immediately if you can do so safely, & dial 999.

Do not try to save any personal belongings.

Electricity: If you have an electrical fault that you think might be dangerous, switch off the electricity at the mains. The switch is either next to the fuse box or next to the meter. Then call us for help. If your electricity supply fails completely, call your electricity supplier.

Gas: If you smell gas, turn off the gas supply at the mains next to the gas meter & open all windows.

Then call National Grid on 0800 111 999 immediately.

For more information look here <http://cadentgas.com/Emergencies-safety>

This service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

You should also:

Not smoke or strike matches.

Not turn electrical switches on or off.

Put out any naked flames (for example, on a gas cooker).

Keep people away from the affected area.

If the problem relates to one of our gas appliances or our pipework, contact your housing officer immediately. If the problem happens outside normal office hours, phone:

Our emergency number 0208 965 5537

Water leaks: If you have a leak or a burst pipe, turn off the water supply straight away. You do this by turning off the main stopcock which is normally either inside your home or, if you live in a flat, behind a small trap door in the shared hallway. Then call us for help. If you see a leak outside your home (for example, on the pavement or road), you can call a Freephone leakline on 0800 714 614 (Thames Water area only). For other areas, please see your water rates bill for the appropriate emergency phone number.

Frozen pipes: In severe winter weather water can freeze in your pipes & cause damage by expanding until the pipe can no longer stretch to contain it. If your pipes freeze, you must defrost them slowly & carefully.

First, always turn off the water supply to your home.

Use an electric hairdryer at its lowest setting to help defrost the pipe – do not warm pipes too quickly.

Do not use a blow lamp, heat gun or any other naked flame.

Thaw along the pipe from the end nearest the tap.

Do not leave taps on – water may not flush away down the plughole if the pipes below are frozen

If a pipe bursts after it has frozen, turn off the water supply to your home immediately & contact us straight away. In an emergency, these actions may help to reduce any damage.

Fire precautions: The issue of fire safety is a major concern. You can make your environment safer & limit the risk of fire by taking some basic precautions:

Be very careful if you are using a ANY Gas heater. Do not leave it on when you go out.

Be careful when getting rid of cigarette ends. Make sure they are properly put out.

Keep an eye on pans on the cooker & take care when cooking with hot oil.

Turn off electric sockets when you are not using them.

You should fit a smoke alarm in your home:

Once a week you should test your smoke alarm using the test button.

Every six months gently vacuum the inside to remove dust from the sensor.

Once a year change the battery (unless it is a 10 year battery).

You should also replace the battery if the low battery warning sounds with an intermittent bleep.

If you have access to the internet, you can find more information on fire prevention at:

You can find more information here: <https://firekills.campaign.gov.uk>

For the safety of residents in shared properties, please make sure that you do not leave any goods or belongings (particularly items that could set fire) in the shared areas. The shared staircase & hall are usually the main escape routes so you must not leave anything that could cause an obstruction to someone trying to get out if there is a fire. We will take action against you if you leave any items blocking the escape routes through shared areas.

Carbon Monoxide - What are the symptoms of CO poisoning?

It's worth remembering some symptoms of CO poisoning are similar to viral infections or tiredness, so try not to panic. However, call your doctor if you experience the following:

Headaches.

Nausea or feeling sick.

Breathlessness.

Dizziness.

Collapse.

Loss of consciousness.

If you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning call immediately on:

0800 111 999

Continued/

Initial stage includes:

Flu like symptoms, mild headaches, dizziness, weakness, nausea, confusion and increased heart rate.

Second stage includes:

Second stage includes:

Conscious but confused, disoriented, and movement difficulties due to extreme weakness.

Third stage includes:

Unconscious, convulsions, loss of muscle control, slow breathing.

Effects will vary for different individuals depending on the level and duration of exposure, body size and physical condition. If your symptoms reduce or disappear completely when you're out of the house, it might be carbon monoxide poisoning. See your doctor if you have any health concerns.

Dial 999 in an emergency.

For more information regarding CO (Carbon Monoxide)

<http://cadentgas.com/Emergencies-safety/Suspect-carbon-monoxide>

Repairs

As your landlord, we are responsible for carrying out certain repairs but we also expect you to look after your home & do your best to keep it in good condition.

Continued/

How do I you request a repair?

