



Lambeth

Housing Management



Welcome

Section 1



Welcome to your new home

We hope you've settled in well, but if there is anything you need to ask us, please give us a call and we'll be happy to help.

Best wishes,



Neil Wightman

Director, Housing Services

**Information about the
North Area Housing Office:**

91 Kennington Lane, SE11 4HQ

Email: HMnortharea@lambeth.gov.uk

Opening: 9am to 5pm, Monday, Tuesday,
Thursday & Fridays (excluding
bank holidays)
10am to 5pm, Wednesday

If you are interested in joining or starting a community group, contact your local resident participation officer (RPO).

RPO contact details:

Joanna Jackson

Tel: 020 7926 1877

Email: jjackson@lambeth.gov.uk

Welcome to your new home.

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Best wishes,



Neil Wightman

Director, Housing Services

Information about the Central Area Housing Office:

Brixton Customer Centre, Olive Morris House,
18 Brixton Hill, Brixton, London SW2 1RD

Email: HMcentralarea@lambeth.gov.uk

Opening: 9am to 5pm, Mondays to Fridays
(excluding bank holidays)

If you are interested in joining or starting a community group, contact your local resident participation officer (RPO).

RPO contact details

Doreen Francis

Tel: 020 7926 0762

Email: dfrancis@lambeth.gov.uk

Welcome to your new home.

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Best wishes,



Neil Wightman

Director, Housing Services

Information about the South Area Housing Office:

Lunham Road, Central Hill Estate,
Upper Norwood, SE19 1AA

Email: HMsoutharea@lambeth.gov.uk

Opening: 9am to 5pm, Mondays to Fridays
(excluding bank holidays)

If you are interested in joining or starting a community group, contact your local resident participation officer (RPO).

RPO contact details

John O'Reilly

Tel: 020 7926 1681

Email: joreilly@lambeth.gov.uk

Dear tenant,

Welcome to Housing Management – we hope you enjoy your new home. This folder is designed to help you settle into your new home by letting you know what services we offer and how you can access them.

It explains your rights and responsibilities as a tenant of Lambeth Council. We have kept the information short and to the point and we hope you find it easy to use.

As well as information about your tenancy, the welcome folder contains a lot of other useful information:

Introduction - Your Housing Management

Provides a useful checklist of who to contact and what to do when starting out in your new home. It also includes information about how get involved with the way your home and estate are managed.

Health and Safety

This section will give you useful advice about keeping yourself, your home, the people you live with and your community safe.

Your Rent

Explains what your rent covers, the different ways you can pay it and the help and advice which is available.

Your Environment

Letting you know about environmental issues that affect you such as disposing of household waste and bulky items, saving energy, recycling, gardens, pests and parking.

Your Tenancy Agreement

This section includes information on the different types of tenancy agreements. It also includes information on your rights and responsibilities as a tenant and our rights and responsibilities as your landlord.

Key Contacts

Besides all the phone numbers listed here, if you need more information, you can visit <https://housingmanagement.lambeth.gov.uk>

We are committed to making sure that your home and your neighbourhood are safe and pleasant places to live, and we all have a part to play in making sure that happens. We look forward to working with you over the coming months and years to make Housing Management estates some of the best in London.

Yours sincerely,



Neil Wightman

Director, Housing Services

Useful Contacts

Estate Services Manager

Name:

Telephone:

Email:.....

Income Officer

Name:

Telephone:

Email:.....

Estate Housing Officer

Name:

Telephone:

Email:.....

Tenants' and Residents' Association (TRA)

Name:

Telephone:

Email:.....

Resident Participation Officer

Name:

Telephone:

Email:.....

Introduction to Housing Management

Section 2



Your Housing Management

Welcome to your new home. This service guide includes helpful checklists and advice about moving into a new home and what to do if things go wrong. It also gives you information on how to become involved in the Housing Management Services community.

Your new home

You must sign your tenancy agreement before you move into your new home. When you sign your tenancy agreement you will meet the staff in our local area offices. They are there to help you with any worries or problems you may have throughout your tenancy.

Before you move in, we will ensure your home is in a suitable condition. We may need to do repairs after you have moved in, but we will let you know exactly what these are and when they will be done.

When preparing your home, we will check that:

- All walls and ceilings are in a reasonable condition. We only decorate properties before letting them if it is necessary
- The heating appliances have been recently serviced
- The electrical and gas systems are safe, or made safe and certificates issued. You will get a copy of any gas-safety certificates at your sign-up meeting. We will ensure that the gas or electricity (or both) are all ready for you to arrange for your meter(s) to be connected
- The property is clean
- None of the window or door glass is broken
- All kitchen and bathroom units are clean and working properly
- The garden has been cleared of rubbish and is in a reasonable condition

If any of these checks have not been completed or you did not receive a copy of your gas or electrical certificate at your sign-up meeting, contact us straight away on 020 7926 6000.

About Housing Management services

We manage about 29,000 tenants' and leaseholders' homes.

Area housing offices

We have three area teams dedicated to supporting residents, each with its own estate management service, repairs service and customer service team.

North: North Lambeth, Stockwell and Vassall

Central: Brixton, Clapham and Tulse Hill

South: Norwood and Streatham

You can call us, Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm on 020 7926 6000.

Tenant Management Organisations

Tenant Management Organisations (TMOs) manage about 2,150 homes in Lambeth. In 1994, the law changed to give Council residents the 'Right to Manage' their own homes by setting up a TMO. The term 'tenant' means secure council tenants and tenants on introductory, demoted or joint tenancies.

A TMO manages homes on behalf of the Council by running day-to-day services on their estate. Each one is an independent organisation which is run by a committee of residents.

If your home is managed by a TMO, you will be told this when you sign your tenancy agreement. For more information on setting up a TMO contact us on 020 7926 6000.

Our services

We are working to improve our local services, including:

- Offering a responsive repairs service
- Providing excellent customer service
- Ensuring our estates are clean and desirable places to live
- Responding promptly to reports of anti-social behaviour
- Involving you in decisions affecting your home.

Repairs service

We are working hard to improve our repairs service by focusing on getting the basics right and improving your satisfaction with the service. We have contractors that work in each of the three areas covered by our area housing offices.

To report a repair, call 020 7926 6000 (Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm). To report an emergency repair outside working hours (Monday to Friday, 8pm to 8am; Saturdays, Sundays or bank holidays) call 020 7926 6666.

For more information about repairs see the Repairs booklet or visit www.lambeth.gov.uk.

Tenancy enforcement

We have a dedicated service that deals with the minority of tenants who break their tenancy agreement. We aim to tackle any activity that may be a nuisance, or may threaten, upset or annoy residents living in our properties. We also take action to prevent and deal with other issues such as subletting and squatting.

Estate cleaning and grounds maintenance

We are working across the borough to:

- Check and replace light bulbs in communal shared areas
- Check the day-to-day running of communal boilers and report any faults
- Report graffiti and remove it where possible, particularly if it is obscene or racist
- Deal with emergencies that affect our tenants' homes, like burst pipes and floods
- Repair lifts

Resident participation

We work with residents to ensure that you can fully participate in activities and decision-making concerning your estate or home. We also support tenants' and residents' associations, help residents organise community events and run consultation activities to find out your views.

Moving-in checklist

When you move home there are many things to remember. Below is a handy checklist of people to contact and things to do.

HAVE YOU REMEMBERED	WHAT TO DO	TICK
Welfare benefits	Phone the number shown on your most recent benefits letter.	
Gas and electricity Take meter readings and tell suppliers you have moved (if you don't use our communal gas supply)	If you don't have a gas or electricity meter in your property, contact National Grid on 0845 835 1111 for the meter point reference number. You will need to give the new supplier this number. Once a meter is installed you can choose your gas supplier.	
Gas and Electricity meters	Do not put money on any keys or cards that have been left in the meters in your property as you will be charged for any previous tenant's debt.	
Water supply Tell the supplier when you moved in (if you don't use our communal water supply).	Contact Thames Water and provide a meter reading if the property has a meter. Telephone: 0800 980 8800 Visit: www.thameswater.co.uk	
Mail redirection Do you need to get your mail redirected from a previous address?	Contact your local post office or Royal Mail. For more information visit www.royalmail.com	
Heating and hot water Do you know how to heat the water and use the central heating?	Contact us on 020 7926 6000 for advice.	
TV licence Tell them your new address	Contact TV Licensing UK. For more information visit www.tvlicensing.co.uk	
Rubbish collection Do you know when and where the rubbish is collected?	Ask your neighbours or contact Lambeth Service Centre on 020 7926 9000 or visit www.lambeth.gov.uk/rubbish-and-recycling	
Parking permit Is parking restricted outside your home?	For a residents permit, contact Lambeth Council Parking Services on 020 7926 9000 , Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm, visit one of our customer centres (refer to section 5) or visit www.lambeth.gov.uk/ParkingPermits Contact us on 020 7926 6000 if you are interested in Estate parking services or in renting a garage.	

From the start of your tenancy you will be responsible for organising and paying all your charges for gas, water and electricity. This includes paying to have pay-as-you go meters installed, if necessary.

Gas test

Once you have been signed up for your new home, the gas servicing team will contact you to arrange to turn your gas on and test the supply. This is known as a 'turn on and test'. The test will identify any faulty appliances in your property, for example a boiler or gas fire. The team will also check your boiler and show you how to use it.

For the team to do a turn on and test, you must have your gas supply connected.

If our gas servicing team discover a fault with the boiler during the turn on and test, they will arrange an appointment with you to fix the problem. You are responsible for getting any gas appliances you have had installed checked regularly by a Gas Safe registered engineer. For more details:

Telephone: 0800 408 5500

Visit: www.gassaferegister.co.uk

Communal heating

If you do not have a boiler in your property, this means you will be connected to the communal heating. To report a fault or repair to the communal heating contact us on 020 7926 6000.

For more information about repairs see the Your Safety section.

Moving into sheltered housing

If you are moving into sheltered housing, you are likely to have already met the scheme manager. The scheme manager will visit you soon after you move in to explain how all the services in your home work. You will also need to fill in a personal information form when you move into your home, giving contact details of key people, such as relatives or care workers, and medical information.

Photographs

When you sign your tenancy agreement you will need to give us a recent photograph of yourself. We use photos of our tenants to check that the correct people are living in our properties. The photographs will be recorded electronically and stored according to our rules of confidentiality.

Insurance

Your tenancy conditions state that you are responsible for the contents of your home. We are only responsible for the cost of repairs to the building. We strongly recommend you take out home contents insurance as protection against loss or damage to your furnishings and personal belongings.

Decoration inside your home

When you move into your property you may want to decorate it. We may provide a decorating allowance to help new residents with the cost of decorating materials such as paint and brushes if appropriate. We will give you a standard allowance for each room that needs to be decorated. When you sign for your tenancy agreement you will be told how to claim your allowance. In some cases we will need to do the decorating ourselves while the property is empty. If so, you will not receive an allowance.

Compliments, comments and complaints

Compliments are just as important to us as complaints. We love to hear from you when things go well. Your compliments help us identify when we give exceptional customer care and we want to promote this amongst our staff.

If you have a comment or a practical suggestion that you would like us to know, please let us know.

We aim to provide good quality service at all times, but we understand that sometimes things can go wrong. If this happens, we want you to tell us about it so we can improve and provide you with a better service. Often, you can get a problem sorted by talking to a member of our staff.

Whether you have had a good experience or bad one, tell us. Your feedback will help us to improve our performance and make things right for you.

Making a complaint

There are several ways to make a complaint about our services. We can usually put things right quickly if you direct it to a colleague from the service that you are not happy with.

You can speak with them in person or by phone, write to them or report it online. They will try to resolve your issue straight away and they will call you back, by the next working day, to agree a way forward.

Where this is not possible, there are two stages to our formal complaints process:

1. Local Resolution

This is a formal complaint which includes a written response. We will acknowledge your complaint within one working day and will make sure that you receive a full response within 10 working days.

Sometimes it may take longer to provide a response. If this is the case, we will tell you the reason why there is a delay and when you can expect a full response.

If your complaint is still unresolved, you can escalate it to the Corporate Complaints team, who will carry out a full review of your case.

2. Review

This is a review of your complaint by the Corporate Complaints team.

We will acknowledge your complaint within one working day and aim to contact you within five working days, to discuss your complaint.

We will then review the handling of your complaint and reply within 20 working days. Sometimes we may need longer, but we will explain the reasons for any delay and let you know when you can expect a full response.

You can write to our Corporate Complaints Team at:

Corporate Complaint Unit, 2nd Floor, Olive Morris House, 18 Brixton Hill, London SW2 1RL

Telephone: 0207 926 1282

Email: HMreview@lambeth.gov.uk

Local Government Ombudsman

If you have been through all stages of our complaints procedure, and you are still not satisfied with the way we handled your complaint, the Independent Housing Ombudsman may be able to consider your case. You can ask for your complaint to be referred to the Independent Housing Ombudsman by:

1. Contacting an MP; you can approach any MP in England.

Contact details for all MPs can be found on the House of Commons website. You can also contact the House of Commons by telephoning their Information Office on 020 7219 4272 or writing to:

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.

2. Contacting a Lambeth Councillor: you can approach any councillor in Lambeth.

Contact details for Lambeth councillors can be found on Lambeth Council's website.

You can also find contact details for Lambeth councillors by calling 020 7926 1000 or email: democracy@lambeth.gov.uk

If you would rather approach the Independent Housing Ombudsman directly, you can, but you must wait eight weeks from the date of receiving the response from our Review of your complaint. Contact details for the Independent Housing Ombudsman are:

Housing Ombudsman Service, 81 Aldwych, London WC2B 4HN

Telephone: 0300 111 3000

Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Visit: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Getting involved

We want to deliver services to standards that you expect and work to policies that you support. Your comments enable us to identify any parts of our service that need to be improved and to make positive changes.

There are several ways that you can get involved with us, your neighbours and your community, and the way your home and environment are managed.

Ways to get involved

All Lambeth Council residents can comment on our services, including the people you live with and anyone who lives on an estate or in a block we manage.

We want residents and their representatives to take part effectively in the activities we arrange to find out their views, so we offer a range of ways for you to get involved.

Tenants' and Residents' Associations (TRAs)

Tenant and resident associations (TRAs) play an important role in representing the interests of tenants and leaseholders in a particular local area (normally an estate) and are consulted on issues relating to the services provided on the estate.

TRAs are the backbone of our engagement with residents. There are over 80 residents' associations in the borough covering 60 per cent of our properties. Find out about whether your property is covered by a TRA or how to set one up if you do not already have one.

We are also very keen to develop the skills of our TRA representatives. We will organise TRA courses on chairing meetings, organising committees as well as setting up websites and producing newsletters. If you are interested in these courses, please contact the Resident Engagement Team at gettinginvolved@lambeth.gov.uk

Our TRAs have also formed their own network to provide mutual support and collaboration. Find them online at <https://lambeth.network/>

Lambeth 500+

Lambeth 500+ is a consultative group open to all residents living on our estates or street properties (irrespective of their tenancy status). It is designed to involve those residents who are actively interested in shaping the future of housing in the Borough and are willing to give honest and open feedback on performance. We want to make Lambeth 500+ an easy and responsive experience for members, so primarily we will be looking at using email and text for our communications. If you would like to join the Lambeth 500+ please contact lambeth500@lambeth.gov.uk.

Area housing forums

Area housing forums meet at least four times a year to discuss the services provided in the area.

Area forums help form our services and influence a wide range of matters including:

- design of local services and staff structures
- contract management (repairs, cleaning, grounds maintenance)
- local budgets
- performance management

Tenants Council

Area Housing Forums also elect reps to sit on the Borough wide Tenants Council. The Tenants Council is the main formal consultation forum for Lambeth Council and its tenants and meets quarterly. Its meetings are open to the public to attend.

