

woven



A place  
you can  
call home

Tenant Handbook

## Do you need assistance with the information contained in this handbook or require the information in an alternative format?

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



Click on the orange 'little man' button that you can see at the top of all our website pages to launch the ReachDeck Toolbar to read and translate the content on our website. Accessibility features include:

Text-to-speech; Translation; magnification; MP3 generation; Screen mask; Web page simplifier and Picture dictionary.



We also work with **Language Line** to offer an interpreting service, where needed.

### Polish

Czy potrzebuje Pan/Pani pomocy z informacjami zawartymi w niniejszym podręczniku lub czy wymaga Pan/Pani tego materiału w alternatywnym formacie?

### Portuguese

Necessita auxílio com as informações contidas neste manual ou exige este material num formato alternativo?

### Lithuanian

Ar jums reikia pagalbos su informacija, pateikta šiame vadove ar Jums reikia tai alternatyviu formatu medžiaga?

### Arabic

هل تحتاج مساعدة فيما يتعلق بالمعلومات الواردة في هذا الكتيب أم هل أنتم بحاجة لهذه المواد في نظام بديل الشكل؟

### Chinese

以在这本手册中被控制，或是做你的信息给你需要帮助在一种供选择的格式中需要这种材料？

### Romanian

Nu aveti nevoie de ajutor cu informatiile continute in acest manual sau Vreti acest material intr-o alternativa formatul?

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## Welcome

Welcome to your new home - we hope that you will enjoy your tenancy with us.

This Handbook provides information to help you with all aspects of your tenancy. It sets out the obligations and responsibilities of you, the Tenant, and of the Association as your landlord. The Tenancy Agreement you have signed, is legally binding on both parties.

The Handbook may not answer all your questions, and you are welcome to contact our office anytime if you require any information. You can also access services and Information via our website [www.woven.org.uk](http://www.woven.org.uk)

Please keep the handbook in a safe place as you may need to refer to it over the life of your tenancy.

**Homes & Communities Team**  
**Woven**

# Introduction

## About Woven

Woven, is a Housing Association registered in Northern Ireland. We have been operating since 1976 (originally called Habinteg Housing Association [Ulster] Ltd) and we are one of the major housing providers in the region.

In line with our Vision: '**A Place you can call home**', we provide housing and housing services for all people, irrespective of age, culture, background, ability or disability. Typically, our developments contain a range of house types, including family houses, bungalows and apartments. We build family houses to Lifetime Homes standard and a proportion of bungalows and apartments are specially designed wheelchair user properties.

In addition to our main pattern of house building, we work closely with a number of organisations in the provision of specialist and supported housing schemes, including housing with care projects for people with disabilities and/or people with particular support needs.

Our main offices are at Laganwood House, Newforge Lane in Belfast and we have a regional office at Exchange House, in Derry/Londonderry. Most staff work at these two locations and we have a number of staff members who work residentially on our larger housing developments.

### VISION

Homes, lives and communities; woven as one.

### MISSION STATEMENT

We provide affordable, accessible homes and bring people together to create thriving communities.

### VALUES

#### PEOPLE

Our business is our people.

#### INTEGRITY

Trustworthy, respectful, and transparent; it's the way we work.

#### QUALITY

Continuous improvement is at the heart of all our services.

#### INTEGRATION

An inclusive living experience for all our customers.

#### ENGAGEMENT

Working together through teamwork, collaboration and partnership.

# About your Tenancy

## Welcome to your new home

### INTRODUCTORY TENANCY

Before moving into your new Woven home, you will sign a legally binding **Tenancy Agreement**.

We give all new tenants a trial period of 12 months to show they can keep to the terms of this Agreement - look after their home and live peacefully with their neighbours. This is known as an **Introductory Tenancy**.

**NB** If you are moving from a previous **Secure Tenancy**, you will continue to be a **Secure Tenant**.

### RIGHTS

If you are starting as an Introductory Tenant, you will not have all the rights of a secure tenant. As an introductory tenant the law does not give you the automatic right to take in lodgers; sub-let part of the property, undertake home improvements or exchange your home during the introductory year.

Although you don't have an automatic legal right to these things, you can apply in exceptional circumstances, to do some of them - take in lodgers, make home improvements or exchange. The Association will decide and let you know if you can go ahead.

### BECOMING A SECURE TENANT

We hope your Introductory Tenancy period is problem-free and that you'll go on to become a secure tenant. If there have been no problems during your Introductory Tenancy this will happen automatically and most people will pass smoothly from their Introductory Tenancy to a Secure Tenancy. As a Secure Tenant you will have all the rights of a Woven tenancy.

### IF THERE ARE PROBLEMS

As an Introductory Tenant you will receive as much protection as Secure Tenant. If you're the victim of somebody else's bad behaviour during the trial period we'll help you in exactly the same way as a other tenants. If, however, there are reports that you have been acting in an antisocial manner, we will investigate thoroughly and, as an Introductory tenant, you could be evicted more quickly and easily than under a Secure Tenancy. We'll always try to help you if you have any difficulties, but you should be aware of the consequences of breaking the Tenancy Agreement.

**See [Terminating an Introductory Tenancy](#).**

# Rent, Rates & Service Charges

## RENT PAYMENT METHODS

**ALLPAY APP** offers a secure and convenient way to pay rent. It can be download from App Store / Google play.

\*If you do not have a smartphone or are unable to download the app, there are several alternative ways to pay.

**DIRECT DEBIT** provides secure and reliable way to ensure regular payments from your Bank or Building Society account. Contact your Housing Officer or call our offices to set this up.

**ONLINE** payments are secure, quick and easy and provide you with the ability to pay your rent at any time at Allpay - you will need your Allpay card number, your debit or credit card number and three digit CVV.