You can contact your housing officer during normal working hours (9am-5pm Monday to Friday, excluding bank holidays) & he/she will arrange a repair appointment for you. If your housing officer is not available, his/her voicemail greeting will give you a backup telephone number to call for in-hours emergency repairs.

PLEASE TAKE PHOTOGRAPHS ON YOUR PHONE IF POSSIBLE & SUBMIT TO YOUR HOUSING OFFICER VIA WHATSAPP. THIS IS VERY USEFUL AS IT ALLOWS US TO PASS ON THE DETAILS TO THE CONTRACTOR ENABLING A SPEEDIER RESOLUTION.

IF YOU ARE UNFAMILIAR WITH WHATSAPP CONTACT THE OFFICE SO IT CAN BE INSTALLED AND/OR EXPLAINED & YOU CAN BE INSTRUCTED HOW TO USE IT.

What happens if I have an emergency repair outside office hours?

See below for examples of repairs which are considered emergencies. If your repair is not an emergency, you should wait until the office is open to report it to your housing officer.

However, if an emergency occurs outside of office hours, to gain access to the duty officer:

CALL 0208 965 5537

When you report an emergency repair we aim to get someone to you within four hours & make the problem safe within 24 hours. Sometimes we might need to come back to complete carry out further work after it is made safe.

What sort of repairs are an 'emergency'?

Emergency repairs are ones which pose an immediate risk to life or property, that is, to your health & safety and/or the health & safety of your family, neighbours or others in or around your home, or to the property itself (including communal areas).

Examples of emergency repairs include:

Complete electrical failure or electrical failure in a kitchen/bathroom.

Serious leaks that will cause significant property damage if left unfixed.

Serious damage to an external door which means that your home is not secure.

Gas safety inspections.

Once a year, by law, we have to carry out an inspection of all the gas appliances we've installed in your home. These inspections are vital for your safety. They make sure that appliances are safe to use & are working correctly & efficiently.

Also, during the gas safety inspection a cursory asset inspection can take place. making note of damages & property condition, this may or may not replace annual property inspections that should be expected as a matter of course during any tenancy. **(DA PLEASE AGREE DISAGREE WITH THIS)**

We will try to organise this at a time which is good for you, but you must give us access to your home to complete the checks. If you don't, we may need to apply to court to enter your home.

Access

There may be other times when it is essential for us to access your home to carry out inspections or repairs. We will give you notice of this, but it is a condition of your tenancy that you give us access & we can take legal action to enforce this, if necessary.

Repairs we are responsible for:

There are a number of ways for you to report a repair

By telephone / post / Arneway Website or WhatsApp

0208 965 5537

Arneway Housing Co-op, The Designworks, Park Parade, Harlesden London NW10 4HT

<http://www.arnewayhousing.co.uk>

WhatsApp - Please register with the office

The office telephone number is charged at local rate & will connect you to the office where you will either speak with a member of staff or alternatively be directed to the mobile telephone number (charged at mobile rates) of the duty staff member in the event the repair is urgent or needs to be reported outside office hours. When connected to the duty member of staff you will be asked a number of questions which will enable us to identify the nature of the repair ensuring that the work is passed to the correct contractor & is appropriately prioritised. You will need to provide a contact telephone number which will be used by the contractor when they contact you to agree an appointment for the works to be completed. From June 2017 WhatsApp has become an approved way of contacting the office to report issues. Please ensure you have registered with office once you have downloaded WhatsApp. The office will be able to advise you how to use the app to report issues show how to include a picture and/or a video which helps us & any contractor as to what the issue is. The office

telephone number above is available 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Overnight between the hours of 8pm & 8am the after hours number detailed on the office number should only be used to report emergency repairs. An emergency is usually something which presents an immediate risk to safety, security or health eg, fire, a major utility issue, burst pipes, damage following a break in or any major incident that warrants a call.

You can contact us at the office address if required, Please provide full details of the repair required. If possible & practical submit a photograph or a brief video via WhatsApp. Remember to provide a contact telephone number so that we can speak with you should we need further information. Your contact details & any media you have submitted may & will be given to the contractor so they can arrange an appointment direct with you.

Who is responsible for the repair?

To ensure we meet legal responsibilities Arneway Housing Co-operative Limited must:

Keep the exterior of the building (e.g. roof, walls, doors, windows, paths) in good repair.

Keep the interior of the building (e.g. ceilings, doors, floors) in good repair.

