

## What are my responsibilities?

In the same way as you have a number of rights you also have a number of responsibilities for your home and your behaviour.

This includes members of your family and anyone visiting you.



### **Who is responsible for communal areas?**

If you share facilities outside your home with other people, e.g. a staircase, entrance lobby, landing or driveway, you are responsible for keeping the area clean and tidy and free of obstructions, including items such as bicycles and prams.

### **Who is responsible for looking after my garden?**

It is your responsibility to look after your garden, or balcony if you have one. You must keep your garden clean and tidy and free from rubbish. This includes things like mechanical parts, furniture or litter.

If you have a tree in your garden you must not destroy or remove it or remove any branches from it without our written permission.

We will normally ask a Tree Officer from the Councils' Leisure Services to inspect it and advise us if any work is needed. We usually pay for any work recommended by the Tree Officer.

If you are elderly or registered disabled and find it difficult to look after your garden, you should speak to your Housing Officer, Sheltered Housing Officer or Tenancy Support Officer about the help and support that may be available from other agencies.

### **Communal gardens**

If you would like to do some gardening in the communal areas please contact your Housing Officer or Sheltered Housing Officer.

We are happy for you to take an interest in your local neighbourhood, but please DO NOT remove or plant anything without first getting permission.

### **Where can I park?**

Please be considerate to other people when you park your car. Some estates have parking areas with marked bays for you to use, but you MUST NOT use them for parking boats, caravans, trailers or commercial vehicles.

You can only park on your property or in your front garden if you have a driveway with a lowered kerb and hard standing for your vehicle.

You MUST NOT drive or park on any open spaces, grass verges, shared gardens or similar pieces of land in your area.

All vehicles parked on PHP land and driveways must be taxed and roadworthy. Vehicles that have a *Statutory Off-Road Notice* (SORN) declaration are not permitted.

Please contact your Housing Officer or Sheltered Housing Officer if you have any queries about this.

### **What can I do about abandoned vehicles?**

Please call our HelpDesk on 0800 652 3900 if you think a vehicle has been abandoned.

We will arrange for it to be removed if it is on our land, or contact the tenant if it is on the driveway of a property.

Some areas, particularly in Poole Town, have parking permit schemes operating in their car parks to ensure that residents and their visitors have priority for parking.

### **Parking permits**

Each household can have ONE PERMIT for the householder if they have a car, a second permit if another household member has a car, plus one visitor's permit.

There is a reasonable charge to cover our administration costs. There is also a small charge if you need a replacement permit.

Cars parked where a permit scheme is in operation that are NOT displaying a valid permit, WILL be wheel-clamped. You will be charged a *release fee* for the wheel-clamp to be removed.

If you do not pay the fee to have your car released, you will be charged to have it towed away. If you are aware of an abuse of a parking permit please contact your Housing Officer so action can be taken against those responsible.

### **Can I rent a garage?**

We do have some garages available for tenants and leaseholders to rent.

Garages are for vehicles only. Due to safety and fire prevention reasons, you are NOT permitted to use it for other purposes, such as storage.

Areas with parking problems, such as Poole Town, usually have long waiting lists for garages, but there are other areas in Poole where they are available quite frequently.

### **What do I do with my rubbish?**

We expect you to dispose of your rubbish carefully.

Please make sure that you put your rubbish in the appropriate bin for the refuse collectors to collect.

Please tell us if someone has dumped rubbish on your estate. We will move the rubbish and re-charge the person responsible, if we know who it is.

If there are bins for recycling please only place recyclable waste in them.

### **How can I get rid of bulky refuse?**

If you have a large or bulky item that needs disposing of, the Council's Environmental & Consumer Protection Services can collect and dispose of it for a small charge.

The Council operate a *Waste Recycling Centre* to dispose of unwanted household waste products.

It is available to all residents of Poole. You may need to show identification with your address to prove that you are a resident of Poole.



**01202 261700**

8:30am – 4:30pm 7-days a week



**[www.boroughofpoole.com](http://www.boroughofpoole.com)**



58 Nuffield Road  
Nuffield Industrial Estate  
Poole  
BH15 2BU

**Is there anything I need to know about keeping pets?**

If you have a pet or would like to get one, we expect you to look after your pets in a responsible way.

