

New Tenancy Guide



Moving home is a busy, exciting and sometimes stressful time. The next few pages are designed to answer some general questions to hopefully ensure everything runs as smoothly as possible for you.

Please keep this guide safe for future reference. With Sorbon Estates Ltd managing the property you can enjoy peace of mind knowing that professional help is at hand from your Estate Manager.

No two tenancies are exactly the same so please also make reference to your own tenancy agreement.

If you find this booklet difficult to understand, please ask a friend, family member or someone you know to assist you. If you do not have someone who can do that please contact your Estate Manager at Sorbon Estates Ltd directly on **01494 671331**.

What happens on the day you leave?

Prior to moving into your new home you will be provided with contact details of your Estate Manager who will be your main point of contact throughout your tenancy. When he or she is unavailable a colleague will gladly assist. Our Head Office contact number is 01494 671331.

Your Estate Manager will usually be available from 8.30am to 5.30pm Monday to Thursday and 8.30am to 5pm on Fridays.

What happens when the office is closed?

Your Estate Manager will provide you with an out-of-hours contact number in case of emergencies. An emergency is deemed to be where a problem places either you or the property in imminent danger of suffering harm, injury or damage. All other matters should be reported during normal office hours.

You should be aware that **if a call out is subsequently not deemed to have been an emergency then you may well be liable for the call out charge.**

Before placing a call regarding loss of power remember to **check for obvious problems** such as tripped residual circuit breakers (RCB's)/ blown fuses as well as checking if other properties in the area are similarly affected.

If you smell gas you should call the National Gas Emergency Service on 0800 111 999 and vacate the property until help arrives. Remember to ventilate the room as much as possible and not to turn on electric items.

If something breaks down what should you do?

As the tenant **you are responsible for promptly reporting maintenance issues** as they arise. Where this involves an appliance apparently not working, firstly read the instruction manual as any **unnecessary call out charges will be your responsibility**. Most instruction manuals provide a useful troubleshooting section.

When a breakdown occurs your Estate Manager will arrange for a suitable tradesperson to visit as soon as is reasonably possible. It is important to remember that your Landlord is unable to compensate you for the inconvenience that inevitably occurs when repairs are required. Needless to say, in the event of a breakdown your Estate Manager will do everything reasonably possible to keep inconvenience to a minimum.

As the colder months approach it is prudent to allow time to check that the property's heating system is operating correctly. Contractors can be a lot busier at this time of year and parts for repairs might not be as readily available as at other times in the year. After reference to the instruction manual, please remember that with gas fired boilers you should check if the pressure needs increasing. With central heating systems, to avoid all or part of a radiator remaining cold you will usually need to bleed air from the radiator when the system is first switched on. These simple steps will help to avoid you paying for unnecessary call out charges. Please contact your Estate Manager if you require advice.

Do I need to be at the property when a tradesperson visits?

Providing that management keys are held securely in our Head Office there is no need for you to be present. **Our maintenance staff are fully vetted** and carry adequate public liability insurance. If we do not hold a set of keys you will need to be present to provide access and you may of course prefer to be present at all times.

If you are unhappy with the quality of works that have been completed please contact your Estate Manager to discuss your concerns.

What if I can't operate my appliances?

Instruction manuals should be available within the property to assist you operating the appliances and equipment provided. Please contact your Estate Manager if an instruction manual is missing. Alternatively, manuals are often available online.

Leaks

Leaks from one property to another are not uncommon and can result from something as simple as failed grouting in bathrooms and showers to more serious problems with pipework installations. If you suspect a leak within your property please immediately contact your Estate Manager.

Who is responsible if the drains become blocked?

Unless the problem results from a failure in the sewerage or drainage system **you as the tenant are responsible for clearing blockages**. Regular use of drain cleaners in bathrooms and kitchens helps avoid blockages.

Who is responsible for changing light bulbs?

Light bulbs are a tenant responsibility during tenancy. Care should be exercised when fittings are above head height or located in areas accessible only by ladder.

Who deals with the transfer of utility accounts?

Under normal circumstances the payment of utility charges and council tax will be your responsibility as the tenant. Your Estate Manager will advise you of meter readings taken at the start of the tenancy and you should then speak to the relevant utility providers to set up new accounts. Your Landlord accepts no liability for unpaid accounts during your tenancy.

