

Glen Oaks

HOUSING ASSOCIATION



Tenants' Handbook

Contents

An introduction from our Chief Executive	1
About us	2
Your rights	7
Rent and advice on benefits	15
Respect for others	19
The environment	23
Letting our homes	27
Gold Service	30
Repairs	32
Safety in the home	48
Leaving your home for a temporary period	52
Our complaints procedure	53
Handbook Feedback Form	54
Taking part	56

We are committed to equal opportunities and valuing people's differences and aim to provide a service to all of our tenants. We are happy to make this handbook available in other formats and languages, if you ask. If you need this information in Braille, on audio tape, in large print or in a different language, please let us know.

If you need any more help or advice, our staff will be happy to help.



Glen Oaks Housing Association Tenants' Handbook



An Introduction from our Chief Executive

On behalf of the Board and our staff, I would like to introduce you to our Tenants' Handbook and, if you are a new tenant, welcome you to Glen Oaks Housing Association.

We have written this handbook to give you information and advice about living in your home. Please keep it to refer to, as it will answer some of the questions you need to know. In developing the handbook, we listened to comments and suggestions from tenant groups and the Arden Tenants' Association, so we hope that you will find it easy to use.

We aim to give you a polite and efficient service and work hard to make your home and environment a pleasant place to live in. If you have any comments about this handbook or the services we provide, please let us know.

I hope this handbook helps you make the most of your tenancy.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Alasdair McKee". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

Alasdair McKee
Chief Executive

About us

We are a not-for-profit organisation. We are a registered charity. We were registered in 1991 as a registered social landlord and are regulated by The Scottish Housing Regulator.

The first 310 properties we managed were from Glasgow City Council in Darnley in 1992. We have renovated all of these properties, and they now provide good-quality affordable housing for our tenants. In 1998, we took over another 235 properties from Glasgow City Council in Cartloch, Pollok. We have re-housed all the tenants from these properties into newly built or refurbished homes. In 1999, we bought 1100 properties in Arden from Scottish Homes. We have worked consistently to get funding to regenerate the Arden estate. We have built 96 new homes to rent to tenants and 10 shared equity homes for sale.

Our Members

We need your support and for you to get involved in running our organisation so we encourage you to become a member of our Association. You can get an application form to buy a £1 share in the Association from our office or from our website. We invite our members to the Annual General Meeting to vote for members who want to be part of the Board.

It is important that you have a real say in what we do. Please consider joining us and becoming involved in our work.

The Board

We are a community based Association and managed by a voluntary Board. The role of the Board is to provide leadership to the Association and determine its strategy. It also controls the Association's affairs and approves its policies. The members of the Association choose Board members at our Annual General Meeting.

We consider what we have to do at monthly Board meetings and Sub-Committee meetings. The Sub-Committees include the following.

- Corporate Services
- Technical and Health and Safety
- Housing Services
- Audit

We also have a Service Improvement Group that meets every two months to discuss service delivery.

Our Staff

We have a team of 27 staff who provide a service to residents in each of our areas. The team is led by the Chief Executive and three Directors, who each have a specific department to manage. There are three departments in Glen Oaks.

- Technical
- Housing Services
- Finance and Corporate Services

One of the main responsibilities of staff in our Technical Department is to deal with repairs to your homes. This includes day-to-day repairs, planned repairs and ongoing maintenance. They also make sure that each property has a current Gas Safety Certificate. Staff within our Technical Department are also responsible for developing new homes for rent and community initiatives like the community garden and football pitches.

Our Housing Services staff provide a wide range of services including:

- collecting rent
- recovering money people owe us
- managing tenancies and our estates
- housing new tenants, and
- getting tenants to take part in various community activities

Our Finance and Corporate Services staff provide support to the other services within the organisation. They also cover a wide range of tasks such as:

- producing yearly budgets
- managing monthly accounts
- processing rent payments
- paying staff
- customer service standards
- collecting feedback from residents
- producing quarterly newsletters and annual reports
- maintaining and developing the website and tenant portal, and
- public relations

We are very committed to developing our staff and we kept our Investors in People status after being successfully re-assessed in September 2014.

Our offices close at 2pm every Wednesday to train staff on any relevant topics.

Our aims

Our mission statement

'Our aim is to provide good quality affordable housing and an excellent service. We will encourage resident participation and work with other agencies to regenerate our community'

Our vision

'Where Communities Thrive''

To provide a good-quality service and homes within a safe and attractive environment, we need you and the agencies who work with us to support us in our work. We agree objectives every year to make sure that we continue to focus on providing a service that meets your needs and also gives you value for money. We publish the results of our objectives in our newsletters and in our annual report.

How to contact us

If you have any questions you should contact our office. The office opening hours are:

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday:	9am - 5pm
Wednesday:	9am - 1pm
Friday:	9am - 4pm

Our address is:

Glen Oaks Housing Association Limited
3 Kilmuir Drive
Arden
Glasgow, G46 8BW

Tel: 0141 638 0999
Fax: 0141 638 5999

You can also e-mail us at go@glenoaks.org.uk, or visit our website at www.glenoaks.org.uk

If you have an emergency repair outwith office hours, including weekends and public holidays, please contact the following telephone numbers:

**Gas Central Heating/Hot Water Emergencies: (GasSure) 01294 468113
All Other Emergencies: (City Building) 0800 595 595.**

If English is not your first language please contact us so we can arrange for a suitable interpreter or give you printed information to make sure you have easy access to our services.

Service standards

We are committed to providing you with an efficient, high quality housing service. We set standards for our service and train our staff to help them deliver a good service to you. We will ask for your views on our service, to make sure we're getting it right. If things go wrong, please let us know. Complaints give us important information, and we would like to know if our service has not met your expectations. Details of our Complaints Procedure are set out on Page 53 of this handbook.

Data protection

We must keep to data protection laws when we use personal information about you and people applying to us for housing. We are not allowed to give anyone your personal information without your permission in writing.

How to use this handbook

We have designed our handbook to make it easy for you to find the sections you want to rather than having to read it from cover to cover.

If any of the information in this handbook changes or we introduce new services we will send you the relevant information for you to keep in your handbook.

If you need any more information on anything in this handbook, please contact our office.

If you have any comments or suggestions for improving the design or layout of this handbook or the information in it, please fill in the Handbook Comments Form at the back of this handbook, and return it to us.

Thank you for taking the time to read through this handbook. We hope you have many happy years in your home.

Your rights

Your tenancy agreement

Your tenancy agreement is the document you signed at the start of your tenancy. We give all our tenants a **Scottish Secure Tenancy or a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy**. Your tenancy agreement is an important document as it sets out the terms and conditions of your tenancy, both your and our rights and responsibilities.

Please keep your tenancy agreement in a safe place.

You must use the property as your only or main home.

The **Scottish Secure Tenancy** gives you 'security of tenure', which means you can keep your tenancy for as long as you want, unless you break the conditions of the tenancy.

The Scottish Secure Tenancy can only end in one of the following ways.

- If you give us four weeks' notice in writing that you want to end your tenancy.
- If we agree with you in writing that you can end your tenancy.
- If we take court action to take back your home under one or more of the grounds set-out in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.
- If you die and no-one meets the legal conditions to take over your tenancy.
- If you, or a member of your household has an anti-social behaviour order, and we take action to change your tenancy to a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy.
- A joint tenant (someone who shares your tenancy) can end their part of the tenancy by giving us and you (and any other joint tenants) four weeks notice. We can end a joint tenant's part of the tenancy if we have reasonable grounds because we think the tenant is not living in the house and does not plan to.

