

A close-up photograph of a person's hands. The person is wearing a light blue ribbed sweater and a gold chain bracelet. They are holding a set of keys and handing them to another person whose hand is visible on the right. The background is dark and out of focus.

woven

Tenancy Fraud -  
what it is and  
what you  
should do if you  
suspect it.

TENANCY FRAUD

# Tenancy Fraud in Northern Ireland

It is estimated that between two and three thousand homes in Northern Ireland are occupied by someone who should not live there or by a person who has obtained the tenancy fraudulently\*.

*\*Kieran Donnelly, the Comptroller and Auditor General [C&AG]*

There are many different types of housing fraud. Here are some of the most common ones.

## Unlawful subletting

This is where a tenant lets out their Housing Association or Housing Executive home without the knowledge or permission of their landlord. The person will often continue to pay the rent for the property directly to their landlord but will charge rent, from the person they are subletting to, at a higher rate. It is unlawful and unfair to sublet and to profit from a property which could be given to someone legally entitled to occupy it.

## Obtaining housing by deception

This is where a person obtains a Housing Executive or housing association property by providing false information in their application. This might include, for example, not telling the landlord they are renting another Housing Executive or housing association property or giving false information about somebody living with them.

## Wrongly claimed succession

This is where a tenant dies and someone, who is not entitled to, tries to take over or succeed the tenancy. They might, for example, say they lived with the tenant before they died, when in fact they were living elsewhere.

## Key selling

This is where a tenant is paid to pass on their keys in return for a one-off payment.

## Why is it important to tackle tenancy fraud?

There is not enough social housing in Northern Ireland to meet the needs of people who genuinely need it. Best use has to be made of the housing that is available, to ensure that it is occupied by those who are legally entitled to do so. People waiting for social housing will have to wait even longer if homes continue to be occupied by people who have no right to be there.

## How does Woven tackle tenancy fraud?

We take tenancy fraud very seriously and will take action to regain possession of properties wherever we find evidence of tenancy fraud.

Woven's Housing Officers will carry out regular checks as an integral part of letting and housing management activities to establish that the correct people are going to or are living in properties. We work with other social landlords and statutory agencies to detect fraud where the law requires it or where information sharing protocols are in place.

# Help us tackle Tenancy Fraud

If you suspect someone is cheating on their tenancy, please let us know. It could make a big difference to people in genuine need of housing.

You can report your suspicions to either of our offices:

**Belfast**                      **028 9042 7211**

**North West**                **028 7136 0015**

or email us at our designated tenancy fraud email address:

**[tenancyfraud@woven.org.uk](mailto:tenancyfraud@woven.org.uk)**

All information received will be taken seriously and treated in the strictest confidence.



*This leaflet can be viewed or 'listened to' on our website in the language of your choice by using the ReachDeck toolbar:*

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**INVESTORS IN PEOPLE®**  
We invest in people Gold



The Responsible  
Business Network  
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[woven.org.uk](http://woven.org.uk)

woven's offices are open:  
08:45 to 16:45 Mon to Thurs  
08:45 to 16:30 on Fridays