Area leasehold forums

Area Leasehold Forum meetings are currently suspended pending the new engagement structures coming into place. Homeowners interested in influencing service delivery in the meantime are encouraged to join the Lambeth 500+

Leasehold council

Leasehold Council is made up of representatives from the area leasehold forums and is the main consultative forum for Lambeth Council leaseholders. Their meetings are open to any leaseholder to attend. The Leasehold Council's aims and objectives are to act as

- the recognised representative voice of Lambeth leaseholders
- a consultative body on issues of borough wide concern to service charge payers

Consultation events

Consultation events are ways for us to collect your views on the things that affect your homes and community. Sometimes we hold formal consultation events like workshops and focus groups. At other times a staff member may approach you and ask for your opinion on a service at a community event or the annual tenants' conference.

We are looking into developing other ways to get your feedback and views, such as telephone and online surveys. We are also working to make better use of the information you give us during everyday contact, such as analysing customer service information, complaints and service requests.

We are always looking for new ways to help residents get involved. If you have any ideas, contact us on 0207 926 6000 and ask to speak to one of our resident participation officers.

Choosing contractors and buying goods and services

Residents can take part in the selection process when we appoint a new contractor to do work for us. This may involve being part of a panel to review proposals or sitting on an interview panel to help choose the right contractor for our programmes of work or to provide services, such as gas, repairs or estate services.

You will have to help set the standards and criteria for choosing contractors, and read through all the bids. This can take a reasonable amount of your time throughout the selection period. We provide support and training to residents who would like to get involved.

Resident conferences

Lambeth Council organises resident conferences which provide an opportunity for residents from across the borough to come together to hear and discuss housing services, current topics of interest and local information. If you are interested in attending conference please contact us on 0207 926 6000 or email gettinginvolved@lambeth.gov.uk

Tenant management organisations

In 1994, the law changed to give council residents the 'right to manage' their own homes by setting up a tenant management organisation, or TMO. The term 'tenant' in this context means leaseholders as well as secure council tenants. A TMO manages homes on behalf of the council by running day-to-day services on their estates.

Each TMO is an independent organisation run by a committee of residents. For more information on setting up a TMO, contact us on 020 7926 6000.

The Lambeth Lettable Standard

Now that you have been offered a Lambeth property, we would like to make moving in as easy as possible.

This document provides a summary of the Lambeth Lettable Standard, which sets out the standard for the repair work that we will carry out in your property before you move in.

Any repair that you may request apart from those listed below are not covered by this Lettable Standard.

A copy of the full version of the Lambeth Lettable Standard is available on request.

Windows and doors

- Windows and doors will be sealed against wind and water penetration
- Glazing will be free from cracks and glazing putties, strips and beads will be in a sound condition
- All window and door elements, including the frames and boards, will be in a sound and useable condition with all necessary attachments in working order
- All front entrance doors will have had a lock change before you are given the keys
- All walls and ceilings will be in a suitable condition for redecoration
- Floor tiles will be present in the bathroom, toilet and kitchen and we will fit a minimum of two courses of wall tiles to form a splash back above sinks, wash hand basins and baths
- Floor screed (concrete flooring), floor boards and existing floor finishes will be retained and will be in safe and sound condition

Fixtures and fittings

- All fixtures and fittings including cupboards, built-in wardrobes and kitchen units will be in good working order
- Central heating systems will be checked and in full working order
- Where no central heating is provided there will be at least one form of heating in the living room with appropriate ventilation
- All electrical re-wiring will conform to the current NICEIC safety requirements

Decoration

- We do not decorate our empty properties; however, where the existing decoration is of a poor quality, we may offer a discretionary decoration allowance as a contribution towards the redecoration so that you can decorate your new home to your taste. You will be given details about this at your sign up meeting at your area office.
- In exceptional circumstances, we may consider decorating some or all of the rooms in your new home if any of the following apply:
 - ▶ You are elderly or disabled
 - ▶ Sheltered properties
 - ▶ Your property has been adapted for disabled use

Where the property has a separate bathroom and toilet, these will be treated as a single unit and payment will be for a single room only.

Cleaning

- Before you move in we will remove all rubbish, furniture and carpets left behind
- We will sweep out all rooms and wash all windows on the inside
- We will wash kitchen and bathroom cupboards, floors, wall tiles and sanitary fittings
- We will wash all woodwork, doors, radiators, boiler coverings, grills vents and electrical fittings

Gardens

- If your property has a garden, we will ensure that it is sufficiently cleared as to be accessible
- Gardens will be cleared of any rubbish and debris
- We will ensure that paths, patios or hard standings are in a safe condition
- We may not provide fencing and gates but we will remove broken or collapsed fencing

General

- We will always carry out all standard electrical and gas testing before you move in
- We will fit a smoke alarm on each level of the property

If you have any questions that you would like answering please contact us on 020 7926 6000 or visit your local area Housing Management office.

Signed: **Address:**

Print name:

Date:.....

Witnessed by:

Gas and Electricity Supply Information for Residents

Information on Gas

When a property becomes empty the contractor carries out a soundness test only. This means that the property will be checked to ensure that there is no gas leaking from anywhere. No appliances are tested i.e. the boiler, this is because most of the time there is no gas in the property and Lambeth cannot create an account in their name.

We will ensure that there is pipe work available so that a meter can be connected but we do not under any circumstances carry out any work to the meter.

Gas Certificates are valid for 12 months.

Please note

- Some properties do not have gas running to them. Please check your gas certificate for this information this will also tell you if you have communal heating or an individual boiler
- Where there is no gas supply to the property we are not required to provide one
- It is your responsibility to contact the supplies and get your utilities connected

You should keep this certificate until it is replaced when an annual service is carried out. Our Gas Servicing Team will notify you of an appointment.

Please check that you were given gas and electrical certificates at your sign up.
(Not necessary for Sheltered Schemes)

Information on Electricity

When a property becomes empty the contractors will carry out a test to ensure that the property is safe. The electrician will then provide us with a report with any necessary works that need to be carried out once the works are completed they will issue us with another certificate that says that the electrics are safe.

A copy will be given to you at your sign up. We will ensure that there is wiring available so that a meter can be connected but we do not under any circumstances carry out any work to the meter.

Electrical Certificates are valid for 6 months.

Please note

- We do not carry out improvements to the property. For example: We do not install or relocate extra sockets/lights

Is there a gas/electricity meter in the property?

Yes

- Contact any supplier and give the meter reading numbers and fax the certificates if necessary

No

- Contact National Grid for the meter point reference number
- Provide the new supplier with the meter number. They may ask you to fax the electric/gas certificate to them as well as your tenancy agreement so that they can prove you are a new tenant
- Once a meter is installed you can choose your supplier

Meters

Some suppliers can be difficult and ask for different types of information. For example some suppliers ask for a certificate that has been done within the last three months or a full installation certificate. If you are asked for information that you don't have, please try another supplier.

The electrical certificates are valid for six months and the gas for twelve months. We cannot change the requirements of any suppliers as they have their own rules and regulations to adhere to.

Please note

- Do not put any money on any existing keys or cards that are left in the meters inside the property. You will be charged for any debt owed by the previous tenant

Gas Test

Once you have been signed up for the property and the Voids Officer receives your paperwork, they will send an e-mail with your details to our Gas Servicing Team.

Our gas servicing contractor will contact you, either by telephone or letter, to arrange a "Turn on and Test" appointment. This test will pick up any faulty appliances in the property, for example, boiler or gas fire. A check will be carried out to the boiler and you will be shown how to use it.

If you do not have a boiler in your property then you have communal heating and any defects or faults should be reported via the Housing Management services centre on 020 7926 6000.

Please note

- A 'Turn On and Test' cannot be completed if you do not have your gas or electricity supply connected
- If our Gas Servicing Team discovers a fault with the boiler when they carry out the turn on and test, then they will arrange an appointment with you to get this rectified as soon as possible

Please sign below to say that you have read and understood this information and will act on this information where necessary

Tenant's (full name):

Signature: **Date:**

Witnessed by (full name):

Signature: **Date:**

How to register to vote in your new home

When you sign up as a Lambeth tenant, the council officer will help you register to vote.

They will take details of all adults at the sign-up and put them on the register to vote website <https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote>. They will need your name, date of birth, national insurance number, previous address. It can take up to 5 minutes to record each person's details. To register to vote, you must meet the conditions for registering to vote, eg you're 16 or over and you're British or a national of an EU or Commonwealth country.

If an adult who will be living with you is not at the sign-up, they can register to vote online at <https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote> or you can ask Lambeth for a form that residents should fill in and send back to electoral services.

If you are already registered to vote at another address, your new tenancy is a change of address and your details on the electoral register should be updated.

If you're not sure if you, or any adults living with you, are on the electoral register, contact electoral services

T: 020 7926 2254

E: electoralservices@lambeth.gov.uk

REGISTER TO VOTE APPLICATION

Please complete all parts of this form. The quickest and easiest way to register to vote is online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote



1. About You	
Forename(s) <input type="text"/>	Surname <input type="text"/>
Date of Birth (day / month / year) <input type="text"/>	National Insurance number <input type="text"/>
Nationality - if you have dual-citizenship, please include both <input type="text"/>	
2. Your address	
<input type="text"/>	
Postcode <input type="text"/>	
3. Your old address	
If you have moved in the past 12 months, please include your previous address	
<input type="text"/>	
Postcode <input type="text"/>	
4. Open Register	
The Open Register is an extract of the electoral register that can be bought by any person, company or organisation. Your name and address will be included in the Open Register unless you ask for them to be removed. Removing your details from the Open Register does not affect your right to vote. I do not want my name and address to be included in the Open Register <input type="checkbox"/>	
5. How do you want to vote?	
If you are unable to go to the polling station in person on polling day, please choose how you would like to vote and we will send you a form to complete and return to us.	
Postal <input type="checkbox"/>	Proxy <input type="checkbox"/>
6. Declaration	
To the best of my knowledge, the information in this form is true. I understand that the information I have given on this form will be used on the electoral register. I understand that it is an offence to knowingly give false information in this form, and that I could face a fine of up to £5,000 and/or up to six months in prison.	
Email address (we will only contact you for electoral purposes): <input type="text"/>	Please sign in box <input type="text"/>
	Date: / /

Electoral Services, 1st Floor Olive Morris House, 18 Brixton Hill, London SW2 1RL
electoralservices@lambeth.gov.uk
020 7926 2254

Health and Safety

Section 3



Asbestos

Asbestos is a naturally occurring fibrous material that has been used in buildings since the 1950s. It is an insulator (keeping in heat and keeping out cold), has good fire-protection properties and protects against rust.

Asbestos is often mixed with other materials and can be difficult to identify. If your property was built before 2000, some parts are likely to contain asbestos. Asbestos is found in many products including ceiling tiles, pipe insulation, boilers and sprayed coatings. Asbestos-containing materials in good condition are not a risk to people's health. In our properties we try to make sure that anything that may contain asbestos remains in good condition, is sealed with paint, and has a warning sign against it. If you suspect that any of these materials contains asbestos or are damaged then please contact us immediately.

You should contact us before doing any of the work listed below in your home. We can tell you whether materials containing asbestos are present in the area where you plan to work.

- Don't drill, cut into, sand or scrape anything you think may contain asbestos
- Always soak wallpaper before removing it. If possible, use a steam stripper and gently peel away the paper before redecorating
- Don't try to remove textured coatings (Artex) from ceilings. Wash any area of flaking paint with sugar soap before repainting
- Don't try to remove old floor tiles or linoleum. Leave them in place and lay new floor coverings over them

The general rule is to always leave asbestos alone.

By law, we must maintain an asbestos register. The asbestos register is essential to managing asbestos in all our properties. It lists all materials that are presumed to contain asbestos or have been confirmed to contain it after laboratory sampling and analysis. You can ask what information we hold on the register about asbestos in your home by contacting us on 020 7926 6000.

Fire safety

Most fires in the home are started accidentally.
You can help keep your home safe by taking a few simple precautions.

Smoke alarms

A smoke alarm is the easiest way to alert you to the danger of fire, giving you time to escape. They are cheap to buy and easy to fit. Ensure you have correctly fitted working smoke alarms in your home by:

- Fitting your alarm according to its instructions
- Testing the alarm regularly and when you return from holidays – by pressing the button on the smoke alarm. If it is working it will ring and flash in the same way as if there is a fire
- Changing the alarm when it comes to the end of its life
- Cleaning the alarm regularly
- Making sure it always has a battery in it
- Changing the battery regularly. Most budget smoke alarms will come with a battery already fitted. This battery will last at least a year. Make a point of changing that battery every year. Consider using a special date to remind you to change it. Some more expensive smoke alarms come with long-life batteries (up to 10 years) and are designed not to be tampered with so they cannot be disabled easily. Make sure you identify which type of smoke alarm you have before trying to change the battery

If we have installed door closers, wired smoke alarms or heat detectors in your home do not remove or disable them, as they are designed to keep you safe from fire.

Home fire-safety visits

The London Fire Brigade offers a free home visit to offer advice on how to make your home safe and, where appropriate, fit a smoke alarm for free. Priority is given to people and places where there is known to be a higher risk of fire. This includes older people, especially people living alone or whose mobility, vision and hearing are impaired, mental-health services users and residents who may be affected by alcohol or drug misuse.

If you would like a visit or know someone who you think needs help, contact the London Fire Brigade:

Telephone: 020 8555 1200

Email: info@london-fire.gov.uk

Visit: www.london-fire.gov.uk/HomeFireSafetyVisit.asp

Fire Safety in high-rise blocks

If you live in a flat, it is important you read and understand this extra advice. Each flat in our high-rise blocks is built to withstand fire for 40 to 60 minutes. This allows enough time for the fire brigade to arrive and assess the extent of the fire, and whether the block must be evacuated.

If there is a fire in your home:

- Alert any other people in the flat
- Leave the room at once and close the door to prevent smoke and fire spreading. Don't tackle the fire yourself unless it is safe to do so
- Leave the flat calmly, and when everyone is out, close the front door to prevent smoke and fire spreading
- Leave your block using the emergency exit and not the lift. Don't use balconies unless they are part of an official escape route
- Call the fire brigade on **999** - it's free from any telephone. Give the operator your address including the number of your flat, **and tell them which floor the fire is on**
- Make yourself known to the fire brigade as soon as possible

If there is a fire in your building:

- Stay inside your flat if you don't know where the fire is
- Close your front door and your windows to prevent smoke entering your home
- Listen for instructions from the fire brigade
- The fire brigade will guide you to a safe location, if they think you should evacuate your home
- If you feel threatened by fire or smoke and it is safe to leave your flat, leave the building via the emergency exit, closing your front door behind you

If there is a fire in your building, if you feel threatened by fire or smoke, or your flat is affected by fire or smoke – you should leave the building if it is safe to do so.

Stay in your home if you are not directly affected by the fire, otherwise you may be putting yourself and your household at risk from smoke. Wait for advice and direction from the fire brigade.

Fire Safety in purpose built blocks of flats

1. Your Building

Your flat is in a building designed to a high fire safety standard. You need to be aware of all the escape routes in your flat and the building as **this could save your life in the event of a fire**.

Purpose-built blocks of flats have varying designs, but in most cases the fire escape route is the normal route you take from your flat when leaving the building. Some buildings or flats have an alternative escape route you can use.

