



National  
Trust

# Residential Tenants Handbook

August 2025

From 1 May 2026, the Renters' Rights Act 2025 changes private residential tenancies in England.

Information in this Handbook will be updated shortly.

# Residential Tenants Handbook

## Your guide, to your Tenancy

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## Welcome!

The keys in your hand are about to open a new chapter in your life. Whether you are moving into a cottage or to the wing of one of our mansion properties, once you step over the threshold, you will become an integral part of the National Trust and the building's story. Whatever your reasons for choosing to be a National Trust tenant, we hope that you will enjoy making the property your home, a home which we hope you will be happy in for many years to come. This handbook is intended to give you all the information and support you need to make the property your home and build what we hope will be a happy and long-lasting relationship with the National Trust.

As the National Trust's Director of Land and Estates, it is my responsibility to oversee our rental houses and cottages and to ensure not only that all of our tenants are receiving a good level of service but also that our buildings are protected, as an integral part of our historic built environment, for generations to come. In these pages you will find all the essential information we think you will need to enable you to settle into your new home. In particular, you will find details of who to call for repairs or advice along with some hints and tips to help you make the most of your new home.

Welcome to the National Trust and I very much hope you enjoy your new home.

**Giles Hunt, Land & Estates Director**

## National Trust as a landlord

Your property is one of around 5,000 houses and cottages we own and rent out. Many of these places are on larger estates that we have acquired and sometimes they include entire villages that were once homes for estate workers. The houses that we let out on residential tenancies form a significant percentage of the number of buildings that we own and care for. The Trust is a conservation Charity, the income from the homes we let out plays an essential part in funding both the maintenance of these properties and our many special places, to which we provide access to tens of millions of people each year. Our status as a Charity means we are bound by the Charities Act to rent out properties on the best terms we can reasonably obtain.

**As landlords we aim, above all, to be fair and professional. We recognise we have an important responsibility to you and to all our residential tenants. We want to provide you with as good a service as we can. Our priorities are to:**

- provide warm, comfortable homes
- maintain all of the houses and cottages we own as part of our historic environment
- raise income for our core purpose work

## In it for the long term

We know that one of the things that is most important to our tenants is the knowledge that, unless there are unexpected circumstances or disputes, they can enjoy their tenancy of a National Trust property for the long term. There are times when our plans for a rental property may change, but in the majority of cases, we are keen to build long-lasting tenant-landlord relationships.

## People and Nature Thriving

The National Trust is committed to promoting and preserving the places of natural beauty and historic interest for which it has the privilege to be responsible for the benefit of the nation. Our strategy 'People and Nature Thriving', outlines how we will achieve this, click the picture below to read our full strategy document;-



Over the course of the next ten years, we have three ambitious goals:

- restoring nature, not just on National Trust land, but everywhere;
- ending unequal access to nature, beauty and history; and
- inspiring millions more people to care and take action.

For the next decade, we'll work towards these goals. We'll also ensure the bedrocks of the National Trust – our members, volunteers, tenants and the treasured places we care for, continue to thrive.

## Your Personal Data

The security of your data is important to us. You can find our Privacy Policy at:-

[www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/privacy-policy](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/privacy-policy)

We will need to collect and process some of your personal data at various stages of your tenancy from the initial viewing, through to processing your tenancy application, credit checking, referencing and ongoing communications with you.

As a Tenant of the National Trust, we will use your personal information to fulfil our contract with you. This may include, but is not limited to, sending you rental invoices, tenant and landlord correspondence, or contacting you with information about issues or activities relating to your tenancy or property.

We will not pass your details to third parties except where you have provided explicit consent, or where we need to do so in order to fulfil our legal or landlord responsibilities. For example, sending your address or contact details to a maintenance contractor so they can carry out repairs, or where we are required to liaise with Council Tax departments or Utilities companies at the beginning or end of your Tenancy.

Our Let Estate Teams will manage this process with you throughout your tenancy and will manage the deletion or retention of documents as per our Retention Schedule.

## Fees, Charges and Deposits

The Tenant Fees Act 2019 and Renting Homes (Fees etc.) (Wales) Act 2019 legislation restricts a Landlords ability to charge fees associated with residential lettings.

A copy of our Permitted Fees Schedule will be provided to you when you apply for a Tenancy, detailing any costs associated with the property letting. We do not take or hold residential letting deposits for our residential tenancies in England or Wales.

## Right to Rent Legislation (England)

The UK Government requires landlords in England to complete Right to Rent checks on each adult, over the age of 18, applying to live in the property. You can find further details at:-

[www.gov.uk/check-tenant-right-to-rent-documents](http://www.gov.uk/check-tenant-right-to-rent-documents)

## How to Rent Guide (England)

We will provide you with a copy of the UK Governments "How to Rent Guide". It provides a checklist and more detailed information on each stage of the letting process:-

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-rent](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-rent)

## Modern Slavery

The National Trust is committed to eliminating modern slavery. We are working across the organisation, including our Let Estate, to continuously improve preventative measures. This includes checks before and during tenancies.

# Tenants' Association of the National Trust (TANT)

This page has been written by TANT to provide guidance on the support it can provide for National Trust residential tenants

The Tenants' Association of the National Trust (TANT) is a volunteer-led organisation supporting everyone who lives in a National Trust property as a tenant or leaseholder. TANT believes that the residents occupying National Trust properties, and the communities around them, are vital to the preservation of the buildings they occupy. The National Trust formally recognises TANT as the representative body for residential tenants.

## How TANT can help

Every year, TANT helps tenants, leaseholders, and the National Trust resolve problems and strengthen relationships.

Should you require advice or have any queries or concerns regarding your residential tenancy, we first advise you to contact your local National Trust office. However, if you would prefer not to, if your issues remain unresolved, or if you require further advice, TANT is here to assist. Our primary aim is to help tenants enjoy their properties and feel secure and settled in their homes.

