

## MOVING HOME

The Association will assist tenants who wish to exchange their tenancy with another Housing Association or Local Authority tenant. Transfers to other landlords will be supported providing the procedure and policy of those organisations is followed.

**Note: exchanges cannot take place if you have rent arrears .**

Consent will normally be given, except in some circumstances, e.g. that the dwelling to be vacated is not suitable for the incoming tenant, or that the dwelling was built for occupation by person(s) with special needs and the incoming tenant does not require the specialist type of accommodation.

If you wish to transfer *within* Dartington Housing Association's housing stock please let us know in writing stating your housing requirement.. You will be notified of any opportunities which may arise.

## How can I complain about Dartington Housing if I feel I have not been treated properly?

You have the right to complain about any service provided by Dartington Housing or the way you have been treated. A full copy of our Complaints and Appeals Policy is available on request.

**In summary:** If you have a complaint, your first step should be to raise the matter with the staff member dealing with you so any misunderstandings can be resolved. If you are not satisfied with this, or the member of staff cannot help you, you should contact the Forder Lane House office.

If you are still dissatisfied after dealing with the Housing Officer, you should contact the Chief Executive. If still dissatisfied after dealing with the Chief Executive , you may appeal to Association Board.

If he matter remains unresolved, you have the right to complain to the **Housing Ombudsman Service.**

## Gas emergencies :

If there is a smell of gas, the supply should be turned off at the mains and the Association's office informed immediately. If the office cannot be contacted immediately, contact National Grid and inform the office as soon as possible afterwards. If the position of the gas and electricity controls are not known ask the Association for advice.

South West Water : 0800 1691144

National Grid: 0800 111 999

Welcome to your  
new home

DARTINGTON  
HOUSING ASSOCIATION  
LIMITED

Large print copies available  
Please call 01803 863550

## Contents

### INTRODUCTION:

About This Leaflet	2
Welcome to Dartington Housing Association	3

### REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

How to report a repair	4
Our Responsibilities as Landlord	5
Your Responsibilities as Tenant	5

### YOUR TENANCY

Your Tenancy Agreement	6
Harassment and Nuisance Policy	6
Equal Opportunities Policy	6
How to Pay your Rent	7
Moving On	8

### OTHER ISSUES

Complaints	8
Emergency Numbers	8

## About This Booklet

This booklet tells you about the main things you may need to know. As a tenant of Dartington Housing Association

It does not cover everything in detail so it is important to always contact the office if you have any queries, on (01803) 863550.

## HOW TO PAY YOUR RENT

Your Tenancy Agreement provides details about your rent . Paying your rent is one of your most important responsibilities. You should make sure that your rent is paid regularly so you may continue living in your home.

If you fall into difficulty with your finances you must contact us immediately. They will be able to provide you with useful advice and help you manage your money to reduce falling into debt.

If you do not pay your rent and make no effort to contact your Housing Officer to explain your difficulties your home will be at risk from repossession.

Rents are reviewed annually, you will be notified at least one month in advance of any increase which is normally around the 1st April of each year.

You may pay your rent by any of the following methods:

- Cheque (made payable to Dartington Housing Association) - please post or visit the office.
- Cash—when visiting the office only. Please do not send cash in the post.
- Standing order (please request a form from the office, you will then need to instruct your bank)
- Depending on your circumstances you may be entitled to Housing Benefit.

The Housing Officer may collect your rent from your home if you cannot pay by any other means. Please contact the office if you are interested in this service.

At the end of each financial year you will automatically be sent a rent statement , although you can request one at any time.

Your rent does not include :

- Water Charges, Council Tax, Gas, Electricity and Telephone Bills.
- Insurance of your own belongings,
- TV Licence

## YOUR TENANCY AGREEMENT

Your tenancy agreement is the legal contract between you and the Association which is signed before moving into your home. Please keep your copy safe and inform the office if it gets lost. Your rights and responsibilities as a tenant of Dartington Housing Association are explained in the tenancy agreement. If you have any questions about your tenancy agreement please contact the office.

## LIVING IN THE COMMUNITY

How you treat your neighbours is extremely important to us. Most people live peacefully with their neighbours and we encourage our tenants to be tolerant and considerate in their dealings with neighbours. One of the conditions you sign to in the tenancy agreement requires that you do not cause nuisance to your neighbours, or allow harassment to your neighbours.