- If we think you have abandoned the tenancy or left your home permanently, we will serve a notice on your home, which gives you 28 days to respond. If you fail to respond within this time we can enter your home and end your tenancy. If there is a security risk or danger to other tenants, we may enter before the 28 days are over.

Joint tenancy

A joint tenancy is where you share the responsibilities of the tenancy of your home with someone else.

People who are not tenants but live in (or plan to live in) the property as their only or main home can apply for a joint tenancy. You must get our permission in writing before someone can become a joint tenant with you.

We will agree to give you a joint tenancy unless there are reasonable grounds for not doing so.

We may refuse permission if, for example:

- the home is not the person's only or main home; or they do not plan to move in to it as their only or main home
- we have served a notice on you to have you evicted (forced to leave) from the house, or we have got a court order to evict you, or
- the house may not be suitable for the joint tenant to share your tenancy with. For example, if your house has been designed or adapted for a person with special needs, and the person you want to share your tenancy with does not need this type of accommodation.

Succession to a tenancy

Succession is where a tenant dies and the tenancy passes to another member of the tenant's family or a carer who lived with them. This provides security for your family.

If you die, the following people will have the right to take over your tenancy:

- Your husband, wife, partner or joint tenant as long as the house has been their only or main home for at least six months before your death.
- A member of your family, as long as the house was their only or main home at the time of your death.

- A person who has given up their own home to care for you (or a member of your household) as long as the house was their only or main home at the time of your death.

Family members and carers do not have the right to take over your tenancy if your property has been designed or adapted for someone with special needs, but we will re-house them elsewhere.

The Scottish Secure Tenancy can be passed on by succession twice.

It is important to keep us up to date with details of the members of your household.

If someone wants to take over your tenancy, they should tell us within 28 days of your death. We will process their request in line with the above conditions.

Assigning (transferring) a tenancy

If your relationship breaks down or your personal circumstances change, you may want to move permanently out of your home and ask us to transfer your tenancy to another member of your household. You can transfer your tenancy to someone else as long as that person has been living in the property as their only or main home for at least six months. The new tenant must be willing to accept responsibility for the tenancy and the property as it is. You must tell us if you want to transfer your tenancy, and get our permission in writing.

Changing your name

If you change your name, please let us know in writing to allow us to update all our records.

Sub-letting

Sub-letting is where you move out of your home temporarily, and let it to someone else. Legally, you would still be our tenant and still have all your rights and responsibilities.

Under your tenancy agreement, the new temporary tenant becomes the 'sub tenant'. You can sub-let your tenancy with our permission. You must tell us that you want to sub-let your home beforehand.

You should consider the following if you want to sublet your home:

- You will still be the legal tenant of the property and will be responsible for making sure the rent is paid on time.
- You will be responsible for the behaviour of your sub tenant, in or around your home.
- You must make a legal agreement between you and your sub tenant.
- You will be responsible for any damage the sub tenant causes to the property.
- It will be your responsibility to make sure that your sub tenant leaves when you want to return to your home, or if you intend to give up your tenancy.
- We would agree the amount of rent and service charges the sub tenant will pay for a fixed period. We will need to agree any changes to these charges.
- We will not give you permission to sub-let your home if it means the property becomes overcrowded. Or, we will cancel our permission for you to keep sub-letting your home if the number of people living in your home changes and means the property becomes overcrowded.

Lodgers

A lodger is a guest in your home, who pays you rent. You would continue to live in the property, and let a room out for rent. You cannot take in a lodger without our permission in writing beforehand, which we would not unreasonably refuse.

If you are thinking of taking in a lodger, here are a few things you should consider:

- We will not give you permission if it means the property becomes overcrowded.
- You will need to declare any payments you receive if you claim Housing Benefit, for example, because they will be classed as income.
- You will be responsible for your lodger's behaviour in, or around your home. It is your responsibility to make sure that the lodger leaves when you want them to, or if you want to end your tenancy.
- If the number of people in your family increases you may not qualify to transfer, as the lodger moving out of your home would solve the overcrowding.

Running a business from your home

Under your tenancy agreement, you are not allowed to run a business from your home. However, in certain circumstances we may be prepared to let you carry out certain business activities. You must not run a business from your home without our permission in writing. You should apply to us for permission giving us details of your business plans.

Short Scottish Secure Tenancy

There are two main reasons why we may offer you a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy (SSST).

- (1) If you were evicted for anti-social behaviour in the last three years, or a court has given you, or a member of your household, an Anti-Social Behaviour Order, we would give you an SSST to allow us to monitor your tenancy. We can end your tenancy if we need to protect the neighbourhood or community against anti-social behaviour.
- (2) We may consider giving an SSST if you need support services to make sure that you can maintain a tenancy. In certain circumstances we will offer you an SSST if you have specific housing support issues. As part of the SSST you must agree to accept support to help you keep the tenancy.

If we have given a **Short Scottish Secure Tenancy (SSST)**, this means that your tenancy will be for at least six months.

If we have given you an SSST because you were evicted or your tenancy has been changed from a Scottish Secure Tenancy to an SSST because you have been given an Anti-Social Behaviour Order, we will change your tenancy back to a Scottish Secure Tenancy after 12 months, unless we have taken action to end your tenancy.

Under the terms of the SSST you:

- do not have security of tenure, and we can end your tenancy by giving you two months notice
- do not have the right to succession, and
- cannot buy the property under the 'Right to Buy' scheme.

The Right to Buy

The conditions of the Right to Buy scheme are different depending on the kind of tenancy agreement you have. Some tenants have the 'preserved right to buy', while other tenants have the 'modernised right to buy' and others have no right to buy. The following sets out briefly the main differences that affect you.

You have the 'preserved right to buy' if you:

- became our tenant because you transferred from another housing organisation where you had a right to buy (for example, from Scottish Homes or Glasgow City Council);
- had to move because your house was being demolished (knocked down) and you previously had a right to buy;
- had the preserved right to buy and transferred or exchanged your home into another one of our properties, before 30 September 2002; or
- took over the tenancy by succession before 30 September 2002 after the previous tenant who had a preserved right to buy died.

It is important to remember that if you have the preserved right to buy and you move to another property voluntarily, you will no longer have the preserved right to buy but will have the 'modernised right to buy'.

You have the 'modernised right to buy' if you:

- do not have the preserved right to buy;
- took a tenancy of a property or transferred or exchanged your tenancy voluntarily after 30 September 2002; or
- took over the tenancy by succession after the death of a tenant who did not have the preserved right to buy.

When can I apply to buy my home?

If you have the preserved right to buy you can apply to buy your home at any time.

If you have the modernised right to buy you cannot apply to buy your home until September 2022.

How much will it cost?

The price of the property will be the market value of your home less any discount which may apply. The price of the property can be more expensive if the 'Cost Floor Rule' applies. This is where the property has been built or substantially improved in the last 10 years and you have to repay costs associated with developing the property. We can confirm if this applies to your home.

What are the discounts?

The discount you are entitled to will depend on the kind of right to buy you have. If you have the 'preserved right to buy' you can buy your home after you have had a tenancy there for two years and you will get a 32% discount if you live in a house or a 44% discount if you live in a flat. You will then earn a further 1% discount (for a house) or a 2% discount (for a flat) for every year you live there after this, up to a maximum of 60% (for a house) and 70% (for a flat).

If you qualify for the 'modernised right to buy' you will get a discount of 20%, after you have lived there for five years without a break, and this increases to 35% after you have lived there for 15 years. The maximum discount you can get is £15,000.

If you want to apply to buy your home you can get an application form from our office. We will offer you professional advice and help you with your application. However, it takes about 24 weeks to process the sale once we have received your application.

We will not process your 'right to buy' application if you owe Council Tax or rent or are having action taken against you for anti-social behaviour.