When you need to evacuate your flat, in the event of a fire, **one of the following will apply**:

- You walk out of your flat entry door on to a balcony that is open. You can only walk in one direction, to a staircase that takes you to a point on the ground floor where you can leave the building
- You walk out of your flat entry door on to a balcony that is open. You then can walk in two possible directions to a staircase that takes you to a point on the ground floor where you can leave the building
- You walk out of your flat entry door into an enclosed lobby or corridor. Then you can only walk in one direction to a staircase that takes you to a point on the ground floor where you can leave the building
- You walk out of your flat entry door into an enclosed lobby or corridor. Then you can walk in two possible directions to a staircase that takes you to a point on the ground floor where you can leave the building

2. Multi-Level Flat (maisonette)

The inside of your flat is on two or three levels. There are two main designs to these types of flats when you need to escape in a fire:

- You walk down or up the staircase inside your flat to your flat entry door to get to the common fire escape route for the building
- On one of the upper or lower floors in your flat there is a door that takes you to an alternative or second escape route from your flat. Once you go through this door it will take you - sometimes via a staircase – to a route that leads into an escape corridor/balcony or staircase. This may not be on the same floor as your normal flat entry door. You need to get to know these escape routes so you remember to use them in a fire

3. What should you do if there is a fire in your flat?

- Make sure everyone in your flat leaves it. Shut your flat entry door – or alternative escape door if you live in a maisonette - as you leave. This helps keep the fire in your flat and stops the fire and smoke spreading to affect your neighbours
- Use the fire escape route to safely leave your building
- Do not use the lift if your building has one
- Phone the fire brigade by dialling **999**
- Wait at a safe distance outside your building for the fire brigade to arrive

4. What should you do if the fire is not in your flat?

“Stay Put” – is generally best. Because of the size and layout of blocks of flats you probably won’t know there is a fire in another flat in your building. Flats are designed to be fire-resistant containers, joined together to make a block of flats. This means the fire should stay in one flat long enough for the fire brigade to arrive and put out the fire before it spreads to any other flat or blocks any escape route.

The **“Stay Put”** policy asks people to stay safely in their flat if they are not directly affected by the fire.

If you feel threatened, can see or smell smoke or feel heat from a fire in another flat you should leave your flat and leave the building via the fire escape route if it is safe to do so. **Do not “Stay Put”**.

Stay FIRE SAFE by completing the following

FIRE SAFETY CHECK LIST SINGLE LEVEL FLAT

1. The smoke alarm in my flat is working

Yes / No

2. Everybody who lives in my flat has walked all of the fire escape routes from the flat entrance door to the exit from the building

Yes / No

FIRE SAFETY CHECK LIST MULTI - LEVEL FLAT

1. The smoke alarm in my flat is working

Yes / No

2. Everybody who lives in my flat has walked all of the fire escape routes from the flat entrance door to the exit from the building

Yes / No

3. I have checked to see if there is a second escape point from my flat

Yes / No

4. Everybody who lives in my flat has walked the second escape point to the exit from the building

Yes / No

Keep exit routes clear.

Lambeth Housing Management Services will take action against residents who put rubbish or their belongings in passageways.

If you want more information about fire safety, please contact the Health & Safety Team:

Telephone: 020 7926 4270

Email: HMfiresafety@lambeth.gov.uk

Visit: <https://housingmanagement.lambeth.gov.uk>

Gas safety

Every year we must check all our gas appliances and paperwork to reduce the risk of an explosion or carbon monoxide poisoning. We will always use Gas Safe registered engineers. You must allow the contractor into your home to do the safety check. You will be able to identify the contractor through their identity pass.

These safety checks do not cover gas appliances you own, such as a gas cooker that you have installed. It is your responsibility to get these appliances checked regularly by a Gas Safe registered engineer. For more details:

Telephone: 0800 408 5500

Visit: www.gassaferegister.co.uk

Signs your appliance(s) may be dangerous

Contact us or a Gas Safe engineer if you spot any signs that your appliance may not be working properly.

These include:

- Yellow or orange flames, rather than blue (apart from fuel-effect fires or flueless appliances, which display only yellow or orange flames)
- Soot, yellow or brown staining around or on appliances
- Pilot lights that often blowout
- Increased condensation inside windows

Carbon monoxide alarms

For your own and your household's safety, you are advised to fit an audible carbon monoxide alarm in your home. A carbon monoxide alarm works in a similar way to a smoke alarm, sounding an alarm if it detects carbon monoxide.

You can buy alarms from most hardware stores. We recommend you buy one that has a British or European mark of approval- such as a Kitemark – to standard BS EN 50219. We do not recommend buying a 'black spot' detector (which changes colour when carbon monoxide is present), as it will not make any sound.

It is important to choose an alarm that will wake you up if you are asleep or you may not be aware of carbon monoxide symptoms until it is too late. Carbon monoxide alarms usually have a battery life of up to five years, so it is important to regularly test and replace the battery as needed.

We recommend you fit an alarm in each room with a gas appliance, after reading the maker's instructions.

Water Safety

We inspect and maintain water systems in large, communal blocks.

To ensure your water system remains free from dirt and blockages, we advise you to de-scale your shower heads every three months. If you haven't used a tap or shower for a while, let the water run for a few minutes before using it again, to allow fresh water to come through from the mains water supply.

Ice and snow

Our contractors do their best to keep communal paths clear and gritted in cold weather. We recommend you use these paths in icy or snowy weather, rather than cutting across shorter routes. If you want to make a difference and help your community during periods of heavy snow, sign up to Lambeth Council's volunteer snow warden scheme. The scheme provides residents and communities with the training, equipment and grit needed to keep paths and quieter residential roads free from snow.

For more information about the snow warden scheme:

Telephone: 020 7926 0524

Email: SnowWardens@lambeth.gov.uk



Lambeth

Your Rent

Section 4



Your Rent

Your rent helps us to pay for all of the housing services we provide from repairs to your home to improving the area you live in. This guide tells you more about your rent and our rent service.

The amount of rent you pay is decided by Lambeth Council in line with government guidelines.

Rent is a priority charge - It is very important to pay your rent and associated charges on time, whether you pay it yourself or are claiming benefit.

Late rent payments mean that we have less to spend on repairing and improving your home and the area you live in.

The frequency at which you pay your rent is entirely your choice; you can pay weekly, fortnightly, monthly or even quarterly, but never in arrears. All payments should be in advance meaning that the value you pay in should be the value that credits your account. Your account should always be in credit.

For example, if you choose to pay your rent weekly and your weekly charge is £120.00; your account should always be in credit of £120.00.

If you are going to be away from your home for a while, for example, if you are going on holiday you must make sure your rent is paid even while you are away.

Paying Your Rent

You can pay your rent in the following easy and convenient ways:

Direct Debit

With direct debit, you allow the council to instruct your bank or building society to pay your rent each month directly from your account. This instruction stays in place until you tell us to stop taking payments or you cancel the arrangement directly with your bank or building society. We require 14 days' notice to cancel direct debit instructions.

Payment by direct debit is easy to set up, and many tenants are now paying this way. The amount your bank or building society pays us is automatically adjusted if your rent goes up or down. If your rent changes, we will give you two weeks' notice of the change and then take the new amount automatically from your bank or building society account.

Benefits of Direct Debit

- Simple – you provide us with your details and your bank sets up the payment
- Convenient – you can choose the 6th, 16th or 26th day of the month for payments
- Safe – the Direct Debit guarantee fully protects your payments
- Efficient for you and us – the money we save we use to improve our services

You have to give at least 14 days' notice to cancel a direct debit and we give you the same amount of notice if any changes are made to your direct debit.

To set up a direct debit:

Telephone: 020 7926 0820

Email: HMCITenquiries@lambeth.gov.uk

PayPoint, Post Office or Cashiers Office

You can pay at convenience stores, newsagents, supermarkets and service stations where you see the PayPoint sign (which is a double purple P). You will need your rent payment swipe card to pay.

You can also pay your rent at any post office in the same way using your rent payment card.

You can pay in cash at the cashiers' office at:

Brixton Customer Centre, Olive Morris House, 18 Brixton Hill, London SW2 1RL

It is important that you always keep a receipt as proof of payment and check your payment against your rent statement, or contact us to confirm the payment.

Credit or Debit Card over the phone

You can pay by debit or credit card by telephoning Lambeth Council's 24-hour automated hotline and following the instructions. Please ensure you have your 9-digit payment reference number to hand.

Telephone: 020 8290 2086

Online

You can pay your rent safely online using our rent payments page. For more information:

Visit: <https://housingmanagement.lambeth.gov.uk/pay-your-rent-and-service-charge>

Standing Order

A standing order instructs your bank or building society to make a regular payment to the council from your bank or building society account. You can set this up to pay at your chosen frequency i.e. weekly or monthly.

The instruction stays in place until you cancel the arrangement directly with your bank or building society and the amount you pay is fixed. This means if your rent changes it will be up to you to contact your bank or building society and inform them of the change as your standing order will not adjust automatically.

To set up a standing order:

Telephone: 020 7926 0820

Or visit: Central Income Team (details below).

What Your Rent Covers

Your rent is made up of net rent and service charges. The net rent covers the general cost of maintaining and managing your home and neighbourhood. The service charges are for services specifically provided to your home or local area, for example, ground maintenance, estate cleaning, or communal facilities such as a concierge and estate lighting. If you think you are being charged for a service you are not receiving, for example you have had no hot water for several days because your water heater has broken, please contact us on 020 7926 6000.

If you are on a low income, you may be eligible for housing benefit towards your net rent and certain service charges. However, housing benefit does not cover some other charges that may be added to your rent. These include:

- Water charges, which are collected by Lambeth Council on behalf of Thames Water and cover the supply of water to your home
- Heating and hot water charges for communal heating and hot water systems

Other costs relating to your home may be charged separately and not included in your weekly rent, for example the cost of hiring a garage from us.

Housing Benefit and Welfare Reforms

If you are on a low income you may be entitled to housing benefit to help towards your rent. Housing benefit is paid directly into your rent account and helps toward the cost of your rent. It does not cover water charges, heating charges and other service charges.

Your entitlement to housing benefit depends on your household income.

The amount of housing benefit you get will depend on:

- How much money you have coming in – work related income or benefit income
- How much money you have in savings
- Your overall household income
- Whether your household is fully occupied or you have spare bedrooms (see below: Removal of the Spare Room Subsidy)
- How much rent you are liable to pay and the level of eligible rent (housing benefit will not cover service charges)

When to Claim and Changes of Circumstances

If you think you are entitled to Housing Benefit you should make a claim immediately, this will enable you to get support for the entire duration of your entitlement. Should you fail to apply immediately, you should apply as soon as possible and request a backdated claim. You will have to show good cause for not applying immediately.

If you already have an active claim, and your circumstances change in the following ways:

- someone moves out of or into your household
- you acquire or lose a job
- your income or your household income changes in some way
- someone in your household gets into employment,

You should notify Housing Benefit **IMMEDIATELY** of these changes. This will avoid accumulation of an overpayment from Housing Benefit which may result in your subsequent entitlement being reduced.

Information to Support your Claim

When applying for Housing Benefit you will have to submit information alongside your claim in order to allow your eligibility to be assessed. You should be ready to supply the following:

- Your National Insurance Number
- A copy of your Tenancy Agreement to prove rental liability
- Proof of identity – this will be for yourself and for all members of your household. It is important to update your household details at all times with Housing Benefit i.e. if someone moves in or moves out
- Proof of your income – this may be wage slips, your audited self employed accounts for the tax year, or proof of benefit entitlement
- Proof of Income for all other working age members of your household – remember Housing Benefit is calculated on Household income, it may be that working age children are in full time education – you will have to evidence this
- Any outgoings you may have for child care – this can be a letter from a nursery or child minder for example, showing how much you pay, your payment frequency and the child minders registration number
- Bank Statements – this will have to be for all of your bank accounts including any savings accounts you may have

Supporting documentation for a Housing Benefit Claim or change of circumstances can be handed into the following offices:

Olive Morris House, 18 Brixton Hill, SW2 1RD

The Springfield Centre, 110 Union Road, SW8 2SH (Our Rent Team)

For more information, please contact:

Telephone

Housing Benefits and Council Tax: 0345 302 2312

The Central Income Team: 020 7 926 0820

Email

Housing Benefit: Benefitsinfo@lambeth.gov.uk

Central Income Team: HMCitenquiries@lambeth.gov.uk

Your home is at risk if you do not pay your rent. If you get housing benefit, you are still responsible for making sure your rent is paid and on time.

Removal of the Spare Room Subsidy

The amount of rooms you have (that could be considered bedrooms) in your property is outlined on your tenancy. If you claim Housing Benefit to help with paying your rent, your entitlement may be reduced if your home is considered too large for you. This deduction is known as the “Removal of the Spare Room Subsidy” or “bedroom tax”. This change could affect you if the make up of your household changes i.e. someone moves out, or if you move into a property that is too big for you.

What you need to Know – Bedroom Entitlement and when you may lose some of your Housing Benefit

Depending on how many spare rooms you have the reduction in Housing Benefit will be different.

For one spare room you will face a reduction of **14%**

For two spare rooms or more you will face a reduction of **25%**

Sometimes, it may not be evident that you have a spare room so it is worth looking over what the room entitlement is. You are entitled to ONE room for each of the following categories:

- Any adult couple
- Each person over 16
- A disabled child who cannot share a bedroom with another child due to their disability (you must seek further advice on this, see contact details below)
- Two children of the same sex under 16
- Two children under 10 regardless of their sex

For example: if you live in a 3-bedroom property with your partner and one child under the rules you will be under-occupying by one bedroom.

Benefit Cap – What Benefits You Are Entitled To

Currently, under the Welfare Reform Act, the maximum amount of benefit you can receive is as follows:

- A Single Person can receive up to £350 per week
- A family (including single parent households) can receive up to £500 per week

This is inclusive of Housing Benefit, and if the level of benefits you receive already adds up to £350/£500 per week depending on what category you fall into, your housing benefit will be reduced so that you do not exceed the cap level.

For example: **A family in receipt of Income Support, Child Benefits, and Child Tax credits at a rate of £500 per week will receive no housing benefit regardless of their entitlement.**

A family in receipt of income support, child benefits and Child Tax credits at a rate of £450 per week would be eligible to £50 worth of housing benefit regardless of their entitlement.

If you have been employed continuously for 12 months, and you lose your job through no fault of your own, the benefit cap won't apply to you for the first 39 weeks of your claim.

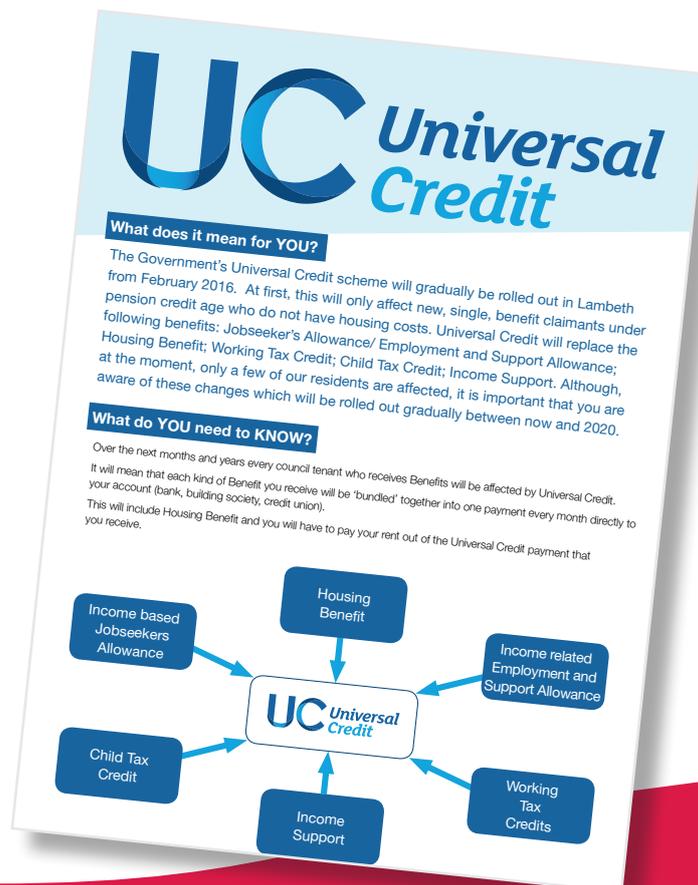
You are also exempt if your family receive one of the following:

- Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment
- Attendance Allowance
- Support component of Employment and Support Allowance
- Industrial Injuries benefits

The cap also doesn't apply if you are of pension age, or you receive war widows' or war widowers' pension.

