



SAXON WEALD

Great homes, building futures

TENANTS' GUIDE



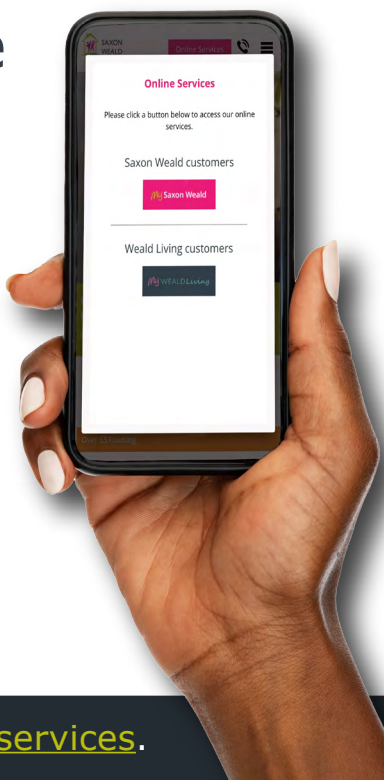
www.saxonweald.com

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online, anytime, anywhere

Our easy-to-use, online services put you in charge of your home, anytime, anywhere. They provide secure access to your information and are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week from a desktop, laptop, tablet or mobile.



Pay your rent,
check your balance



Book repairs,
manage appointments



View and update
your details

Sign up today at www.saxonweald.com/online-services.



Introduction to Saxon Weald and your tenancy



About us

Established in 2000, Saxon Weald is a housing association, sometimes known as a 'registered provider'. We manage around 6,900 homes across Sussex and Hampshire. We provide affordable rented homes for individuals and families, as well as properties exclusively for the over 55s, including those with care needs. We also provide homes for market rent, shared ownership and outright sale through our Weald Living brand.



We are a charitable community benefit society, with the money we make from rents being re-invested in the management, maintenance and building of homes. We are accountable to the Regulator of Social Housing.

Saxon Weald is governed by a Board, which is advised and supported by the Chief Executive and professional staff. The Board is responsible for ensuring the effective strategic and financial management of the company. The Chief Executive and staff are paid to manage the organisation on a day-to-day basis.

Opening hours

You can access your account, make payments and log repairs any time at mysaxonweald.com.



Saxon Weald contact hours

Monday - Thursday from 8.30am – 4.30pm
Friday 8.30 - 4pm

Contact us

Secure message via mysaxonweald.com

 hello@saxonweald.com

 www.saxonweald.com

 www.facebook.com/saxonweald

 01403 226000



Your tenancy agreement

Your tenancy agreement is an important document forming a legal contract between you and Saxon Weald.

It confirms your tenancy with us and contains details about your rights and responsibilities and those of the association. It is your responsibility to ensure that you abide by the terms of the agreement as, by signing it, you have legally agreed to do so.



What we expect of you

- Pay your rent regularly and on time
- Look after your home and give us access to carry out repairs and safety checks
- Be considerate towards your neighbours
- Don't make any changes to your home without our consent
- Tell us about changes to your personal circumstances and contact details

What kind of tenancy have I got?

New tenants – new tenants have a probationary tenancy for their first 12 months. This is an assured short-hold tenancy. It means that tenants can be evicted quickly if they break the terms of the tenancy, for example by causing a nuisance. After the 12-month introductory period, providing there are no problems, the tenancy usually converts to a full assured tenancy.

After the first 12 months – most of our tenants have assured tenancies. This is more secure and gives you various rights and entitlements (see your tenancy agreement for details).

Changes to the tenancy agreement

The only changes we can make to your tenancy agreement without your consent relate to the level of rents and service charges. For all other alterations, unless they are made as a result of new government legislation, we would consult you and seek your approval.



Can you evict me or force me to give up my home?

Yes, but there would have to be a good reason for doing so and there are certain legal steps we have to take, including going to the County Court for a Possession Order. Reasons for eviction include:

- You are not paying your rent
- You are harassing other people or causing antisocial behaviour
- You are not actually living in the property
- You are using your home for illegal or immoral purposes
- You are damaging or abusing your home
- You are running a business from home without our consent
- We require the property for redevelopment and you refuse to move

We may ask you to leave your home temporarily while repairs are carried out, if we could not safely do the work with you in occupation. If you have to move for this reason, we will offer you suitable alternative accommodation while the work is done and pay for reasonable removal expenses.

We can also ask you to move if your home has to be demolished. We would compensate you for the loss of your home, offer you alternative accommodation and pay for reasonable removal expenses.

Making a change to your tenancy

Don't forget to tell us if your personal circumstances change - including any disability caused by illness or accident, relationship breakdown or financial difficulty. That way we can make sure that we're giving you all the help that we can. To make a name change on a tenancy, we would need an official document proving the legal change of name (e.g. marriage certificate).

What happens if my relationship breaks down and I split up with the person I live with?

If you have a joint tenancy, all tenants named on the agreement have equal rights to access the home, unless a court says otherwise. We cannot remove a name from the tenancy without mutual agreement or a court order.

If you have a sole tenancy (where you are the only person named on the tenancy) you have the right of access to your home. However, depending on circumstances, a person living with you may still have certain rights. Please contact us for details.



Can my family stay in my home if I die?

This is known as succession. In certain cases there is a right to succession – for example, a tenancy is usually passed to the spouse or partner of the deceased, if they were living with them at the time of their death. However, succession can only happen once and there will be no legal right to pass on the tenancy to anyone else after that.

For more information on what to do if a tenant dies, please see **page 37** of this guide.

Can I have a lodger?

A lodger is someone who lives with you as though they were part of your family. You must ask our permission before taking in a lodger, giving us details of the person and what room they will occupy. We will not usually refuse unless it causes overcrowding. If you receive any housing benefit, you should check with your local authority if the rent you receive from your lodger will affect your entitlements. If you receive universal credit, you should check with the department of Work and Pensions through your online journal.



What is the difference between having a lodger and sub-letting?

A lodger shares the property with you. They will pay you for food and upkeep. A sub-tenant has part of the property solely for their own use and you need their permission to enter the rooms they occupy.

Can I sub-let my home?

It is a criminal offence to sub-let your home. If we suspect that a tenant has abandoned their home or is sub-letting it, we will issue a legal Notice to Quit.

Can I invite someone to live with me, without him or her being a paying lodger?

Yes, this is normally allowed as long as it does not cause overcrowding and complies with the terms of your tenancy agreement (e.g. meets any age restriction criteria). Please contact us for permission before they move in.

As the tenant, you would be responsible for ensuring guests/household members comply with the terms of your tenancy agreement.

What if I am away and not living in my home for long periods?

You must use your home as your only or main home and notify us in advance if you are going to be away from the property for longer than four weeks. If you are not using the property as your main home, we will take legal proceedings to reclaim it, so we can



offer it to someone who needs it.

Can I buy my home?

If you have been a tenant for more than three years and have an assured tenancy, you may be entitled to purchase your home at a discount under the right to acquire scheme. There are some exceptions, so please call us to check the rules which apply to your property and what discount you may be



Having a say in our services

We really welcome your views on our services. Your feedback helps to shape our decisions and learn how we can improve our services. There is no one better placed to tell us what works well and what doesn't than our customers!

We have numerous ways you can get involved and have your say:

- Telephone interviews
- Feedback surveys
- Your Voice register
- Green Team
- Task and Finish groups
- Customer representation on our Board and Customer Experience Committee
- Policy review group
- Focus groups
- Resident Community Inspectors

To find out more, visit:

www.saxonweald.com/your-voice/getting-involved



Of course, if you have some feedback you want to share, you can do so any time by contacting us at hello@saxonweald.com. We'll be all ears!



Our repairs service

We know how important it is for you to have a reliable and timely repairs service. This section sets out how we will deliver repairs and the timelines and standards you can expect.



How we deliver our repairs service

We are proud to have our own repairs team, HomeFix. The team is made up of skilled, qualified professionals who are passionate about providing high-quality repairs and maintenance services for our customers.



What we do

- We carry out most day-to-day repairs to the inside and outside of your home and Saxon Weald owned communal areas
- We focus on essential maintenance to keep your home safe, secure, and in good condition
- We complete a wide range of tasks, from fixing leaks and repairing windows to addressing electrical faults and resolving damp issues
- We provide emergency repairs 24 hours a day

Whilst HomeFix carry out nearly all our repairs, we are supported by a number of specialist contractors. These contractors have been chosen by us because they share our values. You are most likely to see them for certain jobs such as heating and hot water repairs or for specialist work such as lift repairs.

We are committed to treating every customer with respect, sensitivity, and understanding. Our aim is to remove barriers and provide a repairs service that is inclusive, responsive, and accessible to all.