**CALLPAY** is alternative way to make rent payments by calling our offices and speaking to your Housing Officer.

**ALLPAY CARD**, provided when your tenancy starts, allows additional payment methods if you do not have a bank account. You can use the payment card at Post Office or Pay Point retail outlets displaying a Pay point sign.

We encourage you to pay your rent by the above methods but, where this is not possible, we also accept payments by cheque either by post or made in person over the counter at your regional office.

## RENT STATEMENTS

We will send you a statement every 6 months or quarterly on request. The statement provides details of charges and payments made on your account. You should check the statement and keep receipts for any payments made. We have a list of frequently asked questions in connection with rent payments which you can find on the rent and rates section of our website.

## PROBLEMS / DIFFICULTIES ?

**It is essential that you pay your rent. Non-payment can lead to eviction.**

If you have problems paying your rent, contact us as soon as possible and we will do all we can to assist you in making arrangements. Please also see **APPENDIX 6 - Budgeting**. Where tenants do not make effort to pay rent we may have to take legal action or issue **Notice of Seeking Possession**. This stays in effect for 12 months and if arrears increase in this time we may ask The County Court for a Possession Order. You could lose your home.

Don't allow the situation to deteriorate. You can talk to us in the strictest confidence to get advice. We have a **Welfare Advice Officer** who can assist you with rent arrears and other debts.

## RATES

We collect your rates together with your rent on behalf of Land and Property Services and they may be subject to annual increases.

Wherever possible we will give you reasonable notice of an increase.

## SERVICE CHARGES

You may be liable to pay a service charge. The charge is based on the cost of delivering services which are particular to housing scheme in which you live - communal heating or lighting or the services of a residential member

of staff and Community Facility etc. The service charge for each scheme is therefore calculated individually and based on actual costs for the preceding year and estimate for the charge going forward.

We must give you details of the service provided and the costs involved. At the time of signing up for a property with Woven, your Housing Officer will complete the Schedule of Service Charge items, detailing the services and the weekly cost for each service. These costs are reviewed annually and may increase or decrease.

## SCHEDULE OF SERVICE CHARGE ITEMS

Service Charges are based on the actual cost of delivery of the service. They are reviewed annually and may increase or decrease.

Service Item	Weekly Cost
Communal Cleaning	
Communal Heat & Light	
Communal Fittings	
Laundry Machine Service	
Lift Maintenance	
Window Cleaning in Communal Areas	
Fire Service and Testing	
Scheme based staff Costs	
Fold Telecare	
Door Entry System	
General Miscellaneous	
Landscaping of Communal Areas	
Legionella Testing	
<b>Total weekly Service Charge:</b>	

# Rights and Responsibilities

## Tenancy, conduct, lodgers and subletting

### TENANCY RIGHTS and CONDUCT

As a Woven tenant you have rights *and* responsibilities. Both exist to ensure you can enjoy the benefits of your tenancy.

On signing for your home, you will have received and signed a Good Neighbour Agreement (**APPENDIX 2**). This serves as a commitment that neither you, nor members of your household or visitors to your home will behave in a manner that affects the peace and enjoyment of your neighbours.

### ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

We are determined to protect you and your community from the misery of anti-social behaviour. We have detailed policies and procedures in place for the benefit of you and your community, and we're sure you will want to help us.

If someone tells us that you've been acting in an anti-social way, we will investigate the complaint thoroughly - collecting evidence, interviewing witnesses and talking to the police. If this shows that the complaint is justified we will take action. If the problem is quite minor we'll tell you to change your behaviour – we may also bring in a mediation expert. If you fail to alter your behaviour, or if your actions are of an extreme nature we will seek to evict you.

It is important to remember that you are

not only responsible for your own behaviour. We would take action against you if the anti-social offender is someone living with you, or a visitor to your home. It doesn't matter where the nuisance happens – in your home, outside it or anywhere in the locality.

### TAKING ACTION

We will formally acknowledge and seek to investigate all reports of anti-social behaviour. Where appropriate, we will provide advice and support and work with other agencies to bring about a satisfactory resolution. In instances where efforts at conciliation have failed, we will take the route of legal action. This may involve Court proceedings and eviction of a Secure Tenant or termination of an Introductory Tenancy. See sections on **ENDING A TENANCY** and **TERMINATION**

### ASSIGNING

You may not give, or sell, your tenancy to someone else. Assignments, by way of exchange only, may take place with written permission. If you give up the property under any circumstances your secure tenancy will cease. Any remaining resident will be treated as an unlawful occupier unless they have a legal right to the tenancy.

## LODGERS AND SUBTENANTS

You may take in lodgers provided this does not result in overcrowding. You should also remember that a lodger is treated as a member of your household under the terms of your tenancy. If you take in lodgers or wish to sublet, you must inform us of their names and the rent you are charging.

You may sublet part of your dwelling if it does not cause overcrowding. If you wish to do this you must write to us asking for written permission. Permission might be withheld if your house has been designed for special use or if we are planning to carry out any work which would affect the property to be occupied by the subtenant. In these instances, we will provide our reason in writing. **NB:** Permission to sublet does not grant the subtenant a legal rights to succeed to your tenancy and vacant possession of the dwelling must be given if you terminate your tenancy or if you die.

## TENANCY FRAUD

Tenancy fraud denies legitimate applicants the chance to be offered a property. If you are caught committing fraud, you're likely to lose your tenancy and you could lose your right to social housing in the future. It's also possible, where serious fraud is involved, you could be fined and/or sent to prison.

If you suspect someone is a tenancy cheat, please let us know immediately. All information received will be taken seriously and treated in confidence. It could make a big difference to people who are in genuine need of housing.

## YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

As your housing association, we will provide you with information about how well we perform.

