

LEAVING YOUR PROPERTY



DEVELOPING HOMES AND CREATING OPPORTUNITIES
FOR PEOPLE WITHIN WEST NORFOLK

Freebridge
COMMUNITY HOUSING

Moving Out of Your Home

If you wish to end your tenancy with us, you need to tell us in writing at least four weeks before you want to leave your home by completing an Ending Your Tenancy form. These are available at our offices, or we can send you one in the post on request.

Your notice period will begin on the Monday following the receipt of your fully completed form and during this time rent will be charged. If you leave or return your keys before the notice period finishes, you will still be charged rent for the whole four weeks.

All tenancies will end on a Sunday.

Returning Keys

- All keys, including shed keys and fob keys, must be handed in to our office by 9.00am on or before the date provided.
- Your keys must be handed in to our office at Juniper House, Austin Street, King's Lynn. If you live on one of our sheltered schemes you can return your keys to a Support Advisor.
- You can return your keys early although rent will be charged for the four week notice period.

If you do not hand in your keys by the agreed date and time you may be charged for a lock change. Any outstanding balance could affect your ability to apply for another property through the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Homechoice scheme or through a private landlord.

If you receive Housing Benefit and you leave before the end of the four week notice period, you will only receive Housing Benefit up to the date you moved out; you will therefore be expected to pay the difference up to the end of the tenancy.

If you leave your property owing money on your rent account, these are known as Former Tenant Arrears

Property Inspection

All Freebridge properties will be inspected before a tenancy ends. You will be contacted to arrange an appointment to do this at a time convenient to you.

The surveyor will require access to all areas of the property and will take into account any repairs that are to be completed by Freebridge and will also highlight any repairs required to be carried out by you.

When inspecting the property the surveyor will check all the rooms and will specifically check:

Garden: This must be neat and tidy and in a manageable condition. If you have a pond you will be required to fill this in.

Alterations: If you have made alterations/improvements to the property without prior written permission from Freebridge. This includes removing or erecting any internal walls, fitting a shower, kitchen, bathroom, removing or changing doors, windows, spot lights or using a driveway without a dropped kerb. You will be asked to replace or make good at a cost to you.

Decoration: Your property must be in a good decorative state. You will either need to redecorate the rooms identified or pay the cost for the redecoration by Freebridge.

General: Are there any holes in the walls or doors, missing internal doors, broken electrical fixtures and fittings including smoke alarms.

Flooring: The surveyor will advise if you need to lift your floor coverings.

When you leave the property it is important to make sure that: the property is clean, in a good state of repair, and that you remove all your belongings inside the property, in the gardens and any communal areas. This includes carpets and curtains. If you are not sure about what repairs Freebridge are responsible for and which you are, please refer to your copy of the Tenant's Handbook.

If there are repairs, cleaning or clearing of the property required when you leave, you will be charged for the work; these are known as Rechargeable Repairs.

The costs we charge for these works will be considerably higher than if you were to clear, clean and repair the property yourself so it is important that you have done this before you return your keys if you wish to avoid a large recharge after leaving the property.

Please also note that landlords may check for any outstanding debt relating to property damage or neglect and this can be considered as a genuine reason for refusing to provide further accommodation

How can I pay?

If you receive a recharge bill you can make payment at Juniper House via cash or cheque or you may send a cheque in the post.

For former tenant arrears, payments can be made by Direct Debit, Standing Order, Cheques or an Allpay card.

What if I can't pay in full?

If you are not able to pay the money you owe us in full, arrangements can be made to pay it in instalments. To talk about this call our Income Team on 03332 404444 or email them at enquiries@freebridge.org.uk.

What will happen if I ignore the money I owe Freebridge?

If you leave your tenancy with money owing to us and do not give us a forwarding address, we may use a tracing agency to find you.

If you ignore this situation and do not respond to reminder letters from Freebridge, your debt will be passed to a debt collection agency. This agency is employed by Freebridge Community Housing to collect money owed to us.

Having your debt passed to a collection agency can affect your credit rating and could lead to court action and further costs being added to the debt. You may also be visited by the debt collection agency at your new home.

What if I disagree with the amount of money I owe Freebridge?

If you disagree with amount of money that Freebridge say you owe you should write to us explaining why.

Any action we take to recover any money owed will be placed on hold when a dispute is received and an investigation will be carried out.

Once the investigation is completed you will then be informed in writing of the decision made and any further action that maybe required.

Can I apply for another Freebridge tenancy if I still owe them money?

If you still owe us money after you end your tenancy this could stop you being offered another property by Freebridge Community Housing in the future.

Details of the money you owe will be given in any future reference we provide about your tenancy, and could have a negative effect on renting property from another landlord.

If you register with West Norfolk Homechoice at the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk for a property with another Registered Social Landlord, you will be expected to pay any money you owe to Freebridge before being offered a new tenancy.

What happens if a Freebridge tenant dies?

Following a tenant's death, the tenancy agreement doesn't come to an end, it must be ended by either

- The executor of the will or
- The administrator under letters of administration

If you believe the tenant has died with no will or that nobody has applied for letter of administration, please speak to us to discuss how to end the tenancy. We may be able to accept notice from the tenant's next of kin.

When you let us know of the death we will issue a form to complete (Ending your tenancy form), please read this carefully and make sure all the sections are filled in.

The tenancy will end four full weeks after this is received.

We will also require an original copy of the death certificate.

Rent and other applicable service charges will continue to be charged for the property until the four weeks has passed. Housing Benefit will end on the Sunday following the late tenant's death.

A Universal Credit claim will be brought to an end from the beginning of the 'Monthly Assessment Period' in which the death has occurred.

In the event of the death of a tenant; and once keys are returned, if there are Former Tenant arrears or a Recharge Invoice outstanding, a payment is required from the estate of the late tenant. If there is no estate, please advise the Income Team in writing as soon as possible.

**SPEAK TO THE INCOME TEAM
FOR MORE INFORMATION ON
THIS - 03332 404444**

IF YOU NEED ANY HELP TO UNDERSTAND THIS LEAFLET PLEASE GET IN TOUCH

Freebridge Community Housing
Juniper House
Austin Street
King's Lynn
Norfolk PE30 1DZ

Email: enquiries@freebridge.org.uk

Main Switchboard Telephone: 03332 404 444

Office Opening Hours:

8:45am - 5.15pm (Mon-Thurs)

8:45am - 4.45pm (Fri)

Bank Holidays, Saturday and Sunday Closed

Out of Office Hours:

The main telephone number (03332 404 444) will divert to 24 hour emergency service.