Help and support with repairs

Please see the section on what we can do to help on page 12.



Reporting a repair

Emergency repairs

You should always phone us if you have an emergency repair on **01403 226000**. A list of repairs that can be considered as an emergency can be found on page 11.

All other repairs can be reported in the ways listed below:

- Through your Saxon Weald account - mysaxonweald.com
- By email - hello@saxonweald.com
- On our website: www.saxonweald.com/living-in-your-home/repairs/
- By phone – 01403 226000

For gas heating and boiler repairs:

If you live in a retirement or extra care scheme, please report any gas problems to Saxon Weald via the methods above.

For all other repairs to gas heating and hot water systems you can phone the number above or e-mail our Gas contractors, TSG: saxonweald@tsgplc.co.uk

Following your repair, you may be contacted by our auditors. They carry out random quality checks to ensure we maintain high standards of gas safety.

Damp, mould and condensation

Please report damp, mould or condensation in the same way as other repairs. We have a special team who will visit you and carry out an initial inspection of your home. For more information and advice please see page 18.



Some important things to remember

- ❗ Before you ask us to do a repair, please check that it is our responsibility. There are some repairs that we expect you to carry out yourself. You can find a list of repairs which are your responsibility on page 15.
- ❗ For safety, please ensure children and pets are kept away from work areas. There must be someone over the age of 18 at home and we would kindly request that you do not smoke.
- ❗ We will not tolerate abuse either physical or verbal towards our staff. Please treat our staff and contractors with respect.
- ❗ In exceptional circumstances we may not be able to carry out a repair to your home if there is a risk to the well-being or safety of our staff. If this happens we will let you know the reasons why.

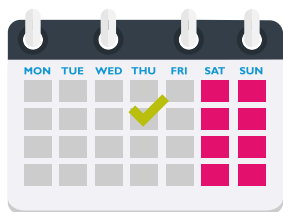


Standard repairs

We aim to complete all repairs within a target of 28 days.

How quickly we can attend will depend on levels of demand at the time, however most repairs are completed well within 28 days.

This 28-day target covers repairs inside and outside of your property and communal areas.



All operatives carry ID and they will leave the area clean and tidy after work is completed

Appointment times

We offer appointments from Monday to Friday during the following time slots:

8.00am – 1.00pm

8.00am – 4.30pm

10.00am – 2.30pm

12 noon – 4.30pm



You can choose an appointment slot that suits you on My Saxon Weald or alternatively rearrange an appointment if the time you have selected is no longer convenient.

We will keep you updated and remind you in advance, by text message, when your appointment is due and when our operative is on their way.

If we do need to cancel your appointment for any reason, we will call you as soon as possible to advise you and rebook. If we cannot reach you on the phone, we will text or email.

Please note!

- Where possible we will repair something that is broken rather than replace. It will be replaced if it is not able to be repaired to good working order
- When replacing fixtures and fittings (including ones you may have fitted yourself), we will try to match the existing style or colour, but this may not always be possible. We appreciate your understanding that availability and stock limitations may affect the final choice.
- We will only replace or repair fencing that forms a boundary to your garden.
- If a HomeFix operative attends to carry out a repair and is unable to complete the job, we will contact you to explain what will happen next.
- We work closely with our contractors to make sure that repairs are carried out to the highest standards and with the same commitment we have to our customers.



Emergency repairs

If you have an emergency repair we will complete this within 24 hours (generally, we will be able to attend more quickly than this).



Emergency repairs – outside of office hours

If you have an emergency repairs outside normal office hours, you will need to phone our main number (01403 226000) and you will be put through to our out of hours service who will arrange for one of our contractors to attend. In some circumstances, they will make the emergency issue safe, and someone will come back the next day to complete the work.

Emergency repairs include:

- A blocked toilet (where there is only one toilet in your home)
- A broken external window, door or lock
- A burst water pipe or failure of the water supply (inside your home)
- Electricity supply failure, if not caused by the electricity supply company.
- Complete failure of the heating system (in winter, or where older people, people with small children and people with related health concerns live in the household)
- Any other repair that could cause a risk to your health and safety



Leaseholders

Responsibility for repairs and maintenance in leasehold properties are determined by the terms within your lease. Generally, you will be responsible for all repairs inside your home, and Saxon Weald are responsible for the external and communal parts.

Please report any repairs through your mywealddiving account, or, if your live in retirement or extra care housing, speak to your Scheme Manager.



WEALD LIVING
BY SAXON WEALD

Charging you for repairs

Please report any repair or defect as soon as it is identified. If a repair is not reported and a delay causes more serious damage, we may seek to recharge for the additional works required.

We will also charge customers for any deliberate damage caused by their household or visitors.



Help and support with repairs



We are committed to being inclusive and meeting the needs of our customers. We offer a range of ways in which we can provide you with help and support and can adapt our repairs service to ensure that you are not disadvantaged or that your well-being is not put at risk.

If you need additional help, or if there is something we should be aware of, please let us know.

Some of the ways we can help are set out below:

- **Prioritising repairs**

There might be circumstances which mean you need to have a repair carried out more quickly than usual. Generally, this is where there could be a risk to your health, safety or well-being if the repair was to take longer. We will aim to get your repair done more quickly where this is the case.

- **Additional repairs**

For some customers, we can carry out repairs that would normally be considered as 'tenants responsibility'. For example, replacing a toilet seat for someone who has a disability and who would not be able to do it themselves, or providing additional security for someone who is a domestic abuse survivor.

- **Accessing the repairs service**

We can help you access the service in a range of ways including:

- Providing documents in accessible formats (large-font, braille, audio or OpenDyslexic)
- Providing interpretation services if you do not speak English
- Using the Relay UK service www.relayuk.bt.com/ if you cannot hear or speak on the phone who can arrange to read your words and provide a written reply

- **Other ways we can help**

- Neurodiversity support - considering additional needs when arranging repairs
- Domestic abuse survivors – e.g. providing/enhancing home security.
- Cultural and religious considerations e.g. when scheduling appointments.
- Providing help through your Scheme Manager (if you live in retirement or extra care housing)

Please note: Requests for additional support should reflect your personal circumstances and be relevant to the situation or repair. This will help us prioritise and adapt our service effectively to support you and others.



Planned maintenance:

Planned maintenance is work that we schedule in to improve and maintain your home. It can include jobs such as: replacing windows or doors, roof repairs, bathroom replacements and kitchen replacements.



If planned maintenance work is required, we follow a three-step approach to the process:

1. We will tell you about the work:

If your home is selected for improvement work, we will contact you telling you about the work we have planned for your home.

2. Home visit:

We will visit your property to plan and discuss the proposed works.

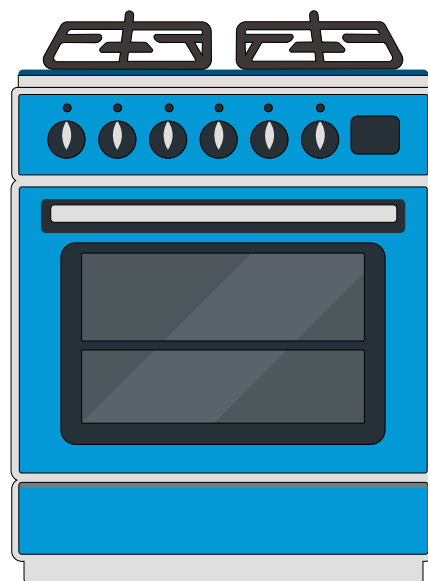
3. Work confirmation:

We will arrange a suitable start date. For larger works, we will confirm the start and expected finish dates in writing.

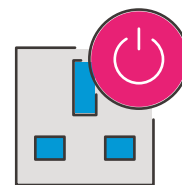
Gas appliances and servicing

We are legally required to carry out annual inspections of all gas appliances and installations that we have put in your home. Our gas contractor, **TSG** will notify you when your annual inspection is due and agree an appointment. Please do respond when you get your notification as this is an important safety matter (see information on carbon monoxide on page 14).

PLEASE NOTE: You are responsible for ensuring your own gas appliances are properly maintained and safe to use. If something is found to be unsafe during **TSG's** checks, they may cap your gas supply and even condemn your appliance if necessary.



Electrical maintenance



It is our legal responsibility to conduct regular electrical maintenance checks to make sure your home is safe.

We need to carry out electrical checks to our properties every five years.

Our Business Support Team will send you details of your electrical maintenance check when it's scheduled in.

It is important that you are present and allow us access to your home to perform the checks. This can take up to four hours, dependent on the size of your home and our findings, but the test will typically take around two to three hours.