Each year, we collect facts and figures about our work and provide, in an understandable form, the information which most likely to interest you, including:

- ✓ **rent charges for different sizes of home;**
- ✓ **how quickly we carried out repairs;**
- ✓ **performance in collecting the rent due from all tenants;**
- ✓ **information on empty properties (voids);**
- ✓ **categories of households which homes have been let to during the year.**

We provide this information in our Annual Report. This publication is available on request and can be viewed or downloaded from our website at [www.woven.org.uk](http://www.woven.org.uk)

Information is also published in additional performance documents, all available on our website.

The work of Woven is regulated by the Department for Communities (DfC). The role of the DfC is to supervise the work of housing associations registered with the Department to ensure that they provide a good standard of service to their tenants.

# About your property

## Maintaining your home

### MOVING INTO A NEW HOME

When dwellings are new or newly refurbished, repairs and defects are the building contractor's responsibility for a period of 12 months - Defects Liability Period. Report faults in the normal way.

In a new home building materials have absorbed water during construction and there will be moisture in the structure. It will not do you any harm but will need to evaporate slowly and be ventilated. Take the time to familiarise yourself with the heating system to help the process. You will be provided with a manual and given a demonstration.

As the home is lived in and heated, timber and plaster will shrink, resulting in small cracks. These cracks are normal - they are not structurally important and can be cured in the usual process of redecoration. Because such minor cracks are inevitable, Woven is not legally bound to rectify them and you should carefully read the advice in this section regarding decoration.

### WOODEN FLOORING

During the drying out period, it is not recommended that wooden floors be fitted. After the defects liability period expires, written permission should be sought for this type of work.

### EFFLORESCENCE

Another consequence of drying out may be the appearance of a white deposit on inside or outside walls, called efflorescence. This is caused by natural salts coming out of the wall materials and is quite normal. On external walls it will eventually disappear and on internal walls it can be wiped or brushed away.

If efflorescence persists internally, it may indicate a water leak, in which case you should contact Woven.

### DECORATION

A light water base paint, allowing moisture to work itself out, may be used on walls and ceilings. We strongly advise you not to apply wallpaper during the drying out period (9-12 months).

When you redecorate, use a filler to make good any minor gaps and plaster cracks which have arisen from normal drying-out and shrinkage.

### WOODWORK

New woodwork absorbs a lot of moisture and the first painting may not give as good a finish as later coats. If painting, always prepare the surface properly and never paint on wet wood.

## BLOCKED PIPES

Blocked waste pipes occur most commonly in kitchens and bathrooms when food particles or hair has blocked the 'S' bend. Clean drainage pipes occasionally with household washing soda crystals. If a blockage occurs, it can usually be removed with a plunger.

If you are unable to remove the blockage with a plunger - place a bucket under the 'S' bend; carefully unscrew the cleaning eye - the lower part of the 'S' bend; remove the blockage and screw the pipe work back into place. If you still have a problem, report it to us but please remember that **if Woven has to clear a blockage which you have caused, you may be charged for the work involved.**

## DETECTORS

We recommend that you check all detectors at least once a week, by depressing the 'Push-to-Test' button. If the alarm is battery operated and fails to sound, please replace the battery and retest.

If the detector is wired to the mains and does not sound when tested, turn off the mains power and check battery is securely attached. If it starts to beep about once a minute, turn off the mains power and clean the detector. If needed, replace the battery.

If you experience a faulty detector or one which sounds continuously without reason - report it to us.

Let us know if any of the above problems persist.

## VENTILATION

To minimise problems arising from dampness and condensation, you should ventilate your home. Leave windows or trickle vents (vents in the window frame) open for periods each day. Leave internal doors and doors of built-in cupboards open slightly to encourage air circulation during the drying out period.

You need a lot of ventilation in the kitchen and bathroom when drying clothes cooking, washing, etc. This will be the case in a new home or one in which you have lived for some time.

We have produced a leaflet detailing the causes, preventative measures and actions for dealing with condensation in the home. It's available via our website or on request.

See summary information opposite.

## CONTENTS INSURANCE

**Many people experience damage to their homes during spells of severe weather. Woven will repair the damage to its properties but the Association is not responsible for damage to furnishings and the personal belongings of tenants.**

We encourage all tenants to take out household contents insurance. There are numerous policies available and you can obtain details by contacting your local insurance broker or checking comparison websites on the internet.

Always choose an insurance broker that is registered through the Financial Services Authority and remember to read the policy carefully.

# Damp and condensation

## Avoiding condensation in the home

### CONDENSATION ON WINDOWS

If you ventilate your home properly, condensation is unlikely, but if it does occur on window glass, wipe it up. Condensation that repeatedly settles where glass meets a timber frame can, in time, cause the timber to rot. If you have double glazing, there should not be any misting between the panes of glass. If this occurs, contact Woven.

### CONDENSATION GENERALLY

Most of the reports we receive about dampness and patches of mould turn out to be the effects of condensation. Condensation occurs when moist air reaches a cold surface and deposits some of its water on the surface.

### The only permanent cure is to reduce the level of moisture in the air. Take the following steps:

- ✓ Keep your home warm. Leaving background heat on during the day may cost little more than heating your home quickly in the evening. Get advice about your heating system.
- ✓ Open windows a little if they become misted up.
- ✓ Provide some ventilation if you have to dry clothes indoors.

- ✓ Keep the kitchen door closed when cooking/washing. Open a window to allow steam to escape.
- ✓ Keep the bathroom door closed when washing/bathing and open a window. Use the extractor fan if you have one and leave it on until the steam has cleared.
- ✓ Do not allow kettles and pans to boil longer than necessary.
- ✓ Do not overfill cupboards and wardrobes preventing air flow. Condensation may affect clothes and wardrobes/cupboards.
- ✓ Do not use paraffin or bottled liquid gas stoves. These give off a great deal of water vapour and can cause serious problems.

If Condensation does occur, mop up the moisture with a cloth. You can also buy special strips from DIY shops which absorb moisture when fitted to window ledges.