Your right to information

There are two types of rights about information in the Scottish Secure Tenancy.

- Information we must give you.
- Information we must give you if you ask for it.

We must give you the following

- Information about the right to buy, and your responsibilities if you take up the right to buy.
- Information about our Complaints procedure.
- At least four weeks' notice when we plan to increase your rent or other charge relating to your tenancy. (Before we give you this information, we have to consult you about the increase we plan to make.)

We must give you the following information if you ask for it.

- The terms of your tenancy.
- Policies and procedures for how we set rent and other charges relating to your tenancy.
- Policies relating to how we offer people housing.
- Policies relating to repairs and maintenance.
- Our tenant participation strategy.
- Information on how we make decisions.

Rent and advice on benefits

Rent

Your rent is our main source of income and pays for all of the important services we provide you with, such as day-to-day repairs, major improvements and management services for your home.

Your **rent is due every four weeks** to cover the four weeks ahead. You must pay your rent when it is due. You must contact us immediately if you are having difficulties paying your rent.

You must pay your service charge with your rent. We will tell you about any service we provide, which is covered by your service charge, and how much this will cost.

The rent you pay helps us to provide you with good quality services. You must pay your rent so we can provide you with these services.

It is a condition of your tenancy agreement you pay your rent on time.

Payments

You can pay us your rent and service charge in the following ways.

- At a paypoint using a rent payment card
- At a post office using a rent payment card
- By standing order
- By direct debit
- By cheque or postal order, made payable to us (Glen Oaks Housing Association)
- By housing benefit, which is paid directly to us by the Housing Benefit department
- Using a switch, debit or credit card at our office
- Using our phone payment service on **0870 023 43 34 34**
- Online at - www.allpay.net

We do not accept cash payments at our office.

Housing Benefit

Housing Benefit is a government scheme to help people who are on a low income to pay their rent. It is paid by the City Council. The amount of Housing Benefit you receive depends on a number of things such as:

- your income
- your rent, and
- the number of people living in your home, and their circumstances.

If you think you may qualify for Housing Benefit you can contact our office for advice on how to apply. If you make a claim for Housing Benefit you must make sure the Housing Benefit Office has all the information they need to assess your claim. It is important that you know your claim can only start from the date that the Housing Benefit Office receive your form. They cannot generally backdate Housing Benefit, so you should not delay in sending them your application. Please remember, you are responsible for paying your rent and you must pay any amount which is not covered by Housing Benefit.

The Housing Benefit Office review claims for Housing Benefit every so often. This means if you are receiving Housing Benefit they may send you a new claim form to fill in and return to them, or you may need to apply on-line. If you do not respond they will cancel your claim and will stop sending payments for your rent. If you receive Income Support you must also fill in a Housing Benefit form. It is very important that you fill in any forms that are sent to you and respond to any letters, emails or phone calls from the Housing Benefit Office.

You must also tell the Housing Benefit Office if your circumstances change, such as your income increases or decreases, the number of people you live with changes or your child leaves home to go to university or they get a job. These changes may change the amount of benefit you are entitled to receive. If you are not sure whether a change will affect your benefit, please contact your local office.

Housing Benefit overpayments

If your circumstances change but you do not tell the Housing Benefit Office straight away, it could mean that you get more Housing Benefit than you are entitled to. This is known as an overpayment. If this happens you must pay the money back.

Your right to a review

Under the Housing Benefit regulations, you can appeal against any decision the Council makes which affects you. The Council must tell you in writing how they have worked out the level of your Housing Benefit.

Our policy for setting rent

We are responsible for setting and reviewing your rent and service charges. We normally review rent once a year in March. When we review the rent each year we take into account our costs and consider what you and our other tenants can afford.

We will consult you every year on any increases we plan to make to rent and service charges. We try to keep rent increases low. We will give you at least 28 days' notice in writing of the increase to rent or service charges.

We will also send you a yearly statement of your rent account (to let you see the payments you have made in the previous year) and a payments calendar to tell you about payment days for the year ahead.

If you owe rent or have problems managing your money

If you have difficulty paying your rent, please contact us immediately. We can help you sort out the problem before it gets out of hand.

We will give you help and advice about claiming Housing Benefit and can make an appointment for you to meet with a welfare rights adviser who will offer you support in dealing with financial difficulties.

We will discuss a repayment arrangement you can afford as long as it covers your rent. As long as we agree a repayment arrangement with you we will not take further action.

If you continue to miss paying your rent, we will take action against you and may take you to court. In particular, if you owe eight weeks' rent, and do not have a repayment arrangement in place, we will serve you with a notice of proceedings'. This means we can begin legal action to get you to repay us what you owe, and we may also take back your home at any time in the six months after we serve the notice.

If we get a repossession order we may evict you from your home. A poor record of paying your rent affects your ability to get another house from another landlord and it can also seriously affect your credit rating and may prevent you from getting a mortgage or credit.

Please remember that the first step in dealing with financial problems is to talk about them. Please contact us if you are having difficulty paying your rent. We can help by organising support, providing you with information and advice and helping you get debt counselling. Your Housing Services Officer can refer you to a debt counselling service.



The Association has arranged for a representative from Money Matters to be available in our office on Tuesdays and Fridays to offer help and advice to our tenants. If you would like an appointment with Money Matters at our office, please contact your Housing Services Officer on 0141 638 0999 and they will arrange an appointment for you.

If you owe us rent after ending your tenancy with us

If you are ending your tenancy with us and you owe us rent you must arrange to repay the rent. If you do not pay what you owe us, we may use a pay tracing and collection agency to find you so we can recover what you owe. If you do not pay the rent that you owe us, you may find it difficult to get housing in the future.

Respect for others

Neighbours

It is important that you and any members of your household consider your neighbours.

This includes making sure that you are not too noisy and that you keep tidy any shared areas you are responsible for, such as your garden. Your Scottish Secure Tenancy (or Short Scottish Secure Tenancy) Agreement explains what we expect of you as a tenant and if you keep to these rules this will help you to be a good neighbour. In our experience, difficulties with neighbours tend to happen when tenants don't keep to the rules of their tenancy.

Some of the important rules of the tenancy agreement include the following.

- You must not use your home for anything illegal.
- You should help keep any shared areas clean.
- Make sure you put your rubbish in bags properly and put it in your bin.
- You must not harass anyone or behave in an anti-social way.
- Make sure your children or any visitors to your home don't cause a nuisance to your neighbours.

It is very important that you take time to read your tenancy agreement.

Disputes with neighbours

We hope you are able to enjoy your home without any difficulties with your neighbours. If, however, you do have problems such as unreasonable noise, unruly children, badly-behaved dogs or problems with your neighbours', please try to settle the dispute with your neighbours before you contact us. This can often sort the problem out quickly and can help to stop any problems getting worse.

How to discuss problems with your neighbour

- Talk to your neighbours about the problem. If their children are misbehaving, they may not know about it. They may not be aware that their music, TV, or dog barking is causing you distress.
- Discuss the matter calmly. It often helps to write down what you want to say.
- Be prepared to listen to your neighbour's point of view.
- Look for a compromise, if you do not agree with them.

If speaking to your neighbour does not solve the problem, please contact us. It is very important that you give us an accurate record of any incidents of nuisance which keep happening. This includes dates and times and where the incidents happened. We need this information to find out what the problem is, and so we can give you appropriate advice.

We realise in some situations it may not be sensible for you to try to sort out the problem yourself and in these circumstances please contact our office to discuss the problem.

We will normally visit your neighbour or ask them to call our office to discuss the issue. It is our policy not to give out your name if you have made a complaint to us. We will keep written records of your complaint and what we have agreed with your neighbour. We will contact you to let you know what we have agreed with your neighbour. Where we have formally interviewed your neighbour, we will issue a warning letter which will set out what your neighbour needs to do and what will happen if they do not take action.