To find out the supplier of gas and electricity to the property contact 'M Number Enquiry Line' for gas on 0870 608 1524 and 'UK Power Networks' on 0845 601 5467 for electricity. These companies will be able to confirm the current supplier's details and what the (MPAN) Meter Point Administration Number is for the property.

You may also contact your Estate Manager who will be able to assist.

Should I check my account to ensure rent is being paid?

Yes – We will pass your signed Standing Order Mandate to your bank if you complete one; however, banks are increasingly carrying out additional checks with account holders prior to making payments. Please check with your bank to ensure your standing order is in place well before the first rent payment is due. If you have spoken to your bank and have any further questions please contact your Estate Manager.

Rent is payable on the first day of each calendar month if your tenancy agreement states you pay monthly. If you pay rent every six months the six monthly payment should also be received by us on the first day of the month in question.

What about media services?

Subject to your location and services available within your building you may be able to take advantage of media packages from providers such as Virgin Media, Sky and BT. However, please remember that you will require permission to install additional wiring or a satellite dish that might be required. You will need to discuss your requests with your Estate Manager and they will be able to advise you on the location of wiring, satellites and junction boxes.

Any damage caused to the property during the course of any installation is the responsibility of the tenant.

What if the property isn't clean when I move in?

Normally your property will have been professionally cleaned prior to you moving in and this will be detailed on your inventory check in report. You are expected, as per the terms and conditions of the tenancy agreement, to return the property in the condition you found it. Please contact your Estate Manager if you have any concerns in this regard.

Please note however that a professional clean does not restore a property and will not rectify the effects of wear and tear and the passing of time.

Who looks after the garden?

Always refer to the Tenancy Agreement, but responsibility for maintaining the garden in seasonal order and for clearing patios, balconies, drains and gutters of fallen leaves will be a tenant's responsibility during your tenancy. Reasonable pruning is also expected and you should remember to water pots and planters as required.

Ventilation

It is a condition of your tenancy that the property is kept ventilated so as to avoid the build up of condensation and mould. To help avoid claims against your deposit for unreasonable deterioration always use extraction fans and ventilation systems whilst regularly opening windows to allow fresh air to enter the property. You will receive a comprehensive Condensation Guide from your Estate Manager at the start of the tenancy. If you misplace this guide you can request a further copy.

Can I hang pictures?

You should contact your Estate Manager for permission and advice on hanging pictures. Providing the number is not excessive and that you use commercially produced picture hooks and agree to making good any damage at the end of the tenancy your Estate Manager will normally provide you with written approval.

What if I need more keys to the property?

Subject to written consent you are, at your own expense, able to have additional sets of keys cut. Details will be held on file in our office, and all keys must be returned at the end of the tenancy. If you lose your keys and our offices are closed you should call a locksmith and inform your Estate Manager as soon as is reasonably possible. You will need to supply your Estate Manager with a new spare set.

How often will the property be inspected?

On average we will visit the property **at least once during a twelve month tenancy** to carry out a general check for obvious signs of deterioration. **You will be given notice of an intended visit** by your Estate Manager and if you wish to be present a mutually convenient time will be arranged.

Do I have to allow access?

Yes, you are under a statutory and contractual obligation to allow your Landlord and his representatives access subject to you being given twenty-four hours notice. **Failure to provide access is viewed as a serious breach of your obligations.**

Refuge Collections?

You should contact the local Borough Council for full detailed advice on local refuge collections. Your Estate Manager should also be able to assist but each council has varying schemes and these change regularly so your first point of contact should be the Council direct. This information can usually be found online.

What about insurance?

We insure the building but you are responsible for insuring your personal contents and we recommend that you take out adequate personal contents insurance during your tenancy.

What happens at the end of the tenancy?

Within the last three months of the initial term of the tenancy your Estate Manager will contact you regarding renewal or termination. If you are to vacate the property, your Estate Manager will contact you regarding your responsibilities and arrangements for vacating the property once a date has been set.

We hope this guide has been useful and trust that you will not hesitate to contact your Estate Manager if you have any further questions.

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The logo for Sorbon Estates features the word "SORBON" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. Above the text is a thick, dark red horizontal line. Below "SORBON" are two short, dark blue horizontal lines, one on the left and one on the right, which serve as brackets for the word "ESTATES" written in a smaller, black, sans-serif font below them.

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