You can remove mould growth by washing affected areas with a fungicidal wash which can be bought from paint shops.

We have a **Condensation Advice** leaflet available on our website or on request.

# Home improvements

## Repairs, decorations and alterations

### REPAIRS TO YOUR HOME

It's in our interest as well as yours to keep your property in a healthy state. At the end of the contractor's liability period in new properties, the care of your home becomes our joint responsibility.

### REPORTING A PROBLEM

We aim to carry out repairs quickly and efficiently. You can report a repair via our website, by telephone, email or calling in person to our offices or with your Community Assistant (where applicable). We will then arrange for our workmen to call and carry out the repair - you must help us make arrangements for access. Always ask to see some proof of identity when someone visits your home.

**In order to prioritise repair work, repairs are categorised as follows:**

### EMERGENCY REPAIRS

Eg. burst pipes and dangerous electrical problems. **We aim to carry these out within 24 hours of being reported.**

### URGENT REPAIRS

Eg. other plumbing / electrical work. **We aim to carry these out within 4 working days.**

### ROUTINE REPAIRS

Eg. repairs to fences, carports and external stores. **We aim to carry these out within 20 working days.**

### DECORATIONS / ALTERATIONS

We will decorate many of the external fixtures at your home, common landings and staircases regularly. If you wish to decorate the outside of your home yourself, please obtain permission first.

It is your responsibility to decorate the inside of your home. You must keep your home decorated to a fair standard. As advised, do not paper inside walls or ceilings during the drying-out period in new properties.

Before you do any alterations or improvement work you must get written consent from Woven. We have to make sure you will not damage your home or make it unsafe.

Work may include building extensions, roofspace conversions, removing walls, changing central heating systems etc. Your rent will not increase as a result of any improvements you make but it may result in you paying more rates.

### ADAPTATIONS

If you have had an Occupational Therapist make recommendations to Woven, you may be eligible to have your home adapted.

See leaflet **Adapting your home.**

# Repair Liability

**Responsibility for carrying out repairs to your home is shared.  
Repair responsibility is split between us, the landlord, and you, the tenant.**

## WOVEN'S RESPONSIBILITY

### EXTERNAL

- ✓ All outside repair work - including structural repairs to walls, outside doors, windows (but not glass replacement), roofs, chimneys, valleys, gutters, down pipes and house drains.
- ✓ External painting to woodwork, ironwork and wall surfaces where these have been previously treated.
- ✓ Paths, garden walls, fences (if we originally provided them) .

### INTERNAL

- ✓ Major repairs to walls, floors and ceilings, handrails to stairs.
- ✓ Repairs to sinks, cisterns and baths. (but not rewashering taps or clearing blockages caused by tenant neglect.)
- ✓ Fireplaces but not frets, tiles, hot water cylinders, radiators, boilers, water storage tanks, pipes and fittings.
- ✓ Electrical wiring, excluding all electrical fittings.

### NB

**Where the Association has carried out a repair to make good damage caused by a tenant the cost of the repair will be charged to the tenant.**

## SERIOUS EMERGENCY REPAIRS

Priority attention will be given to:

- ✓ **serious fires**
- ✓ **gas leaks**
- ✓ **electrical faults**
- ✓ **burst pipes**
- ✓ **blocked main drains (not waste pipes)**
- ✓ **dangerous walls/chimney stacks**
- ✓ **floods.**

If you contact the Fire Service, or water, gas or electricity services, you must advise the Association as soon as possible.

## OUT OF HOURS

You may need to contact services at night or at the weekend (for out of hours **emergency** repairs **Freephone 0800 7313081**).



NB This service, provided in partnership with Radius Connect 24 is for emergency situations only. You will have to pay for any work carried out which proves to be non emergency.

## Under Repair Liability, the following repairs are the responsibility of the tenant.

### TENANT RESPONSIBILITY

#### EXTERNAL

- ✓ Care and upkeep of gardens, hedges and trees.
- ✓ Cleaning out gulley traps, aqua drains etc.
- ✓ Repair to clothes lines. Rotating clothes lines, where supplied, will be replaced on change of tenancy only where necessary.

#### INTERNAL

- ✓ Minor repairs / maintenance of doors (including kitchen units), locks, and windows (including replacement of glass).
- ✓ Replacement of letterboxes, keys and locks where keys have been lost/broken.
- ✓ Internal decoration, floor coverings, small plaster repairs to walls and ceilings, floor tiles, “bleeding” of radiators and relighting of pilot lights, replacement of coat hooks and door stoppers.
- ✓ Replacement of wash-hand basins, W.C. bowls and seats, clearing all blockages which occur in waste pipes leading from baths, sinks, showers and wash-hand basins. Shower curtains and fittings.
- ✓ Replacement of plugs, washers, chains and stoppers to sinks, wash-hand basins and baths. Repair of work surfaces.

### MISCELLANEOUS

- ✓ Additional draught exclusion.
- ✓ Cleaning of chimneys.
- ✓ Clearing of pest infestations.
- ✓ Fitting of TV aerials and dishes (with our permission).
- ✓ Replacement of dustbins.

In wheelchair user dwellings:

- ✓ maintenance of hobs, ovens and refrigerators which are supplied by the Association.

### ELECTRICITY

- ✓ Electric fuses, elements to electric and gas fires, fluorescent light bulbs etc
- ✓ Replacing blown fuses in the main fuse box is your responsibility. (switch off the mains supply and unplug the appliance you think has caused the fuse before replacing) If the replacement fuse blows, contact the Association as there may be a fault in the electrical system.
- ✓ Your home may have circuit breakers instead of fuses which automatically switch off in circumstances when a fuse would have blown. Reset the switch at ‘on’ after disconnecting the appliance which caused the problem. If the circuit breaker continues to switch off, contact the Association.