TANT offers free and confidential support and advice on matters such as:

- General residential tenant matters
- Repairs
- Rent reviews
- Long leaseholds
- Mediation in difficult tenancy discussions

TANT does not offer legal advice.

## Local Associations

TANT has local associations across the country in many estates and villages, working in conjunction with our central committee. If you wish to know if there is a local association in your area, please contact TANT.

## Stay up to date

To be kept informed about TANT activities, please send your details to: [info@tantuk.org](mailto:info@tantuk.org).

If you would like to receive TANT's regular updates, please add your details to the database on its website contact page – this gives you access to regular updates.

## Getting in touch with TANT

You can reach TANT through the following channels:

Website: [www.tantuk.org](http://www.tantuk.org)  
Telephone: 0845 463 3563  
Email: [info@tantuk.org](mailto:info@tantuk.org)



Tenants' Association  
of the National Trust

## Settling in

### Moving in... top tips for Tenants

- Take meter readings and contact all the relevant utility suppliers e.g. gas, electricity, water and telephone/broadband suppliers
- Make sure you have home contents insurance
- Transfer your TV licence to your new address
- Notify the local council so that they can update their records for Council Tax and any benefits you might receive
- Change your personal address details (bank accounts for example) and arrange a postal redirect service.

### The schedule of condition

You will be given a 'schedule of condition' or an inventory to check through. This document describes the condition of your home at the start of the tenancy and lists the items, fixtures and fittings included in the tenancy. It's an important document because it records what we have jointly agreed to be the condition and contents of the property when you moved in. It will be used to determine whether or not you are leaving the property in the same condition when you move out. It will include the amount of fuel in fuel tanks (e.g. gas, oil) where relevant and we ask that, when you move out, you leave the same amount of fuel in the tank.

### Who can live with you...?

Any members of your immediate family (partner and children) can live with you, although if you want other people to move in, you will need to get our consent. Please note that anyone over the age of 18 who lives in the property, whether they are a close family member or not, will need to be named on the tenancy and meet Right to Rent checks.

### Household changes

Under current UK law, if you are married or in a civil partnership and your relationship ends, both of you have the right to stay in the property while you are still married or civil partners. You should take legal advice on your ability to remain in the property as it will depend on your specific circumstances. Speak to us at an early stage so we can work with you. If you are not married your rights will depend on whether the tenancy is held in one name or in both names.

## Who does what...?

### Landlord's responsibilities

#### Our aims

Our aim is to be a fair and responsible landlord, providing good homes for responsible tenants. We also want to do everything we can to build sound relationships with our tenants, and this means being clear about our respective responsibilities and communicating well. The details of each individual tenancy agreement may vary, but all tenancies are based on common principles, explained over the next few pages. **Please always refer to your own individual tenancy agreement for the specific terms attached to your tenancy.**

## Our customer service standards

### As landlords, we aim to:

- Treat all our tenants with dignity and respect. We'll also treat people equally and fairly, making sure no tenant is treated less favourably than another, for example on grounds of race, ethnic origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability.
- Communicate in a way that is professional and courteous. We'll get in touch promptly if we're not available when you want to contact us
- Where possible, we will arrange any meetings to take place at the rented property. We'll make sure we keep any appointments we make. If we're late or can't get there, we'll explain why
- Make sure any National Trust employee or contractor who visits can show ID
- Investigate any complaint you make to us
- Continually review and monitor our services, to make improvements where we can.

## Our rights and responsibilities as a Landlord

### As the property owner and landlord, the National Trust has the right to:

- Enter the property so we can carry out repairs, inspections and general servicing
- Review and change your rent and add any other relevant charges, such as service charges or recharges (some properties are supplied by community heating systems, for example) in accordance with your tenancy agreement and the relevant tenant fees legislation.

### It is our responsibility to:

- Respect the fact that the property is your home, leaving you to enjoy it without unnecessary interruption or disturbance, and consulting you if ever there are changes proposed to the tenancy agreement.
- Complete the repairs for which we're responsible (see page 17 for details), as efficiently as we can. Depending on the type and duration of your Tenancy agreement, we will normally look after the main structure of the building. In most cases, this includes maintaining:
  - the structure and exterior of the building and outbuildings we are responsible for, including roofs, chimneys and walls, and any access paths and steps
  - the outside decoration including, doors and window frames (not the glass, see page 11) and the condition of internal plasterwork (not including minor cracks)
  - drains, septic tank equipment, gutter repairs and external pipes
  - gas piping, electrical wiring and all their fittings, and the heating and plumbing installations and appliances we have provided
  - the water systems within the property, carrying out any measures required to control legionella when there is a change of tenant
  - before the start of any tenancy, we will normally conduct a survey of any materials we know contains asbestos. If we know that there is asbestos in your property, we will advise you about its nature and location so you will know to avoid any actions that may cause disturbance or damage and how to report any incidents.



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## Who does what...?

### Tenant's rights and responsibilities

#### Your rights as a tenant

- You have the right to live peacefully in your home. You should not experience any unnecessary interruption from the Trust or anyone working on behalf of the Trust.
- You cannot terminate your tenancy agreement within the initial fixed period unless there is a break clause, but if you wish to do so after the fixed term has passed you can serve one month's notice in writing to your **Residential Lettings Contact** (see page 33 for more details about what to do if you decide to move on).

