

your home,
your choice,
our promise.



tenant

handbook



Independent Housing
UK Limited

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welcome

Dear Tenant,

Welcome and thank you for choosing to become a tenant with Independent Housing UK Ltd (IHL) in our supported living accommodation.

The care and support you receive is regulated by the Care Quality Commission, but the accommodation is not. We at IHL manage this.

This Tenant handbook gives you useful information and guidelines to refer to whilst living in your property. It tells you about rent and who to deal with, both yours' and your landlords' responsibilities and how damage and repairs are dealt with.

We hope that living here helps you experience having your own home and the responsibilities that go with it.

While being supported you will have the opportunity to gain skills that will help you on your road to further independence and all of the staff at IHL are fully committed to helping you in every way possible.

We hope you are very happy in your new home.

With very best wishes

Guy Bosanko
Chief Executive
Independent Housing UK Ltd.

your tenancy

When you move in you sign an agreement to rent your flat or room.



This is called a **Tenancy Agreement**.



In the Agreement:

YOU are called '**The Tenant**.'

housing manager



Your **HOUSING MANAGER** explains all the details, rules and regulations of the Tenancy Agreement.

They are the landlord contact for IHL

rent

You must pay rent for your room or flat as part of the Tenancy Agreement. Normally, Housing Benefit will pay this direct to your Landlord, but if this is not the case, your Housing Manager can help to arrange things if you wish to pay through your bank. You must pay on time and not get into arrears.

benefits

housing benefit

You may be able to claim Housing Benefit money from the council which can help pay all or part of your rent. Your Housing Manager (HM) will help you claim this and fill in forms but you will need to supply the information the council requires.

council tax benefit

Everyone who owns or rents a house, flat or room has to pay council tax. If you are on a low income or are on certain benefits you may be able to claim Council Tax benefit. Your Housing Manager can help you make a claim with your housing benefit claim.

Some people are exempt from Council Tax and may not need to pay it. Your Housing Managers can advise you on this and help you apply for a Council Tax exemption certification.

responsibilities

tenant (you)

- You must pay your rent and service charge on time.
- You must look after the property and the things in it and keep them in good condition.
- You must not damage the property or allow your visitors to do damage.
- You should not disturb or cause a nuisance to other occupiers, neighbours and visitors, or to the landlord's staff, contractors or agents.
- You must keep to the rules for fire and other health & safety matters so everyone is safe.
- You must always adhere to the terms of your tenancy agreement.

landlords (IHL)

- Must keep in good repair the structure and the outside of the property including drains gutter and pipes.
- Keep water supply, gas electricity, toilets and washing facilities in proper working order.
- Keep in good repair and proper working order all heating and hot water installations.
- Do all repairs and other essential works within a reasonable space of time.
- Allow the tenant quiet enjoyment of their home.
- Keep to the law regarding all tenancy related and health and safety regulations for landlords.

communal areas

Communal areas are rooms that are shared with other tenants such as a kitchen or lounge.

These areas are not included in your tenancy agreement but IHL allow you to share them without charge as long as you do not abuse this access. The landlord can withdraw your use of these spaces without affecting your rights to your flat.

visitors



Visitors are welcome to the property and it is important that you have as much contact with family and friends as you want and are able. Visitors are your responsibility however, they must keep to the same rules as you and the other tenants do.

If a visitor breaks the rules, like making too much noise or committing anti-social behaviour they may be asked to leave and never be allowed back into the property again.

Your supported living service may have its own rules about visitors which you may need to agree to, it is important that you feel safe or not at risk from other people if you are a vulnerable person. Here is some advice on visitors.

visitors easy read advice



Who is a visitor?

Anyone that comes to your house who does not live there.



Do not let anyone in your home you do not know.



It is ok to ask them to wait while you find a member of staff.



Always tell a member of staff when a visitor comes.



All visitors must sign the visitor' book when they arrive and leave your house.



Your supported living service will have its own rules about visitors.



All visitors must respect the needs and wishes of other tenants.



If any visitor does or says anything that upsets or makes you feel angry, tell staff and they will be asked to leave.

repairs - reporting repairs

REPAIR	COMMENT	IHL	TENANT
BATHROOM FIXTURES	EXCEPT TOILET SEATS, CABINETS, MIRRORS, SHOWER CURTAINS, TOWEL & TOILET ROLL HOLDERS	✓	
CARPENTRY	GENERAL CARPENTRY WORK EXCEPT WHERE REPAIR IS DUE TO TENANT DAMAGE OR TENANT ALTERATIONS	✓	
CARPETS	EXCEPT COMMUNAL		✓
COMMUNAL AREAS	EXCEPT DUE TO TENANT DAMAGE	✓	
DECORATION EXTERNAL		✓	
DECORATION INTERNAL	EXCEPT COMMUNAL AREAS		✓
DOORS & DOOR FRAMES		✓	
FENCES & GATES		✓	
FIXTURES & FITTINGS	SUCH AS COAT HOOKS, CURTAINS & RAILS		✓
FLOORS & FLOORING	COMMUNAL	✓	
FLOORS AND FLOORING	ROOMS & FLATS		✓
GARDEN UPKEEP		✓	✓