**NB You will have to pay for the repair of anything damaged by you or by a visitor to your home.**

# Home Efficiency

## Saving money, caring for the environment

### ENERGY - FOR NEW SUPPLY

You can choose from a range of suppliers to provide electricity to your home. There are now several energy suppliers in the region. You can contact **The Consumer Council** on **028 9025 1600** / [www.consumercouncil.org.uk](http://www.consumercouncil.org.uk) for up to date information.

### ENERGY COSTS

Help is often available to help consumers reduce their energy costs and make the most of their income. If a fuel bill arrives and you cannot afford to pay, contact your energy supplier immediately. You will often be able to arrange payment by regular instalments.

Contact us if you are experiencing difficulties. The Consumer Council offers advice on Warm Home Grants, Energy Efficiency, Winter Fuel Payments etc and our own Welfare Advice Service is available to provide advice and support.

### ENERGY EFFICIENT APPLIANCES

If you are thinking of buying a new household appliance be sure to check its energy label which rates products according to efficiency.

All UK / EU manufacturers and retailers must tell you about the energy efficiency of household electrical fridges, freezers, washing machines, tumble dryers, washer/dryers, dishwashers, ovens, air

conditioners and light bulbs. Products are generally rated from 'A' to 'G', with 'A' being the most efficient ('A+' and 'A++' for the most efficient fridges and freezers).

### LIGHT BULBS

Energy saving light bulbs can be a proven way to reduce bills and, because they have a longer life-span than traditional bulbs, reduce consumption of raw materials.

### REGULAR SYSTEM CHECKS

**We have a legal and regulatory responsibility to carry out regular safety checks and servicing to ensure the systems in your home remain safe to use and perform efficiently.**

Servicing of heating systems, and specialist equipment / appliances fitted by Woven, including detectors, is carried out regularly.

This is essential your health and safety and to ensure the efficient running of your system. We will write to you giving you notice of when checks are to be carried out and it is essential that you allow our engineers into your home to carry out this important service.

## WATER

We each use around 145 litres of clean, treated water every day, so the less water we waste the more cost effective the system is and the less energy is needed to produce that water, therefore reducing carbon emissions.

### Tips for reducing water wastage:

- ✓ Turn off the tap while brushing your teeth - a running tap wastes over 6 litres per minute
- ✓ Put a brick or filled drink bottle (or purpose made 'hippo') in the toilet cistern to displace some of the water and reduce the amount used for flushing. Be careful to avoid interfering with the flushing mechanism.
- ✓ If you can, use a dishwasher. Hand-washing dishes typically uses more water than a modern dishwasher. Make sure you always fully load the dishwasher to get those water savings
- ✓ Avoid half-load clothes washes. A full load uses less water than two half loads, saving money, energy and water.
- ✓ Avoid unnecessary toilet flushes by binning cotton balls, make-up tissues etc.
- ✓ Fill a jug with tap water and place in the fridge to avoid over-running the tap for cold drink.
- ✓ Wash fruit and veg in a bowl rather than under a running tap.

## OUTSIDE THE HOME

Use a watering can rather than a hosepipe in your garden. If you must use a hosepipe fit with a trigger gun to control the flow. Use a bucket / sponge, not a hosepipe, to wash your car.

Your roof collects tens of thousands of litres of rain which runs straight into the sewers. If a water butt is not provided by us, call your local council.

## WASTE

Household waste has an impact on climate change. You can help to reduce this impact by recycling more and reducing waste.

Local councils in Northern Ireland organise domestic recycling schemes - contact them to find out which schemes operate in your area. Most councils provide bins for the collection of recyclable items and most areas have recycle yards for non-collectable waste. It's essential that waste items are placed in correct bins - councils may refuse collections.

Please also contact your council for safe disposal sites of products such as oil, garden pesticides and paint.

The website [www.recyclenow.com](http://www.recyclenow.com) has detailed information regarding your nearest recycling facilities. You can key in your postcode and find out the materials you can recycle domestically for collection. You can also download the Bin-ovation app for full information on local services and to get reminders of your bin collection dates.

# Health & Safety

## Safety and Security in the home

### BASIC SAFETY TIPS

Most accidents in the home are avoidable. Minimise the risks by following these simple rules:

#### ELECTRICITY

- ✓ Switch off appliances after use.
- ✓ Make sure plugs are wired correctly and use correct fuses.
- ✓ Check flexes regularly - never use damaged ones and do not run them under carpets / rugs.
- ✓ Service appliances regularly.

#### METERS

Tenants should be aware that the metering equipment and cabinets belong to the energy supply companies or to the original provider/installer. Any damage to this equipment will incur a cost for repair or reinstatement.

More importantly, interference or tampering with the metering equipment is extremely dangerous. Tampering with equipment may result in prosecution, disconnection of supply and the removal of equipment but it also has the potential to cause injury and even death.

**CAUTION: Don't take any chances - never tamper with meters or metering equipment.**

### OIL TANK ADVICE

- ✓ Never allow the oil tank to completely run dry as this can damage the boiler. It can also result in blockages to the burner, pipe-work and pump.
- ✓ Never tip the tank up to drain the contents. The practice of 'tank tipping' is extremely hazardous.
- ✓ Except in emergencies, avoid using small containers to fill tank.

Where damage is caused to the heating system as a result of the above practices, a charge will be incurred by the tenant for repair work and environmental clean up.

Woven appreciates that the cost of oil is high so please avoid adding needlessly to your fuel expenditure. Speak to your oil supplier about available payment methods. You may also, dependent upon your age and circumstances, be eligible for Cold Weather Payments to help with their fuel bills.

### GAS SAFETY

We have a statutory duty to ensure that all gas appliances, flues and gas pipe work installed by Woven is serviced and a gas safety check is carried out (see 'Regular System Checks in previous Home Efficiency section').