## Your responsibilities

In return, we ask that you:

- Look after the property, as set out in the terms of your tenancy agreement, clearing gutters and rainwater goods regularly
- Pay your rent on time, on the dates set out in your agreement or any other dates we have agreed
- Live in your home and do not sub-let any part of it
- Avoid being a nuisance or annoyance to your neighbours or others
- Do not use the property for trade or commercial activities
- Manage your household's waste and recycling, tidily and securely to prevent damage and infestation by pests
- Give our staff access to your property to check its condition, complete repair or maintenance work, or discuss any relevant matters with you
- Communicate with the National Trust team in a way that's courteous and co-operative. For instance, if you can't keep an appointment, let us know; and make sure no-one in your household ever treats our staff or contractors in a way that is inappropriate, abusive, threatening or perceived as harassment
- Let us know in writing if you plan to leave, giving us at least one month's notice following the end of your fixed term
- Make sure the property is in good condition when you leave, redecorating the property in approved colours at the end of the tenancy if necessary
- Notify us of any repairs required as soon as they arise.

## Home Improvements

Our view is that a lived-in house is a cared for house, so we hugely value the role our tenants play in the ongoing conservation of a building, and we strive to build good landlord and tenant relationships. We also recognise that many tenants make our properties their long-term home and may wish to make minor alterations to the property.



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## Making the property your own: what's OK, what's not

Firstly, always check your tenancy agreement or ask your **Residential Lettings Contact** to identify whether you need our permission. Other consents may also be required, for example planning approval or Listed Building Consent.

- Decorating the inside is generally fine, in most cases it is your responsibility. When you move on, you will need to return it to the same condition as when you first arrived. So that might mean if you have used strong dark colours on the walls you may have to repaint them the colour they were when you moved in.
- In many of our historic properties you will need to use specialist breathable paints, please ask if you are not sure!
- If you want to hang pictures or make any fixings, it is best to check with your local **Residential Lettings Contact** first. In some properties, our formal consent may be required to avoid damaging fragile walls or breaching planning legislation.
- Decorating outside is our responsibility. Your tenancy agreement can give you more information.
- In the garden, please do bring colour to flower borders and plant pots or sow vegetable beds.

## Looking after the property

### As tenants, we ask you to:

- Look after your own belongings and keys to the property
- Arrange sufficient Home Contents Insurance to cover your own possessions
- Keep the property clean and in good condition throughout your tenancy. In particular, we expect you to keep the interior decoration of the property in good condition; keep the windows clean, inside and out; keep sinks, baths and showers unblocked; make sure you regularly clean and de-scale any showerheads
- Replace glass panes; bath and basin plugs and toilet seats; and light bulbs
- Manage your domestic waste and recycling to discourage vermin
- Keep the garden neat, tidy and well maintained. This includes trimming hedges (avoiding bird nesting season) but not cutting down any trees, or making significant changes to the garden without our written consent. You should not change the location property boundaries.

### Please let us know if:

- We need to do any repairs (**see page 17**)
- There are any water leaks within the property
- The hot water/heating system is not heating up properly or if there are any other problems with the system
- You have any queries or concerns regarding trees on the property.

**Unless agreed with us in writing, please do not alter or change:**

- The appearance or structure of the property in any way
- Gas, electrical or plumbing installations
- External aerials or satellite dishes
- Trees, hedges, garden walls, sheds or greenhouses



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## Keeping your home safe

### Compliance Tasks and Safety Management

It's essential that your property is safe for you to live in. We have a dedicated central team managing compliance checks and activities across our let residential estate.

Throughout your tenancy, we will arrange a series of checks and servicing on a range of items within the property.

Depending on the different types of heating, drainage or water treatment equipment installed at your home, this may include:

- **Gas Safety checks**
- **Oil Boiler Servicing**
- **EICR Inspection (Electrical fixed wiring)**
- **Solid Fuel Burner Service**
- **Chimneys/Flue Inspection**
- **Heat Pump Servicing**
- **Septic Tank & Sewage Treatment Servicing**
- **Unvented Hot Water Cylinder Servicing**
- **Private Water Supply**

If you have any queries or concerns relating to any repairs or maintenance at your home, please contact our Tenant Repairs service (see page 17).



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## Safety - Carbon monoxide

Carbon monoxide detectors must be installed in the property in rooms with a fuel burning appliance. You should ensure you regularly test the detectors to ensure they are working properly and contact us if you believe there are any faults or missing detectors.

Carbon monoxide poisoning can cause headaches, collapse, breathlessness, stomach pains, nausea/drowsiness, erratic behaviour, dizziness, visual problems, loss of consciousness, chest pains, tiredness and vomiting. **Unlike gas, carbon monoxide does not smell, and so leaks are hard to detect.**



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## Take action to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning

If you suspect there is a carbon monoxide leak at your property, you **MUST** immediately:

- Turn off all appliances which are automatically fed with fuel, for example, gas or oil
- Open all doors and windows. Go outside and don't go back in until you know the appliance is fully extinguished and any gases have dispersed
- If you feel unwell, depending on the urgency, call 999 for an ambulance, go to your doctor or call NHS 111, explaining your symptoms may be caused by carbon monoxide poisoning
- Notify us of the fault as soon as possible via our Tenant Repairs service (**see page 17**)
- Do not use the appliance again until the appliance and the chimney/flue have been inspected by a competent registered installer or chimney sweep, and they have confirmed it is safe.