Ensure supplies of gas, water & electricity are in good working order.

Maintain kitchen & bathroom equipment & drainage.

Maintain shared areas like entrances & stairways and/or common areas.

We expect you to

Treat your home with care. Remember, you may be charged for repair or damage that does not count as fair wear & tear.

Report repair problems to us as soon as possible.

Replace minor items like tap washers, light bulbs, toilet seats, shower heads & hoses.

Keep your home decorated, at least & not more than every five years. Please talk to the office as regards assistance that might be offered as regards this important requirement.

Who is responsible for what?

Tenant

Accidental or malicious damage.

Adjusting doors for carpets.

Batteries in smoke detectors.

Bath panels.

Blockage to sinks / baths & wash hand basins.

Blocked toilets.

Carpets / flooring

Chimney sweeping.

Condensation, unless due to building fault.

Cookers.

Damage due to forced entry by police or emergency services or government agents.

Decorating - internal.

Draught excluder.

Gardening & trees.

Hat & coat rails.

Hot water cylinder jackets.

Light bulbs, tubes & starter.

Keys (lost or stolen) & associated lock changes.

Pest control.

Plaster, Except minor cracks.

Plugs & chains to sinks, baths & wash hand basins.

Satellite dishes, except communal aerials.

Shower heads & hoses.

Tenants own fixtures & fittings.

TV Aerials.

Window Cleaning

Landlord

Communal areas to flats.

Electrical wiring & fittings.

Fences - Boundary (next to public right of way).

Fences – Dividing (between gardens, request information from the office to ascertain which fences you are responsible for).

Garden walls (boundary or dividing & between gardens, request information from the office to ascertain which fences you are responsible for).

Gas central heating systems & fires.

Glazing installation.

Guttering & down pipes.

Locks to doors & windows.

Kitchen units.

Plumbing.

Timber sheds.

Toilet pans & cisterns.

How soon will your repair be completed?

Repairs are prioritised into three categories, each with a target response time.

Whilst most repairs will be dealt with in the timescales shown below, customer services advisers will confirm the target time for your repair when you initially report it.

Emergency Repairs

Category A

These are repairs that present an immediate risk to safety, security or health. We aim to respond to emergency repairs within 24 hours.

Repairs that fall within this category include:

Blocked flue to open fire or boiler.

Blocked or leaking foul drain, soil stack or toilet pan (where there is no other toilet in property).

Blocked toilet (where there is only one toilet in the property).

Boarding up for security.

Burst to water supply / loss of supply (total or partial).

Fire door closures.

Gas leaks / supply failure (total or partial).

Leak from water or heating pipe, tank or cistern.

Leaking roof (make safe in 24 hours/complete in 5 days subject to weather conditions).

Loose or detached banister or handrail.

Loss of electricity (total or partial).

Rotten timber flooring or stair tread or banister rail.

Total or partial loss of space or water heating (31st October to 1st May).

Unsafe power, lighting, electrical fitting (where there is immediate danger).

Urgent Repairs

Category B

These are repairs, which cause substantial inconvenience. We aim to respond to urgent repairs within 5 working days.

Repairs that fall within this category include:

Door entry phone not working.

Extractor fan to internal kitchen or bathroom not working.

Externally leaking overflows.

Defective light fittings/sockets.

Insecure external window, door or lock.

Manhole covers (make safe in 24 hours / complete in 5 days).

Minor plumbing leaks eg waste pipes/radiator valves.

Tap which cannot be turned.

Total or partial loss of space or water heating (30th April to 1st November).

Routine Repairs

Category C

These are day to day repairs which do not cause serious inconvenience. We aim to respond to routine repairs within 28 days.

Repairs that fall within this category include:

Brickwork.

Cupboard / sink units.

Internal doors / fittings.

Boundary fencing / gates (boundary fencing is where it is adjacent to a public footpath / right of way).

Floor / wall tiling.

Garages.

Guttering.

Outbuildings.

Plasterwork.

Tiles.

Window adjustment.

Where certain repairs listed under Category A & B are not completed on time you may have the right to be compensated under the Right to Repair.

Will you be charged for any repairs?

Yes, you may have to pay for a repair for example.

If you have caused the damage that makes the repair necessary. An example might be if you have blocked the WC with nappies or sanitary products including wet wipes or poured oils or fats down plug holes that congeals causing blockages.