From April 2016 the Cap level is at the following levels:

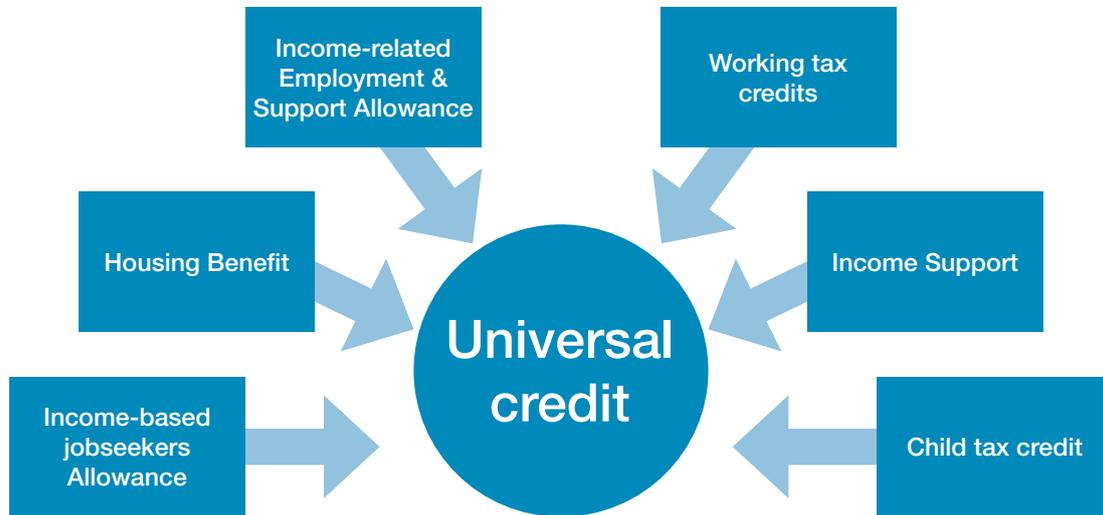
- **£258** per week for single persons
- **£442** per week for families including single parent households



Universal Credit

The Government's Universal Credit scheme started to be rolled out in Lambeth in February 2016. Over the next months and years every council tenant who receives Benefits will be affected by Universal Credit. By about 2020 all the Benefits payable to you will be 'bundled' together into one payment every month paid directly to your account (bank, building society, credit union).

At first Universal Credit affects only new, single, benefit claimants who do not have housing costs. Universal Credit is replacing the Benefits shown:



Pension credit is not yet included under Universal Credit and therefore if you or your partner are over pension credit age, you will not be able to claim Universal Credit.

How does this affect me and my rent?

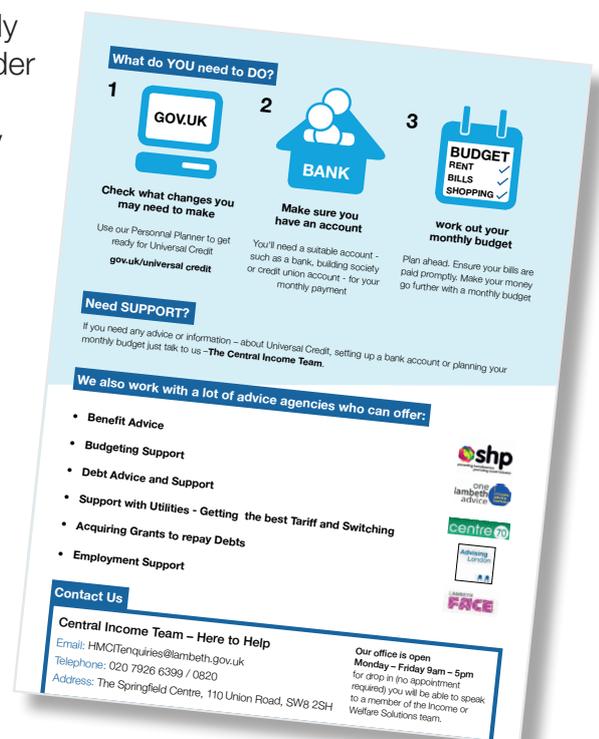
- Before Universal Credit, Housing Benefit was paid directly to the council to cover a portion of your eligible rent. Under Universal Credit, it is your responsibility to pay your rent from the Universal Credit paid into your account and any other income you may have.
- Because Universal Credit is paid monthly and not fortnightly or weekly, you will have to budget to pay your rent monthly.
- There are no paper forms for Universal Credit. All claims or changes of circumstances have to be made through an online portal. <https://www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit>

For more information on the removal of the Spare Room Subsidy (also called the 'Bedroom Tax'), the Benefit Cap and Universal Credit, and any support that may be available to you, please contact our Welfare Solutions Team on:

Telephone: 020 7 926 6399

Email: HMCitenquiries@lambeth.gov.uk

Drop in: Second floor, Springfield Centre, 110 Union Road, London SW8 2SH



Introductory Tenancies – Your Obligations during this Period

As a part of our policy for Introductory Tenancies you will be contacted by one of our income officers in the first 10 days of your tenancy to ensure that everything is going smoothly with the start of your tenancy.

As per procedure, the Income Officer will check to ensure that you are aware of your rent charges and will check if you have applied for Housing Benefit if you think you are entitled.

This Income Officer will be your port of call should you have any issues regarding your rent within the first year of your tenancy.

As an introductory tenant your rights are much more limited than a secure tenant and as such, failure to pay your rent in this period or resolve any issues in terms of Housing Benefit could result in us refusing your transition to a secure tenancy.

Refusal to pay rent will result in a possession order being taken out on your property and ultimately may result in the termination of your tenancy.

Difficulties Paying Rent

Our job in the rents team is not only to ensure that your rent is paid but that you have access to all of the support available to enable you to be in a position to do so.

Your Income Officer will make sure you get support in the following areas, should you need it:

- Debt Advice
- Budgeting Advice
- Benefit Support/advice/appeals
- Employment Support
- Advice on Welfare Reforms and access to support
- Financial support for everyday expenses

We are here to help!

If you are having difficulty paying your rent, you should contact us immediately so that we can try to help you find a solution.

We may be able to help you set up a repayment plan to clear what you owe us. Repayment plans are flexible and designed to suit your needs, there is a statutory minimum that you can contribute to your arrears which changes per year. We can also check whether you are claiming the benefits you are entitled to, and can refer you to the right agencies for debt advice, counselling and support.

When we take Legal Action

If your arrears continue to grow and you do not take reasonable steps to clear them, we may take legal action to recover the money you owe. This could result in a County Court Judgment against you, and you could lose your home.

If you are evicted from your home because of rent arrears, you will be considered intentionally homeless and will not be eligible for re-housing by any council.

As well as the above, if you have rent arrears, you will not be able to:

- Exchange your property with another tenant or get a transfer
- Rent a garage or parking space and, if you already have one, it may be taken away from you
- Keep your right to buy your home
- Stand for executive positions on your tenants' and residents' association
- Get a mortgage. Building societies or lenders will ask us for a reference about your rent payment record when you apply for a mortgage

Keeping you informed about your rent account

We send all tenants a rent account statement every three months (quarterly). This is similar to a bank statement and will show your weekly rent charges, the payments you have made and, if appropriate, any housing benefit payments that have been paid on your behalf.

Your rent statement will also show the balance of your account up to the date the letter was sent. This will tell you how much you owe us if you are in arrears, or how much your account is in credit.

As well as receiving quarterly rent statements, you can ask us for extra statements at any time or an update on your rent account balance.

Email us and we will email you a rent statement within two working days.

If you have any questions about your rent account statements or if you want to request an additional rent statement you can also contact the Central Income Team on the details at the end of this section.

Rent credit refunds

If your account balance is significantly in credit, you can ask us to refund you the credit.

We will carry out a series of checks on your account and housing benefit before approving your refund.

We will check the following:

- If you have any outstanding debt with Housing Benefit
- If you owe any money on a garage account
- If the credit in your account is as result of a discretionary payment intended to support you with your rent

If any of the above applies, we will use your credit to pay these debts first or may refuse your refund.

If you are entitled to have your rent credit returned, we will pay it back into your bank or building society account. Alternatively, we can arrange for you to collect the payment from your local post office.

To find out more about getting a refund of credit on your rent account, contact us on the details at the end of this section.

Changes to your rent and charges

We have the right to change your rent and other service charges at any time, but we usually only do this once a year. We will give you at least four weeks' written notice if we propose to change your rent or service charges. We will send you a Rent Notification letter, which shows the new rent and other charges you will have to pay and the date when your rent will change.

Contact us

If you have any questions about your rent account, contact us on:

Telephone: 020 792660820

Email: HMCITenquiries@lambeth.gov.uk

Visit: <https://housingmanagement.lambeth.gov.uk>

Write to us or drop in on weekdays, 9am to 5pm, to speak to a member of the Central Income Team at:

Central Income Team, The Springfield Centre, 2nd Floor, 110 Union Road SW8 2SH

Your Environment

Section 5



Your Environment

We want to work with you to make your community a place you are proud of and happy to live in. We can do this with your help.

You can help keep your neighbourhood clean by not dropping litter or dumping rubbish and by cleaning up after your pets. You can also report environmental problems like litter and fly-tipping to us on 020 7926 6000.

We encourage and support people who want to take a more active role in their community, in tenants' and residents' associations, or as a street or block representative. Ask at your area housing office for more information and speak to one of our resident participation officers. If you live on an estate, we also have estate housing officers who work with you in caring for and improving your environment.

Keeping your home warm

There are many things you can do to keep your home warm and comfortable while also saving energy and cutting your fuel bills. The best way to make your home warmer and save money is to stop heat escaping.

Here are some tips:

- Draught-proof doors and windows with plastic foam strips or metal draught excluders
- Fit rubber or brush seals to the bottom of doors - they are cheap and easy to buy and fit
- If your letterbox lets in draughts, fit a brush-type seal cover
- Fill gaps between floorboards and skirting boards with beading, mastic or plastic wood
- If you don't have double glazing, you can use specially designed commercial window film across the window frame - this has almost the same effect and is easy to fit
- Close your curtains at night to avoid losing heat through your windows
- Don't let curtains hang in front of your radiators
- If you have a water filled radiator fitted against an outside wall, you can put aluminium foil or specially designed foil from DIY stores behind the radiator

Household rubbish

High-rise blocks have refuse chutes, large communal bins or underground refuse collection sites. The chutes can get blocked by big items, so please use the chutes only for normal household bagged rubbish. See the section 'getting rid of large, bulky items' for more information.

Some low-rise blocks have refuse chutes, while others have large communal bins. If you have to carry rubbish down to the ground level, take care to avoid spilling it in the shared areas.

Some maisonettes and street properties have individual wheeled bins while others have large communal bins.

To report any problems with your rubbish bins or for information about rubbish collections:

Telephone: 020 7926 9000

Visit: www.lambeth.gov.uk/rubbish-and-recycling

Recycling household rubbish

All Lambeth residents must recycle what they can. About 80 per cent of your household rubbish can easily be recycled.

You can recycle the following household items:

- Food and drink cartons
- Plastic pots, tubs, bottles and trays
- Cardboard and paper, including catalogues, brochures and magazines
- Glass bottles and jars
- Tins
- Empty aerosols

If you live on an estate, you can put your recyclable rubbish in the green recycling bins, which are usually near your household rubbish bins.

If your rubbish is collected from outside your home in a wheeled bin or sack, your recycling will be collected from the same place. From early 2017, most homes will have a recycling bin and rubbish and recycling will be collected on the same day.

If you wish to dispose of chemical waste, like paint or motor oil, do not put it in your household waste. Instead, contact your local reuse and recycling centre.

For more about recycling

Telephone: 020 7926 6000

Visit: www.lambeth.gov.uk/rubbish-and-recycling

Getting rid of bulky items

You are responsible for clearing furniture and large bulky items of household rubbish, and we have a collection service that can pick up your bulky waste if you need it to. If you live on an estate, contact us on 020 7926 6000 as your estate's cleaning contractor may be able to remove them

You can also use the reuse and recycling centres in Lambeth, Southwark and Wandsworth to recycle or dispose of household rubbish:

- **Smugglers Way**, Wandsworth, SW18 1JS
- **Southwark Reuse and Recycling Centre**, 45 Devon Street, Southwark SE15 1AL
- **Lambeth Reuse and Recycling Centre**, Vale Street, West Norwood, SE27 9PA

Vale Street

Lambeth reuse and recycling centre on Vale Street accepts only household recyclable items. No vans are allowed onto the site. You will need to show proof that you are a Lambeth resident.

Gardens

Responsibilities

We are responsible for maintaining communal gardens. However, if you have a private garden, yard, window box or balcony, you are responsible for keeping it tidy. For some small street properties with shared gardens, all the residents share this responsibility.

Keeping a garden tidy includes making sure it is free from rubbish, rubble, excessive weed growth and pet droppings, as these may cause a nuisance or health risk to other residents.

If you are vulnerable or disabled and can't look after your garden, we may be able to help you. Contact us on 020 7926 6000 for more information.

If you wish to keep a garden and you live in a flat, you must keep walkways clear and make sure your hanging baskets are secure.

Changing your garden

Contact us if you wish to put up a shed, porch, fence or similar structure, as you need our written permission and possibly planning permission. If you don't contact us, you may have to remove the structure at your own expense.

You also need our permission if you want to cut down or severely prune any tree in your garden. This is because many of the trees on our properties are legally protected. You will also need to contact us before moving, altering, replacing or planting hedges or trees.

If you put up any structure in your garden, such as a shed, you are responsible for keeping it in good condition.

Green waste

Lambeth Council collects garden waste every two weeks but you will need to pay a joining fee for this service. You can recycle your garden waste for free at the reuse and recycling centres. You can also buy subsidised compost bins or join a local community composting scheme to compost kitchen and garden waste.

For more information on green waste:

Telephone: 020 7926 9000

Visit: www.lambeth.gov.uk/rubbish-and-recycling

Managing pests

We are responsible for keeping all communal areas on estates clear of pests. However, it is your responsibility to get rid of pests in your own property, including the garden. Keeping your property clean will help control most pests.

If a pest problem poses a health and safety risk for the whole block of flats, we will investigate the cause and arrange for them to be removed. We may charge you a share of the costs, even if your flat was not directly affected.

To find out about pest control services:

Telephone: 020 7926 6000 or 020 7926 8860

Email: pestcontrol@lambeth.gov.uk

Vehicles

All vehicles parked on our land must be roadworthy, taxed and insured unless you can provide a valid Statutory off the Road Notice (SORN). If you want to keep SORN vehicles on our land, you will also need our permission.

Garages

If you wish to rent a garage, you must show us proof that you own a vehicle that is registered at your home address. Contact us on 020 7926 6000 if you are interested in renting a garage.

Parking large vehicles

You will need our written permission before you park any of the following on our land or on your front or back garden:

- Trailers
- Caravans
- Boats
- Commercial vehicles more than 16 feet (4.8 meters) long, 6 feet (1.83 meters) wide or 6 feet 6 inches (2 meters) high

Disability parking

If you are a blue badge holder, we may be able to give you priority for a free or discounted parking space or garage. Let us know when you apply for a parking permit. You will be asked to provide a copy of your Blue Badge.

Vehicle repairs

You must not do large repairs to vehicles on our land, for example:

- Changing an engine
- Changing or replacing parts of the bodywork
- Paint spraying

You may only do routine minor maintenance work such as changing tyres, plugs or oil, provided this does not cause a hazard or nuisance to others or make a mess. You must not pour any chemicals like engine oil, petrol or brake fluid down drains or gullies or put them in domestic bins. You can usually get rid of these chemicals at your local reuse and recycling centre.

If you cause any damage to your home or communal areas while repairing or maintaining your vehicle, you will have to pay the cost of us repairing the damage.

Abandoned vehicles

We will remove from our land any untaxed vehicle without a SORN or any vehicle we consider a health and safety risk. If you find a red or green sticker on the windscreen of your vehicle, you must contact us and also call the number on the sticker. If you have a SORN, you need to display this with a resident permit. You are allowed to park a SORN vehicle on our land for up to six months, after which we will consider it to be abandoned.

To dispose of or report an abandoned vehicle:

Telephone: 020 7926 6000

Anti-social behaviour

All residents have the right to enjoy their homes and live in peaceful neighbourhoods, free from crime, anti-social behaviour and nuisance. This depends on you, the members of your household and your neighbours being able to get on together. When neighbours are on good terms this makes for a friendlier, safer and better place for everyone to live.

