

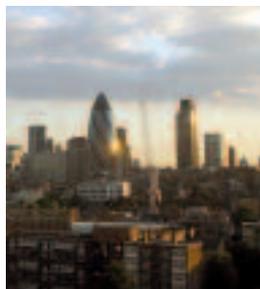
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The Leaseholders Handbook



www.eastendhomes.net



Everything you need to know about being a leaseholder with EastendHomes

Contents

About EastendHomes	4
Your lease - legal rights and responsibilities	5
Service charges	7
Easy ways to pay your service charges	9
Major works and improvements	11
Paying for major works and improvements	12
Good housekeeping	14
Good neighbours	15
Fire safety	16
Subletting your property	17
How to make a complaint, comment or send us a compliment	17
How to contact us	18
Help and advice	19



Welcome from Martin Young

Chair of EastendHomes Board

EastendHomes has produced this handbook as an easy to read guide to the services it provides to leaseholders. It tells you what you can expect from us and what we expect from you. We hope that it will be useful and answer any questions that you might have about your lease and our services.

We have tried to include as much general advice as possible as well as some advice about your lease and your service charges and how you can get involved in the services we provide. From time to time the law or the policies of EastendHomes will change. If this happens we will tell you about this in our resident newsletters and on our website www.eastendhomes.net.

If you have any questions or comments you can phone the Leasehold Services Team on [020 7517 4708](tel:02075174708), contact your local housing centre or write to us at:

EastendHomes
Tayside House
31 Pepper Street
London
E14 9RP



About EastendHomes

EastendHomes is a registered social landlord (RSL) and we are a not-for-profit organisation. We aim to provide you with an excellent level of service. We must comply with the Homes and Communities Agency regulatory code, which is designed to ensure that social landlords are viable, well managed and properly governed.

EastendHomes is also a registered charity, and this means we must also comply with the rules and regulations laid down by charity commissioners.

EastendHomes is governed by a Board, which comprises eight elected local residents from our estates, eight independent members and two local councillors of Tower Hamlets. Board members are not paid and serve on a voluntary basis. The role of the Board is to ensure that, as an organisation, EastendHomes is effectively and efficiently managed, and that it provides a good service to our residents.

Our head office is on the Isle of Dogs, and we have four local housing centres, each of which is responsible for the management of an estate.

In December 2008, the Audit Commission inspected the services provided by EastendHomes, and reported that EastendHomes provides a 'good' housing management service, which has 'promising prospects for improvement'. On a scale from zero to three stars, the Audit Commission inspection team gave EastendHomes two stars because of the ease of accessing services, the quality of estate management and success with rent collection.

EastendHomes is proud of the service it provides, and we will always try to improve our level of service to you whenever we can.

Our Commitment to Leaseholders

- We will achieve the comprehensive regeneration of our estates, and bring about a sustained improvement in the homes and the quality of life for all of our residents
- We are committed to providing an excellent housing management and maintenance service to our leaseholders
- We will provide local housing centres on our estates
- We will act at all times as a reasonable and responsible landlord
- We will provide an accountable cost-effective service for leaseholders
- We will respect and protect the rights of our leaseholders
- We will maintain the block in which you live
- We will provide accurate information about our service charges
- We will provide a dedicated team of staff responsible for collecting service charges
- We will provide equality of service so that all residents are treated equally, regardless of age, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, language, social background or religion



Your lease – legal rights and responsibilities

As a leaseholder you have a legal contract with EastendHomes. This contract is known as the lease. We are required to manage and maintain the structure, exterior and common area of the block and to collect contributions from all the leaseholders for works we carry out.

Keep a copy of your lease in a safe place. You should have been given a copy when you purchased your property. If you have a mortgage on the property your lender may have the original lease.

There are two types of lease:

- Greater London Council (GLC) lease
- London Borough of Tower Hamlets (LBTH) lease

In general there are two main sections in a lease. The first relates to the general covenants, which can be only changed by our agreement with you. The other section relates to the schedules. These regulations can be changed by us but we must tell you about any changes we introduce.

Your lease includes the following:

- brief definitions of some of the terms used in the lease
- EastendHomes' obligations as your landlord and your obligations as leaseholder
- how the service charge is worked out
- the rules and regulations that the leaseholder has agreed to
- the part of the building your lease refers to and the part which is owned by EastendHomes
- the length of the lease which decreases on a year by year basis

Summary of what you must do, whichever type of lease you have

- You must keep your home in good repair and condition. This includes all fixtures and fittings, water, gas and electrics, and pipes that serve your home

- You must give EastendHomes four weeks' written notice if you are going to sell your home or sublet your home
- You must contribute towards the cost of providing services to you. You must pay your building insurance, ground rent and major works costs on request by EastendHomes
- You must obtain written permission from EastendHomes before you make any alterations to the internal structure or the outside of your home
- You must allow EastendHomes into your home to carry out emergency repairs that are affecting other residents
- You must use your property solely for private residential use
- You must show consideration to neighbours in the restriction of music and other noise, particularly between the hours of 11pm and 8am
- You must obtain written permission from EastendHomes before keeping any pets in your property
- You must obtain written permission from EastendHomes if you wish to erect any external aerial on your property

Summary of what EastendHomes must do whichever type of lease you have

- We must keep the main structure and outside of your home in good condition. This includes the roof, outside walls and foundations.
- We must keep shared water tanks, mains water, sewage, drains, electrics, gas, water pipes, rubbish chutes, lifts, and door entry systems and shared TV aerials in good condition.
- We must insure the building (but we are not responsible for insuring the contents of your home).