If you leave the property in disrepair when you end your tenancy. For example leaving behind rubbish, missing light fittings or removing any item that was there prior to your tenancy.

If you do not keep arrangements made with a contractor or refuse them access.

You will also be responsible for the cost of repairing or replacing items that are Arneway Housing Co-operative's responsibility but have been damaged accidentally, maliciously or deliberately by you, or a visitor to your home.

Where a repair or replacement is carried out to safeguard & protect our property from damage that has been caused by you, we will recharge you the cost of such work.

What if your repair is not completed on time?

First, communicate with us & we will check why there is a delay. The contractor may have experienced difficulty gaining access to complete the repair or there may be delays in obtaining replacement parts. Our customer services advisers will arrange for the contractor to contact you direct to explain any delay & make arrangements for the works to be completed.

If having spoken with us you are still not happy with the reasons given you do have the right to complain.

Please write to the appropriate person, as set out in the complaints procedure, giving details of the repair, when it was reported etc. We will look into the matter & reply in writing.

Will your repair be inspected?

If we are unable to determine the exact nature of the repair when it is reported we may need our technical staff to inspect the problem before the work is ordered. You will be advised if this is the case when you initially report the repair.

We inspect all repairs where the cost is expected to exceed £500. We do this to ensure repairs are being correctly ordered & to check that our contractors are providing value for money & are completing repairs to a required standard. You will be advised if the repair you have reported is to be inspected.

Contractor performance is monitored further by customer services advisers contacting residents & asking them to take part in a telephone survey. We survey 10% of all completed repairs.

These surveys provide an opportunity for you to comment on the service you have received. Your views are important & your participation is much appreciated.

Continued/

Who is responsible for decorating your home?

You are responsible for decorating the interior of your home, with a stipulated instruction that it must be refreshed to a good standard within a five year period.

We are responsible for decorating the outside of your home, & any communal areas of the building.

Redecorating takes place on a planned programme of work & we aim to repaint the outside of your home every five years.

Can you get help with decorating or improving your home?

You are reminded that there maybe incentives are available to assist with this instruction. Please contact the office & ask for more information.

What if you need adaptations to your home?

If due to health or disability you require alterations or adaptations to your home, eg fitting grab rails in bathrooms, provision of a shower rather than bath, we may be able to help. We have a limited budget available each year to cover these alterations.

We may need to prioritise alterations according to need. Grants may also be available from other sources & we will give advice if we are unable to help.

Procedures for requesting an alteration/ adaptation may vary dependent on where you live, but it is likely that having discussed your needs we will ask that you seek a letter from the Occupational Therapist setting out their written recommendation for the adaptation / alteration.

For further information please contact the office.

Continued/

What is the Right to Repair?

In law, you have a right to be compensated where we fail to have a repair carried out within a specified timescale & then fail to complete the repair once you have further requested it for a second time.

The repair must be a qualifying one which if left would jeopardise your health, safety or security. All repairs listed under Categories A & B are qualifying repairs with the exception of:

Boarding up for security.

Externally leaking overflows.

Fire door closures.

Manhole covers.

The amount of compensation you may claim is a flat rate of £10, plus £2 per day up to a maximum of £50, for each day the repair remains late. The Right to Repair does not give you the right to carry out a repair yourself & then be compensated. For further details please contact the office.

Contractors' code of practice

All the contractors we employ have to meet certain standards of work & behaviour. They should carry out work with as little noise, nuisance or inconvenience as possible & pay particular attention to keeping your home clean & safe. If there is any delay in finishing the work, the contractor will keep you fully informed. All contractors must follow our equal opportunities policy.

If you have a complaint about a contractor, please contact your housing officer.

Compensation for service failure.

You may be able to claim compensation if:

We fail more than once to deal with a repair within the timeframe

We fail to keep an arranged appointment without giving you notice or a good reason

We fail to finish a repair within four weeks of starting it (though if a repair highlights more serious problems, such as dry rot or damp-proofing, we may take longer than four weeks without having to pay you compensation)

Damages for disrepair

We do our best to make sure that all our repair work is done quickly & adequately. However, from time to time things do go wrong. Damp-proofing in a basement may fail or a contractor may knock a nail through a hidden water pipe. If you believe you have suffered personal harm or damage to your belongings as a result of our failure to repair in time, or during repair work, please let us know straight away.