In some cases we may not be able to sort out the problem by speaking to your neighbour. If this happens, it is important that you let us know that the problem has continued.

If you have a problem with noise nuisance, you can contact Glasgow City Council on 0141 287 1060, between the hours of 5pm and 3am each day. Their community environmental officers will visit your home and monitor the level of noise. If they find the noise levels are too high, they will issue a warning to your neighbour telling them to reduce the noise. If your neighbour does not take action within 10 minutes, the officer will issue a fixed penalty notice. This is a fine of £100. In extreme cases the environmental health officer can take away the equipment that is making the noise (for example, a stereo or television).

Disputes with your neighbours can be difficult to sort out, but we will try to prevent matters getting worse and can offer a mediation service as an effective way for people to try to sort out their differences. However, for this to be successful both you and your neighbour must volunteer to take part.

In some cases we will also consider using an Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC), which is a written agreement between your neighbour, us and the Police. The agreement will say that your neighbour must not continue with certain behaviour and will say what is and what is not acceptable. Generally, the agreement will last for six months and will be reviewed as necessary. Your neighbour does not have to keep to the ABC by law, but, it can be used as evidence if the case goes to court. If someone refuses to accept an ABC, we can issue an unacceptable behaviour notice to make the person aware of

their actions and what will happen if they continue to behave in this way. Again, this has no legal power, but it can be used as evidence if the case goes to court or the person is given an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) or evicted from their home.

We will do everything we can to try to sort out the problem before we take legal action. However, if the complaint is very serious we will take legal action.

Legal action

Interdict

An interdict is an order from the court which asks you to stop doing something illegal. For example, if you break a condition of your tenancy, threaten to use violence against someone or continually cause a nuisance, we may ask the court for an interdict. This order is made without getting proof of the facts or taking full legal action. You can be given an interdict temporarily while we look into the case. It helps us take measures to stop the behaviour. If the behaviour does not improve we can take action against you for breaking the terms of the interdict.

Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO)

In certain circumstances we, along with the Police, may apply to the courts for an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO). An ASBO is a court order that helps to protect the public from behaviour that causes, or is likely to cause, alarm or distress. An order will set out conditions which the person named in it must keep to such as not going to certain areas or not verbally abusing certain people. We can apply for an ASBO for anyone aged 12 or over. The court must agree that an ASBO is necessary to protect others from anti-social behaviour.

By law, we can apply for a temporary ASBO. This is where someone needs protection from anti-social behaviour straight away, before we apply for a full ASBO. The court must agree that a temporary order is necessary to protect people from further anti-social behaviour.

An ASBO is not a criminal conviction and does not form part of a criminal record. However, if you break the conditions of an ASBO, this is a criminal offence and you would have a criminal record.

Repossession

If you are responsible for repeated and serious anti-social behaviour, we will take appropriate action to try to sort out the problem. If this doesn't work, we will take action to evict you.

We will make the decision to evict you in line with how reasonable we, and the courts, think it is to do so. We will consider the following

- The kind of anti-social behaviour, how often it happens, and for how long.
- The level the behaviour is or was as a result of something someone living or visiting your home did or did not do.
- The effect that your behaviour had, is having, and is likely to have on any person other than you.
- Any action we have taken already to stop the behaviour before.

To contact Police Scotland, call 101 or call in to their office at 3 Brockburn Crescent, Pollok, Glasgow. In the event of an emergency call 999.

The environment

We aim to provide and maintain a pleasant environment for you to live in. As our tenant you are responsible for keeping your home and its shared areas clean.

By working together we can achieve this.

In some areas:

- litter is dropped in the street
- household and garden rubbish is dumped in shared areas
- people do not clean up after their pets, in closes and on landscaped areas
- broken-down or abandoned vehicles are left in parking areas or on shared ground, and
- graffiti and vandalism appear to be accepted!

You can help by discouraging these types of activities.

If you see someone causing damage to property or public areas, please let your Housing Services Officer know. It costs thousands of pounds of your rent money each year to put these problems right.

We provide the following services to keep our estates clean and well maintained.

Cleaning stairs

If you live in a block of flats with a shared entrance, we will provide a service to clean your stairs. This service covers the following

- **Every week** we will sweep and wash all of the stairwells and landings, and remove small areas of graffiti (where possible).
- **Every four weeks** we will clean all glass in stair windows and doors and wash down walls and tiles. We will also dust stair railings.

The cost of this service is included in your service charge and we review this every year. We monitor our cleaning contracts to make sure you are satisfied with this service. Your Housing Services Officer will tell you which day your close will be swept and washed. Please do not store anything (such as prams, bikes and so on) in the close area, as this makes it difficult to clean the property.

Collecting rubbish

You must make sure you put your household rubbish in bags and put the bags in your bin. You should never leave rubbish in the close or any other area.

Glasgow City Council will empty the bins from shared bin stores, tidy around the bin store and remove any large items once a week. Glasgow City Council charges an extra fee for tidying shared bin stores and for removing large items of rubbish. We pay this cost and charge you for it through your service charge. If you need to throw away any large items please put these items in the backcourt area the night before your rubbish is collected or first thing in the morning on the day your rubbish is collected. This will help keep the backcourt tidy and reduce the risk of the items being vandalised, or set on fire.

If you have a wheelie bin you should put this out for collection either the night before your rubbish is collected or first thing in the morning. You must then put your bin back in your bin store as soon as possible after it has been emptied. If your wheelie bin is stolen you will have to pay for a replacement. If you are throwing out any large items such as furniture, please call Glasgow City Council on 0141 287 9700 to arrange for them to collect them.

If you are throwing out a fridge or fridge freezer, please call Glasgow City Council on 0141 287 9700 to arrange for them to collect it. This applies whether you live in a property which has a wheelie bin or shared bin store.

The council have provided recycling bins for the Arden Estate in the car-parking area at 43 - 45 Kyleakin Road. Please use these bins to recycle glass, paper and aluminium cans.

If you find any needles lying around on pavements or communal grass areas, report this to Glasgow City Council's Cleansing Department. They provide a service to get rid of needles. Their phone number is 0141 287 9700, choosing option 1.

Abandoned vehicles

It is your responsibility to properly get rid of any vehicles you do not want to keep. If you know of a vehicle, which has been abandoned, please report this to Glasgow City Council on 0141 276 0859 to arrange for them to remove it.

Maintaining your garden

If you have a garden, you must make sure you cut the grass and keep your garden tidy and free from litter. If you are not able to cut the grass, we can do this for you but we will charge you for it every four weeks. Please contact our Technical Department if you want us to maintain your garden.

We regularly inspect gardens and shared areas to make sure you keep these areas tidy. If you do not maintain your garden, we will take appropriate action against you. We organise garden competitions every year to acknowledge tenants who look after their gardens well, making their area a more attractive place to live.

Landscaped areas

We have a landscape maintenance contract to make sure that shrub areas are maintained, de-littered and the grass is cut.

Drying areas

Generally, your property will have its own drying facilities outside, either a rope washing line or a rotary dryer. However, in tenement properties most drying areas are shared. In these cases, you should talk to your neighbours to make sure everyone has enough space to dry their clothes.

If you have a balcony, please make sure you do not put washing over the rails. If you want to use your balcony to dry clothes, please put your washing on a clothes horse, for example.

Pets

It is a condition of your tenancy agreement that you ask for our permission before you get a pet.

Due to the problems that can be associated with keeping pets, we have some rules which you must keep to if you want to keep a pet.