We will charge you for any work that we carry out.

Breaches of the lease

Your lease is a contract and EastendHomes will take appropriate action whenever it becomes aware that a leaseholder is acting against the terms of their lease. This could include:

- Unapproved works to the property
- Improper use of the property
- Refusal of access to EastendHomes staff
- Anti-social behaviour including harassment and neighbour nuisance by yourself, family, friends, guests, visitors present within the curtilage of the building
- Failure to pay service charges
- Failure to control the behaviour of your tenants where you sublet your flat
- Not disposing of rubbish or items of furniture correctly

In all cases, EastendHomes will first write to the leaseholder giving notice that they are required to remedy the breach. If it continues, further action will be taken which could include seeking an injunction and in extreme cases forfeiture of the lease. This last step could mean losing your home.

Should you breach the terms of your lease for any reason, particularly those terms relating to the maintenance and state of repair of your property, this could invalidate your insurance cover and leave you personally liable for any consequential loss or damages incurred as a result.

Leaseholders who believe that EastendHomes has breached their lease should at first contact us. Should the matter not be resolved, you should make a formal complaint to us. If after following the complaints procedure you remain unsatisfied, then you can contact the Independent Housing Ombudsman, or take the matter to the Leasehold Valuation Tribunal.



Service charges

Your service charge is the money you pay towards the day-to-day running costs of your block, your estate and our administration cost for providing a leasehold service. All leaseholders in a block pay service charges.

How we work out your service charge

Each year in March, we will send you a statement showing your estimated service charge for the next financial year. Our financial year runs from 1 April to 31 March. We do our best to make this statement as accurate as possible, and base it on what we have spent in previous years. Some elements of the estimated charge such as repairs to the block can vary significantly whilst other estimates such as those relating to caretaking costs should be fairly accurate in terms of the estimate. Your service charge is due for payment on receipt of the estimate. If you have bought your property part way through the financial year, your service charge will start from when you became a leaseholder.

By October we will send you a statement of the actual money we spent in the previous financial year. If we have overestimated your service charge, we will pay this money back into your account. If we have underestimated it, we will add this money to your service charge account and we will explain why. Any change to your service charge account is based on independently audited accounts to make sure that the service charges are correct. The accountants will check that we have charged jobs to the right block or estate, so customers in one block are not paying for work carried out to another block.

You will also get a summary of your rights and responsibilities. We have to send you a copy of this summary by law. This will include how to check the amount that we have spent on services to your estate and block. If when you receive your bill, you find you do not agree with any of the items on the service charge statement, please let us know. We will keep a copy of the original bill and we will be able to explain the costs to you. We will do our best to give you a full explanation and to make our statements as clear and as accurate as possible.

Depending on where you live, your service charge could cover:

- horticulture (gardening)
- caretaking
- hiring containers to store rubbish
- boiler fuel
- repairing or maintaining the communal boiler
- communal electrical heating
- repairing and maintaining the block in which you live
- repairing and maintaining the estate
- door entryphone
- repairing and maintaining the TV aerial
- repairing and maintaining the lift
- heating and lighting shared areas
- a concierge service
- housing management fees
- administration fees

Horticulture (Gardening)

A gardener will carry out various tasks depending on the season.

Caretaking

Your estate caretaking team are managed by the local housing centre. They are responsible for a range of tasks including:

- cleaning the entrance lobbies, lifts, stairwells, refuse areas, sweeping footpaths, parking and estate roads
- checking that shared lights are working
- the reporting of anything that needs to be dealt with, such as graffiti or repairs in shared areas, emptying estate litter bins, and clearing blocked rubbish chutes

Hiring a container to store rubbish

Various blocks have containers to store rubbish in. Your service charge covers the cost of hiring a container to store non-recyclable household waste.

Boiler fuel

We charge you for heating and hot water if your home is connected to a shared boiler, known as a district heating system. Our charge varies depending on the number of radiators, hot-air blowers and hot-water systems in your home. The fuel supplier sends us a bill and then we work out how much we need to charge you.

Repairing the communal boiler

If your home is connected to a shared boiler, you must contribute towards repairs and maintenance. This includes repairing and maintaining shared pipes, either outside your home or shared pipes that run through it. This charge does not cover repairing or maintaining pipes that only you use inside your home. For example, it does not cover the repairing or replacement of radiators in your home.