We will investigate all claims sympathetically & apologise & pay compensation if we are responsible. If we pay compensation as a result of a failure by one of the contractors we employ, we will ask you to support & help us in claiming the cost back from the contractors.

Condensation

Condensation is caused by warm, moist air hitting a cold surface. It is most noticeable in bathrooms & kitchens but it can also affect other rooms. With proper ventilation, insulation & heating, condensation can be avoided or reduced.

You can reduce condensation in your property by doing the following:

Open your windows. This will help water in the air to escape your home

Leave your “trickle vents” open. On most modern windows there will be a vent on your window frame which you can open. These will let water out without losing the heat from your property.

Don't dry clothes on the radiator – use a drying rack

Close the door & open the windows when you cook, shower or bathe

Leave a gap between furniture (such as wardrobes) & the walls to allow air to circulate.

Make sure your kitchen & bathroom fans are working. Hold a piece of paper over the fan when it's on. If it stays there when you take your hand away it is functioning. If you think it is broken – talk to your housing officer. Sometimes condensation can cause a black stain on walls & paintwork. You can wash this off using a suitable cleaner or diluted bleach solution (you may need to do this more than once). However, if the stain doesn't go away please contact your housing officer.

Using heating & electricity effectively

Heating & hot water account for two thirds of your fuel bills. You can save money by taking a few sensible steps & changing the way you use appliances:

Turn down your central heating by one degree

Turn off your heating when it is not needed at night or if you go out. In very cold weather, keep some heating on low to prevent frozen pipes.

Adjust your heating & hot-water controls to lower settings in the spring.

Look for draughts & block them e.g. fit a flap over your letter box, & put draught strips around door frames & window frames.

Be aware that electric fires & fan heaters are expensive to run.

Adjust your routine:

How often do you need hot water?

Can you lower the temperature of your hot water?

Which radiators do you need on?

Do you really need the heating on first thing in the morning if you are going out to work?

Do you need the heating on when you go to bed, or could you turn it off an hour or so beforehand?

Turn off lights, computers, & other appliances if you do not need them. Turning off a microwave or any other item you don't need can save money over the course of a year.

Security

We provide at least a night latch for the door of your home. You may want to fit more locks on doors & windows for extra security.

If you lose your door keys or get locked out of your home, you must arrange for someone to change the lock. If you have any difficulties, we may be able to arrange for a locksmith to do the work for you but we will charge you the full cost.

If you share a front door with others, it is against fire regulations to fit certain types of locks. You must always consult us before changing a lock or fitting a new lock on a shared front door.

To stay safe in your home, you must check the identity of all callers before you let them in. Our staff carry identity cards with photographs that they should show you, as should representatives from other organisations such as gas & electricity companies & the local council. We also tell our contractors to carry identity cards that they should show you. If you are suspicious of any person who calls at your home, do not let them in & call the police or the organisation that they claim to represent.

If you want advice on what else you can do to protect your home, contact the crime prevention officer at your local police station. Your housing officer may also be able to advise you about other help that may be available.

We provide some homes with a dustbin or another container for getting rid of rubbish, although you are responsible for replacing it. Please be considerate towards your neighbours & make sure you put rubbish in sealed bags inside the dustbins. Please do not leave rubbish in the shared areas.

You are responsible for getting rid of bulk rubbish. If you need bulk rubbish to be removed you should contact the Local Authority.

If you notice bulk rubbish that isn't yours on or outside Arneway Housing Co-operatives property, please contact the office. If you notice bulk rubbish on non-housing co-operative land (e.g. on the street), report it to your Local Authority.

Household pests

You will usually be responsible for dealing with household pests such as ants, wasps, cockroaches, rats & mice within your property. Contact the Environmental Health Department at your local council for advice.

For more information go to <https://www.gov.uk/report-pest-problem>

If you cannot deal with the issue, suspect that you have an infestation, or if you have a pest problem in a communal area then contact your housing officer.

Home improvements

If you want to carry out any improvements or alterations to your home, you must get our permission in writing before you start any work. Contact your housing officer, who will advise you of the information we need to assess your application. You may also need other approval, such as planning permission

from the council. TV aerials & satellite dishes If it isn't prohibited by your estate regulations you might be able to fit things such as TV aerials & satellite dishes but you may still need to get planning permission from your local council. These improvements will remain your responsibility to maintain & you must get our permission in writing first. If you are unsure speak to your housing officer.