Our rules for keeping a pet are:

- You must not keep more than two pets.
- If you want to keep a dog that is classed as a 'dangerous dog' under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, then you must register it and keep it muzzled when you take it out.
- We will not give you permission to keep pigeons or to put up a pigeon loft.

- You are responsible for the behaviour of your pets and must make sure they don't cause a nuisance, put your neighbours in danger, create mess or damage your home or any shared areas.
- You must clean up any mess your pets make and you are also responsible for any damage they cause.
- If your pet causes a nuisance or damages our property, we may ask you to find another home for your pet. This would only happen if we were not able to sort out the problem with you.

If you are aware of an aggressive or dangerous dog you should report this to the dog warden. Glasgow City Council provides this service. You can contact them 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Their phone number is 0141 287 6698. Or, if you are aware of someone being cruel to an animal, please report this to the Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals on 03000 999 999.

Pest control

Glasgow City Council's Environmental Services Department offer some pest control services. You can ask for these services by calling the Council's access centre on 0141 287 9700 and choosing option 3. There is also information on the council's website at www.glasgow.gov.uk (follow the links to the 'Protection Service' then 'Pest Control'). They provide the following services:

- Rodent control - rats (inside and outside your home), mice (inside houses) and squirrels (inside your home).
- The council can remove wasp nests for you, but you will have to pay for this service. They do not provide a service to get rid of other insects.

Vandalism

We regularly inspect our estates for graffiti or vandalism. If you can tell us how some graffiti or vandalism happened we will look into it, in line with our Anti-Social Behaviour Policy. We will charge the person responsible for the cost of removing graffiti or repairing the damage they caused. If someone repeatedly writes graffiti or damages property, we will ask the Police to take action in cases where we can provide evidence.

Letting our homes

We aim to provide high-quality rented accommodation which you can afford. We are committed to creating a balanced and stable community by making the best use of the homes we have available.

We have a waiting list for housing, and anyone aged 16 or over can join. We house people in line with our Allocations Policy. This policy takes account of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and guidance issued by The Scottish Housing Regulator and The Scottish Federation of Housing Associations.

Here is a summary of our allocations policy.

Priorities for re-housing

When assessing applications and offering properties to people, we consider the following priorities:

- If you have an emergency medical condition that means you need to move.
- If you are currently living in accommodation that is in a poor condition or overcrowded.
- If you are homeless and have been referred to us from Glasgow City Council Community Casework Team or you are threatened with homelessness.
- If you transfer from one of our other properties.
- If you have applied for housing through the MoveUK mobility scheme

There are other categories that we have listed in our full Allocations Policy.

You can get a copy of our full Allocations Policy from our office.

We use a points system when deciding who to offer housing to. We award points to the people on our waiting list for housing depending on their circumstances.

Tenancies

We offer the Scottish Secure Tenancy and Short Scottish Secure Tenancy. (You can find details of these in the 'Your rights' section on Page 7.)

Granting you a tenancy if you are a relative of someone who works for us

To make sure we keep to our legal responsibilities to provide benefits for Board members, officers and members of staff and their relatives, when anyone applies to us for housing, we will ask if they are related to a Board member, officer or a member of staff (as far as they know).

You can find details of this process in the Allocations Policy.

Cancelling and suspending your application

You can cancel or suspend your application at any time and can apply again at a later date. We may suspend your application for a number of reasons (please see our Allocations Policy for full details).

If you owe us rent

We will not take your ability to pay rent and other charges into account when we decide which property to offer you.

We will, however, consider your current and previous history of paying rent before we offer you a tenancy. If you owe more than one month's rent we will only offer you housing if you have shown you are committed to paying this debt through a repayment agreement with your landlords, and you have kept to this arrangement for at least three months in a row.

Anti-Social Behaviour

Although we will accept your application if you, or a member of your family, have a record of anti-social behaviour, we will consider each application individually.

Moving home

There are other ways you can move home, without applying through our waiting list.

Mutual exchanges

You can exchange (swap) your property with a tenant of another Council or housing association as long as both landlords give you their permission. We will consider letting you exchange your home with a tenant from another social landlord. You must ask us in writing and wait for our decision before you can exchange properties. Landlords cannot withhold permission unreasonably.

Reasons we can refuse to let you exchange your home:

- If your home would be overcrowded as a result.
- If you would have more than one room empty in the new property.
- One of the houses will be affected by work due to be carried out by the landlord (for example, if it is going to be demolished).
- If we think that you or the person you are exchanging your home with has paid an amount to exchange homes.
- If you or the person you are exchanging would be worse off for exchanging your homes.
- You or the other tenant would be moving into a special needs facility (for example, a house adapted for a disabled person) and you or they do not need this facility.
- You or the other tenant would be giving up a special needs facility that you or they still need and would be moving to a less suitable house.
- You or the other tenant owes one month's rent or more.
- You or the other tenant has a legal notice against you and it still applies.

We will consider and assess exchanges individually.

Ending your tenancy

You must give us four weeks' notice in writing if you want to end your tenancy. You may send us a letter or call into our office to fill in a termination of tenancy form. The four weeks' notice gives us notice which means we can arrange an appointment with you to inspect your home, before you leave. You must leave your home in good condition or we will charge you for any repairs we need to carry out. You must also arrange to pay off any rent or any other amounts you still owe us. You must return the keys for your home to our office by 12 noon on the day you leave. If you do not do this, we may change the locks and charge you for that cost. Rent will be charged until keys are received.

What is Gold Service?

Gold Service is our approach to providing better service and building relationships with our residents.

Why do you have Gold Service?

We want to:

- improve our housing management services;
- promote your rights and responsibilities; and
- reward you when you keep to the terms of your tenancy agreement.

The benefits of being a Gold Service member are:

- bonus bonds of up to £52 a year ;
- a faster repairs service (for tenants only);
- early morning, evening and weekend repair appointments;
- member only competitions;
- access to education grants;
- a gold community fund which local groups can apply to for grants;
- £10 worth of Bonus Bonds for members who set up a new direct debit to make payments for rent (payable 6 months after direct debit set up and rent paid on time) and
- a 'Golden Goodbye' of £75. We give you this award if you leave your home (at the end of your tenancy) in very good condition, and agree to allow possible tenants to view your home before you leave (For tenants only.)

How do I become a Gold Member?

You must meet the following conditions:

- You must be our tenant or shared owner for at least eight weeks and have paid your rent on time. (If you receive Housing Benefit you can still apply).
- If you owe us rent, you must have made an arrangement to pay what you owe us.
- If you owe us eight weeks rent or more, or have outstanding rechargeable repair invoice or factoring bill, you will not be able to become a Gold member. We will suspend your membership if you are already a member.
- You must have kept to your tenancy or occupancy agreement.

If you own your home, you can still apply to be a Gold Member. However, you will only get the following benefits:

- Access to education grants
- Gold community fund

How do I apply?

It's easy!

Contact our office for an application form. Fill in the application form and return it to us. When we receive your application form, we will check to see if you are eligible for Gold Membership and confirm this with you.



Repairs

Who does what and when?

It is important that all of our homes and shared areas are maintained to a high standard.

We will carry out most of the repairs to your home. However, you will be responsible for doing some repairs and some general maintenance. The table below shows who is responsible for which repairs.

You must also tell us immediately about repairs you need. We will respond to you and arrange for a contractor to carry out the appropriate work.

We have set timescales and targets to carry out repairs.

We have two categories of the times within which we expect to carry out repairs. These are a standard target and a target for all Gold Service members, (please see Page 30). These target times are set out below giving the time within which we expect to finish the repair.