Communal electrical heating

You must pay this charge if your home is connected to a shared electrical heating system. The charge does not cover replacing or repairing heating or hot-water equipment inside your home. The electricity supplier sends us a bill and then we work out how much we need to charge you.

Repairing and maintaining the block you live in

This includes any minor repairs or maintenance we carry out to your block and that cost each leaseholder less than £250. If repairs or maintenance cost more than £250 for each leaseholder, we must consult with you before carrying out the work. Minor repairs and maintenance would normally include replacing light fittings, fixing or replacing glass in shared areas and inspecting and maintaining shared water tanks.

Repairing and maintaining the estate

This includes any minor repairs or maintenance we carry out to your estate, and that cost less than £250 for each leaseholder. If repairs or maintenance cost more than £250 for each leaseholder, we must consult with you before carrying out the work. Minor repairs and maintenance would normally include removing rubbish and repairing gates and signs.

Door entry phone

Some blocks are fitted with entry phone systems that are designed to help with your security. From time to time we may have to repair the doors.

Repairing and maintaining the lift

Some blocks have a lift, and to make sure it is working properly, we need to check and repair it regularly. By law we are required to carry out safety inspections as well as repair jammed doors and fix the lift when it breaks down. Where possible we will fit monitors that tell us when a lift has broken down, and when the repair has been carried out. This will improve our service and we will include the cost of this work in your service charge.

TV aerial

Some blocks and some freehold properties share a TV aerial. We need to check and repair the aerial occasionally to make sure it is working properly and that you have a good reception.



Lighting shared areas

This charge covers shared energy to your block and your estate. This can include lighting to your block, the power source for lifts, door entry systems and estate lighting.

Concierge

Some blocks have a concierge service. The concierge's job is to provide security and assistance to residents.

Housing management

Your service charge covers the cost of managing your block and estate. This includes the cost of:

- monitoring repairs
- estate inspections
- residents meetings and consultations

Administration

Your service charge covers the cost of:

- a Leasehold Services Team
- collecting service charges
- dealing with any questions or problems regarding building insurance
- leaseholder surgeries

Easy ways to pay your service charges

Your service charge payment card lets you pay at some local shopping outlets or in a variety of other ways. You can use your payment card at any outlet displaying one of the following signs. Simply take your payment card to the counter with your payment. You will be given a printed receipt as proof of payment. You should keep this in a safe place.



Post office

You can pay at any post office with cash, cheques or debit cards.



PayPoint

You can pay by cash at any local shop displaying the PayPoint logo.



Direct debit

You can pay your service charge by direct debit. Phone us on [020 7517 4708](tel:02075174708) for a direct debit instruction form. Fill in all the information we ask for and send the form back to us. We will take care of everything else. Paying your service charge by direct debit offers a hassle-free solution if you worry about paying your bills on time. You will need to have a bank or building society account before you can set up a direct debit.

Internet payments

Pay over the internet. Make sure you have your payment card and your debit card. Log on to www.allpay.net and click where you see 'Make a payment'.

Telephone payments

Pay over the phone. Make sure you have your payment card and your debit card. Telephone [0870 243 6040](tel:08702436040) and follow the simple instructions. If you have any questions or you just want to know the balance on your service charge account, please get in touch. We will also be able to help you if your card is lost, damaged or stolen, phone [020 7517 4708](tel:02075174708).

Helping you deal with debt

You need to pay your service charges regularly and on time – but we understand that sometimes it can be a struggle. If you get into service charge arrears you need to pay them off as quickly as you can. If you do not pay your service charges you could be subject to forfeiture proceedings, which could mean you may lose your home.

Fair Finance

EastendHomes has entered into partnership with Fair Finance, who have staff experienced in debt advice and the service is confidential. It offers free, impartial advice and can help you with a range of issues including debt counselling and managing your payments. You can contact Fair Finance on [020 7780 1777](tel:02077801777) or pop into their offices at: 47 Ben Johnson Road, Stepney, London E1 4SA.

Leaseholder advice surgeries

If you prefer to deal with our own staff then phone Leasehold Services on [020 7517 4708](tel:02075174708) to make an appointment at one of our advice surgeries. If you get behind with your service charge payments we will:

- deal with service charge arrears in a confidential and sympathetic way and explain what will happen if your debt continues to increase

- help you to clear arrears by making a reasonable payment agreement with you
- take immediate and firm action if you do not contact us

Leasehold Valuation Tribunal

If you feel that we have acted unreasonably in charging you for our services you can take your case to a Leasehold Valuation Tribunal (LVT). They are an independent statutory body set up to determine, amongst other things, the reasonableness of service charges. The LVT will hold a hearing and will hear both sides of the argument. The LVT will make a decision based on the evidence, and will give you their decision as soon as possible after the hearing. You must apply to the LVT in writing and you must pay a fee. If you have access to the internet, you can either download forms on the LVT website at www.rpts.gov.uk or else you can phone the LVT on [020 7446 7700](tel:02074467700). The address is: Leasehold Valuation Tribunal, 10 Alfred Place, London WC1E 7LR

EastendHomes Leaseholder Charges

From 1 April 2010

Standard Administration Fee	£25 plus VAT
Solicitors' Enquiries	£150 plus VAT
Property Valuation Fee	£150
Conveyancing & Legal Fee	£215



Major works

This section sets out your rights and responsibilities as a leaseholder in relation to major works to your block or estate and aims to answer any questions that you may have about major works.