Anti-social behaviour is any behaviour that could cause alarm, harassment or distress to another person, and negatively affects the quality of life of other people and the well-being of the wider community.

We try to resolve all anti-social behaviour issues as speedily as possible depending on the type of anti-social behaviour issue involved.

If you are a tenant, you are responsible for your behaviour and the behaviour of:

- Anyone who lives with you, including your partner, spouse and children
- Anyone who visits or stays with you
- Any pets belonging to you, someone living with you or your visitors

Your tenancy agreement prohibits:

- Illegal, anti-social or nuisance behaviour to other tenants or residents or their family, lodgers or visitors
- Damage to any property, fixtures or fittings belonging to us or to our tenants, residents, their families or visitors

Anti-social behaviour is a serious breach of your tenancy, lease or transfer agreement and it could result in you losing your home.

Types of anti-social behaviour

Anti-social behaviour includes:

- Acts of intimidation or harassment; verbal abuse or bullying; hate crime; or domestic abuse
- Disregard for other people's or the community's well-being such as noise; vehicle-related nuisance; rowdy behaviour or hoax calls
- Misuse of public space such as drug and substance misuse; drug dealing; or street drinking
- Environmental damage such as criminal damage and vandalism; graffiti; litter, rubbish, fly-tipping, fly-posting; or abandoning vehicles
- Animal nuisance such as noisy pets, dog fouling and aggressive behaviour. All animal nuisances are dealt in accordance with our pet policy

Noise and annoyance

Noise is the most common cause of neighbour disputes. It is important to keep your noise to a reasonable volume at all times, especially late at night. This includes keeping the volume down on televisions, radios, stereos and musical instruments.

Abusing our staff

We will not accept any abuse towards our employees, representatives or contractors. Your tenancy agreement says you must not be violent, abusive or threatening towards our staff. This also applies outside normal office hours and if you phone or write to us.

Harassment

This is unwanted, repeated behaviour that is intimidating, hostile or offensive and which causes alarm or distress. Types of harassment can include violence, threats, abuse and property damage. It can involve offensive language, graffiti or letters, and can cause physical injury, stress and anxiety or insecurity. Many forms of anti-social behaviour are harassment.

Hate crime

Hate crimes are any criminal offences that are motivated by hostility or prejudice against a particular group of people. This could be based on their race, religion, age, sexual orientation or disability, or their association with someone from one of those groups.

Domestic violence

Domestic violence is one of the most common forms of gender-based violence, yet it is one of the most under-reported crimes because it usually happens behind closed doors. Domestic violence can happen to anyone regardless of their race, gender, religion, sexuality, age or social background.

Domestic violence often happens repeatedly over a period of time and includes threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between people who are or have been intimate partners or family members. This can include forced marriage and so-called 'honour crimes'.

Domestic violence and gender-based violence are unacceptable and support is available. (Refer to contact list at the end of this folder.)

Gangs and serious violence

Gangs can destroy the peace of their local community and can lead other vulnerable young people into serious and violent crime. We define a gang as a group of people who associate with one another over a relatively long period. They see themselves, and are seen by others, as a clearly identifiable group for whom crime and violence is a key part.

If you or a member of your household is involved in any gang-related criminal offence, you will be breaking the terms of your tenancy and this may lead to you being evicted from your home.

Using your home for criminal purposes

You must not use or allow your home to be used for any criminal purpose. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Dealing in, possessing or growing illegal drugs
- Committing violence against anyone
- Storing or handling stolen goods or illegal weapons

Tenants can be evicted if they or anyone living with them are arrested and convicted of any offence that takes place in or around their home.

How you can deal with anti-social behaviour

How you deal with anti-social behaviour depends on how serious it is, how long it has been going on for, how often it happens, and how it affects you and your household. To solve anti-social behaviour problems effectively, it is important that you do something. We suggest you follow these three steps:

1. Try to talk about the problem

It is best to deal with problems early on, so first try talking with your neighbour about it. For example, if they are causing a noise nuisance, tell them in a friendly way how this is affecting you they may not realise it. Many problems arise because people have not talked or considered each other's point of view. Sometimes people just need reminding that their behaviour can affect others. If when you talk with your neighbour they become unreasonable or start arguing with you, do not get involved or try to argue back – this will only make things worse.

If you can't talk to neighbours directly or you have been unable to sort out the problem yourself, contact us for advice. We may suggest you use a mediation service, which may be a trained member of staff acting as a mediator, or we may decide to use an independent mediation service.

Mediation is a valuable early intervention tool that we use to resolve noise nuisance or neighbour disputes. All cases are referred to an independent service – the Lambeth Mediation Service – that attempts to persuade neighbours to work together to establish mutually acceptable behaviour. Often the mediator will ask both sides for their point of view, and then help them resolve their differences. You may not have to talk to your neighbour directly at first. Mediation is about bringing neighbours together to work things out as quickly as possible, and has a good success rate, as long as everyone is committed and actively involved.

2. Keep a record

It is always a good idea to record any incident, even if you suspect it is only a one-off. By writing down the details straight away, you are more likely to be able to remember accurately what happened. If we have to take legal action, we must have evidence of exactly what has happened and when.

When you keep a written record, make a note of the following:

- The date and time of the incident
- How long it lasted
- What happened – the more detail you write down, the more helpful it will be
- The name(s) of who was involved, if you know
- The name of anyone who witnessed the incident
- Whether you reported it to anyone and who you reported it to
- Details of any investigation. For example a crime reference number from the police, or a visit from a noise patrol officer

3. Report it

You should always report crime and serious anti-social behaviour to the police, who have the power to arrest the perpetrator and protect the victim. Contact the police on 101, or in an emergency always call 999.

You can contact us to report your concerns about any type of anti-social behaviour, including noise nuisance, graffiti, harassment, hate crimes and domestic violence. When you call, you can be sure your concerns will be passed to the right team in Housing Management for investigation and action.

**There are many organisations that can offer advice and support.
(Refer to contact list at the end of this folder.)**

To report anti-social behaviour:

Telephone: 020 7926 6000

Visit: Your local Area Housing Office

What we can do about anti-social behaviour

We will respond to all reported incidents of anti-social behaviour. When you report an incident, we will give you a call to assess the situation, and depending on the seriousness of the complaint, we will arrange a meeting urgently if need be. Once we have spoken with you about what is happening and how it is affecting you, we will agree an action plan with you.

With your permission we may contact:

- The person responsible for the anti-social behaviour
- The police or other agencies
- Neighbours or other witnesses to find out the facts and who else is involved

We will use all the powers at our disposal and act as we think fit. Legal action is not always appropriate, as most cases are sorted out before reaching this stage.

Before we take legal action, we may take the following steps to resolve anti-social behaviour:

- Suggest you talk to your neighbour and try to sort out the matter yourself, if you haven't done so already and this is appropriate
- Refer the problem to mediation
- Help make your home safe by improving the security, removing graffiti and doing repairs
- Warn the person who has carried out the anti-social behaviour that their behaviour is in breach of their tenancy agreement and could lead to them being evicted
- Work with other agencies, for example Lambeth Council's noise team if your complaint is about noise or the police if it is about a hate crime (domestic violence, racial harassment or violence against members of the LGBT community)

Legal action

Legal action can be a lengthy process over which we have no influence. Our ability to take legal action will depend on a number of factors including:

- The type of problem being reported – legal action will not resolve every case of anti social behaviour, and in the first instance we will try to resolve the problems through mediation or a similar intervention. Legal action will only be possible in many cases where there is an escalation of the nuisance
- The impact of the incidents on those reporting the behaviour, and others who may be affected
- The quality of the evidence – this is the most important factor and we will often rely on residents to complete diary sheets that provide us with clear information about the nature of the incidents

In all cases, we will keep you up-to-date with all the steps we have taken to resolve the problem and review with you how effective these steps have been. We will treat anything you tell us in strict confidence, but it may not be possible for you to remain anonymous. This is because the person you are complaining about may guess who made the complaint, unless several people have complained about them.

Support for victims

We work closely with the police and our other partners to give victims of anti-social behaviour and crime, practical and personal support. The staff at your Area Housing Office can discuss your housing options with you and can help you contact other organisations that can offer support. This could include applying to the courts if you wish the perpetrator to leave or to stay away from your home, or helping you find alternative temporary accommodation.

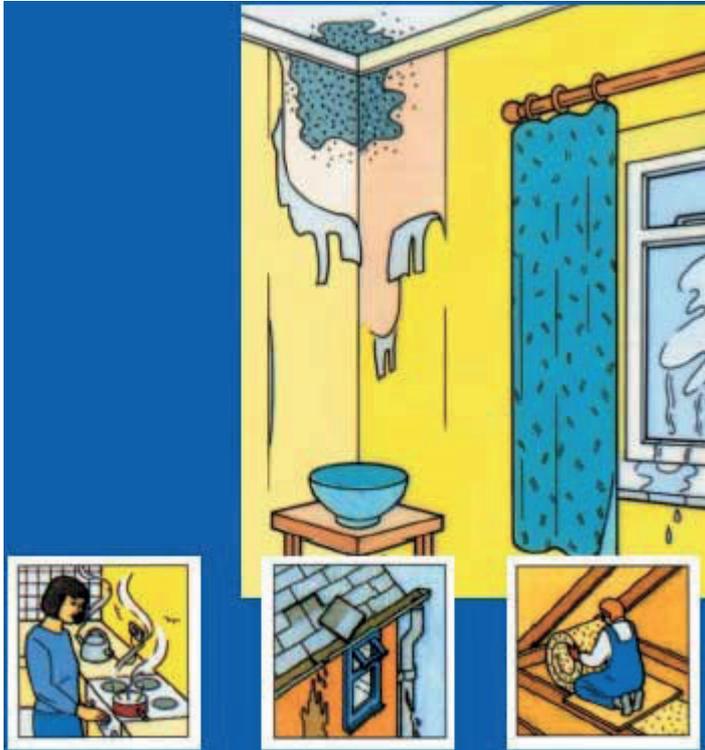
Protecting our vulnerable residents

Some people become victims of abuse, harassment or violence because they are vulnerable, perhaps due to a disability, their age or simply because others view them as 'different'.

If you suspect a neighbour is being abused or treated incorrectly report it to:

- The police - call 101 (or 999 in an emergency)
- Your area housing office
- Us on 020 7926 6000

Keep your home free from damp and mould



Is your home damp? Damp can cause mould on walls and furniture and make window frames rot. Damp cold housing encourages the growth of mould and mites, as mites feed on moulds and can increase the risk of respiratory illnesses in some people.

Some damp is caused by condensation. This leaflet explains how condensation forms and how you can keep it to a minimum, so reducing the risk of dampness and mould growth.



First steps against condensation

You will need to take proper steps to deal with the condensation, but meanwhile there are some measures you can take right away.

Wipe down the windows and sills every morning. Wring out the cloth rather than drying it on a radiator.

Condensation channels and sponge strips can be bought at DIY shops. They are fitted to windows to collect the condensation and thus help prevent window frames from rotting and avoid damp forming under sills. Care must be taken to fit these devices properly.



First steps against mould

First treat the mould already in your home. If you deal with the basic problem, mould should not reappear.

To kill and remove mould, wipe down walls and window frames with a fungicidal wash which carries a Health and Safety Executive 'approval number'. Follow the manufacturer's instructions precisely. Dry-clean mildewed clothes, and shampoo carpets. Disturbing mould by brushing or vacuum cleaning can increase the risk of respiratory problems.

After treatment redecorate using a good quality fungicidal paint to help prevent mould. Note that this paint is not effective if overlaid with ordinary paints or wallpaper. When wallpapering, use a paste containing a fungicide to prevent further mould growth.

The only lasting way of avoiding severe mould is to eliminate dampness.

Is it condensation?

Condensation is not the only cause of damp. It can also come from:

- Leaking pipes, wastes or overflows.
- Rain seeping through the roof where a tile or slate is missing, spilling from a blocked gutter, penetrating around window frames, or leaking through a cracked pipe.
- Rising damp due to a defective damp-course or because there is no damp-course.

These causes of damp often leave a 'tidemark' and you should have the necessary repairs carried out to remove the source of damp.

If your home is newly built it may be damp because the water used during its construction (e.g. in plaster) is still drying out.

If your home is damp for any of these reasons it may take weeks of heating and ventilating to dry out. Hiring a dehumidifier will help.

If you do not think the damp comes from any of these causes, it is probably condensation.

What is condensation?

There is always some moisture in the air, even if you cannot see it. If the air gets colder it cannot hold all the moisture and tiny drops of water appear. This is condensation. You may notice it when you see your breath on a cold day, or when the mirror mists over when you have a bath.

Condensation occurs mainly during cold weather, whether it is raining or dry. It does not leave a 'tidemark'. It appears in places where there is little movement of air. Look for it in corners, on or near windows, in or behind wardrobes and cupboards. It often forms on north-facing walls.





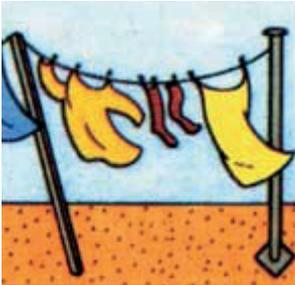
How to avoid condensation

These four steps will help you reduce the condensation in your home.

1. Produce less moisture

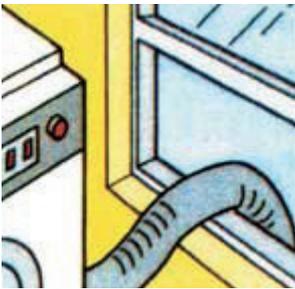
Some ordinary daily activities produce a lot of moisture very quickly.

Cooking: To reduce the amount of moisture, cover pans and do not leave kettles boiling.



Paraffin and portable flueless bottled-gas heaters: These heaters put a lot of moisture into the air – one gallon of gas or paraffin produces about a gallon of water. If you have a problem with condensation, try to find alternative means of heating.

Washing clothes: Put washing outdoors to dry if you can. Or put it in the bathroom with the door closed and the window open or fan on. It is best to fit a fan that can be switched to run continuously for clothes drying. If you have a tumble dryer make sure you vent it to the outside (unless it is the self-condensing type). DIY kits are available for this.



2. Ventilate to remove the moisture

You can ventilate your home without making draughts.

Some ventilation is needed to get rid of moisture being produced all the time, including that from people's breath. Keep a small window ajar or a trickle ventilator open all the time if possible, and especially when someone is in the room.

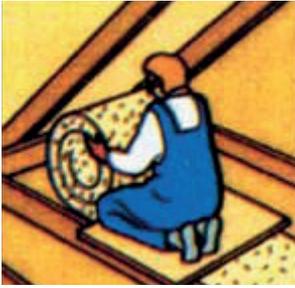
You need much more ventilation in the kitchen and bathroom when cooking, washing up, bathing and drying clothes. This means opening the windows wider. Better still, use a humidistat-controlled electric fan (these come on automatically when the air becomes humid and are cheap to run).



Close the kitchen and bathroom doors when these rooms are in use even if your kitchen or bathroom has an extractor fan. It will help to draughtproof these doors. Doing this will help stop the moisture reaching other rooms, especially bedrooms, which are often colder and more likely to get condensation.

Allow space for the air to circulate in and around your furniture. Open doors to ventilate cupboards and wardrobes. Leave space between the backs of wardrobes and the wall. Where possible, position wardrobes and furniture against internal walls, i.e. walls which have a room on both sides, rather than against outside walls.

When you have a curtain or blind drawn, it makes the surface of the window cooler and increases condensation, especially with single glazed windows. Trickle ventilators can help reduce the problem. If you replace your windows at any time, make sure they are double glazed and fitted with trickle ventilators.