Our targets for finishing repairs

Type of Repair	Gold Service Members	Other Tenants
Emergency	Made safe within 4 hours	Made safe within 4 hours
Urgent	1 working day	3 working days
Routine	5 working days	10 working days
Right to Repair	Between 1 and 7 working days – See Appendix 1	Between 1 and 7 working days – See below.

RIGHT TO REPAIR - QUALIFYING REPAIRS AND MAXIMUM TIME FOR COMPLETION

<i>Qualifying Repair</i>	Maximum Period (Working Days)
Blocked flue to open fire or boiler.	1
Blocked or leaking foul drains, soil stacks or toilet pans where there is no other toilet in the house.	1
Blocked sink, bath or drain.	1
Loss of electric power;	1
Partial loss of electric power.	3
Insecure external window, door or lock.	1
Unsafe access path or step.	1
Significant leaks or flooding from water or heating pipes, tanks, cisterns.	1
Loss or partial loss of gas supply.	1
Loss or partial loss of space or water heating where no alternative heating is available.	1
Toilet not flushing where there is no other toilet in the house.	1
Unsafe power or lighting socket, or electrical fitting.	1
Loss of water supply;	1
Partial loss of water supply.	3
Loose or detached banister or handrail.	3
Unsafe timber flooring or stair treads.	3
Mechanical extractor fan in internal kitchen or bathroom not working.	7

Who is responsible for what?

Common Repairs	Us	You	Qualifies for RTR*	Category	Comments
Paths and steps	✓		✓	RTR or Routine	We will class this as an emergency if they are unsafe.
Handrails	✓		✓	RTR or Routine	We will class this as an Emergency if unsafe.
Fences and gates	✓			Routine	
Clothes poles	✓			Routine	
Rotary driers	✓			Routine	Only if we provide them.
Walls and ceilings in your home	✓			Routine	We can charge you for this if you are responsible for the damage. You are responsible for decorating the inside of your home.
Outside walls	✓			Routine	We will inspect these repairs.
Roof tiles and ridges	✓			Emergency or Routine	We will class this as an emergency if water is leaking into your home or the roof tiles or ridges are unsafe. Emergency work to make good water ingress if safe to do so. Follow up work Routine.
Woodwork outside your home	✓			Routine	We aim to paint all of the woodwork outside your home every 7 years.

Door Entry	✓			Urgent	
Common TV Aerials	✓			Urgent	Work carried out only in safe working conditions.
Gutters & Downpipes	✓			Planned/ Urgent	Generally, these will be cleared annually. Any repairs will be treated as Urgent.
Common Stair-lighting	✓	✓		N/A	Service operated by GCC Stair-lighting – 0800 595 595. Any faults should be reported direct to them.

*RTR = Right to Repair

Joinery	Us	You	Qualifies for RTR*	Category	Comments
Doors and frames outside your home	✓		✓	Emergency or Routine	We will class this as an emergency, if they are not secure or you cannot get into your home. We will recharge you for these repairs if you are responsible for the damage. This includes lost keys.
Doors and frames inside your home	✓			Routine	
Handles and locks inside and outside your home	✓			Emergency or Routine	We will class this as an emergency if the main door on your home is not secure. We will recharge you for these repairs if you are responsible for the damage.
Skirting boards, facings	✓			Routine	
Stairs, bannisters and handrails	✓		✓	Emergency or Routine	We will class this as an emergency if unsafe.
Floors	✓			Emergency or Routine	Emergency if unsafe.
Kitchen units	✓			Routine	We will recharge you for these repairs if you are responsible for the damage.

Broken windows	✓		✓	Emergency to make safe & secure. Follow-up work Routine	We will class this as an emergency to make your property safe. We will recharge you if you do not report it to the police. Follow-up replacement of window pane classed as Routine.
Windows	✓			Emergency or Routine	We will class this as an emergency if your property is not safe.

Plumbing	Us	You	Qualifies for RTR*	Category	Comments
Pipes, taps, stopcocks	✓			Emergency or Routine	Serious leaks are emergencies.
Tap washers	✓			Routine	
Plugs and chains		✓		N/A	
Storage tanks	✓			Emergency	Leaks are treated as Emergency.
Blocked sinks, basins, toilets and baths	✓		✓	RTR	We will recharge you for the repair if the damage was intentional or caused by your neglect.
Toilet bowl	✓			Urgent	Leaks from your toilet are emergencies. Repairs to mechanism – Urgent
Toilet seat		✓		N/A	Tenant responsibility.
Showers	✓	✓		Emergency and/or Routine	Only if fitted by Glen Oaks. We will attend to make safe within Emergency timescale. Follow-up works will be treated as Routine.
Washing-machine Connections		✓			Unless we fitted them.

Heating	Us	You	Qualifies for RTR*	Category	Comments
No Central Heating	✓		✓	RTR	
No Hot Water	✓			Urgent	
Radiators & Pipework	✓			Emergency or Routine	We will class this as an Emergency only if significant leak from radiator.
Flues	✓			Emergency	If spillage of combustion gases - Emergency
Storage heating	✓			N/A	No repair will be attempted. System will be switched to Gas Central Heating System.

Electrical	Us	You	Qualifies for RTR*	Category	Comments
Switches, sockets	✓		✓	Routine or Emergency	We will class this as an emergency if they are dangerous.
Light fittings	✓		✓	Emergency or Routine	Only if we fitted them. We will class this as an emergency depending on location. For example, on stairs or in the kitchen.
Consumer Unit Faults	✓			Emergency	Check trip switch first. You can be re-charged if Consumer Unit tripped by a faulty appliance belonging to you.
Plugs and fuses		✓	✓		
All light bulbs (including outside lights)		✓			Except common external lighting.
Extractor fan	✓		✓	RTR	
Door bells	✓			Routine	Only if we fitted them.
Smoke detectors	✓	✓		Urgent	You are responsible for replacing batteries. Smoke detectors will be checked annually and replaced if required.
Carbon Monoxide Alarms	✓			Emergency	If Alarm sounds contact SGN 0800 111 999 immediately and shut down all gas appliances.
Electrical appliances		✓			Your responsibility

How to report repairs

You should let us know as quickly as possible if you need us to carry out any repair. This lets us get repairs finished before things get any worse!

You can report repairs by calling or telephoning our office or via the website www.glenoaks.org.uk . You can find contact details on Page 5 of this handbook.

What we need.

- (1) Your name, your address, flat position (where your flat is in the building) and contact telephone number.
- (2) What the repair is. Please give as much accurate information about the repair as possible. This will help to avoid any delay and make sure that we send the correct tradesperson to your house.
- (3) In some circumstances we will need to inspect the repair before we can carry out any work. In these circumstances, a Technical Officer will call to inspect the repair. It is important that you give us access to inspect the repair on the agreed day because if you fail to give us access on three occasions, we will not carry out the repair. We will use the usual repair timescales to carry out the repair once we have inspected it.

Please make sure that you are at home to allow us to carry out the repair at the agreed time on the agreed day.

All our contractors will leave a 'no-access' report card with you if they have not been able to get into your property.

We can also charge you for the contractor's time if they are not able to get access to your property.

What do I do if the office is closed?

We have a system in place that allows you to report Emergencies when the office is closed.

If you have an Emergency outwith office hours, including at weekends and Public Holidays, please contact the following telephone numbers:

- **Gas Leak: 0800 111 999 (SGN)**

- **Other Gas Central Heating/Hot Water Emergencies:**
01294 468113 (GasSure)
- **All Other Emergencies:** **0800 595 595 (City Building)**

In most cases they will carry out the repair, but in some circumstances the contractor will only make the repair safe and visit you again to finish the work.

We will try to carry out all emergencies as quickly as possible. However, you should understand that in some circumstances it might be impossible to finish a repair if we have to order parts or if the situation is so dangerous that a contractor could be at risk if they tried to finish the repair. In these circumstances the contractor will make the repair as safe as possible and we will make sure that any further work is carried out as quickly as possible.