Leaseholder consultation on major works

We have a duty to consult leaseholders on our proposed major works prior to entering into an agreement with a contractor.

EastendHomes must consult you about any works or services to your building or estate where you are likely to contribute more than £250 per leaseholder for works to the building or estate, and £100 per leaseholder in respect of a long-term contract.

For any proposed major works or contract you will receive three formal notices. At each stage you have the right to make observations. We will consider any observations made and respond to them.

The key consultation stages set out below are for major works where leaseholders pay towards the cost of works. The notices will be issued to all leaseholders and any recognised residents association.

The requirement under the law is defined under two headings:

- Qualifying works
- Qualifying Long-Term Agreements

Qualifying works

These are works carried out to the building or the estate. We must consult with you if the works will cost more than £250 per leaseholder. If consultation is not undertaken the maximum that can be recovered from each leaseholder is £250.

Qualifying Long-Term Agreements

These are services with an independent organisation or contractor that are for a 12 month period or more. We must consult you if the cost of services exceeds £100 per leaseholder in any one year.

Consulting you

Stage 1 – Notice of Intent

This tells you that it is EastendHomes intention to tender for major works, to take out a new contract affecting leaseholders or renewing an existing contract.

Stage 2: Notice of Proposal

This sets out the major works to be carried out and your contribution towards cost of the works.

Stage 3: Award of Contract

This tells you which contractor we have selected to do the works.

These notices will be sent to all leaseholders affected by the works. If you are subletting, we will also send this to the correspondence address that you have given us.

Stage 1: Notice of Intent

The notice will give you:

- a description of the proposed works or services
- the reason we are making the proposals
- a time and place where you can inspect the proposals
- the opportunity to make written observation within 30 days of receipt of the notice
- the right to nominate a contractor (but this only applies to certain works)

At this stage we will not have a full list of the works and will not have asked contractors to tender for the works. We will provide you with estimated costs at Stage 2.

You have the right to make written observations on our proposed works, and we must receive this within 30 days of serving you the notice. We will provide you with a written response as soon as we can and tell you what we will do if there are any changes to the contract.

You do not have the right to nominate a contractor if the work is being carried out under an Official Journal of the European Union notice.

Stage 2: Notice of Proposal

This notice will be sent to you after EastendHomes has obtained competitive tenders but before it has agreed to appoint a contractor. The notice will give you:

- a summary of at least two of the tenders or in the case of a contractor appointed under European procurement rules a summary of the reasons for proposing a contractor
- a summary of any observations received at stage 1 (Notice of Intent)
- a time and place where you can inspect all the estimates and obtain copies of them
- the opportunity to make further observations within 30 days of the notice date
- once again you have the option to make further observations and we shall respond in writing to you, stating our response and any action we agree to take to further amend the works specification if the observations are considered reasonable

Stage 3: Award of contract

At the end of the second observation period and once we have made any necessary changes to the works, we will formally appoint the chosen contractor. At this stage we will provide you with a notice setting out the following:

- the name of the contractor who has been awarded the contract
- the date we expect that they will start the work

- if we have not chosen the lowest tender we shall tell you why we have made that decision
- a summary of any observations received at Stage 2

New 'Right to Buy' leaseholders and changes to ownership during consultation

Where a new lease is granted part way through the consultation procedure, EastendHomes is not required by law to start again or send any previously issued notices. We will bring the new leaseholder into the next stage of the consultation process. If the ownership of a property changes during the consultation process, it will be assumed that the new leaseholder has received copies of documentation from the previous owner.

Leasehold Valuation Tribunal

The Leasehold Valuation Tribunal has the power to allow a landlord to dispense with a consultation requirement if it is satisfied that the landlord was reasonable to do so. For example the LVT may grant a relaxation of the rules in the case of emergency works or for health and safety reasons. If this were to be the case we would apply to the LVT for retrospective dispensation as soon as practicable.

Paying for major works and improvements

EastendHomes will not know the final costs until the contract is almost completed. In most cases we would expect the final cost to be near to the estimated cost given to you with the notice of proposal (Stage 2). We will then issue you with a final account invoice that clearly states the cost to you. A full set of our accounts will be available for you to inspect and we will provide you with a breakdown of the costs.

Your lease sets out your obligation to pay towards the costs of carrying out our repairing obligations. We will calculate your contribution by reviewing the contractor's priced works specification.

