



Residents' Handbook

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Contacting Us

Telephone number: 020 3848 6020

Email address: Admin@TheSusannaInitiative.org.uk

Office address: 109 Baker Street, London W1U 6RP

Website: www.mmhs.org.uk (awaiting new website)

Normal office hours: 9.00am to 5.00pm
Monday to Friday, excluding Bank Holidays

For property emergencies **outside** these times, please choose option 1 and your call will be automatically directed to our gas contractor's call centre.

Your Tenancy

Our residents usually have either a tenancy agreement (TA) or an equity sharing lease (ESL). Some legal jurisdictions require alternative documentation to a TA or ESL. You will be advised what applies to you.

Tenancy agreements and ESLs can only be amended by agreement of both parties or by a change of law. This is not applicable to rent which may be altered following a three-month notice period or in accordance with the annual rent review process.

Rent & Equity

Rent is usually payable monthly and is subject to an annual review. Our Finance Department will advise you of the method of payment to be used. It may be that you will be required to pay a surcharge rent on top of our basic rent, if your income at any time **during** your tenancy exceeds the cap (fixed annually) for payment of basic rent only. Our Finance Department will also advise you of your rent responsibilities and any service charge responsibilities too.

If prior to the commencement of your tenancy or **during** your tenancy your sole or joint assets* exceed a capital sum (also fixed annually), you will be required to contribute capital towards your home. Full details of our Equity Sharing Scheme will be provided when you apply for a tenancy, so too during your tenancy, should the need arise.

*assets include but are not limited to savings, investments, capital such as a share in a property.

Insurance

We organise buildings insurance but not contents insurance which is your responsibility. It is advisable that you evaluate your personal possessions and obtain contents insurance which meets your needs.

Improvements and Alterations

You must not carry out any improvements or alterations to your property without our prior written consent. If you have a specific request regarding improvements or alterations, please write to the Property and People Services Department at the our office by email or letter.

Occupiers, Lodgers, Subletting & Animals

If you wish to take on an additional occupier or lodger, including children or other family members, you must obtain our written consent first.

Under no circumstances may you sublet your property, either in whole or in part.

You are responsible for ensuring that nothing happens on your property which may become a nuisance or annoyance to others or become a health or safety hazard.

If you would like to keep a domestic pet at your property (for example, cat, dog, rabbit, hamster, fish etc) you will require written consent from us, which will not be unreasonably withheld. As part of the process of considering your request, we will check if there are any restrictions in the title deeds for your property. Please note, any permitted pets will need to be kept under control for the duration of your residency and should not cause any damage to your home, nuisance to other people or become a health or safety hazard.

Ending Your Tenancy

When ending your tenancy, please provide us with as much notice as possible, and at least three months' written notice. You can provide notice via email or by letter. You will be provided with a vacating checklist detailing what you must do prior to returning keys. If you have an ESL, you will also receive guidance on how to surrender your lease.

Please note that rent and all other charges relating to running your home, such as utility costs, will remain payable by you until keys have been received by our office.

Looking After Your Home

The maintenance and repair of your home and garden is a responsibility shared between you and us. Please also refer to your TA or ESL.

We are generally responsible for exterior and structural repairs, whereas residents are responsible for smaller repairs.

A more detailed list is included at [Appendix One](#) **for guidance purposes only.**

As the resident, you must pay all costs relating to the supply and removal of electricity, gas, oil, water, sewage, telecommunications, data and other services and utilities. You should comply with all laws and with any recommendations of the relevant suppliers.

We would recommend that you maintain adequate heating and ventilation to ensure your wellbeing and to prevent property issues around condensation and mould. You are also responsible for keeping the garden in seasonal order. Please refer to your TA or ESL for further details.

If you are unsure whether a repair or garden issue is your responsibility, please contact our office

Please note that if you are no longer able to carry out garden maintenance yourself and need to pay for assistance, a grant may be available from the Methodist Church's Fund for the Support of Presbyters and Deacons (FSPD). WE can provide you with an application form.

Reporting Repairs

Please report repairs promptly, both for your own benefit and so that no further wear and tear or damage is caused to the property.

To report a repair that is our responsibility, please contact the Property and People Services Department by emailing **Property@SamuelLiving.org.uk** or by calling our Office.

In many cases it is best for you to arrange the repair, with us reimbursing you for the cost where the work is our responsibility.

Repairs that are our responsibility

Under our current policy:

For repairs costing less than £250 in value, please arrange the repair and provide us with an invoice for reimbursement.

For repairs costing between £251 and £500 please obtain 1 quote and email this to the Property and People Services Department. You must await permission prior to instructing works.