The types of repair that we would normally do outside of office hours are:

- burst pipes or pipes leaking badly causing flooding;
- a blocked toilet (if it is the only toilet in your home or the toilet is leaking sewage into your home);
- no hot water (we will do these repairs up until 10pm);
- no heating (we will do these repairs up until 10pm);
- a front door that is not secure;
- a door that is jammed closed;
- broken or unsafe stairs or handrails;
- a roof that is leaking badly;
- no electricity (telephone Scottish Power on 0800 092 9290 first to check there is not a power cut);
- faulty smoke detectors; and
- faulty or sounding Carbon Monoxide Alarm

You should understand that we cannot treat every repair as an emergency.

Our contractors are very experienced. They will assess the situation and organise any appropriate action and repairs. We may charge you for calling out contractors if the repair is not an emergency.

Remember, as a Gold Service member you have the option of having repairs carried out between 5pm and 7pm on weekdays, and between 9am and 12 noon on Saturdays.

Medical adaptations

Every year, we apply to Glasgow City Council for funding to carry out adaptations to properties that you may need if you are disabled or in ill-health.

The number of adaptations we do depends on the level of funding we get. We keep a waiting list of adaptations our tenants need. We produce this list by using the priority for adaptations shown on the referral form we are given by the social worker or doctor dealing with your request.

We cannot carry out any adaptation that you ask for unless you use a referral form or letter from your social worker or doctor.

In some cases it may not be possible to adapt your property to suit your needs. This may be for financial reasons or, for example, there is not enough space for the adaptation.

When this is the case we would ask you to apply for a transfer to a more suitable property. We will do everything to make this process as straightforward as possible.

If you need a medical adaptation, contact the Social Work Department of Glasgow City Council and then contact us.

Rechargeable repairs

This is when we carry out a repair and then charge you the costs of the repair.

This would normally happen in the following circumstances:

- When we have carried out a repair as a result of neglect, misuse or vandalism by you, a member of your household, or your visitors.
- When you ask us to carry out work you are responsible for.
- If you use the emergency call-out system and did not need to.

- If we cannot get into your home, on three occasions, to carry out a repair.

If possible, if we are likely to charge you for a repair, we will write to you to tell you the cost. When we have finished the repair we will write to you again confirming the cost and send you a copy of the contractor's invoice.

We will expect you to pay the cost of the repair in full at this time.

If you are not able to pay the amount in full, you should contact us immediately to discuss a payment arrangement.

We can issue you with an 'Allpay' payment card to make the repayment system as straightforward as possible. We will make every effort to recover any amounts you owe us for repairs, and may even take legal action to recover what you owe us. Of course, we will also charge you the cost of this legal action. So, it makes sense for you to pay the balance immediately or agree a payment plan and stick to it until you have paid what you owe us.

Alterations and improvements

We do not allow tenants to carry out alterations and improvements to their homes without getting our permission first in writing.

We cannot withhold permission unreasonably. However, you must carry out any work to an acceptable standard. We recommend that you always employ fully-qualified tradesmen to carry out work to your property.

It is your responsibility to get all legal permission for work, for example, building warrants, planning permission and so on.

Where we have concerns about the quality of work you have carried out to your property, particularly when dealing with electricity or gas, we may insist that a contractor from our own approved list carries out a safety check to make sure that the work is safe.

You may use contractors from our approved list. You should contact us for details. In these cases we will not take responsibility for the contractor's work and you should pay the contractor direct.

You can get applications forms for permission to carry out your own improvements from our office or from our website at www.glenoaks.org.uk

If you do carry out improvements to your property after getting our permission in writing, you may be entitled to compensation for the work if you decide to end your tenancy.

Improvements you make which you may be able to get compensation for include the following:

- Central heating
- Sanitary ware (for example, a toilet bowl or bath)
- Double glazing
- Fitting a new kitchen

We work out how much compensation you may be entitled to using a system that takes into account the cost of the improvement, how long ago you carried out the work and how long we expect the improvement to last.

You can get full details of the way we work out compensation and other information on improvements in our Tenant Improvement Policy.

You can get this from our offices and from our website.

Ongoing maintenance and major repairs

As well as dealing with all of the repairs that you report to us, we carry out regular maintenance work to our homes to keep them in good condition. Our ongoing maintenance programme includes work such as painting the outside of your property, servicing gas appliances and heating systems and cleaning gutters.

We aim to paint all woodwork on the outside of your home every five years and clean the gutters every two years.

We will often wait to carry out repairs which are not urgent (like fencing repairs) and do them as a contract because that gives better value for money and means we can do more work for the money we have available.

We also carry out major repairs and renew fittings. This includes work like installing new kitchens, re-roofing, replacing boilers and so on. We do this work on a planned basis to keep all of our homes up to a modern standard.

We will consult you on these planned repairs and we will set out any major work we plan to carry out in our newsletter, well before we start the work.

Defects liability

If you have moved into a new property all of the repair work is covered by a guarantee called 'defects liability'. This guarantee period will usually last for 12 months after you move into your new home.

This means that the contractor who built your new home is responsible for repairing anything that goes wrong within the first 12 months you live there.

You should still report repairs to us and we will decide what action to take.

Quality of service

Making sure that repairs are done properly and on time is important to both you and us.

We want to keep improving the standard of our services and make sure they are as good as possible. We monitor our own performance and our contractors' performance to make sure you get a good service and that we use our money wisely.

You have an important role in this process. When you report a repair we will always send you a 'Repairs Satisfaction Form'. You should always fill this in and tell us whether or not you are happy with the standard of the repair work or our service. If you are not happy, for example, if the contractor was rude or untidy or did a bad job, or you found it difficult to report your repair, then please let us know.

We will look into all your concerns.

Right to Repair (RTR)

From 30 September 2002, under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, you have the right to have small repairs carried out within a set timescale. This is called the 'Right to Repair' scheme.

Only certain repairs fall under the 'Right to Repair' scheme and we will tell you if the repair you are reporting qualifies under this scheme.

If the repair does qualify, then we will:

- tell you how long we have to carry out the repair;
- explain all of your rights under the 'Right to Repair' scheme; and
- try to arrange a suitable time with you to get access to your property.

If our usual contractor has not started the repair within the set time limit, you can then ask us to find another contractor to carry out this work.

We will tell you who the new contractor is when we send you confirmation information about the repair. Any contractor must be from our approved list of contractors.

You are also entitled to compensation from us for any inconvenience you suffer if we do not start the repair within the set time limit.

You can find more details of this 'Right to Repair' scheme in our Right to Repair Policy which you can get from any of our office or you can download a copy from our website at www.glenoaks.org.uk .

Gas Safety Inspections and Servicing

By law, we must carry out gas safety checks every year in all of our properties that have a gas supply.

This check will cover all the gas appliances we provide and also covers all pipework and flue work for these appliances.

It is in your interest, your family's interest and your neighbours' interest that you allow our tradesmen into your home to carry out these checks. We have a programme that allows us to check every property every nine months.

This gives us enough time to take all necessary action we need to make sure that we get access before the legal 12 month period ends.

If we send you a letter about a gas safety check please make every effort to be available at the time and date we have asked for.

If you know that you will not be available at the time or day we have asked for, please contact us to arrange another time for us to call. We must get carry out an annual gas safety inspection in every property every year and we will force access into your property if necessary.

We will charge you the cost of any work to gain access to your property.

Please make sure your house stays safe and that you avoid any unnecessary expense by allowing us into your home to carry out our gas safety checks and service every year at the time we have asked for.