Other improvements

If you want to carry out any other kind of improvement (for example, fitting your own central heating, gas fire or shower units), these become our property. You cannot remove them if you move. If you have replaced existing fixtures, you must return these to us.

We are not able to refund the cost of carrying out the improvement but we will take over responsibility for maintenance when we have inspected & approved the work. We will not increase your rent as a result of any improvements you make to your home. At the end of your tenancy you may be entitled to compensation for some improvements that you have carried out with our permission.

Fitting wooden or laminate flooring

If you are thinking about replacing your carpet with wooden or laminate flooring you must get permission from your housing officer. If you live in a flat, it is likely that your neighbours will hear more noise if you lay wooden or laminate flooring. Please consider this before making any changes. It could cause nuisance to your neighbours & may end up in a dispute. If you install this kind of flooring without permission you may be asked to remove it & replace the original flooring at your own expense.

Decorations

You are responsible for decorating inside your home to a reasonable standard. If you are elderly or have a disability & there is no one who can do the decorating for you, we will try & arrange help from a voluntary organisation.

Running a business from home

If you want to run a business from home, you must get our permission in writing. You may also need council planning permission. We will refuse any business use that may annoy your neighbours.

Home contents insurance

We strongly advise you to take out a home contents insurance policy. This is to insure your personal belongings, furniture, carpets & decorations against damage or loss due to water, fire or burglary.

Our own insurance policy does not cover your belongings if they are lost or damaged, unless we have been negligent. Taking out your own insurance will also provide you with cover if you are held responsible for damage caused to your home or a neighbour's home or belongings (for example, if you let your bath over flow or if you accidentally hammer a nail through a central-heating pipe).

Arneway Housing Co-operative Limited maybe able to advise as to vendors of insurance and typical types of cover offered and advisable, for more information contact your housing officer.

Exterior repair & renovations to the outside of your home:

To keep your building in a good state of repair, we have a maintenance programme. This means that every few years we repaint the outside of the windows & front doors, & the shared areas.

We also carry out repairs to the outside of the property & inspect & repair roofs if necessary. We will tell you beforehand if your property is due to be repainted. For some work, such as painting windows, we may need to come into your home so we would appreciate your co- operation. We often need to put up scaffolding to the building to finish the works safely. Please take extra security precautions while the scaffolding is in place.

When carrying out any improvements to your home we will ensure that you are notified & involved in the process from the start to the end of the work.

If you have any queries regarding the programme of works please contact your housing officer.

Major improvements

Arneway Housing Co-operative Limited sometimes carries out planned upgrade programmes to improve the property assets. The decision to include your kitchen, bathroom, electrics or boiler in a planned programme is based on the condition that it is in, whether it is safe & whether it can be repaired. We will always get in touch to let you know if your home is part of a planned upgrade programme in advance of work starting.

Adaptations to your home

If you are elderly, have a disability or a long-term medical condition you may find carrying out day-to-day tasks difficult, such as using your kitchen, bathroom or the stairs. If so, speak to your housing officer about adaptations to your home.

Simple adaptations (such as installing a grab rail in the shower) can be arranged by housing officers but for larger changes you will need to contact your Local Authority Occupational Therapy Department to request an Occupational Therapy (OT) Assessment. They will provide advice about whether you are eligible for an assessment.

If an occupational therapist approves any adaptations they will contact the office & they may be able to arrange for any work to be carried out.

Your household

Changes to your household

You **MUST** let us know if there is any permanent or semi-permanent change in your circumstances.

Continued/

Subletting & lodgers

You may wish to rent out a room to someone as this can help bring in some extra money. This is **prohibited** & contrary to your tenancy agreement. You may wish to sublet a part of your property, this too is **prohibited** & contrary to your tenancy agreement & will result in eviction.

It is strictly forbidden to sublet the whole of your home. If you are going away for three months or more (for example, to visit family abroad) & you would like someone to stay in your home while you are away, please discuss this with your housing officer. They will explain how you might be able to do this. You cannot transfer your tenancy to someone else unless we give you permission (for example, to exchange your home with another resident) or unless a court orders it. **(DA?)**

Remember: If you move out without telling us, sublet the whole of your property or transfer your tenancy illegally, you will have broken the conditions of tenancy. We will take immediate action through the court to repossess your home & evict any people living there.