## If you smell gas:

- ✓ Extinguish any naked flames. Do not use a flame to find a leak;
- ✓ avoid using electrical switches;
- ✓ open doors and windows;
- ✓ check to see if a tap has been left on or pilot light blown out;
- ✓ if you suspect there may be a leak, turn off the gas at the meter and call us. In emergency, call **NI Gas Emergency on 0800 002 001**.

We advise the use of CO detectors and have commenced a programme of installing them in our properties where we have fitted gas / internal oil boilers or solid fuel room heaters.

- ✓ Never block ventilation.
- ✓ Ensure that flues are kept clear at all times.
- ✓ Look out for staining, soot or discolouration around a gas fire or around the top of a water heater or central heating boiler.
- ✓ Check for a yellow or orange flame in a gas appliance.
- ✓ Be aware of the onset of flu-like symptoms such as tiredness, headache, nausea, giddiness, pains in the chest and stomach.
- ✓ If you suspect an appliance is unsafe, turn the appliance off and do not touch it until it has been checked by a Gas Safe Registered engineer.

## FIRE

- ✓ Check your smoke alarm weekly to ensure it is working properly. (see previous section).

- ✓ Keep matches, lighters, fire-lighting materials out of reach of children.
- ✓ Never leave a chip pan unattended. If you have to leave the kitchen, turn off the cooker ring and move the chip pan away from the ring.
- ✓ Do not hang clothes over or heaters or cookers.
- ✓ Do not prop open fire doors or interfere with closing mechanisms.
- ✓ Close all doors at night.

**If a chip pan catches fire** turn off the heat and cover the pan with a damp cloth or lid to smother the flames (A small fire blanket is useful).

If clothing catches fire lay the person on the floor, roll them up in a rug or curtain to put out the flames and call an ambulance.

If your home catches fire close the door of the room where the fire is (if you can), evacuate the house and call the fire service.

**If a fire alarm sounds at any time, you should evacuate immediately.**

For detailed fire safety advice go to [www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk) / [www.nifrs.org](http://www.nifrs.org)

## WATER HYGIENE SAFETY

Water Hygiene is extremely important in preventing waterborne diseases like Legionnaires', caused by bacteria in poorly maintained water systems.

We urge tenants to read our all Health & Safety leaflets - all our on our website in the *For Tenants* section - *helpful info*.

## FROST DAMAGE PRECAUTIONS

It is your responsibility to ensure that property is not damaged through frost. Serious damage can be done to pipes, cisterns, sinks and basins by the expansion of water when it freezes in wintry weather.

At the start of a cold spell keep your house as warm as you can. Make sure you know where to find the main water control tap stopcock and know how to turn it off - follow the following guidance.

Check all water pipes and tanks in the roof or outside are lagged. Make sure taps are turned off at night. Report any dripping taps or running overflows. Leave radiator values slightly open or set the room thermostat to about 10 C (50F) if you are away from home for long periods. If despite precautions the pipes freeze or you have a burst:

- ✓ turn off main stopcock and switch the immersion heater off.
- ✓ Turn all hot and cold taps on, to drain as much water as possible.
- ✓ Report the problem to Woven as soon as possible.
- ✓ Keep contact number of a registered plumber handy place in case of emergency and our out of hours call helpline **0800 7313081 (emergency only)**.

## FALLS

60% of deaths from accidents in the home are the result of falls.

- ✓ Do not polish under rugs.
- ✓ Make sure stairs and landings are well lit and kept clear.

- ✓ Put guards at the top of stairs and upper floor windows if you have small children.
- ✓ Wipe up any liquids spilt on the kitchen floor immediately.
- ✓ Repair or cover any holes in your carpets or lino to avoid tripping.
- ✓ Securely fix stair carpets.

## GENERAL SECURITY

- ✓ Close windows when you go out and lock front and back doors.
- ✓ Never leave your door key under the doormat or hanging on a string behind the letterbox.
- ✓ Do not leave a window open a few inches. Burglars find this useful.
- ✓ Check the identity of all callers before you let them in. Woven officers have identity cards.
- ✓ Always cancel newspapers / milk before you go away.

## KEYS

Woven does not keep master keys to all dwellings. If you lose your key and the lock needs forced, you will be charged for damage.

## INSURANCE

See **MAINTAINING YOUR HOME** earlier in the Handbook. It is important to take out insurance on all your possessions in your home and to cover accidental.

The cost of insurance is quite low compared with the money it may save you and can be usually paid by instalments. Ask for advice

# Around your home

## Pets, gardens, common areas & bins

### PETS

If you wish to keep a household pet (other than a caged bird) you must have Woven's permission. This will not be unreasonably withheld.

Dogs and cats are not usually permitted in flats. Qualified permission may be granted under special conditions.

**Permitted pets must not cause a nuisance to neighbours - permission may be withdrawn. It is your responsibility to keep your pet under proper control, not let it wander on its own or continually make noise.**

### COMMON AREAS

Where there are common/shared spaces, tenants should co-operate with their neighbours to keep them clean, tidy and free from obstruction. In areas not cleaned by tenants, Woven may cover these duties through a service charge. **Smoking in shared areas of buildings is prohibited under legislation and will be treated as a breach of tenancy**

### REFUSE STORAGE

We will normally provide a bin for new dwellings or, if necessary, at a change of tenancy. At other times you need to contact your council for provision.

### GARDEN AND YARDS

You are responsible for keeping gardens, yards and front areas tidy and well maintained. If you live in a flat, you should arrange responsibilities with your neighbours. Where gardens are not maintained by the tenants, Woven may undertake this work, paid for by a service charge.

Untidy bin areas can become a health hazard, attracting pests and vermin. It is your responsibility to keep the bin and bin areas clean and tidy. Refuse should be bagged before placing in the bin.

Large items of rubbish such as old furniture, toys or prams can be removed by arrangement with your local council. Each council has different rules so please contact your council for details.