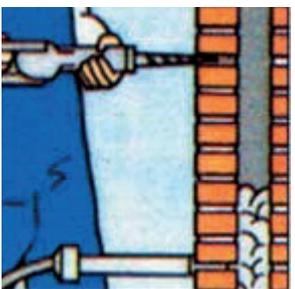


3. Insulate and draughtproof

Insulation in the loft, cavity wall insulation and draughtproofing of windows and outside doors will help keep your home warm and you will have lower fuel bills as well. When the whole home is warmer, condensation is less likely.

When draughtproofing:

- Do not block permanent ventilators.
- Do not completely block chimneys (leave a hole about two bricks in size and fit a louvred grille over it).
- Do not draughtproof rooms where there is a fuel burning heater (e.g. gas fire) or cooker.
- Do not draughtproof windows in the bathroom or kitchen.



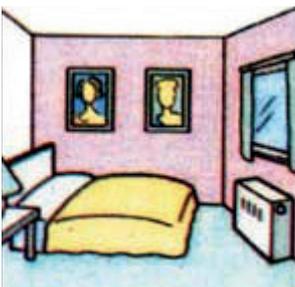
If you live in a house, insulating your loft is a cost-effective way of cutting heating costs. Remember to draughtproof the loft hatch but do not block any eaves ventilation. Cavity wall insulation is also an effective way of cutting heating costs. Many properties, however, are built without suitable cavities. If you are in doubt, you should seek the advice of a building professional who will advise you on the need for a building warrant.



Secondary glazing of windows reduces heat loss and draughts but you must ensure that there is some ventilation and adequate means of escape in an emergency such as a fire. Remember that any alteration to your windows, including their replacement, must meet the relevant requirements of the Building Standards (Scotland) Regulations. You should consult your local authority on the need for a building warrant before any work is undertaken.

4. Heat your home a little more

In cold weather, the best way to keep rooms warm enough to avoid condensation is to keep low background heating on all day, even when there is no one at home. This is very important in flats and bungalows and



other dwellings where the bedrooms are not above a warm living room. If you have central heating set it to provide background warmth in all rooms including unused rooms.

Otherwise install suitable thermostatically-controlled heaters where necessary (do not use paraffin or flueless bottled gas heaters for this purpose). The thermostats will help control heating and costs. Remember to provide background ventilation at the same time.

Dehumidifiers will help dry out damp in newly built houses. They can also help reduce condensation but they are of limited use in cold damp rooms.

Points to remember

Produce less moisture:

- Cover pans
- Dry clothes outdoors
- Vent your tumble dryer to the outside
- Avoid using paraffin or flueless bottled gas heaters

Ventilate to remove moisture:

- Ventilate all the time, especially when someone is in
- Increase ventilation of the kitchen and bathroom when in use and shut the door
- Ventilate cupboards, wardrobes and blocked chimneys

Insulate and draughtproof:

- insulate the loft
- draughtproof windows and external doors
- consider cavity insulation
- consider secondary glazing
- find out if you are eligible for a grant or other help

Heat your home a little more

- if possible, keep low background heat on all day, with background ventilation
- find out about benefits, rebates and help with fuel bills

Your tenancy agreement

Section 6



Your tenancy agreement

When you signed your tenancy agreement you entered into a legal contract and became a tenant of Lambeth Council. You also agreed to the tenancy conditions, a document that sets out your rights and responsibilities. The tenancy conditions apply to all tenants.

Keep your tenancy agreement and tenancy conditions in a safe place and refer to them if you have any questions about your tenancy.

If you need another copy of your tenancy conditions, contact your Area Office by phone or email.

Your tenancy agreement: checklist of do's and don'ts

This is not a complete list of what you should and should not do as a Lambeth tenant. However, you have signed this as the last page of your tenancy agreement and committing yourself to this checklist is part of your conditions of tenancy.

I agree to do the following:

- TO PAY all my rent on time in advance.
- NOT to harass, or let my family or friends harass anyone.
- NOT to commit or permit any criminal act on or near the Property.
- NOT to damage the Property and to return it to the Council in a good state when I leave.
- Where I have a garden, TO KEEP it tidy.
- TO DISPOSE of my rubbish in the appropriate bins provided.
- TO BE RESPONSIBLE for the good behaviour of my family, friends and visitors in my home, on the estate and local areas.
- TO ENSURE that any pets the Council has given me permission to have are kept in order and do not make a mess, bark or in any other way cause a nuisance, or damage my home or other homes in the vicinity or any part of the estate I live on.
- TO ABIDE BY the parking scheme on my estate and ensure that any vehicle used by me or my household is taxed and insured, unless I produce a valid DVLA acknowledgement or Statutory Off Road Notice (SORN) for the period, which will not exceed six months.

I understand and agree to the conditions listed above and that if I break this agreement the Council has the right to take action to evict me from my home.

Signed: **Address:**

Print name:

Date:.....

Witnessed by:

Types of tenancy agreements

You are likely have one of the following tenancies:

- Secure tenancy
- Introductory tenancy
- Demoted tenancy

When you sign your tenancy agreement you will be told what type of agreement you have; you can ask us if you are unsure. Your rights and responsibilities as a tenant often depend on your type of tenancy.

Secure tenancy

Most tenants are secure tenants. Secure tenants have 'security of tenure', which means that your tenancy can only be ended with a court order, if we can prove to the court that we have a good reason to evict you.

If you become a secure tenant, you will remain one, so long as:

- The property is your only or main home
- You do not completely sublet your home
- The court does not make an order ending your tenancy

Introductory tenancy

All new tenants begin as introductory tenants. An introductory tenancy is a trial period and usually lasts 12 months, after which the tenancy automatically becomes secure as long as no problems occur. Few tenancies end in the first 12 months and most tenants complete their trial period successfully. If problems do occur, for example rent arrears or anti-social behaviour, we can extend the introductory tenancy or seek a possession order (see Breaching your Tenancy Agreement.)

Sometimes new tenants become secure tenants straight away, or in less than a year. This may happen if you have been:

- A secure tenant of a different property
- An assured tenant of a registered social landlord
- An introductory tenant of a different property

Demoted tenancy

You may be given a demoted tenancy if you have a secure tenancy but have behaved in a way that causes serious nuisance to others. We can ask the court to replace your secure tenancy with a demoted tenancy. Demoted tenants can be evicted much more easily than secure tenants (for more information, see Breaching your Tenancy Agreement.)

Joint tenancies

Joint tenancies are usually created when two or more people apply for housing together. If your tenancy agreement names more than one tenant, then each tenant named on the tenancy agreement will be a 'joint tenant'. Joint tenants have the same rights and responsibilities, even if they no longer live at the property. For example, each joint tenant is responsible for making sure the whole of the rent is paid, and not just their share of it. If we seek a court order for rent arrears, it is against all the joint tenants.

Either joint tenant can apply for housing benefit or council tax benefit.

If one joint tenant breaks the tenancy agreement and we cannot solve the problem, the other joint tenant/s may need to go to court to deal with the matter.

If one of the joint tenants dies, you must tell us. The tenancy will continue with the remaining tenant/s – this is known as ‘survivorship’. The remaining tenant/s are responsible for all of the rent and other charges.

Any joint tenant has the right to end the tenancy by giving notice. A notice served by one joint tenant will end the tenancy for everyone, even if the other joint tenant/s do not want the tenancy to end. If a joint tenant wants to leave and give up the tenancy, we encourage them to tell the other joint tenants. We also recommend all the joint tenants get advice from us and an independent legal service.

If a joint tenant gives notice to end a joint tenancy, we can decide whether to offer the property (or an alternative property) to the remaining joint tenant/s. For more information about this, contact us on 020 7926 6000.

You can apply for other members of your household to become joint tenants with you. We will decide whether to agree to your request.

Conditions of your tenancy agreement

Only Lambeth Council, as your landlord, has the power to change the conditions of your tenancy agreement. Before any proposed changes can be adopted, by law* the council must formally seek the views of all secure tenants using a formal consultation process.

Following the consultation process, you will get a letter giving you at least four weeks’ formal notice of any changes. You do not need to sign a new tenancy agreement. If you do not wish to accept the changes, you can end your tenancy and leave your property.

Once the new conditions come into force they apply to all tenancy agreements, including any new tenancy agreement we may grant you in the future. This consultation process does not apply to changing your rent and other service charges. We can change these by giving you at least four weeks’ notice in writing before the changes come into force.

*The Housing Act 1985 (as amended)

Breaching your Tenancy Agreement

Breaching your tenancy agreement means failing to keep to its terms and conditions. If you breach your tenancy agreement, you could be made to leave your home. We do not want this to happen and will normally do everything we can to resolve any tenancy problems in other ways.

This section sets out what we may do if a tenant breaks the terms of their tenancy agreement.

When we may take action

Rent arrears

Most evictions are for rent arrears. If you are finding it difficult to pay your rent, call us on 020 7926 6000 straight away so that we can help. We can check whether you are receiving all your entitlements, for example housing benefit, and arrange a manageable payment plan for the arrears.

Anti-social behaviour

Anti-social behaviour is any behaviour that could cause alarm, harassment or distress to another person. As a tenant, you are responsible for your behaviour and the behaviour of:

- Anyone who lives with you, including your partner, spouse, and children
- Anyone who visits or stays with you
- Any pets belonging to you, or someone living with you or your visitors

Examples of anti-social behaviour include:

- Causing noise and annoyance
- Abusing our staff
- Harassment
- Domestic violence
- Dangerous dogs
- Gang membership
- vandalising or causing damage to our property, common areas or the estate
- using your home and neighbourhood for criminal purposes

Anti-social behaviour is a serious breach of your tenancy agreement. We will not tolerate anti-social behaviour and will make every effort to identify and deal with perpetrators. If we find that you or a member of your household or visitor is responsible for anti-social behaviour, we have the right to end your tenancy.

For more information about how we deal with anti-social behaviour, nuisance and harassment see our Your safety section in this handbook.

**To report anti-social behaviour, contact us on 020 7926 6000.
In an emergency always call 999.**

Illegal subletting

Illegal subletting is a breach of your tenancy agreement. We regularly check to find out whether tenants are unlawfully subletting their homes. Examples of illegal subletting include:

- Subletting your home to another household, and not living there yourself
- Subletting your home to many people (not of the same household), and not living there yourself
- Subletting the property to another household, and not living there yourself as your main home
- 'Key selling', where you leave the property and give away the tenancy in return for a one-off lump payment

What we may do

Injunctions

An injunction is a court order requiring a person to do something or stop doing something.

There are three types of injunction:

- Anti-social behaviour injunction – these stop people behaving in ways that may cause nuisance or annoyance to an extent that affects the way the council manages its housing

- Injunction against unlawful use of premises – these stop someone using or threatening to use their home for an illegal purpose, for example drug dealing or prostitution
- Injunction against breach of the tenancy agreement – these stop behaviour that would breach the terms of the tenancy agreement

When a court grants an injunction, it can attach a power of arrest or exclude someone from a home, if there is violence, the threat of violence or a significant risk of harm to anyone else. This means that if the injunction is broken, the perpetrator could be imprisoned.

Charging costs for damage to our properties and communal areas (recharging)

We will charge you for the cost of repairs and maintenance:

- Where the cause is due to you, your household or your visitors misusing, abusing or accidentally damaging our property
- if we have to do repairs that are your responsibility

You will also have to pay our costs if:

- We have to do work to your garden because you have failed to maintain it to an acceptable standard. If you cannot maintain your garden because you are older or have a disability, please contact your area housing office (contact us for details).
- We have to clear a blockage that you caused (for example by flushing nappies or other objects down the toilet) or that you could have unblocked yourself
- We have to put right alterations you have made to your home without our permission or that have not been done to an acceptable standard

We will not charge for items that have failed because of fair wear and tear. We will decide whether to charge, when we are making the repairs.

Demotion of a secure tenancy

If we find that a secure tenant, a member of their household or a visitor to their home is responsible for anti-social behaviour, we can apply to the court for a Demotion Order.

This will end the secure tenancy and replace it with a less secure demoted tenancy. This takes effect from the date specified in the Demotion Order and lasts for at least a year, as a probation period. After this period, provided there have been no further acts of anti-social behaviour, the demoted tenancy will go back to a secure tenancy.

If there are further incidents of anti-social behaviour during a demoted tenancy, the period of probation can be extended or we can seek a Possession Order (see below) to evict the tenant from their home. The court will decide whether to grant a Possession Order on specific information and evidence it receives.

Possession Order

We will end a secure, introductory or demoted tenancy or evict a tenant if the court grants us a Possession Order. A Possession Order will require a tenant to leave their home by a specific date. The circumstances when we can do this are different for each type of tenancy. We will always carefully consider whether to end a tenancy in this way, and will normally do so only as a last resort.

Ending secure tenancies

If we decide to end your tenancy, we will give you 28 days' written notice. This is called a Notice of Intention to Seek Possession and tells you we intend to go to the court to seek possession of your property. After the 28 days' notice period, we can start court proceedings to evict you.

In cases involving nuisance and anti-social behaviour, the Housing Act 1985 (as amended) states that we can serve a Notice of Intention to Seek Possession and start court proceedings immediately.

We can only apply for a court order to end your tenancy for specific reasons, which are set out in the Housing Act 1985 (as amended). These include:

- Rent arrears
- Breach of tenancy conditions
- Antisocial behaviour
- Using your home for immoral or illegal purposes
- Domestic violence
- Providing false information
- Property damage or vandalism
- Getting financial gain from a mutual exchange
- Improper behaviour if your tenancy is connected to your place of work
- Your current tenancy was granted because work was being done on your previous home, which is now complete

If your secured tenancy is ended by a court order, in certain circumstances you may be able to apply to the court to start it up again. For more information, seek legal advice.

We will evict tenants who have committed serious anti-social behaviour, domestic violence or harassment as quickly as possible. We may also ask the court to bring criminal charges against them and make an order allowing us to get back our costs from them.

If a court finds a tenant guilty of this behaviour, we can ask the court to:

- Make an order ending the tenancy, or
- Impose conditions on the tenant which, if breached, will end the tenancy or will allow us to ask the court to end it.

Ending introductory and demoted tenancies

Introductory and demoted tenants can be evicted more easily than secure tenants. So, for example, if you break your tenancy agreement or we have another good reason, we can seek an order to end your tenancy.

Before we start court proceedings we will give you 28 days' written notice, called a Notice of Proceedings for Possession, which will explain why we want to end your tenancy agreement.

You have a right to ask for us to review our decision to end your tenancy. You must do this within 14 days of us serving the Notice of Proceedings for Possession.

If you ask for a review hearing, a different and more senior officer than the one who originally decided to serve the notice will review the case. The purpose of a review hearing is to:

- Ensure that a proper notice has been served
- Consider the evidence the decision was based on, with any further matters you have raised
- Consider whether, in all the circumstances, the case is serious enough to warrant your eviction

You can attend the hearing, or you can write a letter outlining your concerns and the matters you wish to raise. You can seek legal advice and ask witnesses to give evidence for you. At the review hearing, the reviewing officer may decide to uphold or overturn the decision to evict you. The review should be completed by the date set out in the Notice of Proceedings for Possession.

If you do not ask for a review hearing, or if the review officer upholds the decision to end your tenancy, we can then ask the court to make an order ending the tenancy.

Rights and Responsibilities

Your Rights

By keeping to the rules of your tenancy agreement and paying your rent you have the right to:

- Security of tenure: this means we cannot evict or move you out of your home without good reason and a court order
- Enjoy your home free from harassment and nuisance
- Get us to do repairs to your property. This is referred to as your 'Right to Repair' (see the repairs section or Tenant Management Organisation repairs service guide for more information)
- Be consulted on important issues that affect your home and services, including new development and modernisation schemes
- Complain if you are not happy with your home or what we are doing (see the complaints section or visit <https://housingmanagement.lambeth.gov.uk>)

This following section sets out your main rights and the housing law that supports it. It does not cover all circumstances. If you want to know more, contact us on 020 7926 6000 and we will do our best to help you.

The right to pass your property to another person

Under certain circumstances a tenancy or property can be passed from one person to another. This can happen when a tenant:

- Dies (succession)
- Assigns their property to another member of their household
- Exchanges their property with another person's property

Succession

If a tenant dies and the tenancy passes to another member of the household, this is called 'succession'.