They must not cause a nuisance to your neighbours by creating a lot of noise or excessive smells.

It is important that you clean up after your pets, in particular dogs, and many areas have special red bins for the disposal of dog mess.

If your pet(s) are causing a nuisance or disturbance to your neighbours, we may ask you to re-home them.

Although you may keep pets we do ask that you think very carefully before taking on a long-term commitment, especially if you are elderly or have particular needs that may require you to be away from your home at times

**It is your responsibility to ensure that your pets are looked after in your absence.**



## **What happens if I experience anti-social behaviour or neighbour nuisance?**

Everyone is entitled to enjoy his or her home peacefully and quietly.

We expect you to behave in a way that will not disturb your neighbours.

As the tenant, you are responsible for not only your own behaviour, but also for that of your family, friends and visitors both in your property and neighbourhood.

If you feel you are suffering as a result of a neighbour's behaviour we will always suggest that you try talking to your neighbour first. It may be that they do not realise that their behaviour is disturbing you.

If you are having problems and are unable to resolve these by talking to your neighbour, we have a leaflet about *Anti-Social Behaviour* that gives you more information on what you can do to solve the problem, and how we can help.

We will take action to prevent serious cases of neighbour nuisance or *Anti-Social Behaviour* continuing.



We work closely with residents and other agencies such as the Police and Dorset Mediation. We have a number of possible actions that we can take, including legal action.

We also offer a range of victim and witness support, including tenancy support and lifeline alarms.

### **What can I do if I experience racial harassment or hate crime?**

If you are the victim of a racial incident or hate crime, or you are aware of racially motivated incidents in your neighbourhood, please report it to your Housing Officer or Sheltered Housing Officer as soon as possible.

Any information you give us will be kept in the strictest of confidence.

If you have suffered harassment or racial abuse, there are things we can do to help you feel safe in your home. For example, installing a *Lifeline Alarm*, and working closely with you to tackle the problem in a way that you are comfortable with.

Racial harassment and hate crimes are criminal offences that we take very seriously, and we are committed to tackling them.

We expect you to treat all your neighbours with respect and any form of harassment, abuse or threatening behaviour will not be tolerated.

**Are there any special considerations if I live in a flat?**

Door entry systems are provided for your security.

When you leave the building remember to close the door securely to protect you and your neighbour's homes against theft, vandalism and unwanted visitors.



Refuse should be disposed of carefully and should not inconvenience anyone else. Many blocks have a refuse chute for your convenience.

**You must not put large items down the refuse chute as this will block it.**

Noise and nuisance problems can be more problematic in flats. Noise in flats travels a long way.

Avoid problems by keeping your TV and radio at a reasonable volume and be especially considerate between 11:00pm and 7:00am. Having carpets instead of hard flooring can significantly reduce noise in flats.

Bottled gas and paraffin heaters are not allowed in flats as they represent a significant health and safety hazard.

## **Are there any special considerations if I live in sheltered accommodation?**

**Speech equipment** (emergency alarm system) and **smoke alarms** are fitted in all our sheltered accommodation.

This equipment needs regular testing to ensure it is in working order and your Sheltered Housing Officer will need access to your property to do this.

**Suited locks** are installed in all our sheltered properties. This is to enable the Sheltered Housing Officer and emergency services to access your property in an emergency.

**Do not fit extra locks or change locks without permission from your Sheltered Housing Officer.**

**Communal facilities** on site are there for all our residents to enjoy. We encourage residents to use the lounges, kitchens, laundries and guest rooms.

For more information about these facilities please contact your Sheltered Housing Officer.

## Can you end my tenancy?

We can apply to court to end your tenancy if you break any of the conditions set out in your Tenancy Agreement.

We are committed to helping people remain in their homes, especially if they are experiencing other difficulties. However, in some instances, we have no other option but to end a tenancy.