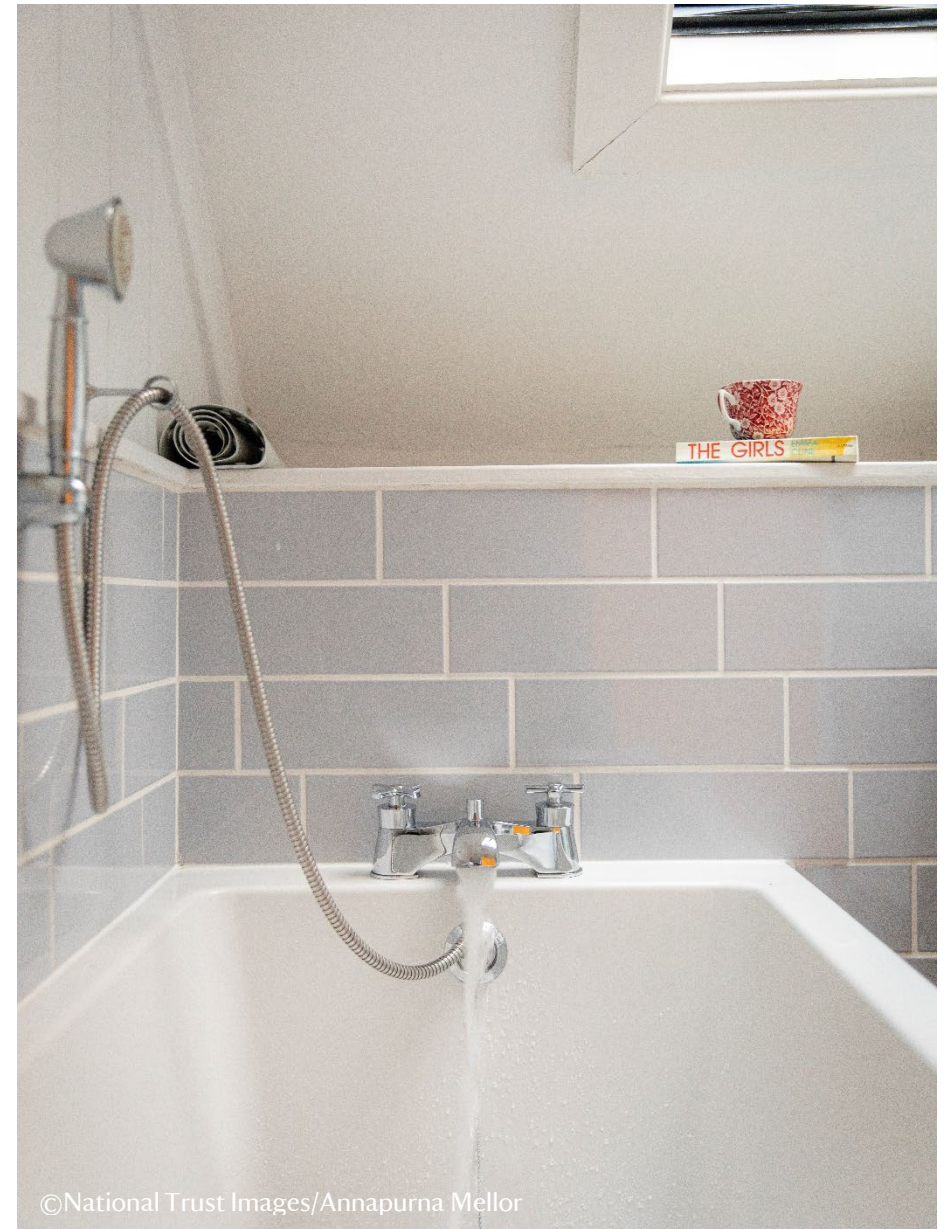
## Legionella

Legionella bacteria are common and can be found naturally in rivers and lakes. They can also be found in man-made water systems such as water tanks, taps and showers. The bacteria are sensitive to temperature and grow in temperatures between 20°C and 45°C. The organisms do not usually multiply below 20°C and will not survive above 60°C. Legionella bacteria can give rise to a range of illnesses similar to pneumonia; the most well-known of these is Legionnaires' disease.

People can be exposed to Legionella bacteria by inhaling small droplets of water containing the bacteria suspended in air. This is usually from a mist or aerosol of water such as from showers which has stagnated. There is no risk from drinking water containing the bacteria. In order to minimise the risk from Legionella you can:

- Run the water from infrequently used taps, showers, baths etc or when you've been away for a week or more
- De-scale showers every three months
- Set the hot water thermostat to 60°C
- Inform us of any issues with the hot water system or any changes you notice to the water tank or pipe lagging

The risk from Legionella bacteria in domestic homes is extremely low because houses are continuously occupied, and water is used on a regular basis. If you follow the tips listed above, you will reduce the risk still further and have no need for concern.



## Keeping chimneys and flues clean

It is the tenant's responsibility to organise and pay for any flue/ chimney sweeping or cleaning. The National Trust will also organise for a chimney/flue inspection once a year.

Please take the following precautions when it comes to open fires and solid fuel appliances:

- Check any chimney or flue has been approved by the Trust as safe before you begin using it
- Make sure you are using the fire/system safely, having read and understood any relevant instructions, and made sure there is the right level of ventilation
- Keep the chimney/flue clean and swept at the right frequency (see details below).
- Test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors regularly.

## Does your chimney need sweeping more than once a year?

Don't assume that it's okay for a chimney to be swept just once a year – the recommended frequency depends on what's being burned and how regularly you're burning it.

- **Smokeless fuel or Oil** - Once per year
- **Coal or Wood** - Quarterly when in use

## Use a qualified chimney sweep

If you need to use a contractor to clean your chimney or flue, please make sure they are either HETAS approved, or a member of one of the following bodies: The National Association of Chimney Sweeps (NACS), The Guild of Master Chimney Sweeps or The Association of Professional and Independent Chimney Sweeps (APICS).



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## Maintenance, Servicing and Repairs

We carry out most of our repairs as part of a planned maintenance cycle, for example, exterior decorations. While we're completing these, we'll often check to see if there is any other maintenance we can take care of at the same time.

We will let you know when we plan to undertake any routine maintenance and repair work, which we aim to complete to a good standard and with minimal disruption.

### Tenant Repairs Line

If you occupy a property which is [within or very close to a National Trust mansion or visitor business](#), you will already have been notified of your own specific arrangements and local contact for repairs. **If this applies to you, please use these local contacts, as an alternative to the details below.**

If you need to contact us for repairs or in emergencies, you can use any of the following ways to contact us:-

**24/7 Locally Charged Telephone Line:** 0345 646 1311

**Online Tenant Portal:** [NationalTrust.fixflo.com](https://nationaltrust.fixflo.com)

**Email:** [tenantrepairs@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:tenantrepairs@nationaltrust.org.uk)

These services are available for reporting repairs 24 hours a day. However, outside the hours of 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday the telephone line is for urgent matters only.