Solid fuel appliances

If your home has an open fire and chimney, it is your responsibility to get the chimney swept. This should be done at least once a year, although every six months is ideal. We will carry out an annual inspection for anyone with a closed solid fuel appliance such as a Parkray or Rayburn. If you have such an appliance but would like to discuss an alternative form of heating, please contact our Asset Management team.

Advice on carbon monoxide

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a highly poisonous gas produced when carbon fuels don't burn completely. It has no taste, smell or colour and can kill without warning in a few hours. Gas, oil and solid fuels are safe to burn so long as the appliance is installed, maintained and used correctly.

The symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning can include:

- Severe headaches
- Nausea
- Chest or stomach pains
- Drowsiness or feeling very tired
- Confusion
- Dizziness
- Loss of memory



Headaches



Nausea



Stomach pains



Breathlessness



Weakness



Confusion

If you suspect a CO leak or think you are suffering from CO poisoning, switch the appliance off, open windows and then get out into the fresh air immediately. If the symptoms are serious you should go straight to your doctor or emergency department.



Your Repair Responsibilities

While Saxon Weald are responsible for most of the repairs and maintenance of your home, there are some areas that we ask you carry out yourself. These are set out in your Tenancy Agreement and are listed in this section.

If you have difficulty in being able to manage any of these responsibilities, please let us know and we may be able to help you. See Help and Support on page 12.

DOORS, WINDOWS AND GLAZING

- **Easing and adjusting doors** - for example, to fit carpets
- **Door accessories** such as doorbells, knockers, and numerals
- **Any additional locks or chains you may want to install**
- **Internal doors** including hinges, handles and latches
- **Cat flaps** – please get permission before installing a cat flap
- **Replacement of keys** – if you lose your keys we will be able to help you but we may charge you for the call out
- **Broken windows** - If somebody breaks your window please contact the police to get a crime reference number. We will not leave your property with a broken window but we may charge you for the work without a crime number
- **Damaged front entrance doors** – If the entrance door has been damaged due to forced entry, we will attend to secure your home but you may be charged for the work.

- **Draughts to Doors and Windows:**

Many homes have areas around the doors and

windows that can be prone to draughts, especially in cold or windy weather.

Here are some tips to help you reduce them:

- **Draught Excluder Tape** - Self-adhesive foam or rubber strips that seal gaps around windows and doors. Low cost and easy to apply
- **Door draught excluders** – Fabric or brush-style excluders placed at the bottom of doors help block the flow of cool air.
- **Thermal window insulation** – This is film applied to your windows to create an additional barrier, reflecting solar heat in the summer and helping to insulate in the winter.
- **Curtains or thermal blinds** – Thick curtains or insulated blinds help keep draughts from windows out and warm air in.
- **Keyhole covers and letterbox brushes** – Small covers for keyholes and brush strips for letterboxes can help stop cold air from sneaking in.
- **DIY caulking** – You can use caulk to seal small gaps around window frames if they are letting in cold air.



FIXTURES AND FITTINGS

- Curtain battens and rails
- Coat hooks
- Toilet seats, toilet roll holders, towel rails, fitted toothbrush and soap dishes
- Fitted shelving
- Built-in appliances that you have installed - Including cookers and hobs. You are responsible for maintenance or replacement of these appliances but please contact us if you are concerned about your safety.
IF YOU SMELL GAS please leave your property immediately and call the National Gas Emergency Service immediately on **0800 111 999**.

KITCHEN

- Please look after your kitchen and help it remain in a good condition Please avoid overloading kitchen units and drawers. Whilst we will be responsible for putting right general wear and tear, you may be charged if your kitchen has been damaged.
- Please do not cover kitchen units or work tops with vinyl wraps or paint.

ELECTRICAL

- Plugs, fuses, and appliances – unless they have been provided by Saxon Weald
- Fluorescent tubes and light bulbs - except in communal areas. If you are unable to change lightbulbs due to a disability and you have no one to do it for you, please contact us.
- Electrical faults caused by faulty appliances or installations carried out by you, or somebody acting for you.

We will always make your home safe but we may charge for the necessary work.

- **Testing smoke alarms:** We recommend you test your smoke alarms every six months (we will test your smoke alarm every year).

PLUMBING

- Plugs and chains or baths, wash basins, and sinks
- Blocked wastes or blocked toilets. Please do not flush anything down the toilet such as nappies, sanitary products or wet wipes. Whilst we will attend to deal with blocked sinks and toilets, if we find the blockage has been caused because of items that should not have been flushed, we may charge for the work.



DECORATION

- **Interior decoration** - including filling, stain blocking, painting and wallpapering,
- **Minor plaster cracks:** Hairline cracks in paint and plaster. If the crack is deeper than 3mm (depth of a £1 coin), please report this to us.



- **Wall tiles, grouting and sealant.** If you are unable to carry out this work or if you think there has been a leak due to damaged tiles or missing sealant please contact us.
- **Floor coverings including floor tiles, vinyl, laminate, and carpets.** If you have been told that your floor tiles may include asbestos, please do not try to repair them or take them up. If there is a problem with them please contact us. Please note that Saxon Weald are responsible for repairing safety floors in kitchens and wet rooms - these are generally in Extra Care Schemes.
- **Decorative finishes:** Includes coving, dado, and picture rails.

EXTERNAL

- **Cutting grass and keeping bushes, trees and other foliage well maintained.**
- **Washing lines and posts** - except in communal areas.
- **Garden patios, decking, paving and driveways** - except in communal areas or on paths leading to the entrance to your property.
- **'Non-boundary' walls and fences.**
- **Lawns, shrubs and bushes:** Please keep your garden tidy and cut back. We may charge if you if we are called in to deal with overgrown gardens and some plants can cause damage to the property or outbuildings.
- **Wooden sheds or other garden structures.** Saxon Weald will not be responsible for the maintenance of sheds or garden structures that do not form part of the main property.

Guidance in finding someone to carry out repairs that Saxon Weald do not carry out.

If you need to find someone to carry out repairs that are your responsibility you can find reputable tradespeople here:

- www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/care/housing-options/adapting-home/finding-tradesperson/
- <https://www.checkatrade.com/>
- <https://www.trustatrader.com/>

Repair guides

There is a series of handy videos on our website that show you how to do some basic repairs:

- Filling hairline cracks
- Replacing handles and latches
- Unblocking a sink
- Power failure: Your fuse box and RCD Switch
- Changing a lightbulb
- Adjusting internal doors
- How to use your thermostats
- Storage heaters (drops to 3 x videos)
- How to bleed a radiator
- How to repressurise your boiler
- Go to: www.saxonweald.com/living-in-your-home/repairs/Guides



Condensation, damp and mould



Some condensation in any home is normal and unavoidable, especially in kitchens and bathrooms. However, if left untreated, condensation can lead to mould growth and cause damage to our homes and belongings.

Condensation and damp – what's the difference?

Condensation is caused by warm, moist air meeting cold surfaces, such as windows and walls. Penetrating damp, which is much less common, is caused by moisture entering the home from an external source, such as leaking plumbing or moisture from the ground.

Tackling condensation

While damp is an issue that requires further investigation, there are some ways we can all reduce the impact of condensation in our homes:



REDUCING MOISTURE:

Condensation is caused when warm damp air meets cold surfaces.

Cutting down moisture levels in our homes can reduce this. When cooking, keep lids on saucepans where possible and close kitchen doors to stop steam from escaping. When taking a bath or a shower, keep the bathroom door closed and wipe down wet surfaces after use. Opening windows and using extractor fans, if you have them, can also help damp air escape.



HEATING:

We understand that keeping the heating on is not always financially possible. However, it is recommended to

maintain a temperature of between 18 & 21 degrees to reduce condensation in our homes. Warm air is dry air!



AIR CIRCULATION:

A lack of ventilation can cause dampness and a musty smell in our homes.

We can help air to circulate by keeping furniture away from walls, not blocking radiators or overfilling wardrobes and cupboards. Keeping trickle vents open will allow air to circulate, however, opening windows for ten minutes each morning is also great to let in some fresh air. While it may be chilly, the fresh air will take less energy to heat up than the damp air in our homes.



DRYING LAUNDRY:

During the winter, we may be more likely to dry wet clothes inside and on radiators. Unfortunately, this can put moisture back into the air. If possible, hang washing outside to dry. If this is not possible, keeping a window open will help moisture escape.



Mould tip: if you notice small spots of mould in your home, wipe these away using a damp cloth as they appear. This will help to prevent it from spreading.

While some condensation is common and can be managed using the guidance above, excessive moisture in our homes can indicate a bigger issue. If you are worried your home is experiencing damp, mould or condensation, please contact us at hello@saxonweald.com or **01403 226000**. If possible, please



Asbestos: what you need to know

What is asbestos?