repairs/reporting repairs continued

REPAIR	COMMENT	IHL	TENANT
GAS	ANNUAL SERVICING TO BOILERS AND APPLIANCES SUPPLIED BY LANDLORD	✓	
GLAZING	EXCEPT COMMUNAL	✓	✓
HEATING		✓	
HOT WATER		✓	
INFESTATIONS	BY ANTS, WASPS, BEES, BEDBUGS COCKROACH, MICE, RATS	✓	
KITCHEN UNITS WORKTOPS & EQUIPMENT SUPPLIED BY IHL		✓	
LIGHT FITTINGS	EXCEPT CHANGING LIGHT BULBS	✓	
LOSS OF KEYS OR FOBS			✓
PATHS AND DRIVES		✓	
PLUMBING REPAIRS AND LEAKS		✓	
SHOWERS & BATHS & SINKS	EXCEPT UNBLOCKING	✓	
SWITCHES AND SOCKETS		✓	
TOILETS	EXCEPT UNBLOCKING	✓	
WASHING EQUIPMENT	WHERE SUPPLIED	✓	
WINDOWS	EXCEPT WHERE DAMAGES BY TENANT	✓	

reporting problems

Landlord Repairs

For minor problems and repairs you can record these in the maintenance book for the maintenance team to deal with on their regular visit.

For problems, work required or damage repair on the things marked in the IHL column of the attached list please contact IHL to arrange for the repairs to be carried out.

Tenant Repairs

For things in the tenant column please ask for advice from your support worker on the best thing to do.

IHL's maintenance team may be able to carry out work on your behalf but you may be charged for this. This can be arranged by the House Manager.

Your Housing Manager is:

Housing Manager Tel:

Maintenance Tel: **01625 877522**

Email:

Available 9am - 5pm Monday to Friday. You can leave a message outside of these times.

emergency repairs

Your support staff have the emergency contact numbers and will know what to do.

damages



What happens if a tenant damages the property or contents?

It depends on the situation.

Before any action is taken, IHL will conduct a full and fair investigation of the incident. As part of the investigation IHL should try to find out whether the tenant damaged the property or contents on purpose or by mistake. Finding this out will help to decide what action should be taken.

We will do this by:

- Telling the tenant of the allegation against them regarding the damaged property.
- Advising the tenant of likely consequences if the allegation against them is found to be true.
- Allowing the tenant the opportunity to explain their side of the story and then give consideration to the other people's explanation.
- Allowing the tenant to have a support person at any meetings.

- Finding out all relevant information necessary to try to determine what actually happened (this may include interviewing any witnesses that were present at the time).
- Keeping a record of the investigation.
- Considering all relevant information before coming to a decision about what happened and what the consequences should be.

In some situations IHL may be able to seek damages against a tenant, if the tenant damaged the property on purpose or was negligent. The reason for this is that a tenant has a duty to exercise reasonable care, and they must seek to protect IHL's property and business and avoid doing any harm.

antisocial behaviour

our commitment

We will deal with anti-social behaviour in our supported living services. We want to make sure that everyone feels safe in their home. We will do this by working with tenants and families/ advocates to:

- Take action to stop all forms of anti-social behaviour.
- Respond to complaints quickly, efficiently, sensitively and in an consistent manner.
- Offer support to those complaining and take action against anyone committing anti-social behaviour.

what is antisocial behaviour?

Anti-social behaviour includes, but is not limited to the following:



- Use of violent or threatening behaviour.



- Racist behaviour including physical or verbal abuse, graffiti, or racist comments.



- **Playing music loudly** or making other loud noises.



- **Banging and slamming doors.**



- **Damaging property.**



- **Criminal activity** in the property.



- **Selling alcohol, tobacco or counterfeit goods.**



- **Drugs, we have a 'zero tolerance policy.'**



- **Spraying graffiti.**



- **Throwing** things out of windows or from balconies.



- **Breaking shared security**, for example allowing strangers to get into the building.



- **Causing fires** deliberately



- **Interfering** with neighbours, other people who live in the neighbourhood or anybody visiting or working.

How we deal with Anti-Social Behaviour, what action can we take?

IHL, when needed, will issue verbal or written warnings. A tenant who has received a warning will also need to agree and sign a behavioural contract.

The contract is a written agreement between the individual and IHL and will outline the expectations and agree the best way forward. In extreme circumstances tenants may be asked to vacant the premises on a permanent basis.

complaints and feedback

Building, facilities repairs and maintenance

If you have a complaint about the building, its facilities or about repairs and maintenance please contact your Housing Manager, you can do this yourself if you can or ask staff to help you.

Tenancy

If you have complaint or question about rent, or other points covered by your tenancy agreement please also contact your Housing Manager.

Other Tenants

If you have a dispute or complaint with another tenant at first it is often best to speak to the person concerned about it. Talk in a calm and reasonable manor to them and you might find you can sort things out. Support staff can help you with this.

If the problem continues or is very serious then inform your support worker first and then contact your Housing Manager.

Feedback

We welcome any comments you may have in regard to the service IHL provides. Please let your Housing Manager know.

complaints

Complaints Procedure

Whilst we will try at all times to do everything right first time, we understand that sometimes you may wish to complain if you feel that something is wrong.

In this instance, we promise to deal with your complaint immediately and keep you fully informed of how we are dealing with the problem.

Stage 1

Talk to someone you trust about the problem – for instance, your Key Worker, your Advocate, your Social Worker or Family.

If you are still unhappy, you can go to:

Stage 2

If your complaint is about your tenancy, accommodation or maintenance issues, you can contact your Housing Manager on the mobile number provided to you.

If your complaint is about Benefits and Rent payments, you can contact the head office on

01625 877522

or email info@ihl-uk.com



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