This telephone service is operated by a dedicated team of trained staff who have direct contact with our contractors.

If you are a Welsh speaker, our bilingual service is also available on the same number between the hours of 7am and 8pm.

### How long does it take to get repairs done?

We will contact you to discuss your repair within 5 working days of reporting to the Tenant Repairs line, unless it is an emergency in which case we will respond the same day.

We will either allocate the job to a contractor or a member of our building team. We will agree with you the level of urgency and timescale in which we will complete the work. We generally categorise repairs on our list as either:

**Emergency:** This includes issues that are a risk to an occupant's health, safety or security, or may have a serious adverse impact on the building

**Urgent:** This includes problems that cause an occupant serious discomfort, inconvenience or nuisance

**Routine:** This includes issues that aren't causing serious discomfort, inconvenience or nuisance to anyone, or causing any risk to the building itself. It may be that the repairs can wait until the planned maintenance work is due, if this timeframe is reasonable.



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## If repair work is not carried out as agreed

We will always try to do repairs by the deadlines we've agreed with you. If this isn't possible, we will let you know, explain the reasons and agree revised timings.

If we haven't done the work and haven't let you know, please get in touch with your local contact (see back page) so we can look into the issue and rearrange the work as soon as possible. If you have a problem that cannot be sorted out by the local contact, you can make an official complaint (see **page 33**). We are always glad to have feedback on your experience with contractors and their service.

Our aim is to complete all repairs promptly. In many cases we achieve this, but there are times when repairs or maintenance can take a while to get started or complete. One reason is that the right experts, artisan-level Stonemasons or Thatchers for example, aren't always available whenever we need them. If we expect a delay in any planned work, we will always tell you. In return, we ask for your understanding and patience.

## Living in a National Trust property

### Getting to know the history of your home

'Vernacular architecture' is the term used to describe buildings that reflect local historic styles and traditions, using local construction materials. Some vernacular buildings give us important insights into what life was like when they were constructed.

We have conducted detailed surveys of the most significant of these properties. If your property is one of them and you are interested in learning more about its history and significance, we are happy to share its Vernacular Building Survey. Your **Residential Lettings Contact** can give you the details.

### Condensation

When living in a historic property, it is important to understand and manage condensation. Your **Residential Lettings Contact** will provide you with guidance on your specific home. The following measures are all good general practice and will minimise condensation and the associated presence of black mould in houses:

- Utilise the heating as needed to maintain a background heat of at least 18°C.
- Make full use of extractor fans in bathrooms and kitchens
- Avoid drying washing indoors, or on radiators
- Open windows to provide ventilation

- Utilise breathable paints to help walls expel moisture
- Report any problems via our repairs service, **see page 17.**



### Going away for a week or two..?

If you are intending on leaving the property empty for more than a couple of days, there are some important actions that you can take to prevent damage to the property. These include:

- Leaving the heating on a low timer setting to prevent frost damage to the boiler, pipework or water supply in winter
- Turn off the mains water supply stopcock
- Lock the property and any outbuildings or sheds.

## Getting involved...

If you want to get more involved with other tenants and your local National Trust community, speak to your **Residential Lettings Contact** and they will point you in the direction of the nearest tenants' association group (see page 6). Here are some of ways you can get involved if you are interested:

- Sharing information about the property you live in. Sometimes tenants build up an intimate knowledge of the property's history and we're always keen to learn from this and add to our vernacular building records. Likewise, we can share what we know about the legacy of your place if you are interested.
- Keeping up to date with what's on through local or national Trust newsletters and the tenants' space on our main website homepage for our residential and farm tenants [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/residential-and-farm-lettings](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/residential-and-farm-lettings)
- For those of you who want to get more deeply involved, take a look at the Volunteering pages on our website for details [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/volunteer](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/volunteer)
- And finally, don't forget to make the most of your National Trust Tenant Pass by visiting other Trust properties in your area (see page 25).



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## Life in the Countryside

### The Countryside Code

Most of the properties we own are in rural locations and many of them are linked to agricultural activities, woodlands or common land. The Countryside Code sets out guidelines to help you respect, protect and enjoy the countryside.

Your pets, for example, must be under control at all times and must not worry livestock or disturb wildlife. When you are out walking, it is important you stick to paths on public rights of way. You should always check whether land such as moorland, woodland or at the coast has open unrestricted access, for example on an OS Map or online at:

[www.magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx](http://www.magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx)

Not all National Trust land is open access, much of our countryside property is let to our agricultural tenants, we ask you to respect the land, livestock and wildlife that may be part of your neighbour's or community's livelihood.

You can read the Countryside Code by going to:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code)



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## Pets and gardens

### Keeping pets

If pets are part of your family, we would like to welcome them too, but we do need to make sure the type and number of pets are appropriate for the property you live in and will not damage it or disturb your neighbours. If you would like to keep pets, please discuss this with your local **Residential Lettings Contact** to request permission.

We will normally give our consent, especially for cats and dogs, as long as you agree to clean all carpets to a professional standard just before you move out when your tenancy ends. Please do not install any cat/dog flaps into doors, erect hutches, cages or pens without our prior consent. If the animals become a nuisance or damage the property, we reserve the right to withdraw our consent for you to keep them at the property.

## How does your garden grow?

For all tenancy agreements, unless stated otherwise in your agreement, we will carry out essential maintenance to walls and fences that we own around your boundaries and maintain the main path and/or driveway leading to your property. You are responsible for keeping your garden tidy and clear of any rubbish as well as making sure you maintain any hedges, so they do not overhang your garden or your neighbours' gardens. You are also responsible for any steps or fences within (as opposed to around) your boundaries and any secondary paths.