### COMMUNITY HUBS

Community Hubs (Common Rooms) where provided, are for use by individual tenants or groups for appropriate meetings and events. It should be booked in the correct manner and left clean.

The person making a booking will be held responsible for any damage. Contact your Housing Officer for full terms and conditions.

# Your Community

## Building sustainable neighbourhoods

### COMMUNITY ASSISTANT SERVICE

On our larger housing schemes, there is often a residential member of staff on hand to act as a liaison between you, the tenant, and our offices. The Community Assistant may live at the scheme or nearby. They may work 'peripatetic' covering more than one location. The Community Assistant (Scheme Supervisor, Concierge etc) can assist with reporting repairs, helping with community issues, sign-posting to services and helping to promote a community spirit.

The Community Assistant is also available to offer assistance (in addition to care provided by Health and Social Care Trusts) for more vulnerable tenants - older persons or persons with a disability. Wheelchair user housing and housing designed for older tenants may be linked to the Community Assistant's home and office by a warden call system. This enables the Community Assistant to answer any emergency calls which might arise and provide appropriate assistance. The warden call system is also linked to Fold Telecare service to provide cover for the tenants of a scheme when the Community Assistant is off duty.

Contact details for your Community Assistant (where applicable) are provided at the time of sign-up.

### GOOD NEIGHBOUR AGREEMENT

On signing for your home, you will have received a Good Neighbour Agreement. The Agreement sets out reasonable expectations and asks tenants to pledge to respect the rights of his/her neighbours in the community. We ask that you treat neighbours with respect and look out for them in times of need. We would also hope that you help us to stop nuisance and anti-social behaviour.

**When necessary, Woven will use legal powers to deal with anti-social behaviour. This may require working with an agency such as the Northern Ireland Housing Executive or local Council to obtain an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) or applying for an Order for Possession and/or an Injunction.**

We would encourage you to sign the Good Neighbour agreement and keep a copy for reference as a commitment that neither you, nor members of your household or visitors to your home will behave in a manner that affects the peace and enjoyment of your neighbours.

There is a separate Good Neighbour Agreement for T:BUC / Housing for All schemes.

## TENANT ENGAGEMENT

We aim to develop a meaningful relationship with our residents and encourage involvement to help us continuously improve services.

We promote and offer residents a wide range of opportunities - from events and activities to more formal structures. There are many ways you can get involved all outlined in our menu of involvement - see later Appendix on tenant involvement and engagement.

Speak to our Tenant Engagement Officer and / or our Community Involvement Officers or get in touch with our offices to find out more.

## RESIDENTS' FORUM

We believe that our tenants and residents are the best people to tell us about the things which matter most to them. The Forum is a focus group with Members elected by neighbours and fellow residents from housing developments right across Northern Ireland.

The Forum, which meets three times a year, has input into the work of the Association, it can voice your concerns and get answers to your questions. Speak to your Housing Officer or Community Assistant for further information.

## T:BUC / HOUSING FOR ALL

Shared Future / Housing for All began in NI with an initial programme of 10 shared neighbourhood schemes which are supported through the NI Executive T:BUC scheme (Together: Building a United Community). It is aimed at building a 'united community, based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation - one which is strengthened by its diversity, where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced and where everyone can live, learn, work and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance.'

Woven is helping to deliver shared housing as part of the Social Housing Development Programme. Each shared neighbourhood is supported through the development and delivery of a five-year Good Relations Plan, managed by the Woven and delivered to the new shared neighbourhood residents. There are 'bonding' and 'bridging' programmes which are delivered between the new shared residents and residents from surrounding communities.

Residents join Advisory Groups along with Woven staff, local Councils' Good Relations Officers, Community and Voluntary organisations and other statutory bodies to help plan and review the activities and projects.

# Ending a tenancy

## Moving on, transfers and termination

### SUCCEEDING A TENANCY?

If you are a secure tenant, (most Woven tenants) another member of your family may have the right to take over your tenancy if you die. Your spouse or civil partner can become the tenant if you die, whether or not their name is on the tenancy agreement, as long as they were living in the property at the time. In the event of your death, your parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, nephew or niece may also automatically take over your tenancy providing:

- ✓ they lived with you for the 12 months before your death;
- ✓ your house is their only / main home;
- ✓ they are 18 years old or over.

This includes partners / step-relatives.

Anyone claiming the right to succeed must tell us within one month of the tenant's death. If there is more than one person entitled to succeed, a spouse or civil partner will take precedence. If all are equally entitled and cannot agree, Woven will make the decision.

If a joint tenant terminates a tenancy, the remaining tenant(s) may be granted a new tenancy of the dwelling. If you are separated / divorced and the court allows you to live in the house instead of

your spouse, this does not count as a succession - a family member may still succeed the tenancy. Where a joint tenant dies, the remaining tenant automatically becomes the sole tenant.

Automatic legal succession can only occur once. We will consider giving a tenancy to someone after the tenant's death if it is their only home and they formed part of the tenant's household with Woven's knowledge and/or consent. If you are in doubt contact your Housing Officer. All applications will be considered fully and fairly.

### LEAVING A PROPERTY

It is essential that you leave your house in a good clean condition and remove all your furniture / items. If a repair, cleaning or redecoration is needed, you may be charged if it is your responsibility. We may charge to remove items left in the property. Have meters read, to avoid paying for the supply of the next tenant, and disconnect telephone. Please give us a forwarding address.

### MOVING OUT

Your tenancy will be terminated on a Monday but **you must give us four clear weeks' notice in writing**.

**Rent will continue to be charged until you return the keys to us -even if you have given four clear weeks' notice.** Until we receive the keys, you will be responsible for the security of the dwelling. If we have to force entry and change the locks you will be charged with repairing the damage.