We will deduct any works that you will not be charged for such as internal works to tenanted properties.

We then apportion the costs based on the floor area of your property. These calculations will tell us the amount we can charge you. If you purchased your property through the "right to buy" scheme in the five years before the start of the works contract (Stage 3), we will charge you based on the information you were given in your Section 125 offer letter. The Section 125 offer letter would have been sent to you by your landlord (Tower Hamlets Council or EastendHomes).

Ways to pay

Reduced payment

Some leaseholders may choose to pay for the cost of the works in full. Leaseholders who pay the cost of works in this way will be given a 5% discount.

Interest free by direct debit

Leaseholders may repay the cost of works by direct debit in 24 monthly interest free instalments. This period may be extended at the discretion of EastendHomes in cases of hardship. If the repayments are defaulted the interest free period may end and the debt would be due in full. The interest free option is open to all leaseholders.

Interest-only

A leaseholder can just pay the interest on the capital until such time that they are able to make the capital payment or when the lease is transferred or the property sold (whichever happens first). This is only available for resident leaseholders who do not have any other mortgage or loan registered on the property. The aim is to keep repayments as low as possible. If the repayments are defaulted the interest only period may end and the debt would be due in full.

Shared appreciation

This type of repayment is principally aimed at leaseholders of pensionable age who have no means available to them to pay for the cost of major works. To qualify the leaseholder must occupy the property and be in receipt of state pension. EastendHomes will take a small financial stake in the property, equal to the cost of the works. The value of the property will be established by an independent surveyor. No interest will be paid on the capital sum. On the future sale of the property, it will be re-valued by an independent surveyor and any increase in the financial stake held by EastendHomes will be repayable to us on completion. If you chose this option you would need to pay for the survey and an administration cost. The share will be noted at Land Registry as a charge on the property. This is only available for resident leaseholders who do not have a mortgage or loan registered on the property.

Discretionary capping

Some leaseholders will be eligible to have the cost of their works capped at no more than £10,000 provided that they fulfil all the following criteria:

- The property must be the leaseholder's only or principal home and the leaseholder must occupy the property
- The leaseholder must be the original Right to buy purchaser and works were not specified on their S125 notice
- The leaseholder must not have any service charge arrears
- The leaseholder must be in receipt of a state pension or disability benefit

House-proud Loan and Council Grant

If you are over 60 or disabled you may be eligible for a grant and loan to pay for the cost of major works.

The House-proud loan scheme is run by the Home Improvement Trust and is currently available to homeowners who are aged over 60 and homeowners with a disabled person living at the property. They can assist with a loan of up to 50% of the cost of major works. Tower Hamlets Council may also be able to help with a grant for homeowners over 60 and homeowners with a disabled person living at the property. You can obtain further details about both schemes from the Council's Private Housing Improvement Team on [020 7364 0819](tel:02073640819).

Financial difficulties

All leaseholders will be treated fairly should they fall into financial difficulties over repayments. If you think that you cannot afford to pay for the works then contact us and we will try to help you with an affordable repayment plan.



Good housekeeping

This section includes some general advice on maintaining your home.

Water supply

It is a good idea to know where your stop-valve is in case you have to turn off the water supply in an emergency. If you are sub-letting your property makes sure that your tenants know how to switch off the water.

Protect your pipes from frost

Water can freeze the inside of your pipes, cisterns, sinks and basins in very cold weather. When frozen the water will expand which can crack the pipes or joints which can lead to damage to your property and to your neighbours' homes. If you are leaving your home empty for any period of time, leave some heating on. It only needs to be on a low setting to protect it from the frost. If a leak happens call a plumber at once.

Gas heating and hot water

It is important that you have a full safety check carried out on your electric and gas installations on a regular basis. In the case of your gas boiler and central heating this should be done once a year. **If you are letting out your property you are legally required to test and service gas installations once a year.** EastendHomes can arrange this for you at a reasonable cost. Phone [020 8880 7825](tel:02088807825) for more information.

Gas heaters and boilers need proper ventilation so that fumes, which can be poisonous, can be carried away safely. You can buy a carbon monoxide monitor from most DIY stores and we recommend that you have one fitted at your property.

You have duties under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 to arrange maintenance by a Gas Safe Registered engineer for all pipe work, appliances, and flues which you own. You must also arrange for an annual gas safety check to be carried out every 12 months by a Gas Safe Registered engineer. You must keep a record of the safety check for 2 years and issue a copy to each existing tenant within 28 days of the check being completed and issue a copy to any new tenants before they move in.

The Health and Safety Executive has a 'one-stop shop' providing access to expert advice and guidance on health and safety issues for private landlords. You can contact the Information line service from Monday to Friday between 08.00 and 18.00 hrs by phone on [0845 345 0055](tel:08453450055).