If you are concerned that any trees within the boundaries of your property are dangerous or in need of an assessment, please contact us so that we can arrange any necessary work.

**Please do not undertake any of the following activities, without getting our written consent first:**

- Putting up a shed or laying concrete in your garden
- Changing your fencing or boundary
- Cutting down, lopping or planting any trees in your garden
- Parking vehicles of any sort in your garden unless they are on a driveway or a hard standing area.

## Managing refuse, recycling and garden waste

- It is important for you to manage your refuse, recycling and garden waste to discourage vermin
- There is a presumption that the occupier is responsible for the management of pests and vermin: [www.gov.uk/pest-control-on-your-property](http://www.gov.uk/pest-control-on-your-property)



## Living sustainably

We've set ourselves a series of commitments, with climate change as one of the organisation's top five priorities.

- We have an ambition to be net zero carbon as an organisation by 2030
- We will adapt to the reality of climate change by accounting for its impact in the decisions we make
- We will co-ordinate and prioritise action to deliver this objective through a national Climate Change Programme
- We will tell our story effectively and widely, engaging and inspiring action in our Tenants and supporters.

### Top tips at home...

#### Keeping warm

Get to grips with your heating controls and if you can regulate radiators, set them lower in those places that don't need the heat so much. Keep doors closed.

#### Night storage heaters

These are great for storing heat while electricity is cheaper but do take a little practice to work out the most effective settings.

#### Keeping the heat in

Thick curtains and draught proofing around doors, windows, letterboxes and even cat flaps can all make a difference.

#### Efficient electrical appliances

Choose energy-efficient appliances, only use the washing machine for a full load and boil enough for your cup of tea instead of the whole kettle.

#### Simply switching off

Lights, heating, computers, TV – the habits of a lifetime are hard to break but simply remembering to turn them off, at the wall, will make a significant difference to your electricity consumption and to bills.

#### Lighting

Where possible invest in LED and energy-saving spiral bulbs. Within a year they will be saving you money. Allow as much natural light as possible into rooms by angling blinds correctly

#### Water

You can make big water savings by turning off the tap while you brush your teeth and installing a water butt in the garden.

#### Shop around for your energy

Go to your energy provider and ask for energy saving tips. Consider using a 'green' energy tariff where power is generated by renewable sources.

#### Electric bikes and scooters

Ensure electric bikes/scooters with lithium-ion batteries are charged in accordance with manufacturer recommendations and away from any combustible materials. Avoid charging overnight or when they are unattended for extended periods. Before charging, review the fire risk of any enclosed charging locations – ideally do not charge or store them inside a house.

## Being a good neighbour

It's likely you are going to be living in a small community where lives and living spaces are closely intertwined. We all know what we wish for from a good neighbour:

- respecting privacy and behaving considerately
- an awareness of keeping noise to a minimum
- considerate parking
- clearing all rubbish, garden waste and recycling
- controlling pets
- a willingness to co-operate with or join community activities.

## Tenant Pass

Under our Tenant Pass scheme, you will receive one annual 'Tenant Pass' and 'Supporter Parking Permit' per tenancy. This is issued once a year and entitles two adults plus accompanying children to enjoy unlimited entry to hundreds of National Trust properties\*. Your first Pass will be provided by your local **Residential Lettings Contact** and subsequent Passes will be issued centrally, once a year. Please look after your pass as we are not always able to issue replacement cards.

You will also receive the tri-annual National Trust Magazine throughout the duration of your tenancy. If you have any difficulties or problems with your Tenant Pass, please contact your local **Residential Lettings Contact/local estate office**.

*\*Please check NT website for any advance booking requirements.*



From 1 May 2026, the Renters' Rights Act 2025 changes private residential tenancies in England.

Information in this Handbook will be updated shortly.

## Tenancy details - England

In England, the most common of three standard types of tenancy is the Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST).

### Assured Shorthold Tenancy

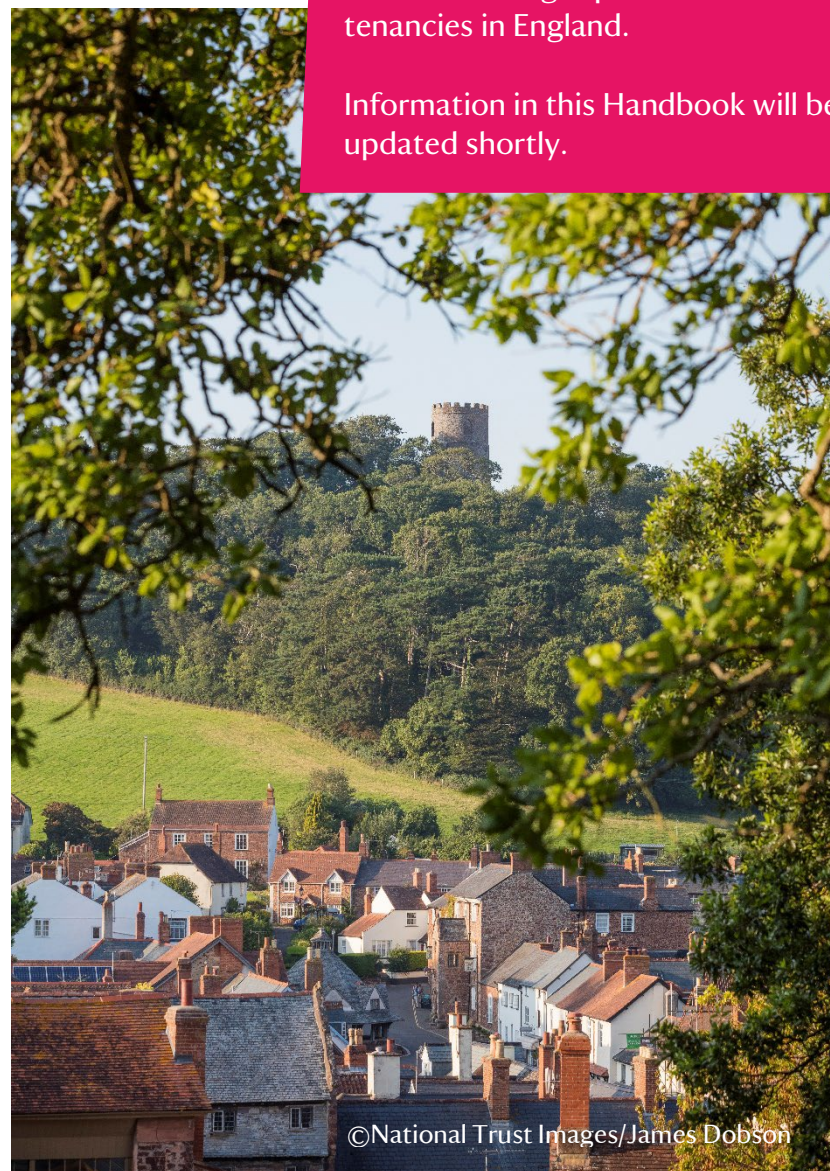
This agreement gives you a legal right to live in your property for a specified length of time. It also offers the landlord a right to take back the property at the end of the tenancy term should they want to. Normally, though, after the initial fixed period, these agreements run on from month to month as long as the terms of the agreement are met.