Some examples of when we may do this are:

- ★ If you get seriously behind with the rent
- ★ Someone living in, or visiting, your home causes a serious nuisance or breaks the law
- ★ You let the condition of the property seriously deteriorate
- ★ You have been violent or threatened violence to your partner or member of your family, and they have left the property because of this
- ★ You have been violent or threatened violence to your neighbours
- ★ You have been violent or threatened violence to a member of staff from PHP or other agency
- ★ Someone living in or visiting your home is convicted of using the property for illegal purposes
- ★ You got your tenancy because you deliberately gave us false information
- ★ You have a temporary tenancy while we carry out work to your home and we have finished this work

## WE CANNOT END YOUR TENANCY WITHOUT A COURT ORDER

### What happens if you want to end my tenancy?

We must give you written notice. This is called a *Notice of Seeking Possession*.

The *Notice of Seeking Possession* must state our reason(s) for going to court to end your tenancy and the date when court proceedings can begin.

That date must not be less than 28 days from the date when we issue the *Notice of Seeking Possession*.

In exceptional circumstances, we can take action before 28 days if we want to evict you for neighbour nuisance, illegal use of your home or you have been convicted of an arrestable offence.

The most common reason we will issue a *Notice of Seeking Possession* is for rent arrears.

If you are served with one, it will usually be because you owe us at least 8 WEEKS rent.

Further details about what you can do if you are issued with a *Notice of Seeking Possession* for rent arrears are given in the [Paying Your Rent](#) section.

The *Notice of Seeking Possession* gives you the opportunity to put things right and comply with your tenancy conditions.

If during the 28 days you come to an arrangement with us and comply with your tenancy conditions, we may decide that no further legal action is necessary.



If we decide at the end of the notice period to proceed because serious problems still exist, an application is made to The County Court for a date when your case can be heard.

You will have the opportunity to put your version of events to the court and we would encourage you to go to the court hearing.

The court will decide if your tenancy should end or if you will be required to do certain things, such as pay off your rent arrears, or stop anti-social behaviour.

In addition, we may also take other action to stop serious tenancy breaches during the notice period, such as asking the court for an *injunction*. In these cases the court can order you to stop doing something immediately.

The court can even decide to stop you returning to your home or your neighbourhood if the Judge thinks this is the right course of action to protect your community.

If you receive a *Notice of Seeking Possession* from us you must come and talk to us about it, or get independent advice from a solicitor or the Citizens Advice Bureau.

A *Notice of Seeking Possession* will either be handed to the tenant personally or hand-delivered through your letterbox.

In line with the *Disabled Discrimination Act*, we will work with, and offer support to, vulnerable or disabled tenants who face court action.

All efforts will be made to assist you in keeping to your *Tenancy Agreement*, but if you do not comply, court action may still be necessary.

### **What happens if the court does end my tenancy?**

If the court does end your tenancy, it will set a date by which you must leave your home.

We do not have to offer you another suitable home, and it is likely that other *Housing Associations* and *Local Authorities* will also refuse to offer you an alternative home because your home was repossessed.

## **Are there any exceptions to this?**

There are circumstances when we can seek to end your tenancy but where we must offer you another suitable home. These circumstances include:

- ★ If you are able-bodied but are living in a home that has been specially adapted for someone with special needs
- ★ If you inherit the tenancy from a partner or close relative but the property is too big for your needs
- ★ If we want to carry out demolition, major repairs or improvements that cannot be completed while you are living there

In these circumstances we will work with you, to find you somewhere else to live that meets your needs, and you are happy with.

## **Making sure you know your rights and responsibilities**

To make sure you understand your rights and responsibilities your Housing Officer or Sheltered Housing Officer will go through them when you sign your *Tenancy Agreement*.

Your Housing Officer or Sheltered Housing Officer will also carry out a new tenant visit with you within 8 WEEKS of you moving in, to see how you are settling in and answer any queries you may have.

All tenants receive a tenancy review visit approximately every 5 YEARS.

This is an opportunity for PHP to ensure you are familiar with your rights and responsibilities and know about all the services we can provide including; tenancy support, resident involvement and refurbishment programmes.

If you have any questions about your rights and responsibilities, please contact the HelpDesk on 0800 652 3900 or e-mail us at [enquiries.php@poole.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries.php@poole.gov.uk)