Asbestos is a natural material that was used in many homes and buildings from the 1930s to the 1980s because it was strong, affordable, and resistant to heat and fire.

The UK banned the use of asbestos in construction in 1999. However, some homes built or improved before then may still contain asbestos materials. If your home was built before 1999, asbestos may be present.

Where can asbestos be found?

Asbestos can be found in a range of building materials, including:

- Pipe lagging
- Insulation
- Textured wall and ceiling coatings, such as Artex
- Soffit boards
- WC cisterns
- Wall cladding
- Internal wall boards and partitions
- Central heating boilers
- Floor tiles and vinyl flooring
- Rainwater pipes and gutters

Why do we manage asbestos?

Many older homes contain asbestos materials. When these materials remain in good condition, we can often manage them safely without removing them. If the material becomes damaged or disturbed, it may need specialist attention. For this reason, please contact us before starting any home improvements or DIY projects that could affect your property.



How does Saxon Weald manage asbestos?

We monitor and manage asbestos in line with current safety requirements.

To help keep customers safe, we:

- Inspect asbestos in communal areas every year
- Check for asbestos before planned improvement or repair work starts
- Use specialist contractors when asbestos needs treatment or removal

In many cases, asbestos materials can stay in place safely if they remain in good condition.

What should customers do?

To help keep yourself and others safe, please:

- Get written permission before making changes or improvements to your home
- Contact your Housing Officer if you would like to alter your property
- Avoid DIY work in areas where asbestos may be present
- Do not drill, saw, sand, scrub, or cut materials that could contain asbestos

Concerned about asbestos in your home?

If you think a material in your home may contain asbestos and appears damaged, please contact us.

Telephone: 01403 226000

Email: hello@saxonweald.com

You can also contact us through our online self-service portal at a time that suits you. We will review your concern and let you know what action we need to take.



Insurance

As the owner of your property, we insure the building you live in. Buildings insurance covers the permanent parts of the building e.g. walls, doors, windows, roof, bathroom suite and fitted kitchen.



You are responsible for buying your own contents insurance, however, which should cover your belongings for theft and damage. This usually includes items such as electrical equipment and gadgets, clothing, furniture and upholstery – think about it as everything you would take with you if you moved.

Make sure your insurance also covers you for damage caused to other people's property - for example, if your washing machine overflows and causes damage to a neighbour's property, this would be your responsibility.

Please be aware that even if a problem is caused by something which we are responsible for repairing, any damage caused to your belongings would have to be claimed against your own contents insurance. For example, if there was a flood caused by a burst pipe, we would repair any damage to the structure of the building and you would have to claim on your own insurance for any water damage to your furniture, carpet or floor coverings, loss of water / increased water bill, etc.

If you need to make a claim against our buildings insurance, please contact hello@saxonweald.com.

Adapting your home

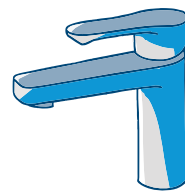


As time goes by, you may want to make alterations to your home that allow you to live more safely and independently. We may be able to help with installing minor adaptations such as grab rails, lever taps and window winders. Please contact us to discuss your needs. In some cases, our consultant occupational therapist will visit you to assess what adaptations would suit you best.

If you require a portable aid, such as a trolley or battery-operated bath seat, this is usually provided by your local health trust or can be purchased privately.

If you need more extensive adaptations (usually those costing more than £1000), such as a level-access shower or stairlift, you will need to contact your local council. You may be eligible for a Disabled Facilities Grant to cover the cost of the work. Please let us know what is planned before any work goes ahead.

We are responsible for maintaining any adaptations we have fitted. Usually, we will also maintain adaptations which have been funded by the local council. We will not, however, maintain any items supplied and fitted by yourself or a private organisation. If you are arranging your own adaptation, you may wish to consider taking out your own breakdown insurance with the supplier.



Living in a newly-built home

If you live in a property that has been built in the last year, it will be covered by a 12-month defect period. This is effectively a one-year warranty and means that problems caused by design, materials, workmanship or specification will be dealt with by the builder. This excludes faults and issues that arise as a result of tenant misuse, neglect, wilful acts or accidental damage. Please contact HomeFix to report any defects.

It is important with a new property that you allow it to 'settle' and dry out gently. This will usually take between 9 – 12 months. At the end of the defects period, we will carry out an inspection to check that everything is in order and agree any work needed.

Drying out, cracks and shrinkage

Small cracks in the walls and gaps in joinery are both common signs of shrinkage. This happens when materials contract as they dry out. It's extremely unlikely that these cracks are anything significant and you can easily put them right with filler during routine decoration. It is wise to wait until the drying out process is complete before trying to fill any gaps, as they may continue to grow or new ones may appear.

To keep cracks and gaps to a minimum, you need to allow your home to dry out gradually and try to keep an even temperature throughout the property.

Leaving your window vents open will help to air your home and allows moisture to evaporate more naturally.



Efflorescence

The appearance of a white deposit on the wall (known as efflorescence) can also be an effect of the drying-out process. These white deposits are natural salts that come out of the wall materials and are quite normal. The salts are not harmful and usually disappear over time. Where they appear on internal walls, they can be brushed or wiped away.

Decorating your home

Hopefully you will be happy with the wall colours in your new home, but if you want to decorate, then please wait until the drying out process is complete. Decorating at an early stage could be a waste of time, as shrinkage cracks may continue to appear.





Your rent

Paying your rent is your most important responsibility as a tenant. We are a non-profit making organisation and use income from rent to pay for the cost of managing and maintaining your home.

You should pay your rent in advance, as set out in your tenancy agreement. You can check your balance at any time at www.mysaxonweald.com.

Rent charges

Rents are reviewed each year, with changes taking effect in early April. We will give you at least four weeks' notice of any changes.

Rent payment cards

Around a week after you have signed your tenancy agreement, you will receive a rent payment card. Please keep it safe. Replacement cards can be ordered via your online account at mysaxonweald.com, by calling us on **01403 226000** or by emailing hello@saxonweald.com.

Ways to pay

For security reasons, we do not accept cash payments at our office. However, there are many other ways you can pay your rent.

Direct debit: This is where you give your bank permission to pay your rent direct to us on your behalf. You can pay weekly or monthly on a range of different dates. You can set this up easily online at mysaxonweald.com.

Online: Simply log in to your mysaxonweald.com account or click on the 'pay now' button on our homepage at www.saxonweald.com and enter your details.

Internet banking: Internet payments should be made to Natwest Bank; sort code 60-11-17; account number 67088848. Make sure you quote your tenancy reference number and name to ensure your rent account is credited.

Standing order: You can instruct your bank to pay your rent automatically by standing order. You can choose which day and how frequently to make the payment. Payments should be made to Natwest Bank; sort code 60-11-17; account number 67088848. Make sure you quote your tenancy reference number and name to ensure your rent account is credited.

Phone payments: During office hours, please call us on **01403 226000**. When we are closed, you can call Allpay on **0844 5578321**.

Pay points: You can make a payment at any post office or paypoint outlet. You will need your rent payment card.



Benefits and debt advice



We offer free advice on your eligibility for benefits. Our advisers can make sure you are claiming the right benefits, and will help you if you are having trouble claiming or appealing against any benefit claims. You can contact our Money Matters team at hello@saxonweald.com.

If you are in debt, there are a number of organisations offering free and confidential advice, including:

Citizens Advice Bureau:

www.adviceguide.org.uk

National Debtline:

www.nationaldebtline.org

Christians Against Poverty:

www.capuk.org/money-and-debt-advice

Having difficulty paying your rent?

If you are having difficulty paying your rent or think you are going to start having problems, please contact us straight away. We understand that there may be times when you have genuine circumstances which make paying your rent hard. We will listen to your problem and agree on how you can pay any overdue rent without causing too much hardship.

However, if you continually avoid



paying your rent, or fail to keep to our agreement, or if you simply ignore the problem, we will start legal proceedings and you will be at serious risk of losing your home.

INCOME	
Wages / pension	
Benefits	
Other income	
TOTAL INCOME	
EXPENDITURE	
Rent	
Home contents insurance	
Council tax	
Gas / electricity and water	
Phone / mobile phone	
TV licence	
Loan repayments	
Food	
Travel	
Clothes	
Going out	
Other (e.g. toiletries, cigarettes, presents)	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	

If your expenditure is more than your income, you need to think of ways to reduce it, or to increase your income.

Council tax and other bills

You are responsible for paying your own council tax to your local authority. You are also responsible for paying your own utility, telephone and other domestic bills. If you live in retirement or extra care housing, your heating and water may be included in your rent – please check with your scheme manager as this



varies from scheme to scheme. Please note if you receive universal credit, you will need to make a separate claim for council tax support.