Safety in the home

Contents Insurance

Accidents do happen and it is important that you have insurance to cover any damage to your home. Please make sure that you have full insurance, which covers risks such as fire, flood and leaking water pipes. You can suffer severe financial loss if you do not have insurance or enough cover.

We make your safety a high priority and take steps to make sure any risk is the lowest it can be.

Following the simple guidelines listed below could help to protect you, your family and your home.

Fires

You can help to prevent most fires in your house by taking a few simple precautions.

In particular, pay attention to the following.

Before you go to bed:

- Close all the doors in your home. If a fire starts this will help to prevent it from spreading.
- Put out all cigarettes and empty ashtrays into something that will not burn.
- Unplug all appliances when you are not using them.
- Always make sure that you put out all candles.

Heating

- Never dry or air anything near fires, cookers or portable heaters.
- Do not put a portable fire near curtains.

Kitchen safety

- Always keep a fire extinguisher and fire blanket handy in case of a fire in your kitchen.
- Never leave saucepans or deep-fat fryers on when you are not in the room.

If a pan catches fire, don't try to move it. Turn off the heat and try to smother the fire with a damp towel. If you can't control it, close the kitchen door, get out of your home as quickly as possible and call the fire brigade from a safe phone, and warn your neighbours about the fire.

General safety

- Keep matches where children cannot see or reach them.
- Don't smoke in bed.
- Do not store materials which could catch fire or explode in your home, outbuildings or in shared areas.
- Don't overload electrical power points.
- Don't put cables under carpets or rugs or staple them to skirting boards or walls. Don't leave cables lying where someone could trip over them and knock over an electrical appliance.
- Check your smoke alarms regularly.

Smoke detectors

We have installed smoke detectors in all our properties. Some are battery operated and some work from the electrical mains supply. We gradually want to replace all battery-operated detectors with detectors that run off the mains supply.

Smoke detectors can save lives. By pressing the test button on the smoke detector you can hear if the alarm still works. You should check this regularly (once every few weeks).

If you think there is a problem with your smoke detector or you want advice on how to use it, please call us on 0141 638 0999.

If you have a battery-operated smoke detector you will need to replace the batteries from time to time.

By testing the system (as set out above) you can find out if the batteries still work. Normally, as the battery is running down it makes a 'bleeping' sound. For your own safety, make sure you have spare batteries available.

Burst pipes

If you have a burst pipe remember the following.

- Turn off the water at the stop valve.
- Switch off the electricity supply at the mains if water could come into contact with any electrical supply or fittings.
- Switch off any water heaters.
- Switch off the central-heating system.
- Fully turn on all sink, wash-basin and bath taps to drain the system
- Warn your neighbours if they might be affected.
- Contact us as soon as possible.

To prevent burst pipes in winter when very cold weather can cause water in pipes to freeze, you should keep your home as warm as possible.

If you are going to be away from home for any length of time, especially in winter, we can give you advice about draining your hot-water system and switching off your supply. Please check with us whether or not you can or should drain your water and heating system. This can vary from property to property depending on the type of system you have and where it is in your home. For example, in flats, the main water supply sometimes serves more than one home.

Electrical problems

You should contact us on 0141 638 0999 as soon as possible for advice.

Outwith office hours, including weekends and public holidays, please contact City Building on 0800 595 595.

Don't attempt to repair any electrical problem yourself - leave it to an expert.

Window safety

All our properties above ground level should have safety catches fitted on all windows.

All windows can be dangerous, especially to young children or when you are cleaning them.

We will check all of the safety catches in your home before you move in. However, you should keep checking them to make sure they work safely and contact us immediately if you have any concerns. The catch should not allow

the window to open fully but it should allow you to open it a bit about 10cm, to let you ventilate your home.

Procedures for leaving your home for a temporary period

If you are going away for more than one week, you should follow the procedure below:

- Lock all windows and doors.
- Turn off the water at the main stop cock.
- Make sure you tell us the name of a neighbour we can contact if there is an emergency and leave a key with them.
- If possible, give us a relative's address or telephone number.
- Never leave your key under the door mat or hanging on a string from the letter box.
- If you are going to be away from home in the winter, please leave your central heating **ON** for a period every day to reduce risk of frozen and then burst pipes.

Keys

We do not keep spare keys to your home. So if you lose your key and we have to force the lock or window, we will charge you for the damage. If possible, leave a set of keys with a close friend or relative rather than in your home.

Our Complaints Procedure

As part of our commitment to customer care, we have a complaints procedure to make sure we deal properly with any complaints you may have.

We will deal quickly with any complaint you make in line with our complaints policy.

How do I make a complaint?

Below is a summary of our complaints procedure to help you understand the complaints process.

Step-by-step guide to making a complaint

Stage 1 – frontline resolution

Contact a member of our staff to try and sort the problem out informally. Our staff should respond within 5 working days.

Stage 2 – investigation

We will look at your complaint at this stage if you are dissatisfied with our response at Stage 1. We will also look at some complaints immediately at this stage, if it is clear that they are complex or need detailed investigation. You should make any complaint you have about our Chief Executive to our Chairperson. If your complaint is about a Board member, you should complain to our Chief Executive. We will write to you within 3 working days to tell you we have received your complaint. We will give you our decision as soon as possible. This will be after no more than 20 working days unless there is clearly a good reason for needing more time.

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (Government Watchdog)

If you are still not satisfied with how we have dealt with your complaint at this stage, you can ask the Ombudsman to consider it. The Ombudsman will usually only look into cases when you have followed our complaints procedure fully.

Handbook - Feedback Form

We would like to receive any comments you have about this handbook. Please let us know what you think about the following, in the spaces below.

The design

.....

.....

.....

.....

The layout

.....

.....

.....

.....

The information

.....

.....

.....

.....

Do you have any other comments that will help us to improve this handbook?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Thank you for your time.

Please return this form to our office.

Your Name:	
Your Address:	
Your Postcode:	

Taking part

We are committed to working with you to improve our services. We are keen to see as many tenants and owners as possible taking part in our consultation processes, either as an individual or through tenants' groups. We want you to tell us about how we develop and deliver our services and to tell us how we can improve them. We support registered tenants' organisations (Arden Tenants' Association) by providing training in how you can take part.

We want tenants to be involved in making decisions about:

- housing policies;
- housing conditions; and
- housing (and related) services.

It is a two-way process, which involves sharing information, ideas and power. We aim to improve the standard of housing conditions and service.

How can I get involved?

- By taking a keen interest in how we deliver and develop our housing service, and by contacting us with your ideas and comments.
- You can apply to be on our 'Register of Interest', and we will send you details of our policies for you to comment.
- By becoming a member of the Association
- By going along to the next meeting of your local Tenants' Association or Service Improvement Group.

We have a 'Community Participation Strategy', which we review after consulting registered tenants' organisations (tenants' associations) and groups of interested tenants. You can get a copy of our 'Community Participation Strategy' from our office.

www.glenoaks.org.uk

Glen Oaks Housing Association Limited
3 Kilmuir Drive
Arden
Glasgow
G46 8BW

Tel: 0141 638 0999
Fax: 0141 638 5999
Email: go@glenoaks.org.uk

Individual members of staff can be contacted by email, e.g.
alasdair.mckee@glenoaks.org.uk



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



Member of the following organisations:

Employers in Voluntary Housing
Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector
Glasgow and West of Scotland Forum of Housing Associations
SHARE (Scottish Housing Associations Resources for Education)
Scottish Federation of Housing Associations
Scottish Urban Regeneration Forum
Tenant Participation Advisory Service

Financial Services Authority Reg No: 2402R(S)
The Scottish Housing Regulator Reg No: HCB241
Scottish Charity No SCO34301

