



GOOD HOUSEKEEPING



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Help for leaseholders from the Warm Homes Project



Good Housekeeping

Apart from the main legal obligations that apply to both the landlord and leaseholders there are other elements of good management that are also important.



Lodgers and sub-tenants

A lodger is someone who shares your home, like a member of your family does. A sub-tenant is someone who rents your flat when you are not living there.

You have the right to take in lodgers or rent your flat to anyone you want to. You must ask permission in advance from South Lakeland District Council. You should also contact South Lakeland District Council's Insurance Officer, as sub-letting may affect your buildings insurance.

If you sub-let, please give us your new address so that we can contact you.

Lodgers and sub-tenants do not have the same rights as you. So if your flat was repossessed by your mortgage lender or landlord, they could be evicted.

However, if you let someone else rent all or part of your home, you become their landlord and you could be creating a tenancy which could be difficult for you to end. You could have considerable difficulty making them leave if you want your flat back. You could also have problems selling your lease if you have a 'sitting tenant'.

Before you agree to rent your flat to someone else, you should look into it thoroughly. Seek legal advice or ask the Citizens Advice Bureau what you should do to make sure you are legally protected.

It is important that when taking in lodgers you do not become overcrowded.



Local Occupancy Restrictions

If the property is situated in an area other than the townships of Kendal, Ulverston or Grange-over-Sands, the lease will contain a local occupancy restriction clause restricting future sales to persons who have lived or worked in Cumbria for a minimum of 3 years prior to purchase.



Grounds Maintenance

Contractors carry out the maintenance of estate grounds such as landscaping or grassed areas. The maintenance contract is offered for tender and South Lakeland District Council awards the contract to the most competitive bidder. The cost you are charged reflects the price quoted to service your estate.



Decorating

External window frames and other outside woodwork and metal work to your home will be decorated every five years unless otherwise stated in your lease. The cost of this work will be recharged proportionally to leaseholders in accordance with the terms of your lease.



Alterations

Should you wish to carry out an improvement to the exterior of your property, written permission must first be sought from South Lakeland District Council.

Requests for permission to carry out improvements from leaseholder to their property will not be unreasonably refused, however, in the following circumstances, permission will be refused where the proposed improvement of alteration:

- Affects the structure of the building for which the landlord is responsible and therefore, the landlords' future maintenance liabilities
- Would involve changes to rights-of-way or communal areas and other residents object to these changes
- Would reduce the value of the building

Leaseholders have a duty to apply to the landlord for permission to alter a structure. Therefore should you wish to carry out internal alterations / structural changes you may require planning permission and or building regulations approval. South Lakeland District Council's Building Control Department covers the whole of our area and can be contacted on 0845 050 4434.



Grants Available

Leaseholders may be eligible to apply to the South Lakeland District Council for a Home Improvement or Disabled Facilities Grant. Should you wish to find out more, contact the Principal Housing Renewal Officer at South Lakeland District Council on 0845 050 4434.



Pets

If you have a pet, you must make sure that it is kept under control and does not annoy neighbours. This is a condition of your lease. If your pet does cause a nuisance, we will ask you to control its behaviour or if this does not solve the problem, to find a new home for your pet.

If you are thinking of getting a pet you should think carefully whether it is suitable for living in a flat.

If you are having problems with dogs (your own or someone else's), you can ask the Council's dog warden to help. To contact South Lakeland District Council's dog warden, please ring 0845 050 4434.



Car parking

Most blocks of flats have shared parking areas. Some flats and maisonettes have their own driveway to park on.

Parking in shared areas is 'first come-first served'. No one has their own parking space. Please consider others when you park:

- Do not cause an obstruction, you could prevent emergency vehicles from getting through
- Do not park on the footpath, it is against the law
- Do not park in your garden unless you have a hard standing and a dropped-kerb
- Do not park lorries and trucks on residential streets and especially in shared parking areas

You can do minor repairs to your own vehicle in a shared parking area, at the roadside or in your garage, as long as you do not disturb your neighbours. You should not do major repairs to your own vehicle or do repairs for other people, whether for money or not.

Sensible use of shared parking areas help you and your neighbours – tell your housing officer if someone is causing a nuisance in your parking area.



Garage Insurance

If you have a garage, this will not normally be included in your insurance cover, either freehold, leasehold or on the contents policy. You will need to check depending on the ownership or terms of sale / lease. You may need separate insurance cover for the contents of the garage.



Condensation

Condensation can be a problem in flats if you do not have proper ventilation. This can be unpleasant to live with and can damage plaster, decoration and window frames in your home. Condensation often cause black mould which can spoil walls and ceilings, and also clothes curtains and carpets.

Condensation happens when moist air meets a cold surface, such as a window or a cold wall. Double-glazing and cavity wall insulation help to reduce the problem by keeping inside surfaces warmer, but you may still get condensation if the air in your home is too moist. The moisture in your flat comes from everyday things such as cooking, washing, hot baths and drying clothes indoor.

To limit condensation:

- Try to make sure that there is enough constant heat in your home so there are no solid surfaces for moisture to settle on
- Try to make sure that there is some ventilation in each room by opening windows or by turning on extractor fans if you have them. When cooking, put lids on saucepans, close the kitchen door and open a window or turn on the extractor fan
- Try to dry clothes outside if possible. If it has to be done indoors, keep a window open and make sure your tumble drier is vented to the outside
- When running a bath, run the cold water before the hot to reduce the amount of steam and keep the bathroom door closed. Afterwards, keep the window open and leave extractor fans running until the walls and windows are dry. Don't let the moisture escape into other rooms

- Paraffin and liquid gas heaters give off water vapour as they burn and make condensation worse. Paraffin heaters can also be dangerous. Avoid using them.



Help for leaseholders from the Warm Homes Project

Saving energy concerns us all. We are affected by the cost of our fuel and the need to look after the environment. Some of us need to keep warm for health reason. For others, condensation causing damp in the come can be an issue.

If you would like more information about saving energy, keeping warm, free grants or the other schemes that are available please contact:

The Warm Front Team
The Networking Team
Eaga Plc
Eaga Housing
Archbold Terrace
Newcastle-upon-Tyne
NE2 1DB

Alternatively, for free advice on what services you are entitled to, please ring:

0800 316 2814