To find more financial support and resources, please visit the Money Matters page on our website. You can also check your own eligibility for financial help through the benefit calculator:

www.betteroffcalculator.co.uk



Living in your home

Emergencies

If you need the fire and rescue service, police or an ambulance dial **999** immediately. Do not contact us first.

If your personal safety or the safety and wellbeing of others is at risk, you should dial **101** (**999** in an emergency) and seek police assistance. The police will then have a record of the event, which they can share with us if necessary.

If you need to contact us in an emergency, please call **01403 226000** and you will be re-directed to our out-of-hours service.

Access to your home

We have the right to gain access to your home to inspect or repair the property. We will always try to give you notice or make an appointment. Always ask to see identification – all Saxon Weald staff and contractors should have ID with them. If you are not sure, please contact us for verification.

Locks and keys

You are responsible for the keys to your home. We do not hold a spare set and will not pay for replacements if you lose them. If you lock yourself out and ask us to arrange a locksmith to let you back in, we will send you the bill. This also applies to any damage caused getting back in.



If a lock to an external door is broken as a result of daily wear and tear, or a genuine fault, it is our responsibility and we will either repair or replace it.

At the end of your tenancy, you must ensure that all keys to your homes are handed in to us.

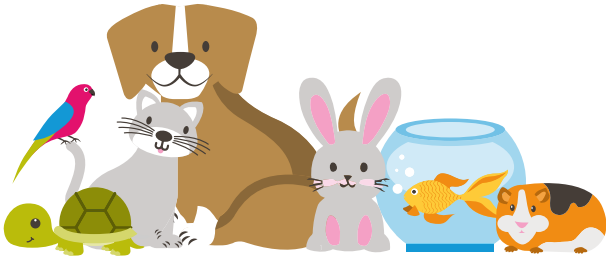
Pets

You must ask our permission to keep a pet. We will only give permission for a reasonable number of pets that are suitable for the size of property. We will only grant permission for one dog in a property that does not have direct access to a garden.

For retirement or extra care housing, please consult the scheme manager.



We will usually agree to a pet, but we expect you to look after them and make sure they don't cause a nuisance to other people or damage property. This includes preventing excessive dog barking and picking up and disposing of dog waste responsibly. If we receive complaints, we can withdraw our permission.



We classify domestic pets as:

- Dogs (except those prohibited by the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 or other law)
- Cats
- Song birds
- Fish
- Rabbits and small caged rodents
- Small, non-poisonous caged reptiles, amphibians or insects

You can apply online at www.saxonweald.com.

Gardens and balconies

If you have a garden, you are responsible for keeping it tidy. This includes maintaining trees, shrubs and hedges. Do not fill it with rubbish and unwanted household items as this creates a nuisance and spoils the look of your neighbourhood. Please contact us if you are having problems maintaining your garden.

If you have a balcony, it is your responsibility to keep it tidy and ensure there are no fire hazards, such as BBQs or portable heaters.

If you have a shed or outbuilding, you should only store gardening equipment, garden furniture and outdoor toys or bicycles inside it. Other items may become damp or damaged as these buildings do not have insulation and tend to get cold. Keep it locked when not in use to protect your property. It is also your responsibility to have adequate cover for any belongings on your home contents insurance policy.

Running a business from home

You must get our written consent to run a business from your home. We don't normally object to work such as child minding, secretarial or administrative work. However, we would not usually allow you to do things that may cause a nuisance to your neighbours, such as car repairs, animal breeding / running kennels, or work that requires you to employ staff or use machinery.

If your work or business breaks planning laws, we will ask you to stop or change your business. If your business becomes a nuisance to those living near you, we will ask you either to take steps to prevent the nuisance or to stop or change the business. If you ignore this request, we will have to take action against you for breaking the terms and conditions of your tenancy agreement.



Vermin

If you think you have rats, mice, wasps, cockroaches or other pests inside your home, it is your responsibility to deal with them at your own expense. You should contact your local council or a reputable pest controller for help.



Saxon Weald are responsible for getting rid of pests from our communal areas. If you discover a pest problem in a communal area, please contact us and we will arrange for a pest controller to visit.

DIY

You have the right to make improvements to your home, but you may need to get our written permission first. Our permission is not needed for minor jobs such as putting up shelves or redecorating, but would be needed for jobs such as putting in patio doors or putting up a shed.



If you carry out major works without our consent, or if you damage the property in any way, you are responsible for fixing the damage and putting the property back to its original state. Alternatively, we will carry out the work and charge you for it.

Satellite dishes, television or radio aerials

You must gain our written permission and any relevant planning approval before installing any of these items of

equipment. We have the right to refuse permission to erect satellite dishes and, in some cases, the local council will place a limit on the number of dishes that can be installed on one block of flats. Apply online at: www.saxonweald.com.



Anti-social behaviour

We want you to enjoy living in your home and neighbourhood without interference and disturbance from others. Unfortunately even in the safest of neighbourhoods, anti-social behaviour can occur.

Anti-social behaviour can include:

- Acts of violence.
- Drug misuse and alcohol-related nuisance.
- Hate incidents motivated by someone's age, disability, faith, sexual orientation or race.
- Noise nuisance at high levels or unreasonable hours.
- Vandalism and graffiti.
- Environmental health issues such as rubbish dumping.
- Dog fouling, uncontrolled and noisy pets.
- Inconsiderate or dangerous parking and abandoned cars.

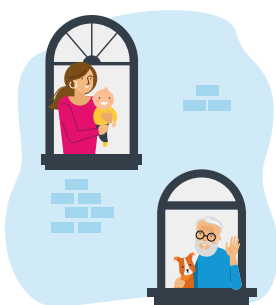


If you are experiencing anti-social behaviour

It's often best to approach the person causing the problem and explain calmly why their behaviour is upsetting you.

They may not realise they are disturbing you. If the behaviour continues, or you don't feel able to talk to the person concerned, please contact us.

If your personal safety or the safety of others could be at risk, you should call **101** (or **999** in an emergency) and seek police assistance. The police will then have a record of the event which they can share with us if necessary.



What is not considered anti-social behaviour

Some things may cause you annoyance, but cannot be dealt with by us as they do not constitute a breach of the tenancy or lease. These include:

- ✗ Noise from children when they are playing.
- ✗ Family disputes.
- ✗ Babies crying.
- ✗ Smells from cooking.
- ✗ Sounds of normal day to day living that we can hear such as opening and closing of doors, going up and down stairs.
- ✗ One-off parties such as BBQs, birthday or Christmas parties providing they don't cause an unacceptable disturbance.
- ✗ Parking in the wrong bay.

- ✗ Clashes of lifestyle, including cultural differences.
- ✗ Minor personal differences such as fall outs between children.
- ✗ Putting rubbish out on the wrong day.

How we deal with anti-social behaviour

We will always take the time to listen to your concerns and understand your personal circumstances. We will tell you if we think we can help and agree an action plan with you. This will include information on what we will do and how often we will contact you. We will work with other organisations, such as the police or environmental health, to help us deal with the issue as quickly and effectively as possible.

We will need you to help us take action by keeping records of the problems. In some circumstances, we may also need you to agree to be a witness.

Reporting noise nuisance

You should report noisy parties and other repeated or constant noise problems

to the council's environmental health department. They have access to noise monitoring equipment and also have the legal power to confiscate the equipment responsible for making the noise. If you report a noise problem to the council, please let us know so we have a record of the situation.



Your responsibilities

We expect you to treat other people with respect and keep to the conditions of your tenancy. You must take responsibility not only for yourself, but also for the members of your household and your visitors. You must not behave in any way that causes an annoyance, or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress in the community.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is defined as an incident or series of incidents of controlling, coercive, or threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse. No one deserves to be a victim of domestic abuse, but unfortunately we are seeing increasing numbers of incidents.



Saxon Weald is a member of the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) and we believe everyone has a right to feel safe in their home. We can help you by dealing with your disclosures of domestic abuse, quickly, effectively and sympathetically by a trained member of staff.

We offer a non-judgemental and person-centred approach, where you are at the heart of any support and intervention put in place. Ensuring the safety of you and your family is our top priority, and we will be led by you on what you need to feel safe, whether that be extra locks, security lights or alternative housing.