Succession

If a tenant dies it is not possible for their tenancy to pass to another member of their family or partner living with them.

Estate agreements

If you live on an estate, there may be local rules that form part of an estate agreement. These rules (for example, concerning parking or behaviour in shared areas) are in place for the general interest of all residents. You will be breaking the terms of your tenancy if you break these rules.

Car parking

Car-parking spaces in shared areas on estates are for the benefit of all residents. Unless we say otherwise (usually in your tenancy agreement) you do not have rights to an individual car-parking space.

Shared or common areas

It is one of the conditions of your tenancy that you & the other people living in your house or block keep the shared areas clean (unless you have a cleaner that you pay for by a service charge added to your rent) & free from obstruction. You & your neighbours will need to decide how to do this. You may want to take it in turns or decide that each of you will be responsible for a particular area. The shared areas are made up of:

Common Areas.

The entrance hall.

Stairways & landings.

Sometimes the dustbin area & the front garden or yard.

Remember that the shared areas are often the only escape route in case of fire so do not leave anything that could cause an obstruction.

Neighbour disputes

Our tenancy conditions are intended to make sure that you, your family & your guests are considerate to those people living around you. Most homes we provide are very close together & some have shared areas. This means that a certain amount of noise & differences in lifestyle should be expected.

Sometimes these differences may lead to a disagreement between neighbours. In most cases you should try & sort out these problems yourself. Raising the issue with your neighbour & explaining the effect it is having on you is usually the best way forward. Your neighbour may not be aware they are disturbing you & you could reach a compromise together.

Continued/

If you're not able to solve the problem on your own, or don't feel able to speak to your neighbour, then you should discuss the issue with your housing officer. They may be able to refer you to a mediation service or provide other advice on resolving the problem.

Anti-social behaviour

We want our residents to live in a safe, secure & comfortable environment. Tenants are responsible for their own behaviour as well as that of their family members & visitors.

Anti-social behaviour can involve:

Abandoned vehicles.

Criminal damage.

Drug dealing

Fly tipping.

Littering.

Out of control dogs.

Playing loud music late at night.

Racial Abuse.

Vandalism.

We would not generally consider household noise such as children playing to be anti-social behaviour.

Antisocial Behaviour Resolution Service

When you are experiencing antisocial behaviour it can be detrimental for your wellbeing. We have contracted ASB Operations to be your first port of call if you are experiencing anti social behaviour. They react 24 hours a day 365 days per year. Take a few moments to visit their website and see how they might help you if you are subject to someone else's behaviour.

Respect Line is an out of hours helpline number available to residents experiencing problems of antisocial behaviour. Our team are available whenever the Housing Offices are closed, providing round the clock advice, support and reporting options to residents experiencing ongoing issues.

Respect Line already works with over 50 Associations all over the country, covering no less than 250,000 social housing properties, making the service the largest dedicated ASB Helpline in the UK.

Please visit 'The ASB App' section of the website for further information about how our new innovative and unique evidence app will help transform the way your Association tackles anti social behaviour.

To report anti social incidents call Respect Line 0800 075 66 99 referencing Arneway

<http://www.asboperations.co.uk/contact-us>

If you report anti-social behaviour to ASB they will:

Take this seriously & investigate your problem.

Offer support & communicate with you in your own language if needed.

Put you in touch with any local support groups.

Carry out any necessary repairs.

Provide extra security or try to move you if it is not safe for you to stay in your home.

Take action to resolve the problem.

Legal action will always be a last resort, but for the most serious kinds of anti-social behaviour, this can lead to someone losing their home.

<https://twitter.com/asbrespectline?lang=en>

Harassment & hate crime

We believe that everyone has the right to live in peace. Harassment & hate crime may be motivated by race, gender, sexuality, age, disability or religion. Abuse, harassment & violence against customers will not be tolerated.

If you experience harassment, you can:

Report it to your housing officer.

Report it to the police.

Report it via a third party support organisation.

We will take action to resolve the harassment or hate crime. This is a serious form of anti-social behaviour & can lead to someone losing their home.

If you see or hear harassment, hate crime or anti social behaviour please report it to your housing officer even if you are not directly involved.

Continued/

Your rights

Data protection

Under the Data Protection Act 1998, you have a right to check any details we hold about you in our records. There are a few exceptions. For example, you will not be able to see information given to us by other people (like doctors or social workers) except with their permission. If you would like to see your records, contact your housing officer who will explain the procedure & arrangements.