### Assured Tenancy

Assured tenants have greater security than Assured Shorthold Tenants. These tenancies mean that as long as you don't break the terms of the Tenancy Agreement, you can live in the property for an agreed period and after that, continue to live there unless certain legal conditions apply. These agreements will usually have started between 15 January 1989 and 27 February 1997.

### Protected or Statutory Tenancy

If your agreement was signed before 15 January 1989, it is likely to be protected under the Rent Act 1977. This means that the rent will be set using the independent fair rent system and your agreement cannot be ended unless certain legal conditions apply. If you have a protected tenancy with the Trust it will remain protected even if you move to another Trust property and sign a new agreement, although the rent may vary according to the size of the property.



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## Tenancy details - Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, the most common tenancies are Rent Controlled, Protected, or Uncontrolled Tenancies.

### Uncontrolled Tenancy

This is the most common form of tenancy in Northern Ireland and is the one the National Trust will normally grant. It gives you a legal right to live in your property for a specified period of time. It also offers us, as landlord, a right to take back the property at the end of the tenancy should we wish to.

Normally, however, an Uncontrolled Tenancy, after the initial fixed period, will run on from month to month as long as you meet the terms of the agreement.

### Rent Controlled or Protected Tenancy

If your tenancy is a Rent Controlled tenancy, legislation controls the level of rent and duration of the tenancy. The law concerning Protected Tenancies is complex and if this applies to your tenancy we recommend you seek advice about your rights, either from a solicitor or the Housing Rights Service at:-

[www.housingrights.org.uk](http://www.housingrights.org.uk).

### We also...

- Give you a Rent Book containing the specific tenancy information prescribed by regulations specific to Northern Ireland

- Where appropriate, we also give you a copy of a Certificate of Fitness in accordance with the Private Tenancies (NI) Order 2006, depending on the age of the property and the start date of the tenancy.



## Tenancy details – Wales

The National Trust and our Let Estate Team in Wales are registered as a Landlord and Agents under the Rent Smart Wales scheme. <https://www.rentsmart.gov.wales/en/home/>

Residential agreements in Wales are called Occupation Contracts and tenants are known as contract-holders. The form of Occupation Contract which is granted by the National Trust is called a Periodic Standard Occupation Contract. It runs from month to month and although there is no fixed term, it cannot be brought to an end in the first year except in limited circumstances.

Contract-holders are able to add joint contract-holders and withdraw from Occupation Contracts where there are joint contract-holders. There are also up to two succession rights available to individuals which meet the statutory criteria.

Further details of these types of agreements can be found on the Welsh Government website here:

<https://www.gov.wales/standard-occupation-contracts-guidance-html>



## Paying rent

As a charity, we have a duty to make the best use of our assets. This means that in most cases, we will ask for a market rent for our rental properties.

### How to pay your rent

Rents for our properties are collected by our central Financial Services Centre (FSC), based in Trowbridge, Wiltshire. Rents for residential lettings are normally paid monthly in advance, on a day specified in your tenancy agreement. We collect all rents by Direct Debit from your bank or building society account. FSC will email you an invoice about two weeks before the rent due date.

Please note that the Trust will treat any rent unpaid by the due date as being a debt and that it will be managed according to our credit control procedures.

It is essential that we have an email address for us to send your monthly e-invoice and correspond with you regarding the property or your tenancy.

### Getting help with your rent

You may be entitled to claim assistance with your rent from your local council. Make sure you claim any such help as soon as you think you may be entitled to it – payments usually only start from the day you submit your claim.

You are responsible for telling the local council about any changes in your circumstances that may affect your entitlement, for example, an increase in earnings, someone moving into your property or any changes in your other benefits. You are also responsible for paying back any claims that have been overpaid.

### If you fall behind with your rent

It is important to pay your rent on time, but if you fall behind with your payments please get in touch with us as soon as possible to talk through the best solution to your situation. We will not turn a blind eye to rent arrears and, if necessary, will take enforcement action to recover any sums you owe.

If you are in debt because you are waiting for a decision on a claim for Local Housing Allowance, you should tell us and make sure you have sent your local council all the information they need to deal with your claim.

If you know you are going to have difficulty paying the rent or have received a letter from us already, contact us straight away on the number on your rent invoice or arrears notice. We can put you in touch with professional, independent agencies who will be able to give debt management advice.