Other organisations who can help include:

WORTH SERVICES (West Sussex)

Specialist Domestic Abuse Service
0330 2228181 or
07834 968539 (weekends)

WOMEN'S AID

0808 2000 247
helpline@womensaid.org.uk

MEN'S ADVICE LINE

Advice and support for men experiencing domestic abuse and violence
0808 801 0327
info@mensadvice.org.uk

GALOP

24-hour support for the LGBT+ community
0800 999 5428

SAMARITAN

24-hour confidential and emotional support for anyone in a crisis
111 123

NSPCC

0808 800 5000

CHILD LINE

0800 1111

HOURGLASS

Providing support and information older people at risk of or experiencing abuse
0808 808 814

KARMA NIRVANA

Support and advice for those at risk of so-called honour-based violence and forced marriage
0800 5999 247

VICTIM SUPPORT

For victims of crime whether they have reported it to the police or not
0808 1689 111



Remember, if your personal safety or the safety of others is at risk, you should call **101** (or **999** in an emergency) and seek police assistance. Please also look at the domestic abuse pages on our website for more information: www.saxonweald.com/da.

Your neighbourhood

Our Estate Services team cover a range of activities to support customers in creating a safe, well-maintained community.



Neighbourhood visits

Our Estate Services team check the communal areas on our estates periodically. In retirement and extra care housing, checks are carried out by the scheme manager. These visits help us to:

- Check the standard of our contractors' work
- Identify health and safety issues
- Identify problems and report repairs
- Spot where we can make improvements

You can help us by reporting any problems you see in your neighbourhood, such as dumped rubbish or abandoned vehicles.

Rubbish disposal

Please dispose of your rubbish carefully. If you have a shared bin store area, please only place rubbish in the bins provided and do not put extra items around the store. If we find dumped rubbish, we will investigate who it belongs to and charge them the cost of removal.

If you have a general enquiry about your rubbish collection service, please speak to your local council.



Grounds maintenance

To keep our estates and schemes tidy, we have a planned programme of grounds maintenance which is carried out by a contractor. Routine maintenance takes place across all of our communal areas and includes tasks such as grass cutting, shrub bed and hedge maintenance, weed management, litter picking and bordering. You will receive a minimum of 26 visits a year.

The cost of work carried out is charged equally for everyone living in the area via their service charge. If you pay a charge and would like more information about the area it covers, or if you spot a problem with the grounds maintenance, please email hello@saxonweald.com.

It is worth noting that many grass verges are the responsibility of the local Highways team, so in some cases, we will refer you to your council.



Tree management

We use a specialist contractor to survey, protect and manage the care of the trees on our communal land.



They prioritise work to trees that pose an urgent or imminent health and safety risk. If you notice a tree on communal land that falls under this category, please contact us and we will ask them to conduct a survey.

If a tree is in your own garden, it is your responsibility to maintain it. We may be able to assist if it is a health and safety concern or is causing considerable nuisance and you do not have the means to manage it yourself. We will handle such instances on a case-by-case basis. If a tree in a neighbouring property is causing a problem, you will need to discuss it with the neighbour or relevant landowner.

Cleaning

We carry out regular cleaning of communal areas and quarterly window cleaning in our retirement and extra care schemes. Customers pay for this through a service charge and should report any problems to their scheme manager or by emailing us at hello@saxonweald.com.

Customers who don't pay for contract cleaning are jointly responsible for cleaning any shared areas, such as stairwells and hallways. We monitor the cleanliness of these areas during our visits and will take action if we

feel customers are not meeting their responsibilities. This includes imposing a basic cleaning service which customers would be required to pay for.

Car parking

We know that where parking is limited it can be frustrating for customers, and ask that you park considerately and do not block people's access. If severe problems arise, we will consult with customers about setting up parking control. This is where a parking contractor issues permits and patrols the area, issuing fines where appropriate. We will not usually get involved with parking disputes between individuals. If the parking problems are occurring on a public road, your local council may be able to assist.

You must not park any untaxed vehicle on our land. We will ask you to remove, or will remove ourselves, any vehicle from our property that is found to be either dumped, untaxed, causing a nuisance, obstruction or safety risk. We will charge the owner the cost of having the vehicle removed, stored or destroyed. If you spot an abandoned vehicle in your neighbourhood, please report it to the police via Operation Crackdown at: www.operationcrackdown.org.

You will need our written consent to keep any of the following on our property: heavy goods, public service, trade or commercial vehicles, caravans, boats, trailers or similar items.





Personal items in communal areas

Fire safety regulations mean that customers are not permitted to keep any items in communal areas, except a door mat. This means no plants, furniture, bikes, mobility scooters or pushchairs.

It may be inconvenient and you may think we are being petty, but our customers' safety has to be our first priority. Any obstruction to the common areas can hinder escape in the event of a fire, and can also provide fuel to a fire.

If we find items in shared areas, we may remove them without notice and charge you the cost of doing so.

Communal grounds

We want to ensure the communal grounds within our blocks and schemes can be enjoyed by everyone. To ensure this is possible, we ask tenants to respect these areas and be considerate of others when using these spaces for activities. For example, you must not obstruct communal footpaths, shout and play music loudly, or smoke directly under a neighbour's window.

Please also be aware that any personal items left in communal grounds and gardens are left at your own risk.

Saxon Weald will not get involved with disputes around items left unattended in communal grounds.

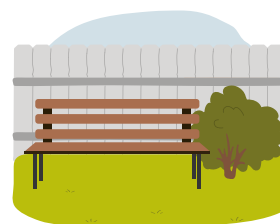
Garages

Garages are let under separate agreements to those of our homes. Garages must not be used for running businesses, storing hazardous or illegal materials, living in, storing rubbish and household waste or carrying out vehicle repairs (other than to your own vehicle).

To see availability in your area and current rents, please see our website www.saxonweald.com/rent-a-garage.

Environmental improvements

Every year we set aside some money to make small improvements to our neighbourhoods, such as installing a bench, adding some planting, improving a drying area or contributing to play equipment. If you have an idea for something that would improve your neighbourhood, please email hello@saxonweald.com.



Who else can help?

You should contact your local council for queries concerning:

- Refuse collection and recycling
- Street cleaning
- Street lighting
- General tree concerns (those not on Saxon Weald land)
- Parking issues on public highways
- Grass verges not owned by Saxon Weald



Making a complaint

We take pride in providing good customer service, however, we know that occasionally things can

go wrong. Here is some information on how to make a complaint and what you can expect from us. A copy of our full complaints policy is available on request.



How to complain

Simply contact us telling us:

- what the problem is, giving details where possible, such as dates / names
- what you would like to see happen next
- how best to contact you

We ask that you bring any problems to our attention within 12 months of the issue occurring.

Our complaints procedure

We try to deal with complaints quickly and fairly. At Saxon Weald we operate a two stage complaint process. We will acknowledge all complaints within five working days. We will then investigate and issue a full response within 10 working days of the acknowledgement. In the event that you are not happy with our response, we will refer the

issue to our Customer Experience team (this is known as stage two). They will also acknowledge your complaint within five working days. TWe will issue a full response within 20 working days of the acknowledgement.. This will be our final response to the issue.

Still dissatisfied?

If you have been through our complaints process and are not satisfied, you have the right for your complaint to be considered by the Independent Housing Ombudsman. You can contact the Ombudsman at any time for impartial advice.

Housing Ombudsman Service

PO Box 1484, Unit D

Preston, PR2 0ET

Telephone: 0300 111 3000

Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Unacceptable behaviour by complainants

We reserve the right not to consider a case if the complainant acts in an unreasonable, rude or aggressive manner, or where the complaint is frivolous, or has already been closed.



Help making your complaint



If you are not confident about communicating your complaint, you are entitled to have a friend, family member or other advocate act on your behalf. We will need your permission to share your information with this person.

If you have a disability, health condition or other circumstance that means you need additional support to progress your complaint, please get in touch.

There is also advice on making a complaint on the Housing Ombudsman's website: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk.

Moving or ending a tenancy



Moving

At some point, you may need or want to move home. Families may need more bedrooms, while empty-nesters may wish to downsize.

If you need to move, please contact us for guidance. Generally, if you are under 55 you will need to register with your local council. They will have certain conditions that you have to meet before they accept you on their list (for example, over-crowding or under-

occupying in your current home). If you are over 55 and wish to move into our retirement properties, we may be able to help you. See our website www.saxonweald.com for more information on our over 55 housing.

Exchanging



Another way to move is through a mutual exchange. This is where you swap your home with another of our tenants or a tenant of another housing association or local council. You need our written permission before you swap.

Finding someone to swap with

We use an online system called Homeswapper, which is a register of all tenants in the UK who want to move. To join Homeswapper, go to www.homeswapper.co.uk.

We will approve your registration so long as:

- You have been a tenant in your current property for more than one year
- You don't have any rent arrears
- You don't have a history of antisocial behaviour
- You can afford the rent on the new property
- The new property is the right size for your household

Please note: it is illegal to pay or receive money when swapping your home with another tenant.