Stop damp and mould

A lot of moisture goes into the air whenever you cook, run a bath or dry clothes in your home. When this moisture meets a cold surface like a window or an outside wall it turns into condensation which can lead to damage to your property and health problems for you and your family. You can help stop this by:

- wiping moisture from windows which often forms overnight;
- keeping a window open if you are drying clothes inside your property (close the window when you go out);
- keeping rooms warm – even a low heat helps;
- letting air from outside into the room to stop moisture forming on windows;
- not blocking air vents and try not to put furniture next to your radiators as the air needs to circulate;
- not using gas or paraffin radiators as they produce water in the air and are a fire risk too;
- using a mould cleaner or mild bleach cleaner. There are also a number of environmentally-friendly cleaning solutions available.

Hard Fixed Flooring

The impact of feet and objects on hard flooring surfaces produces noise which can reverberate through a building's structure and this can often cause a nuisance to neighbours below.

Residents are required to keep all floors covered with a suitable floor covering that has noise reducing qualities, for example a carpet with underlay, in all rooms other than their kitchen and bathroom.

Residents are required to seek permission for the installation of laminate or other types of wooden or artificial hard floor covering. If you have installed hard flooring without the permission of EastendHomes, you can seek permission retrospectively. If you install flooring without permission which causes a nuisance, you may be asked to remove it.

Permission will not be unreasonably refused, however permission will not be granted unless EastendHomes is satisfied that appropriate noise reducing measures will be used in the installation of the hard fixed flooring, e.g. underlay.

Security Gates

The fitting of security gates to your front door or security grilles to windows should not be carried out without our permission. Whilst we understand that additional security gates and grilles may increase your feeling of security they will, in the case of a fire, delay your rescue.

Never place a security gate in front of a *Secure by Design* security door that has been installed by EastendHomes. These doors are fitted to stop fire from spreading and help crime prevention. By placing a security gate in front of a *Secure by Design* door you slow down access to your property in the case of a fire and are putting yourself and other residents at risk.

Never use a security gate to increase ventilation to your property during hot weather by locking it and leaving your front door open. This considerably aids the spread of fire and could significantly impact on your safety and that of others in your building.

Front Entrance Doors

Front entrance doors are an integral part of the fire safety design of your block. Please do not change your front entrance door without getting specific written permission from us so that we can check your proposed new door meets all the regulatory requirements.

Good neighbours

Anti-social behaviour

We are committed to promoting a safe and secure environment so that residents are able to live peacefully in their own communities. We want everyone to enjoy living, working and visiting our estates. We are working hard to achieve reductions in anti-social behaviour and crime but we know there is still much to do. We have made a public commitment to meet the Respect Standard for Housing Management which means we intend to deliver good services to help stop anti-social behaviour and create a culture of respect. We are working closely with the Council, other social landlords, the police and local people in order to achieve this. By working together we believe we can tackle the problems associated with anti-social behaviour on our estates.

Anti-social behaviour is a term which covers a range of issues from serious violence and harassment to more everyday incidents including:

- harassment and intimidating behaviour;
- hate crime (for example racist or homophobic abuse);

- problems associated with people dealing or using drugs;
- with people dealing or using drugs;
- people being drunk or rowdy;
- vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property;
- dumping rubbish, throwing rubbish over the balcony, dog fouling, uncontrolled pets, dangerous parking and abandoned cars

EastendHomes has provided a number of ways to report anti-social behaviour. You can contact your housing centre in person, by telephone, fax or letter. Your housing officer will take details of the problem and will be responsible for undertaking all further enquiries. See contact details for the housing centres on the back page.

You can also report anti-social behaviour by:

- emailing asb@eastendhomes.net
- telephoning the Council's 24 hour free phone anti-social behaviour reporting line on **0800 917 5918**
- contacting your local Police Station. If you witness a criminal act or if you are in danger you should ring 999. We will work with the Police to bring criminals to justice through the courts

Your responsibility

We are determined to reduce anti-social behaviour. Any EastendHomes resident causing a nuisance is breaking their tenancy agreement or lease. You are not only responsible for what you do yourself but also for the behaviour of other people living with you or in your property. We will require any leaseholder whose tenants are causing a nuisance to take action to stop it. Failure to do so could jeopardise your lease.



Fire safety

Residential blocks of flats are designed to resist the spread of fire. Most domestic fires don't spread further than one or two rooms. However, although the risk is small, it is worthwhile talking to your family about fire safety to ensure you are prepared. There are on average 53,000 dwelling fires each year in the UK and 80% of all casualties from fire are caused in the home.

What to do if there is a fire outside your home

Staying in your flat is best unless told to leave by Emergency Services

Flats and maisonettes are built to give you good protection from fire. Walls, floors and fire resistant front entrance doors will hold back flames and smoke for some time. If there is a fire elsewhere in the building you're usually safer staying in your flat unless heat or smoke is affecting you. If you hear somebody else's smoke alarm sounding for a while and you are concerned, call the Fire Brigade.