There are many different types of nuisance, from noise, verbal abuse, health hazards, untidy / dirty areas, to abandoned vehicles, physical abuse, and dangerous chemical storage.

In most cases we advise that you try to resolve any problems yourselves. Try to see each other's point of view and talk things over. This is often the most effective way of resolving a dispute.

If you have no success with this approach, please contact our Housing Officer who may be able to advise or help. We take harassment and nuisance very seriously and will do everything possible to help you come to a mutually beneficial solution.

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Dartington Housing Association Ltd operates an equal opportunities policy which means that tenants, employees, sub-contractors and members of the public will be treated with courtesy and respect, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion, nationality or sexual orientation.

Those who have a complaint or believe themselves to be subject to any form of harassment which involves the Association, or its representatives, should contact the Association.

## WELCOME TO DARTINGTON HOUSING ASSOCIATION

### About the Association

Dartington Housing Association Limited is a not-for-profit, exempt charity, registered with The Housing Corporation. We were formed in 1958 and aim to provide affordable housing, care and support services.

### The Board

The Association has a Board of Management made up of voluntary Members, with a wide range of experience and skills. The Board has overall responsibility for the activities of the Association. There are two elected Tenant Board Members.

### The Staff

The Association has its offices at Forder Lane House, Dartington. The Association staff are responsible for the day to day management and maintenance of the Association's housing stock and you should contact them should you have a problem with your property.

### The Office

The office is open from 09.00 am—5.00 pm Monday to Friday. There is an out of hours service for emergencies only. The number to call for daytime enquiries and evening emergencies is: 01803 863550.

### Regulator

Dartington Housing Association is regulated by the Housing Corporation which provides grants for building properties, regulates our work and checks our performance.

## REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

### Reporting a repair

Report repairs and maintenance problems to the office on 01803 863550. *If the problem occurs out of working hours and is an emergency, call the emergency number 08457 626 085.*

When reporting a repair it is important to tell us:

- As soon as possible
- Your name, address and telephone number
- A description of the fault (what it is and where it is)
- How it happened
- When we can have access to the property to carry out the repair.

Please remember:

- To ask for the identification card of the Approved Contractor
- We will not pay for any work ordered directly by a tenant from a contractor
- If you do not keep an appointment for a repair we may re-charge you the cost of the visit.

Tenants should NOT order repairs direct from sub-contractors.

When you notify a repair to the Association we will confirm if it falls into the category of EMERGENCY, URGENT or ROUTINE repair.

We monitor the time it takes to complete work against target times:

- EMERGENCY REPAIRS: within 24 Hours—these are repairs which affect the health, safety or security of yourself or others using the premises.
- URGENT REPAIRS: 5 Working Days
- ROUTINE REPAIRS: Within 1 calendar month

We also monitor tenant satisfaction with our repairs through repair cards that we ask you to complete and return to us so we can improve our service to you.

### Planned Repairs

The Association also has a programme for redecorating the outside of its properties, carrying out major repairs and regularly servicing installations such as gas safety checks, and smoke detectors.

## OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

We are responsible for the overall maintenance of your home, including the structure, exterior, and installations that we have supplied.

We accept responsibility for the following repairs:

### Structure and Exterior

- Drains, gutters, pipes
- The roof and chimneys
- Outside walls, windows, doors
- Internal walls, floors, ceilings and doors, but not

decorating.

- Stairs, steps, paths, boundary walls, fences, access ways.

### Fixtures

- Work-tops, fitted cabinets and cupboards.

### Installations

- Basins, sinks, baths, showers, toilets, waste pipes.

## YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

Please keep the interior decoration in good order and carry out minor repairs. These include the following:

- Replacing door handles and filling in small plaster cracks
- Replacing fuses, plugs, light bulbs, fluorescent tubes & starters and toilet seats.
- Cleaning blocked sinks, toilet pans and baths where the blockage is caused by misuse or negligence (disposable nappies, sanitary towels etc. should not be put down the toilet )
- Relighting gas pilot lights and adjusting central heating thermostats where possible.

You are responsible for maintaining any domestic appliances you have brought to the property such as cookers, washing machines and fridges. If you buy new carpets you must adapt the doors to fit.

If damage is caused to your home on purpose or which could have been avoided you must repair it yourself. You may contact the Association for assistance but you will be charged for any work carried out by one of the Association's sub-contractors.