We can refuse your exchange with good reason. Reasons for refusal could include:

- You owe us rent
- We don't think you will be able to afford the new rent
- Either tenant has been issued a Notice Seeking Possession or legal proceedings have begun against them
- Either property is too big or too small for either tenant
- Either property has an age criteria and the new tenant does not meet that criteria
- You have been in your current home for less than 12 months

When you find another tenant you want to swap with, find out as much as possible about the tenancy you would have and compare it with your own. Be sure to visit the property.

If your new home has had any improvements or alterations carried out by the previous tenants, you may be expected to maintain these. You may also be asked to sign a document called a 'disclaimer'. This will mean you agree to certain items being repaired or replaced to a different standard or even removed without replacement if they fail.

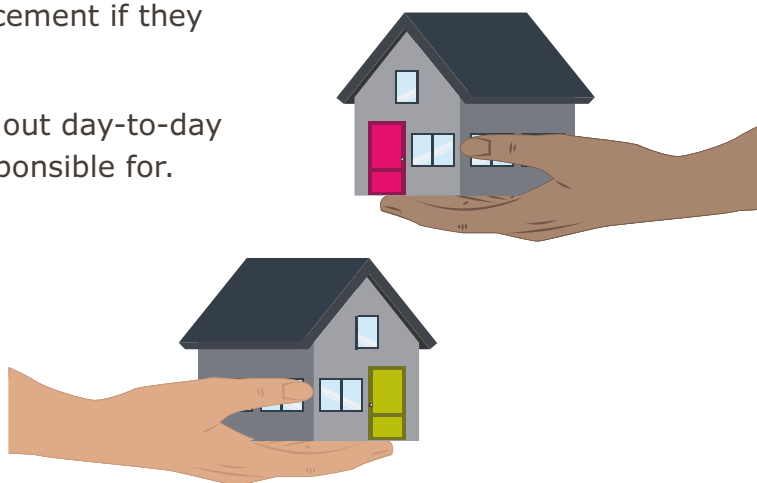
We will of course carry out day-to-day repairs that we are responsible for.

Mutual exchange checklist:

- ✓ Is the property in good condition?
- ✓ How much is the rent?
- ✓ Is there a separate service charge?
- ✓ What kind of tenancy would you have?
- ✓ Have they made any improvements and did they have permission?
- ✓ Why do they want to move?

Please remember, you are accepting the property as it is. After the move:

- ✗ Repairs may not be carried out to any damage
- ✗ Installations (such as fire places) will not be removed
- ✗ Unscheduled improvements or alterations will not be made (so make sure you are happy with the kitchen etc as it is)
- ✗ We will not remove items left in the property or garden



Applying for a mutual exchange

Once we've approved your request and you've found someone who's agreed to swap home with you, you'll need to sign up to SwapTracker.

SwapTracker is part of the HomeSwapper service and provides an end-to-end digital service, where you can apply for a mutual exchange and keep track of the progress all in one place.

Click the link to download a copy of the Swaptracker Guide:
[swaptracker_guide.pdf](#)



Moving out

If you are moving or wish to give up your home, there are a number of things that you must do. This will help your move go more smoothly and will avoid the possibility of us charging you to put things right after you've left. It also means we can provide a better service to other people in housing need, by helping us to let your property quickly after you have moved out.

You must give us four weeks' notice in writing, telling us that you want to end your tenancy and



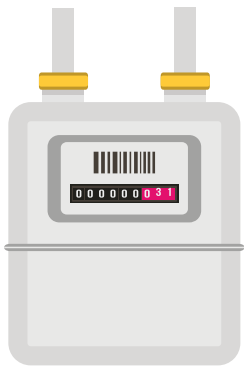
the date you are moving out. Please note that all tenancies must end on a Sunday. If you are transferring to another property owned by us, we may accept a shorter notice period. In this instance, you should contact the Home Move team for advice as soon as you know the date you are moving into your new home.

Make sure your rent is paid up to date. Check your balance any time at [mysaxonweald.com](#).

Make sure you clear out all of your belongings and leave your home clean, tidy and in good decorative order, in accordance with our standards (see **pages 37-39**). We let our empty properties in good condition and we believe that it is only fair that they are handed back to us in a similar condition when tenants move out.

Before you move out, we may carry out a basic inspection of your property. If we think that work is needed to bring the property up to standard, we will notify you and tell you what needs to be done. Once you have moved out we will carry out another, more detailed inspection. If we find that you have failed to meet your obligations or carry out the repairs required, we will charge you for the costs we incur in putting things right. Please be assured that we will not be unreasonable and will take into consideration the fair wear and tear of the property and its fixtures and fittings.





It is your responsibility to take all meter readings and inform the relevant utility companies accordingly. You should also notify other relevant organisations of your move. For example, inform your telephone and insurance companies and your council's Council Tax department. Gas and electric keys/cards should be left in the property and accounts on credit meters should be in credit. We may charge you for outstanding debts on the meter. Do not take your key/card with you as you will not be able to use it in your new home.

If you receive benefits, you must contact your council's benefit department to tell them about your move. Your benefit will not be transferred automatically.

Arrange for your mail to be redirected to your new address and pay any outstanding bills. We ask that you also give us your new address in case we need to contact you. This information will be treated as strictly confidential.



During the period leading up to you leaving, we may identify a new tenant for the property. In this case, we will try and arrange an accompanied viewing, whereby, with your permission, a staff member will show the prospective tenant around your property. This helps us to let the property as quickly as possible after you move out.



On leaving the property, make sure that all gas, electric and water supplies are switched off at the mains. Check that all doors, windows and gates are properly secured. Any smoke alarms or carbon monoxide monitors need to remain in place.

All keys belonging to the property must be handed in at our offices by midday on the Monday after your tenancy ends. If you live in retirement housing, keys should be handed in to your scheme manager. If you are late returning the keys, we will charge a further week's rent. Once you have given us the keys you will not be allowed back into the property.



The acceptable standards for tenants ending their tenancy

It is your responsibility to ensure that all unwanted rubbish, furniture and other items that belong to you are removed. Please do not leave bagged rubbish by the bins as the refuse collectors will not remove it and you may be charged for its removal. You may also be charged if we have to make changes as a result of work you have carried out.

The property should be left in the following condition:

PAINTWORK

All paintwork (e.g. walls, ceilings, doors and woodwork) should be in a clean and presentable condition, which means free from grime, dirt, grease and tobacco stains.



BATHROOMS AND SANITARY WARE

- All sanitary ware (for example, toilets, baths and wash basins) should be clean, free from grime or stains and in an acceptable state of repair, with no cracks or visible leaks.
- All toilets should have clean and unbroken seats in place.
- Baths and wash basins should both have a plug and chain.
- All taps should be clean and in good working order.
- Tiles around baths and wash basins should be clean.
- Sealant around baths and basins should be clean and free from grime.

KITCHEN SINK, UNITS AND WORK SURFACES

- The kitchen sink should be clean, free from grime and have a plug and chain fitted.
- Taps should be clean and in good working order.
- Units and worktops should be clear of food deposits, grime and grease.
- Unit doors should be intact and in good working order.
- Tiles should be clean and free from grease and grime.
- If your washing machine hose is fitted to the sink waste please plug the waste to stop the sink unit being flooded.
- Spaces where fridges and washing machines stand should be clean and free from dirt and dust.
- Kitchens should be left with the same or a greater number of units and worktops than were originally provided.
- All kitchen units or worktops that have been removed by the tenant without our written consent should be replaced or reinstated.
- If you intend to remove any fitted units and worktops, that you have installed with our consent, the original or similar units should be replaced or reinstated and we should be informed accordingly.



DOORS AND DOOR FURNITURE

- Doors must be re-fitted where they have been removed
- Where you have installed your own doors or door furniture they should either be left or replaced with the originals or suitable alternatives
- Doors and door frames should be in good repair and decorative order, with any holes filled
- Door furniture (knobs, handles, latches and locks) should be operational and in a good state of repair.
- Doors should be able to open and shut freely and without obstruction.



lighting these should either be left or replaced with safe and suitable alternatives.

- Where you have carried out DIY work by installing your own electrical fittings, these fittings must be safe and conform to national safety standards.

GAS APPLIANCES

- Where installed, all gas appliances (including radiators) should be in a clean and useable condition.
- If you have installed a gas appliance of your own (replacing one that was originally installed by us), and want to take it with you, ensure the original appliance or suitable alternative is put back in place before you move.
- On leaving the property you should ensure that the boiler is switched off.

WALLS AND PLASTER

- General cracks (over 5mm wide), holes or damage caused by the removal of fixtures and fittings should be filled.
- Walls or other structures that have been altered or removed without our written consent must be reinstated.