What to do if there is a fire inside your home

Alert everyone in your household and get them out

- Make sure everyone in your home is aware so that they can leave immediately.
- Keeping a torch nearby can be very useful, wind up ones remove the need for batteries.
- If there's a lot of smoke, crawl along the floor where the air will be clearer.
- Don't investigate the fire.
- Before you open any doors check them with the back of your hand. If they're very warm don't open them because the fire is likely to be on the other side.
- Close doors behind you – even simple doors can hold back fire for a while allowing you to escape.
- Don't delay to collect valuables.
- Close the front entrance door behind you.
- Where possible, always use the stairs and never the lift.

- Once out of the block don't go back in.
- If you haven't already done so, call the Fire Brigade on 999. Give them your full address and postcode.
- Wait at a safe distance for emergency services to arrive.

What you can do to protect yourself

Ask the London Fire Brigade to carry out a fire safety visit to your home. They will give you advice and fit a free smoke alarm where this is needed. They will advise you on your Fire Escape Plan and give you practical advice on identifying fire hazards in your home. Find out more about this service on 08000 28 44 28 or at www.london-fire.gov.uk/SafetyAtHome.asp

We have produced a leaflet on Fire Safety for our residents. You can get a copy from your local housing centre or our website www.eastendhomes.net.



The leaflet features the East End Homes logo at the top. It contains several sections with icons and text:

- What to do in the event of Fire.** (Blue box)
- If the fire is not in your flat, you're usually safer staying in your flat unless heat or smoke is affecting you.** (Black box with a white horizontal bar icon)
- If there is a fire in your flat, leave the building closing the door to your flat behind you.** (Green box with a person running icon)
- If there is a lot of smoke, crawl along the floor where air will be clearer.** (Red box with a person crawling icon)
- Do not use the lifts, go down the stairs instead** (Red box with a lift icon and a red prohibition sign)
- Call 999 from any phone. Give them the address, including the number of your flat and tell them which floor the fire is on.** (Green box with a telephone icon)

Subletting your property

You should contact us in the event that you intend to sublet your property. We do not usually object to anyone subletting but you must give us a forwarding address and phone number in case we need to contact you. This also applies if you use a managing agent to sublet your property. We can then keep you informed of planned repairs and maintenance and keep you up to date with news about your estate or if we need to contact you in the case of an emergency.

Please send any change of address to Leasehold Services, EastendHomes, Tayside House, 31 Pepper Street, London E14 9RP

A formal tenancy agreement must exist between the owner and subtenant. This will usually be an assured short hold tenancy. You can usually buy

a standard tenancy agreement at most good stationers. A formal tenancy should include all the responsibilities that you have in your lease with EastendHomes. You would then have the right to take action against your subtenants should they breach the terms of your tenancy. You are ultimately responsible for the behaviour of your subtenants and their visitors. You normally have to register with your insurers and mortgage lender that you are subletting your property.

EastendHomes advises you to take legal advice before entering into a tenancy agreement.

Failure to address issues of nuisance or anti-social behaviour arising from your subtenants may put your lease at risk.

How to make a complaint, comment or send us a compliment

We use your complaints to find out if we are doing something wrong and improve our services. We are committed to giving you a high-quality, effective and efficient service. We understand, however, that you will not always be happy with us. We have a complaints policy which sets out how long it will take us to respond to your complaint. We use a four-stage complaints procedure, where we look at your complaint in detail. If you are still not happy with our response, you can take your complaint to the Independent Housing Ombudsman. You must have followed our complaints procedure before you go to the ombudsman.

In the first instance, it is usually best to try to resolve any difficulties directly with EastendHomes. If that does not work then ask for a complaint form which is available from your local housing centre or download a copy from our website www.eastendhomes.net

Comment and compliment forms are available at our local housing centres or on our website.



How to contact us

EastendHomes Head Office

Tayside House, 1st Floor, 31 Pepper Street,
London E14 9RP

E-mail: enquiries@eastendhomes.net

Phone: 020 7517 4700

Fax: 020 7515 0218

Island Gardens Housing Centre

137 Manchester Road, Isle of Dogs,
London E14 3DN

E-mail: islandgardens@eastendhomes.net

Phone: 020 7538 2340

Fax: 020 7537 0512

Mile End Housing Centre

38 Wager Street, London E3 4JE

E-mail: mileend@eastendhomes.net

Phone: 020 8880 7055

Fax: 020 8880 7810

St George's & Glamis Regeneration Project Office & Area Housing Centre

61A Swedenborg Gardens, London
E1 8HP

E-mail: stgeorges&glamis@eastendhomes.net

Phone: 020 7680 8640

Fax: 020 7680 8641

St George's and Glamis residents can also
contact us on freephone 0800 0281587

Holland Housing Centre

35-39 Commercial Street, London E1 6BD

E-mail: holland@eastendhomes.net

Phone: 020 7456 6700

Fax: 020 7456 6737

You can send us a text message to
07961 941584

Leaflets

We have a range of other leaflets you may find useful. They are available from our local housing centres and on our website www.eastendhomes.net.