For repairs costing between £501 and £1,000 please obtain 2 quotes and email them to the Property and People Services Department. You must await permission prior to instructing works.

For repairs exceeding £1,000, please contact the Property and People Services Department for guidance. You must await permission prior to instructing works.

It is important to note that when instructing contractors, they must hold Public Liability Insurance. You will be required to provide a copy of this for us alongside any quotes.

Please be wary of cold calls from contractors who are looking for work or repeat business. If you have any concerns or are unsure about how to source an appropriate contractor for quotes, please contact the Property and People Services Department at the our office for guidance.

Gas & Electrics

We work to ensure that your property remains compliant in respect of both gas and electrics. We will arrange for a gas engineer to inspect your property every year and electrician every five years. This does not include inspection of appliances which belong to you.

You are obliged to allow access and to work with us and our contractors to complete these inspections as they are a legal requirement and therefore are not optional appointments.

Planned Maintenance

We have a programme of maintenance which includes items such as double glazing, refurbishment of kitchens and bathrooms, central heating boilers, driveways and external decorating. When your property is due for such work you will be notified and given details of the specification that will apply.

Your wellbeing

Aids and Adaptations

If you require aids and adaptations, we will work with you and your social services team to examine appropriate options and how these can be funded. Written consent will be required for any alterations to your property. Please contact us for further details.

It is important to note that we are a general needs housing provider. We are not obliged to make **structural** changes to your property to accommodate any aids and adaptations.

Wellbeing Support

We are aware that your circumstances may change during your tenancy, in terms of your finances, health and mobility or other needs. There may be ways that we or other organisations can support you in enabling you to live well in your property.

Please contact our office so that we can point you in the direction of advice and support and provide information on our programmes of wellbeing and property related grants.

Our Grant Programme

Under our current policy, we will consider making contributions towards garden sheds, loft ladders, security lighting, the provision of an over-the-bath shower and where finances are potentially causing hardship, offer advice. Please contact the our office for further details.

Appendix One

Below is an informal guide to responsibilities relating to property and garden maintenance and repair. Please refer to your TA or ESL for full details.

In most cases, our responsibilities include:

Externally

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• garages• window frames• window catches, locks and security devices (where provided by us)• external doors and frames• external lighting• access steps, paths and driveways• drains, gullies and external pipes• keeping gutters and drain gullies clear (we will reimburse you for one annual clean)• boundary and divisional garden fences, where provided by us, but excluding painting with preservative• roofs• walls• chimneys• decoration of previously painted areas• provision of a garden shed where there is no garage at the property• conservatories where already in place on moving in |
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Garden

- | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• pruning or removal of large forest-type trees |
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Internally

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• cold water storage tanks and supply pipe work• electrical installations including wiring and consumer units, switches, lighting, power points and extractor fans• kitchen units, worktops, sink, taps, waste pipes, traps and associated wall tiling• sanitary fittings including wash hand basin, taps, WC pan and cistern, bath, showers, WC seats and lids (as a result of fair wear and tear), waste pipes, traps and associated wall tiling• plumbing• floorboards• internal doors, frames, hinges, handles and catches• heating systems• floor covering in wet areas, ie kitchens & bathrooms• wired smoke detectors and CO detectors, if fitted |
|---|

In most cases, *your* responsibilities include:

Externally

- taps
- doorbell
- greenhouse
- shed (where there is already a garage at the property)
- patios or decking
- clothes posts, lines and rotary dryers
- stores and sheds not owned by us
- replacement of locks when keys are lost or stolen, or the provision of replacement/additional keys
- additional locks
- security alarm systems
- pipes in outbuildings, damaged by freezing
- provision of water meters
- paths and paving not directly serving an entrance door
- fences erected by residents within the demise of the property
- treatment of fences with preservative (regardless of ownership)
- gardens - including garden ponds
- TV and radio aerials and satellite dishes

Garden

- Maintaining gardens so that they are in a tidy and well-kept condition

Internally

- telephony and internet
- routine redecoration
- a repair not attributable to the normal wear and tear of items which are usually our responsibility
- all fittings and appliances not provided by us (includes cookers, ovens whether built-in or not, and cooker hoods, etc)
- fuses, light bulbs and fluorescent tubes
- security alarm systems
- shaving points
- Saniflo-type macerators
- sink, bath and basin plugs and chains
- blind and curtain rails
- floor coverings (which are laid on the structural floors in the property) except in wet areas
- clothes airers
- hat and coat rails and hooks
- shelving
- minor plaster cracks
- fitted wardrobes and doors