### Credit Control

Open Monday - Friday 8.30am - 5pm

Payment Line (for customer payment only): 0344 809 9910

Email - [rentsreceivable@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:rentsreceivable@nationaltrust.org.uk)

## Reviewing rent levels

### England & Wales

Assured Shorthold Tenancies, Assured Tenancies and Occupation Contracts follow a similar rent review process. In most cases we review rent levels on a two-yearly cycle. If you have an Assured Shorthold Tenancy, the law allows us to set the rent in line with other market rents for similar properties in your area. We adopt the same approach with Occupation Contracts.

We will contact you when it is time to review the rent to explain the process, the new rent and when it will be implemented. If you disagree with the new rent, you can appeal it through an independent tribunal for residential property. Should you wish to appeal, we can provide you with further details about the process, or you may wish to refer to Governmental or Citizen Advice websites which contain detailed information.

You will not be compensated or receive a reduction in your rent for doing improvement works without written permission.

### Protected Tenancies

In the case of Protected Tenancies, a 'fair rent' has to be set by the government's Rent Service. The process is as follows:

- We apply to the Rent Officer asking for a rent review, usually once every two years.

- You will have the chance to tell the Rent Officer if you don't feel this is appropriate.
- The Rent Officer may then need to visit your home to help them decide on a fair rent. We may accompany the Rent Officer at their visit.
- Once the Rent Officer has decided the appropriate rent level they will notify all parties and explain what you need to do if you wish to appeal the rent.
- The rent is then set and formally registered. It cannot be changed for a period of two years unless there is a significant change in the property during that time.

### Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, we usually review residential rents every year, unless your tenancy agreement specifies otherwise. If you have a Rent Controlled or Protected Tenancy, a Rent Officer will set the level. For an Uncontrolled Tenancy, we can agree a new rent together.

## Understanding the terms of your tenancy

Your tenancy agreement is a legal document, which sets out the specific conditions of your tenancy. Please make sure you read and familiarise yourself with its details.

### Conditions of your tenancy

The agreement has a set of conditions that you must keep. It is important that you read and understand all the terms and conditions. Breaking any of the conditions of your tenancy agreement could mean you could risk losing your home.

### Breaking the terms of your tenancy

You could find yourself breaching your tenancy agreement if:

- You don't pay the rent in full and on time
- You don't look after the place you live in
- You cause nuisance or annoyance
- You use your home for illegal purposes
- You threaten neighbours, National Trust staff or contractors
- You give false information in order to get the tenancy of a Trust property
- You do not use the home as your main or only home, unless we have agreed it in writing beforehand
- You do anything else in breach of your tenancy agreement.

### Court action

If you do not keep to the terms in your agreement with us, you will be seen as being in breach of your tenancy. If you do not put things right when we ask you to, we may decide to take legal action which could involve you going to court. If the court agrees you are in breach of your tenancy, they may decide to terminate your tenancy and you will have to leave the property.



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## Moving on

When you decide it's time to move on, you can end your tenancy agreement by following the steps below.

It's important you follow these steps otherwise you will continue to be responsible for all elements of your tenancy including the rent.

### Things you must do

- If your tenancy is in England, then after the end of your fixed term agreement, give us at least one month's notice in writing of your intention to leave (on your tenancy term date) or, where you have a break clause, in accordance with the break clause
- If your tenancy is in Wales, give us at least four weeks' notice in writing, which you can give at any time after the Occupation Contract has been granted (if there are joint contract-holders each of you must give us notice).
- Liaise with your utilities providers to transfer your account and arrange final meter reads and payments
- Allow us to assess the condition of the property before you leave and have access to show prospective new tenants around
- Make sure that everyone living at the property leaves on the agreed date – the tenancy will not end until everyone has left
- Ensure carpets are cleaned to a professional standard if you have had pets living with you
- Clean throughout, including windows, make sure you remove all your furniture, possessions and rubbish from inside and outside the property

- Make sure the garden, if you have one, is tidy.
- Settle all outstanding rents or recharges for the property
- Redirect your post and provide us with a forwarding address
- Hand back all your keys on the final day of your tenancy

You may be charged if we have to clear or clean the property after you have left.

### Things we must do

We will need to inspect the property, referencing the schedule of condition that we agreed with you at the beginning of the tenancy, to assess its condition and read any meters supplying the property. We will agree final meter readings and ensure local council and utility companies are notified of the end of your tenancy.



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## Your feedback

We are always really pleased to hear what you think and welcome your ideas on what else we could do to provide our tenants with a good service.

### We are particularly keen to hear about:

- Our policies and procedures
- Any ideas or issues that affect a group of tenants and residents
- Improvements we can make to our service
- How we manage our properties and maintenance
- What services you need as a tenant
- How we can improve the range of services we offer



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## When things don't go well

The National Trust aims to give an excellent service to all tenants. We recognise, however, that from time to time things can go wrong and when this happens, we want to try to put them right as quickly as possible. We value complaints as an opportunity to learn and continually improve our service.

Our full tenant's complaints procedure can be found online at [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/tenant-complaint-procedure](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/tenant-complaint-procedure). Please use the 'View page in' toggle in the top right-hand corner of the above webpage to view the page and documents in Welsh.


## Getting in touch

### Your personal contact

If you need to discuss anything in connection with your tenancy agreement or the property you rent from us, please get in touch with your local **Residential Lettings Contact** shown below:



Your local **Residential Lettings Contact** should be able to deal with the majority of your questions. If you need to contact the central National Trust team, you can contact them by post at; *The National Trust, Heelis, Kemble Drive, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN2 2NA* or email us at [tenant.enquiries@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:tenant.enquiries@nationaltrust.org.uk) or for Welsh enquiries, [wa.tenantenquiries@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:wa.tenantenquiries@nationaltrust.org.uk)



If you need this in an alternative format, please contact  
[tenant.enquiries@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:tenant.enquiries@nationaltrust.org.uk) or call **01793 817400**

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