- Service standards – providing a high-quality service for all of our residents
- Resident involvement – ways you can get involved in our services
- Sub-letting your property – what you should do
- Money matters – help, advice and support with your finances
- Noise nuisance
- Your right to complain
- Anti-social behaviour
- Fire Safety
- Gas Safety



Help and advice

Out of hours repairs call centre	0800 376 1637
London Borough of Tower Hamlets	020 7364 5000
Citizens Advice Bureau	020 7247 1050
Tower Hamlets Law Centre	020 7247 8998
If you smell gas phone the National Gas Emergency Service	0800 111 999

The Leasehold Advisory Service is funded by the government to provide free initial advice and information on a wide range of residential leasehold issues and is staffed by officers with legal training **020 7374 5380**

Email: info@lease-advice.org

Website: www.lease-advice.org

If you would like further information on leasehold ownership we recommend you read "*Residential Long Leaseholders - A guide to your rights and responsibilities*".

Copies can be obtained from:

Communities & Local Government Publications

PO Box No 236

Wetherby

LS23 7NB

Tel: **030 0123 1124**

E-mail: communities@capita.co.uk

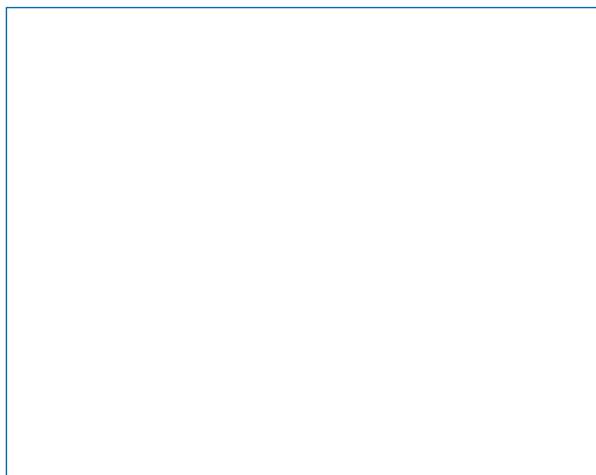
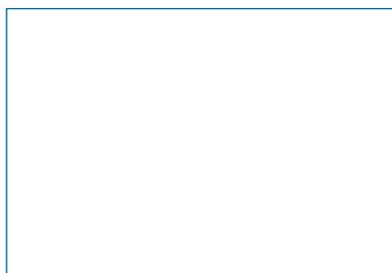
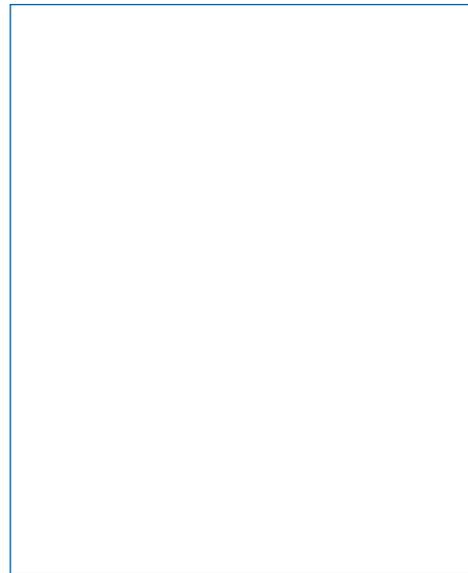
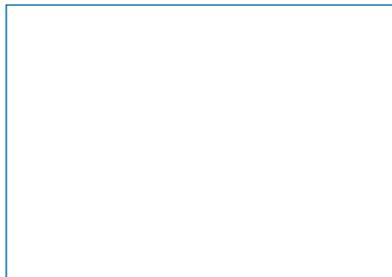
Other languages and formats

If you ask, we can provide copies of this document in a range of languages and formats, including Bengali and Somali, in Braille, in large print or on audio tape. To ask for a different format, please contact your local housing centre.

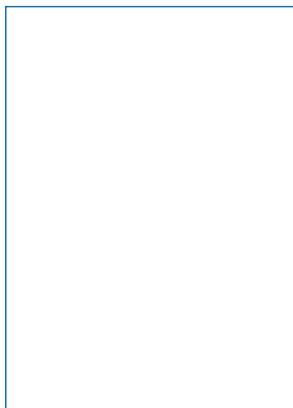


Disclaimer

The contents of this guide are not legally binding and do not affect any lease. EastendHomes has tried to ensure that the contents are correct at the time of writing but EastendHomes cannot guarantee their accuracy. If you are in any doubt or if you are involved in a dispute, you should seek independent legal advice from a solicitor or other suitably qualified person.



The Leaseholders Handbook



EastendHomes
Tayside House
31 Pepper Street
London E14 9RP

E-mail: enquiries@eastendhomes.net
Phone: 020 7517 4700
Fax: 020 7515 0218

www.eastendhomes.net