There can only be one succession to a tenancy. This means that if you became the tenant of the property on the death of the previous tenant (even if you and the previous tenant were joint tenants), the property will return to the council when you die.

The Localism Act 2011, with effect from 1 April 2012, amended the succession rights of new social housing tenants.

Under this amendment there will only be a statutory right of one succession to a spouse or partner for secure tenancies which commence on or after 1 April 2012. There will be no right in law for other family members to succeed the tenancy, unless the tenancy agreement allows for it. The spouses and partners must have been occupying the home at the time of the tenant's death.

While this excludes other family members living with the tenant at the time of their death, Lambeth's Tenancy Policy (February 2013) extends the right to succeed a tenancy to tenants' children providing they have been living with the tenant for 12 months prior to their death. Therefore if you were granted your tenancy after 1 April 2012, your tenancy can be passed on to your spouse or civil partner, or to your children.

If you have not obtained your tenancy through succession, then when you die your sole tenancy can pass to another qualifying member of your household. To qualify, that person must occupy your property as their only or main home when you die, and must be:

- Your spouse or civil partner
- Your son or daughter who has lived with you during the 12 months immediately before your death

If you die and no one is entitled to succeed your tenancy, your tenancy does not automatically end. It continues as a 'common law' tenancy as part of your estate. When this happens, we will end the tenancy by serving a Notice to Quit on the person dealing with your affairs. Anyone remaining in the property after the tenancy has ended must leave.

We will accept any money we receive from your estate or anyone who remains in the property after the tenancy has been ended as 'use and occupation' charges instead of rent.

If no one has the right to succeed the tenancy, and a member of your household meets one of the conditions below, we can grant that person a tenancy for the property, or another suitable property. The household member must have:

- Been living with you for at least 12 months before your death
- Been caring for you, or
- Accepted responsibility for your dependants.

If the property is not suited to the successor, we will offer suitable alternative accommodation. This may happen if the property:

- Is too big for the successor and their household, or
- Has been adapted to meet the needs of someone with a disability and the adaptations are no longer needed.

For more information on succession and the things we take into account when deciding who can succeed a tenancy, contact us on 020 7926 6000.

Assignment

Assignment is where you transfer your tenancy to a family member. You are not normally allowed to do this while you are still living in your property.

If you are a secure or introductory tenant, you may assign (pass on) your tenancy to a person who would be qualified to succeed your tenancy if you died. You cannot assign your tenancy to friends who live with you. Demoted tenants may not assign their tenancies.

There can only be one succession or assignment, so if a tenant has already succeeded or assigned a tenancy they cannot pass on their tenancy again. A spouse, civil partner or member of the family wishing to receive the tenancy by assignment must provide proof that he or she has lived with the tenant for the last 12 months. If we grant a succession, the new tenant will take on all the rights and responsibilities of the tenancy from the previous tenant.

In certain situations the court also has the power to assign a tenancy.

Exchanging your property

If you are a secure tenant, you may exchange your tenancy with another secure tenant or an assured tenant of a social landlord. To exchange properties you must get our consent and the consent of the other tenant's landlord before exchange. It is a breach of your tenancy agreement if you receive any financial gain for agreeing to a mutual exchange.

For information on help available if your home becomes overcrowded, or the Transfer incentive Scheme, or if you have more rooms than you need then call us on 020 7926 4200 or visit www.lambeth.gov.uk/housing

Right to Buy

If you are a secure tenant, you may be able to buy your home at a discount under the government's Right to Buy scheme. To be eligible for the Right to Buy, you must be a secure tenant and have rented your home from one or more public-sector landlords for a qualifying period – usually five years.

For more information:

Telephone: 020 7926 6000

Visit: <https://housingmanagement.lambeth.gov.uk>

Right to Complain

You have the right to complain if you are not happy with your home or what we are doing. Visit <https://housingmanagement.lambeth.gov.uk> for more information on our complaints process or contact us on 020 7926 6000.

Housing Ombudsman

If you have been through all stages of our complaints procedure, and you are still not satisfied with the way we handled your complaint, you can contact the Housing Ombudsman. The Housing Ombudsman is an independent national service that investigates complaints about councils. It would expect you to have gone through all our complaints procedure before you involve the ombudsman. You can contact the Housing Ombudsman on **0300 111 3000** or info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Missed appointments

If a contractor misses a booked appointment, you are entitled to compensation of up to £20 from the contractor. Contact us as soon as you can to rearrange the appointment and to ask about compensation. The earlier you contact us the sooner we can rearrange for a contractor to visit you, make the repair and compensate you for the missed appointment.

To report a missed appointment:

Telephone: 020 7926 6000

Right to compensation for improvements

If you move after making improvements to your property (for which we gave you permission), you may be entitled to compensation. See our Repairs Manual for more information.

Right to information and data protection

By signing your tenancy agreement you agreed to us processing your personal information in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. We process your information for various reasons, including rent collection, housing management, equal-opportunity monitoring, and research.

When we ask you for personal information, we will:

- Tell you why we need it
- Ask only for what we need, and not collect too much or irrelevant information
- Protect it and make sure it is not given to anyone who should not see it
- Let you know if we share it with other organisations, for example to give you better public services (you can say no to us sharing your information)
- Not keep it longer than necessary

To help us keep this information reliable and up to date, we ask you to:

- Give us accurate information
- Tell us as soon as possible if there are any changes, for example in your household or other circumstances

You are entitled to copies of information we hold about you unless:

- The information has been given to us in confidence
- The law prevents us giving it to you

We may charge a fee for providing this information.

For more details contact us on 020 7926 6000.

Your Responsibilities

Alongside your rights as a tenant, you have a number of responsibilities to help ensure you and your neighbours live safely, in a pleasant environment that is free from harassment and unacceptable behaviour. If you do not fulfil your responsibilities, you are breaking the terms of your tenancy agreement.

In this section we list your main responsibilities as a Lambeth tenant.

Paying your rent

You must pay your rent. It is due every Monday one week in advance. There are various ways you can pay your rent – see your finances – paying your rent – for more information. If you are worried about rent arrears, contact us on 020 7926 6000.

Paying your rent by direct debit

Direct Debit is a quick, simple and secure way to pay your rent, and more than 45,000 Lambeth residents already pay their council tax by Direct Debit.

By paying your rent by Direct Debit you can say goodbye to queues, cash, debit cards and rent swipe cards. Direct Debit helps us save money, which we can spend on improving services to you.

How it works

- You complete the direct debit form at www.lambeth.gov.uk/housing and choose a preferred payment day – choose the 6th, 16th or 26th day of the month
- We send you direct debit payments each month
- We make sure your direct debit payments are fully protected with our direct debit payment guarantee

Sign up to our safe and secure direct debit rental scheme at www.lambeth.gov.uk/housing

Applying for housing benefit

You may be eligible for housing benefit to help with your rent. You are responsible for making the claim and for informing the Housing Benefit office of any changes in your circumstances, such as changes to the people living in your home.

Keeping your home in good order

You are responsible for some repairs inside your home and for keeping your property and garden in good order.

You must report any repair as soon as possible and allow our repair contractors to do any work needed to your home.

For more information see our Your environment section, or the Tenant Management Organisation repairs service guide.

Safety

To help keep you, your neighbours and your local community safe you must:

- Not store bottled paraffin, petrol or any other toxic or dangerous materials in your home, garage, store, or in any shared areas such as balconies. Liquid petroleum gas (LPG) can be kept in disposable containers no larger than one litre and designed to British Standards
- Not leave syringes where other residents may come into contact with them
- Not keep any firearm, shotgun, or air-powered weapon (for example an air rifle) in your home without the firearms or shotgun certificate required by law. You must also get our written permission to keep it, which we only give in exceptional circumstances. If we give you permission, you must ensure that the weapon is always secure, and that you comply with all legal requirements and the conditions of our permission. You must never discharge (fire) any firearm, shotgun, rifle, or air weapon in or near your home, or anywhere in the local area
- Dispose of all rubbish and recycling properly, for example in the bins or rubbish chutes provided
- Keep communal areas clear
- Service any gas appliances you have installed, for example a gas cooker

See our Your safety section for more information.

If you have condensation or think that you may have asbestos in your home see the Health and Safety section or our Tenant Management Organisation repairs service guide for more information.

Acceptable behaviour

You are responsible for the behaviour of those living with you or visiting your home, including children. You must ensure that you, people in your household or your visitors do not behave in an anti-social way, and this may include hate crime, harassment, domestic violence, abuse of our staff or being a gang member.

If you or any member of your household is convicted of criminal activity in the area near your home, we may consider action to repossess your home.

See our Your Safety section for more information.

To report anti-social behaviour, contact us on 020 7926 6000.

In an emergency always call 999.

Using your property as your only or main home

You will have security of tenure as long as you occupy your property as your only or main home. If you stop using your property as your main home, or are away for more than six months without letting us know, we may end your tenancy. If you start to live somewhere else you must let us know immediately, even if you intend to return.

If you gain a legal interest in any other residential property, for example you inherit a house; we will assume it will be your main home unless you can show us otherwise.

Extended holidays

If you want to go away for longer than eight weeks, it is a good idea to talk to us first, letting us know:

- How long you are likely to be away
- Your forwarding address
- If you are staying away for longer than you intended, let us know as soon as possible. If you go away without telling us and we find someone else living in your home, we will assume you have illegally sublet the property or given up possession, so we may end your tenancy

If you leave your home unoccupied for more than a few days, you can help protect it by:

- Turning off the main stopcock for the water supply
- Running all hot and cold water taps until the flow of water stops
- Turning off all gas appliances and the immersion heater
- Checking your home is securely locked. This means all windows and doors. If you have windows that allow for ventilation, ensure you lock the windows rather than just putting down the ventilation handle
- Checking that all external doors and windows including skylights are still secured. It's important to check that wooden frames are still solid and not starting to rot. It doesn't matter how good a lock you have – if the framework is not solid, the lock will give easily

If you do turn off the water supply by turning off the stopcock before you go away, make sure you turn it back on when you return. You could leave a note to remind yourself when you return. Do not use the boiler or immersion heater until the stopcock has been turned back on and check that all taps, tanks, cisterns and cylinders are working.

While you are away you are still responsible for paying your rent. You should also arrange to deal with other day-to-day matters concerning your home, for example asking a neighbour to collect your mail. If you want us to accept rent from someone who is not the main tenant/s, you must get our agreement for this in advance.

Contents insurance

We are responsible for repairing and maintaining the building your home is in, but you are responsible for the contents of your home. This means that if there is a fire, flood, storm damage, accident or burglary, you will be responsible for replacing anything that is damaged or missing, such as carpets, furniture, clothing, curtains and your personal belongings, and this can be very costly. We strongly recommend you take out home contents insurance as protection against this.

Farr Insurance offers low-cost home contents insurance designed specifically for our tenants and leaseholders. How much you pay will depend on what you insure and for how much, and your postcode. Payment methods are easy and flexible and can be made once a year; fortnightly or monthly by cash; or monthly by direct debit. All cash payments are made by swipe card via the allpay network; visit www.allpay.net for more information.

For more information about contents insurance call us on 020 7926 6000 or visit <https://housingmanagement.lambeth.gov.uk>

If you prefer, you can insure the contents of your home using any other insurance company. It is important to include third-party cover, which will cover you if anyone claims against you, for example if you leave a tap running and flood your neighbour's home.

When you must contact us

This section lists the situations where you must contact us to get our permission before going ahead.

Subletting

Subletting is where you let one or more rooms in your home to a sub-tenant, who has sole use of one or more rooms. If you are a secure tenant (not an introductory or demoted tenant) and want to sublet part of your home, you must first get our written permission. We would only refuse permission if subletting would result in your home being overcrowded. A sub-tenant cannot be included on your tenancy agreement.

You must not sublet the whole of your home. If you do, this is 'illegal subletting' and we can end your tenancy. We make regular checks to make sure only the people who should be there are living in our properties (for more information see Breaching your tenancy).

If you sublet part of your home, this may affect your housing benefit entitlements.

For more information on subletting:

Telephone: 020 7926 6000

Taking a lodger into your home

A lodger is someone who lives with you in your home, pays you money for this, and does not have exclusive use of any rooms. They also probably receive some service from you such as laundry or meals. You may allow anyone to lodge in your home, as long as you first get our written permission. We would usually only refuse permission if having a lodger would result in your home being overcrowded. A lodger cannot be included on your tenancy agreement.

If you have a lodger, this may affect your housing benefit entitlements.

For more information on taking a lodger into your home:

Telephone: 020 7926 6000

Visitors to your home

If anyone comes to stay with you for more than four weeks, please let us know so we can record them on our files as an 'authorised occupier'. An authorised occupier is someone who is living with you long-term with our permission.

We may refuse permission for your guest to be an authorised occupier if:

- You are subletting part of your home to them without our permission
- They are causing the property to be overcrowded
- They are not allowed to stay at your home for some other reason, for example anti-social behaviour

If we record someone as an authorised occupier, this does not mean we have granted them any tenancy rights.

Decorating your home

You must keep the inside of your home reasonably well decorated. We will decorate the outside of your property and communal areas of flats and maisonettes from time to time.

If you would like to decorate the outside of your property, you need to get our permission first and show us a plan of how you would like to decorate.

We will repair any of your decorations that our contractors damage when they are carrying out repairs or improvements to your property. Or we may give you a reasonable allowance to do the work instead.

These offers do not apply if the repair work is needed because you have broken the terms of your tenancy by doing work without our permission.

Home improvements

If you want to change the structure or outside of your home, you will need our written permission.

The same rules apply if you want to install a garage, greenhouse, shed, pigeon loft, parking space, driveway, wall, security grille, television aerial or satellite dish.

In certain situations you may be entitled to compensation for improvements you make to your home.

See our Repairs section or Tenant Management Organisation repairs service guide for more information.

You are responsible for maintaining improvements you make to your home. If you make an improvement without first getting our written permission, we may:

- Obtain an order from the court requiring you to put the property back to its previous state
- In very serious cases, obtain an order from the court ending your tenancy
- Return the property to its original state and charge you for the cost of doing this, including the cost of repairing any damage you caused. We will not be responsible for any damage our contractors cause when removing your unauthorised improvements.

Installing floor coverings

Wooden or laminate floors can make homes noisy and can result in complaints from your neighbours about noise nuisance. Normally, we will not grant permission for you to fit laminate flooring or sanded floor boards in your home, unless:

- You live on the ground floor
- No one lives beneath you

If you already have wooden or laminate floors, they can remain as long as we receive no complaints about noise. However, if a neighbour does complain, you will have to try to reduce the noise, for example by laying a rug, carpet or good-quality underlay. If complaints persist, as a last resort we may ask you to remove the flooring.

Certain floorings can make some medical conditions worse. If this applies to you and you want to fit an alternative type of flooring, contact us on 020 7926 6000.

Owning a pet

If you want to keep a pet, it must be suitable for your home and lifestyle and you must get our authorisation beforehand.

For us to grant authorisation, you must meet the following two conditions; i.e. the pet must not be a nuisance and if you have a dog, it must be micro chipped. You will be in breach of your tenancy if you keep a dog without our permission which may result in legal action. According to The Microchipping of Dogs (England) Regulations 2015, it is compulsory for all dogs over the age of eight weeks in England to be fitted with microchips from 6 April 2016.

We will refuse permission for any dog covered by the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, such as a Pit Bull Terrier, Japanese Tosa, Dogo Argentino, Fila Brasileiro or any other dog listed under this law.

We will not grant you permission to have more than two dogs, except in very exceptional cases. You are not allowed to breed dogs commercially or sell any animals from your home.

We will refuse permission if we think your pet will cause a nuisance or be a danger to other residents. We can withdraw our permission for you to keep domestic pets at any time, so it is important to be a responsible owner.

You are responsible for your pets and those owned by your visitors, sub-tenants or lodgers. A dog must wear a collar and tag showing the owner's name and address at all times while in public and must be kept on a lead when on our estates. If they cause damage or a mess, we will charge you for clearing it up and take any other action that we think is necessary to resolve the problem.