ELECTRICAL SWITCHES, SOCKETS AND LIGHT PENDANTS

- All switches, sockets and light pendants should be safe, in good working order, clean and free from dirt, grime and paint splashes.
- Where you have installed your own switches, sockets, pendants or



PLUMBING

- Any plumbing works you have done should be safe, tidy and securely clipped, with no visible leaks.
- The lagging jacket for the hot water cylinder should be securely fixed and in good condition.
- The waste pipe from the kitchen sink and any washing machine outlet should be clear and flushed with an appropriate solution to ensure that it is free from grease and other items that may cause obstruction to the flow of waste water.



FLOORING

- All floors should be clean and free from dirt and grease.
- Where foam backed carpets have been removed, any rubber backing and dust should be removed from the surface.
- Where there are vinyl tiles or similar coverings, these should be level and firmly stuck to the floor.
- All carpets and underlay should be removed unless you have agreed otherwise with the incoming tenants or with us.

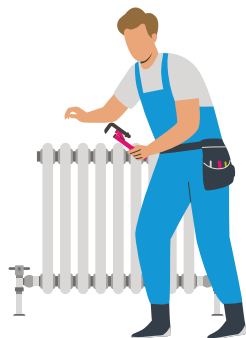


TILING

Ceramic wall tiles should be clean and free from grease and grime. Broken or missing tiles should be replaced along with any re-grouting that may be required.

HEATING

Heating appliances should be clean, with all controls intact and in good working order.



OPEN FIRES

Open fireplaces and flues should be clear and free from obstruction (e.g. birds' nests).

LOFTS AND CUPBOARDS

Roof spaces, fitted wardrobes and storage cupboards must be cleared and free from rubbish or unwanted items.

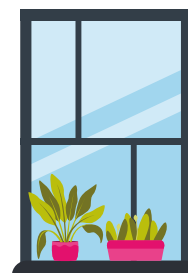
SHEDS, OUTHOUSES, GARAGES AND GARDENS

- All temporary structures (e.g. lean-tos or sheds) must be removed, unless we have agreed for it to stay.
- All sheds or external buildings must be clean and free of rubbish.
- Gardens must be free from rubbish.
- Boundary fences and hedges must be in good condition.
- Paths will be clear and free from obstruction and slime patches.
- Communal areas must be cleared of rubbish. Any items left in communal areas will be considered abandoned (unless we have agreed otherwise) and as such you will be re-charged for their removal.
- Lawns, shrubs and plants need to be tidy and patios / decking must be in good condition.



SECURITY

- All external doors and frames should be secure and in good repair.
- All windows should have working fasteners.
- All glazing should be in good condition with no broken or cracked panes.
- Windows should be able to open, shut and secure properly.





MOVING CHECKLIST

- Complete a change of address form at the Post Office to re-route mail (www.royalmail.com)
- Notify relevant authorities in your old and new areas regarding council tax and electoral registration
- Notify water, gas and electricity suppliers to turn off your services at your current address on your moving day and arrange for utility connections at your new home
- Arrange to transfer your home insurance or set up new policies to begin the day you move in
- Transfer your TV licence to your new address (www.tvlicensing.co.uk/moving)
- Arrange to discontinue your phone service and broadband and have it installed at your new address
- Complete the relevant section on your car registration document and licence and send them to the DVLA (for more information, visit www.dvla.gov.uk)
- Inform your car insurance company of your move
- Check parking arrangements at your new address and apply for permits if necessary
- Notify schools, doctors and dentists of your impending move
- Tell your bank, credit and store card companies your new address
- Book a removals company or arrange help
- Start using up the contents of your freezer
- Arrange for someone to look after your children and pets on move day
- Lock all windows and doors when you leave and take meter readings



What to do if a tenant dies

Please tell Saxon Weald as soon as possible after the death, so the necessary arrangements can be put in place.



If someone still lives at the address

If there is still someone living at the home, it may be possible for them to take over the tenancy. This is known as succession but is only possible provided there has been no previous succession of the property since December 2000. We will give the tenancy to a husband or wife, partner or any surviving joint tenants. We may also pass the tenancy on to close members of the deceased's family, as long as they have been living there for at least a year prior to the death. In some cases, we may ask a relative (but not a husband/wife) to move to alternative accommodation. This is usually where the property is larger than they need or where the home has been adapted for special needs. We will always deal with these cases as sensitively as we can. If you believe 'succession' applies to you, please discuss this with us.

If the person who died lived alone

If the tenant lived alone, we serve a 'notice to quit' which brings the tenancy to an end after four weeks. We will

ask to see the death certificate when available. If you need more time to sort things out, this can usually be arranged. You can clear the property and return the keys at any time during these four weeks, but rent is charged until the end of the tenancy. You need to return the keys to our offices, or if the person lived in a retirement scheme, you can give the keys to a Scheme Manager.

Will rent have to be paid?

Rent must be paid until the end of the agreed notice period. When you tell us about the death, we will tell you how much rent is due. This should be paid from any funds in the deceased's estate. If there are no funds in the estate, we will not pursue any outstanding rent from the next of kin. The executor of the estate must inform us in writing if there are no funds available.

Clearing the property

All belongings, including carpets and curtains, must be removed from the property. Please remember to check sheds, greenhouses and lofts for belongings. If you leave any belongings in the property when you give back the keys, we will dispose of them and charge the deceased's estate for the work. If you need help clearing the property, contact the local council's environmental health department as they may be able to collect any bulky or large items for a small charge. We may also be able to put you in touch with other local organisations who may be able to help you clear the property or who may take unwanted items for charity.



Getting a death certificate

If the person died at home, the medical certificate stating the cause of death will be signed by their doctor. If they died in hospital, it will be signed by the certifying doctor. You must record the death officially by registering with the Registrar. You will need an appointment to do this. You can purchase death certificates at the same time; you will need these in dealing with the deceased's affairs. You can find your nearest Registrar at www.gro.gov.uk.



How do I deal with benefits?

If the person who died was getting housing benefit, you must tell their local council's benefit department. You should note that council tax benefit, income support and housing benefit are all cancelled from the closest Monday to the date of death.

If the person who died was getting universal credit, you must inform the Department of Work and Pensions.

Other people to tell

You should also inform:

- Your local council tax department
- Inland Revenue
- Passport office
- Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority
- Services: electricity, water, gas, post office
- Benefits agency – you might be entitled to claim an increase in retirement pension for widowers.

SUPPORT

AtaLoss

Helps bereaved people find support and wellbeing.

Tel: 0800 448 0800

www.ataloss.org

Bereavement counselling

To help you cope with your loss, you may find it helpful to talk to a bereavement counsellor. They can offer you advice, information and support. Cruse Bereavement Care is a charity that offers free advice for anyone who has been affected by a death. You can contact them on: 0844 477 9400 or email helpline@crusebereavementcare.org.uk.

GOV.UK

Government website offering information about bereavement benefits.

www.gov.uk/bereavement-support-payment/how-to-claim

'Tell us Once'

'Tell us Once' is a service that lets you report a death to most government organisations in one go. When you register the death, the registrar will let you know if the service is available in your area. If so they will give you a phone number and unique reference number to use.

Tel: 0800 085 7308

www.gov.uk/after-a-death/organisations-you-need-to-contact-and-tell-us-once



Data protection

Most of the information we hold is fairly obvious and in most cases we hold it because you, or others living with

you, have given it to us. Under data protection legislation you have a right to see personal data held on you. There are certain exceptions to this right. In particular, we may not be required to give you access to personal data if this involves giving you information about another individual.

If you want to see the information we hold on you in our records, please contact:

The Data Protection Officer
Saxon Weald
38-42 Worthing Road
Horsham
West Sussex
RH12 1DT

Alternatively, you can email any queries to hello@saxonweald.com.

We need to be careful that you are who you say you are and we will need information from you to check your identity. If you find information that is wrong, you should tell us and we may correct it or put a note on the file stating that you dispute the information.

The easiest way to update the information we hold on you is via your account at mysaxonweald.com.



For more information

UK GDPR came into force in 2018.

For up to date information on what data we hold on you, as well as how we process it, please visit our website:

www.saxonweald.com/privacy/

On our website you can also find our policies and guidelines, such as our Data Protection Policy.

The Government's Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) is responsible for enforcing Data Protection Legislation as well as providing information relating to how to handle and process personal data. Further details are available at: www.ico.org.uk.

About you

Please tell us about any changes to your personal contact details, including mobile phone numbers and email addresses. We use this information to send you updates on our services, such as reminders of repair appointments, so it's important that it is accurate. Please be assured that we keep your information secure and do not sell information to any third parties.

The easiest way to update the information we hold on you is via your account at mysaxonweald.com.





Should you require a large-font, braille, audio or OpenDyslexic font version of this document, please contact:
hello@saxonweald.com.

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