All information we have about our residents is confidential. Usually we will not give your details to anyone without your permission. There are a few specific exceptions to this, where strict guidelines apply. For example we may share information with authorities & agencies (such as the police or local authorities) to:

Help prevent & detect fraud.

Help prevent & detect crime.

Meet other legal obligations.

Support local strategies to reduce crime & disorder.

We will provide limited information to Housing Benefit offices & the Department for Work & Pensions to help you if you are claiming benefits. We will also provide limited information to gas & electricity providers. We will give your details to other members of staff only when it is necessary to provide a service to you. We treat it very seriously if someone breaks confidentiality. You should make a complaint if you feel your privacy has not been respected.

Resident involvement

There are many formal & informal ways in which we welcome your involvement in our work. These include:

Local Scrutiny Panels that scrutinise & challenge how we deliver services in your local area. These panels are made up of residents who examine & comment on the services they receive from us

Service panels that monitor & challenge how we deliver our services

Local residents' & tenant associations that provide a starting point for residents who want to get involved in decision-making processes.

Service reviews where you can work with us in looking at the whole range of services we provide & to agree changes to the way we deliver these services

Consultation about proposals involving changes in housing management practices & policy.

We welcome suggestions from you for improvements in our services, including suggestions for greater resident involvement in managing our activities. To get involved, talk to your housing officer or send an email to Arneway Housing Co-operative Limited.

Complaints

We aim to give you an excellent service & we want to know when you are unhappy with our service.

You can tell us about your complaint on the telephone, in writing, by email or at a visit.

Often an issue can easily be solved on the day that you raise it as a 'quick fix'. If not, it will be treated as a complaint & given to an appropriate member of staff who will contact you to clarify the issue & agree how & when it will be resolved. If you remain unhappy following our initial response you will have the

opportunity to have your complaint reviewed by a manager who will have access to independent advice.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome you can then refer your complaint to the Independent Housing Ombudsman Service. Please note they will only usually look at a resident complaint once it has been all the way through our complaint process.

Your housing officer can give you a copy of our complaints process.

Moving home

If you want to move home you can find out about your options by speaking to your housing officer.

If you are considering moving home then it's best to consider all of your different options.

Below are the two most common ways to move home.

Please note: if you have breached your tenancy, including anti-social behaviour or rent arrears, you might not be able to move through these means. You should discuss your personal circumstances with your housing officer.

Applying for a transfer.

When you apply for a transfer you will be given a banding depending on your housing need & you will be able to view properties that you are eligible for at www.locata.org.uk. To register, contact your housing officer who can send you more information.

Bands range from A (highest priority) to D. Your banding will depend on a number of things, including whether you have a medical condition. Your housing officer will make sure that your personal circumstances are taken into account. Depending on the property size you need & the areas you'll consider moving to, if you are in band C or D it could take years before a transfer will be available.

One of the quickest ways to move is to find someone who wants to swap their property with yours. This is called a 'mutual exchange'. It's a particularly good option if you want or need to move to a larger property.

If you want to apply then the best place to start is a national mutual exchange website called HomeSwapper. It lists thousands of properties across London that are available for exchange. You can look at properties by price, area & number of bedrooms. You can register for free at www.homeswapper.co.uk

Also, speak to your housing officer who can advise you if there are any potential properties in the area you would like to move to.

We are committed to making best use of our homes, & will offer incentives to those who have spare bedroom(s) to encourage them to move to a smaller home. To find out what is available & if you would qualify, speak to your housing officer. **(DA PLEASE ADVISE).**

Continued/

The Ombudsman's Service

For you records, please make a note of the following:

The Ombudsman,
Housing Ombudsman Service,
Exchange Tower,
Harbour Exchange Square,
London. E14 9GE.
Telephone : 0300 111 3000

Lines are open Monday to Friday from 9:15 to 17:15 (except public holidays).

Calls are recorded for training & monitoring purposes.

Fax : 020 7831 1942

Email : info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

You can also [follow the Ombudsman;s Service on Twitter](#) & [LinkedIn](#).

If you would like to make a complaint, please visit the link below & use our online complaint form.

[Getting help from the Housing Ombudsman](#)

If you have a query or want to check something before making a complaint to us please call the Ombudsman's office on the above number. They will welcome your call.