For more information on applying for responsible pet ownership and information on local vets who offer discounted rates for microchipping, visit your local area housing office or contact us on 020 7926 6000.

Alternatively, visit Battersea Dogs and Cats home:

Telephone: 020 7622 3626

Visit: www.battersea.org.uk

Running a business from home

If you wish to trade or run a business from your home, you need to get our written permission first.

We will generally grant permission, unless:

- you intend to carry out your trade or business from a garage, shed or shared area at the property
- Your activities will cause a risk to you or anyone else's safety
- You will disturb or cause nuisance to your neighbours, or
- Your activities will break the law or planning or environmental health requirements

We will not normally give permission for businesses or trades that require you to employ staff or install machinery, but we will generally agree to occupations like accounting, freelance writing/journalism or child-minding. We may withdraw our permission if the business or trade causes a nuisance, or you don't get planning permission for it.

For more about planning and environmental health:

Telephone: 020 7926 1000

Visit: <https://housingmanagement.lambeth.gov.uk>

If your household changes

We want to make sure that your home remains suitable for you and your household. This section tells you more about what we can do if your circumstances or needs change.

Support for older residents

Sheltered housing offers accommodation for older tenants (over 60) and people with disabilities (over 55) enabling them to live independently in their own self-contained flat, with the added security of having someone to call on in emergencies. You must have a clear rent account to qualify for sheltered housing.

For more information about transferring to sheltered housing:

Telephone: 020 7926 6000

Visit: <https://housingmanagement.lambeth.gov.uk>

Growing family or overcrowding

If your household increases so that your home becomes overcrowded, Lambeth Council may have a responsibility to re-house you and your household. This does not apply if your home becomes overcrowded because you have invited extra people to live in your home.

For more information:

Telephone: 020 7926 1000

Visit: <https://housingmanagement.lambeth.gov.uk>

Living in a home that is too large for you

If you are living in a Lambeth Council property with more rooms than you need, or a wheelchair-adapted property that you no longer need, you could benefit from our Transfer Incentive Scheme.

If you qualify for the scheme, you will be given high priority for a move to an area of your choice in Lambeth. We will also pay you for each bedroom you give up when you move to a smaller home, or for giving up a wheelchair-adapted property you no longer need. We will also pay for any removal or connection costs if you move to another home in Lambeth.

For more information about the Transfer Incentive Scheme:

Telephone: 020 7926 6000

If you move out

If you decide you want to end your tenancy, you must give us four weeks' written notice ending on a Monday (this is called a 'Notice to Quit'). You must deliver your Notice to Quit to your local area housing office (see Contact us, for details).

We will trace people who give up their tenancy without giving notice and may take legal action to recover any outstanding rent or repairs charges.

You are responsible for paying your rent and other charges until the end of your notice period.

Any joint tenant has the right to end the tenancy by giving notice. A notice served by one joint tenant will end the tenancy for all tenants.

When your tenancy ends, we will inspect your property before you leave. When you leave you must:

- Make sure that everybody leaves the property
- Leave the property clean and tidy
- Complete any repairs or decorations that are your responsibility
- Leave all fixtures and fittings as they were at the beginning of your tenancy. This includes leaving any improvements that we have authorised, and removing and repairing any unauthorised alterations to return the property to its previous state. We may charge you for our costs if we have to correct any unauthorised alterations or any damage caused. We make allowances for reasonable wear and tear
- Return all keys and fobs (including shed, garage and security door keys) to your local office
- If you keep any keys, we may charge you for locks we have to change
- Return any parking permits

If you fail to do any of these tasks, we will charge you the cost of doing them ourselves. If we cannot rent the property to someone else because you have not done these tasks, you must pay us for any rent we lose.

If you leave anything in the property, we will keep it for seven days (unless we decide it is rubbish), and then sell or dispose of it and charge you any costs for doing so.

If you are transferring to another Lambeth Council property, we may withdraw your transfer offer if you:

- Do not pay all the charges you owe, or
- Fail to repair any damage in your home that is not the result of fair wear and tear

Our Rights and Responsibilities

As your managing agent, we have rights and responsibilities that ensure we can manage our properties for the benefit of everybody who lives in them. We have a duty to:

- Maintain the property and surrounding land
- Deal with repairs
- Set and collect rent and service charges
- Tackle anti-social behaviour and other forms of harassment

We have the right to gain access to your home to do repairs, to deal with pests, or in an emergency. We can also repossess your home, although we can only do this under certain circumstances governed by law, for example if you break your tenancy agreement, see Breaching your tenancy agreement for more information.

In some cases, we have the right to end your tenancy and move you out of your home. If we do so, we must find you suitable alternative accommodation that meets the reasonable needs of you and your household. We may do this if:

- Your home is overcrowded
- You need to move out so we can do repairs or improvement work
- Your home is part of a redevelopment scheme
- Your home is linked to a job and we need to give it to another employee
- Your home has been specially designed or adapted for people with disabilities, or is reserved for people with special needs, but no-one in your household needs that type of accommodation and we want to give it to someone who does
- The tenancy passed to you when the previous tenant died, you are not the previous tenant's spouse, and it is too large for your needs

If you are a common law tenant (not a secure, introductory or demoted tenant) we also have the right to end your tenancy by giving you at least four weeks' notice. This would apply to tenants in temporary accommodation, or tenants who lost their security of tenure by subletting their entire home, breaking the terms of their tenancy agreement.

We also have the right to collect 'use and occupation' charges if you stay in your home after your tenancy has ended (with or without our permission). This is not the same as paying rent, although the amount may be the same.

Our other rights and responsibilities are set out in full in your tenancy agreement and this handbook.



Lambeth

Key Contacts & Glossary

Section 7



Explanation of words

Anti-social behaviour Any behaviour that could cause alarm, harassment or distress to another person.

Choice-based lettings A register where tenants can bid for properties they would like to live in.

Fire risk assessment A comprehensive report carried out by experts to help identify the fire hazards and risks of communal areas of buildings.

Leaseholders Council A representative body for leaseholders made up of members from the six area leasehold forums

LGBT A common abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community.

Major works Significant work to improve council homes.

Micro-chipping A small microchip placed under the skin of an animal containing information such as its owner's name.

Mutual exchange Swapping your home with another council or housing association tenant, provided your landlord agrees.

Planned maintenance Maintenance work to communal areas as part of a planned programme of work, for example lifts, water systems, electrics.

Resident participation Where Housing Management works with residents and partners to share ideas and improve services.

Responsive repairs Repairs done in response to a resident's request.

Service charge A charge leaseholders pay for maintenance and repairs.

Sheltered housing scheme A group of properties specially designed for elderly or disabled residents who need extra help but still want to keep their independence.

Suspended Possession Order A court order setting out certain conditions that must be met or a home will be repossessed.

Tenanted A property lived in by a resident paying rent.

Tenants' and residents' association

A group of tenants and leaseholders representing a local area they live in, usually an estate.

Tenant management organisations (TMOs)

Organisations managed by the tenants and leaseholders. Resident members of the TMOs create an independent legal body and elect a management committee to manage the organisation. The TMO then manages the housing service under a management agreement with Lambeth Council.

Key Contacts

Emergency contacts

If you smell gas report it to National Grid:

0800 111 999

Emergency services (ambulance, fire or police): **999**

If you suspect a neighbour is being abused or treated incorrectly report it to:

The police - call **101**

Visit: <http://content.met.police.uk/Borough/Lambeth>

Gas Safe register

To arrange your annual gas service of the gas appliances you own:

Telephone: 0800 408 5500

Visit: www.gassaferegister.co.uk

Fire brigade

To arrange a home safety visit or for advice on how to make your home safe:

Telephone: 020 8555 1200

Visit: www.london-fire.gov.uk

Housing Management

General enquiries: 020 7926 6000

Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm

Email: HMfeedback@lambeth.gov.uk

Website: <https://housingmanagement.lambeth.gov.uk>

Emergency out-of-hours repairs:

Open

Monday to Friday, 8pm to 8am; Saturdays, Sundays and bank holidays, 24 hours

Telephone: 020 7926 6666

Housing Management

North Area Housing Office

91 Kennington Lane, SE11 4HQ

Open

9am to 5pm – Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday (10am to 5pm – Wednesdays only)

Email: HMnortharea@lambeth.gov.uk

Telephone: 020 7926 6000*

Housing Management

Central Area Housing Office

Brixton Customer Centre, Olive Morris House, 18 Brixton Hill, Brixton, London SW2 1RD

Open

Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

Email: HMcentralarea@lambeth.gov.uk

Telephone: 020 7926 6000*

Housing Management

South Area Housing Office

Lunham Road, Central Hill Estate, Upper Norwood, SE19 1AA

Open

Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

Email: HMsoutharea@lambeth.gov.uk

Telephone: 020 7926 6000*

*All calls for area housing offices are directed through the Lambeth call centre.

Lambeth Council

Lambeth Council - Service Centre

Open

Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

Telephone: 020 7926 1000

Email: infoservice@lambeth.gov.uk

Visit: www.lambeth.gov.uk

24 hour automated credit or debit card hot line

Telephone: 020 8290 2086

Housing Options and Advice Service

Speak to a customer service advisor at one of our Customer Centres.

Telephone: 020 7926 4200

Lambeth Revenues and Benefits Service

Telephone: 0345 302 2312

Write to them at

Brixton Customer Centre,
18 Brixton Hill, SW21RL

Email: benefitsinfo@lambeth.gov.uk

Lambeth Council Customer Care Centres

Brixton Customer Centre

Olive Morris House, 18 Brixton Hill, SW21RL

Open

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday,
9am to 5pm; Thursdays, 9am to 7pm

Lambeth reuse and recycling centres

Smugglers Way

Wandsworth, SW18 1JS

Open

Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm; Saturday,
8am to 6pm and Sunday, 8am to 5pm

Email: info@wrwa.gov.uk

Telephone: 020 8871 2788

Southwark

43 Devon Street (off Old Kent Road), SE15 1AL

Open

1 April to 30 September, 8am to 8pm;
1 October to 31 March, 8am to 6pm

Email: environment@southwark.gov.uk

Telephone: 020 7525 2000

Cringle Dock

Cringle Street (off Nine Elms Lane)
Battersea, SW8 5BX

Open

Monday to Sunday 24 hours a day

Email: info@wrwa.gov.uk

Telephone: 020 8871 2788

Vale Street

West Norwood (behind West Norwood
cemetery), SE27 9PA

Open

Monday, Thursday and Friday, 7.30am to
4.30pm; Saturday and Sunday, 8am to 5pm

Telephone: 020 7926 9000

Tenant Management Organisations

Angell Town Estate Management Board

Langport House, Overton Road, SW9 7HN

Telephone: 020 7926 8820

Blenheim Gardens Resident Management Organisation (RMO)

24 Prague Place, Blenheim Gardens estate, SW2 5ED

Telephone: 020 7926 0158 or
020 7926 0161

Email: blenheimgardens@
lambeth.gov.uk

Cetra Housing Co-operative Ltd

27 Cedars Road, SW4 0PN

Telephone: 020 7926 7555

Cottington Close Tenant Management Co-operative

1 Opal Street, Second Floor, SE11 4HZ

Telephone: 020 7926 8105

Email: BCrawford@lambeth.gov.uk

Cowley Resident Management Organisation (RMO)

147 Brixton Road, SW9 6LZ

Telephone: 020 7926 0690

Holland Rise TMO

95 Clapham Road, SW9 0HS

Telephone: 020 7926 0310

Loughborough Estate Management Board (EMB)

10 Featley Road, SW9 7LJ

Telephone: 020 7926 8800

Email: Loughborough@lambeth.gov.uk

Roupell Park Resident Management Company (RMC)

Community Office, Brockham Drive, SW2 3RY

Telephone: 020 7926 0219

Email: cdavis@lambeth.gov.uk

Waltham Resident Management Organisation

The Old Laundry, Thornicroft House, Stockwell Road, SW9 9PT

Telephone: 020 7926 9083

Email: waltham@lambeth.gov.uk

Wellington Mills Housing Co-operative

24 Mead Row, Kennington Road, SE1 7JG

Telephone: 020 7633 0255

Email: VBundhoo@lambeth.gov.uk

Anti-Social Behaviour: Organisations that provide support

There are many organisations that can provide support and advice to victims of anti-social behaviour and crime.

Family Lives

This is a national charity that provides help and support on all aspects of family life.

Call their confidential helpline on **0808 800 2222** or visit **www.familylives.org.uk**

Open 24 hours

Victim Support

This is an independent charity that provides support for anyone affected by crime, including victims, friends, and family. Their services are free and available to everyone, whether or not the crime has been reported and regardless of when it happened.

Call on **0808 168 9111** or visit **www.victimsupport.org.uk**

Open from 8am to 8pm on weekdays and slightly shorter hours on weekends.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SUPPORT SERVICES

Men's Advice Line

This is a confidential helpline for men experiencing violence by a current or ex-partner (in a heterosexual or same-sex relationship).

Call on **0808 801 0327** or visit **www.mensadvice.org.uk**

National Domestic Violence Helpline

This is a 24-hour helpline that provides information on how to access emergency refuge accommodation.

Call on **0808 200 0247** or visit **www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk**

SEXUAL VIOLENCE SUPPORT SERVICES

Camberwell Haven

The Haven is a specialist centre in South London for people who have recently been raped or sexually assaulted.

Call on 020 3299 6900 or visit **www.thehavens.co.uk**

South London Rape Crisis Centre

The centre provides specialist, confidential support and counselling to women and girls who have suffered any kind of sexual violence, recently or in the past.

Call on **0808 802 9999** or visit **www.rapecrisislondon.org.uk**

PETS

Information on being a responsible pet owner

Battersea Dogs and Cats home:

Telephone: 020 7622 3626

Visit: www.battersea.org.uk



Lambeth

Housing Management

ONLINE

Visit our website

<https://housingmanagement.lambeth.gov.uk>

Report a repair

<https://housingmanagement.lambeth.gov.uk/report-a-repair>

Report Anti-social behaviour (ASB)

<https://housingmanagement.lambeth.gov.uk/report-asb>

SEND US AN EMAIL

North Area office

HMnortharea@lambeth.gov.uk

Central Area

HMcentralarea@lambeth.gov.uk

South Area office

HMsoutharea@lambeth.gov.uk

Central Income Team

HMCITenquiries@lambeth.gov.uk

Home Ownership Services

HMhomeownership@lambeth.gov.uk

Freedom of Information enquiries

HMFOI@lambeth.gov.uk

Existing or new Housing

Ombudsman enquiries

HMIHO@lambeth.gov.uk

CALL US

020 7926 6000

Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm

020 7926 6666

(emergencies – outside working hours, weekends and bank holidays)

VISIT US

Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm at:

North Area office

91 Kennington Lane SE11 4HQ

covering North Lambeth,
Stockwell and Vassall

(opens from 10am on Wednesdays)

Central Area office

Brixton, Clapham and Tulse Hill
Brixton Customer Centre, Olive Morris House,
18 Brixton Hill, Brixton, London SW2 1RD

South Area office

Lunham Road, Central Hill Estate,
Upper Norwood SE19 1AA

covering Streatham and Norwood

Central Income Team

for all your rent enquiries

The Springfield Centre, 110 Union Road,
Stockwell SW8 2SH

Spanish

Si desea esta información en otro idioma, rogamos nos llame al 020 7926 1000.

Portuguese

Se desejar esta informação noutra idioma é favor telefonar para 020 7926 1000.

French

Si vous souhaitez ces informations dans une autre langue veuillez nous contacter au 020 7926 1000.

Bengali

এই তথ্য অন্য কোনো ভাষায় আপনার প্রয়োজন হলে অনুগ্রহ করে ফোন করুন 020 7926 1000.

Somali

Haddii aad jeclaan lahayd in aad warbixintan ku hesho luqad kale, fadlan annag nagala soo xiriir lambarka 020 7926 1000.

Polish

Aby otrzymać niniejsze informacje w innej wersji językowej, prosimy o kontakt pod numerem 020 7926 1000.