## TRANSFERS

When you accept a tenancy, it is assumed that the home is suitable. If your circumstances change we will consider Application for Transfer if:

- ✓ you are overcrowded;
- ✓ your accommodation is too large;
- ✓ there are serious medical / social reasons requiring you to move;
- ✓ you need to move to be near work or relatives for support.

However, supply of accommodation is limited and you may not be offered the property/area of choice.

## CONDITIONS

Prior to any offer of transfer we will inspect your home to ensure that it is in good repair and reasonably decorated. If it is in an unsatisfactory condition or if you have rent arrears (of more than 4 weeks) or owe recoverable charges you will not be offered a transfer. Transfer is not normally considered for tenancies under two years and you must not have been guilty of serious unacceptable behaviour. If we cannot offer a transfer we will write to you explaining the reasons.

## TERMINATING AN INTRODUCTORY TENANCY

If Woven intends to proceed to court and seek an order for possession of your home, you will be issued with a Notice to Terminate. As an Introductory Tenant you have the right to request a review of this decision. If you wish to contest the decision to end your tenancy, please **make a written request within 14 days** of receiving the Notice to Terminate. There will be no further opportunity to put your case to Woven for consideration.

## THE REVIEW PROCESS

You may choose to attend the review hearing in person or you may wish to make representation to the review panel in writing.

Woven will notify you at least five days before the review of the date, time and venue of the hearing.

If you have chosen to attend the review you have the right to:

- ✓ be heard and be accompanied by another person who may be a solicitor
- ✓ call upon other parties to give evidence
- ✓ put questions to any person giving evidence at the hearing
- ✓ make representations to the panel in writing

A Director will review the case. The officers will not have been involved in the original decision to terminate your tenancy.

## COURT PROCEEDINGS

If the review accepts the original

decision to terminate an Introductory Tenancy was correct, Woven will apply to the court for an Order for Possession. You will be advised of the date of the court hearing. If the court grants the possession order, the Introductory Tenancy will be terminated and you will be asked to leave your home. If you remain in the property, we will proceed to have the Order enforced through the Enforcement of Judgements Office.

**If Woven is granted an Order for Possession, you may be considered ineligible for housing assistance in the future.**

## GROUNDS FOR EVICTION

A tenant cannot be evicted unless the County Court grants an Order for Possession to Woven. This can only be done on one or more of the following grounds:

1. Non payment of rent or breach of any of the conditions of tenancy as described here.
2. If the tenant or anyone living with the tenant is a nuisance to neighbours or using the premises for immoral or illegal purposes.
3. Damage to the property (including any common areas) by the tenant or any person living in the dwelling
4. Damage to any furniture provided by Woven, by the tenant or any person living in the dwelling.
5. Deliberately giving false information when applying for a tenancy.
6. If the dwelling was only given as temporary accommodation while the tenant's own home was being improved and those works have now been completed.

7. If the Association needs to gain possession in order to redevelop or rehabilitate the property.

8. Where accommodation provided specifically for a physically disabled person is occupied by a person who does not need such special accommodation and it is wanted for letting to a disabled person.

9. If a person's continued occupation would conflict with the charitable objectives of the Association.

10. Where grouped accommodation has been provided for those with special needs and it is occupied by a person who has no need of the special service of facility provided and it is required for letting to a person who has these special needs.

11. Where a person has legally succeeded to a tenancy by virtue of being a member of the former tenant's family and the dwelling is under-occupied and the Association seeks possession between six and twelve months after the previous tenant's death.

12.

The court shall not make the order for possession to the Association:

- a. on any of grounds 1-6, unless it is considered reasonable;
- b. on ground 7 unless suitable alternative accommodation will be available for the tenant;
- c. on any of grounds 8-11, unless it is considered reasonable and alternative accommodation will be available for the tenant;

Additionally, there has been an extension to Ground 2, Schedule 3 of the 1983 Housing Order.

# Directory

## EMERGENCY NUMBERS

In emergency requiring **POLICE, FIRE AND RESCUE, AMBULANCE, MARINE & COASTAL EMERGENCY or MOUNTAIN RESCUE** dial **999**

For non-emergency police 101

The following are for other **emergencies and out of hours emergency calls**

**NIE - faults / supply -**

**0345 7643 643 (24 hour)**

**Gas (Phoenix and Firmus) -**

**0800 002 001 (24 hour)**

**Department for Regional Development - street lighting -**

**0300 200 7899**

**Flooding Incident Line -**

**SERIOUS FLOODING -**

**0300 2000 100**

**Northern Ireland Water LEAKLINE -**

**mains water supply -**

**0800 282 2011**

**Northern Ireland Water Waterline**

**FLOODING -**

**0845 744 0088**

**Samaritans Helpline -**

**08457 909090**

**24/7 Helpline - if you're in distress or despair -**

**0808 808 8000**

**Women's Aid Domestic violence**

**hotline - 0808 917 1414 (free)**

## IMPORTANT CONTACTS

(non emergency numbers)

**Age NI Advice 0808 808 7575**

**Carbon Monoxide Help Line 0800 408 5500**

**Housing Rights 028 9024 5640**

**Northern Ireland Housing Executive 03448 920 900**

## HEALTH

### HOSPITALS

**Altnagelvin Area 028 7134 5171**

**BELFAST:**

**Royal 0289024 0503**

**City 028 9032 9241**

**Mater 028 9074 1211**

**South Tyrone 028 8772 2821**

**Lurgan 028 3832 3262**

**Daisy Hill Newry 028 3083 5000**

**Craigavon Area 028 3833 4444**

**Antrim Area 028 9442 4000**

**Coleraine 028 7032 7032**

**Mid-Ulster 028 7963 1031**

**Whiteabbey 028 9086 5181**

### ON CALL DOCTOR

**Southern HSCT**

**028 3839 9201**

**Belfast HSCT**

**NW 028 9074 4447**

**SE 028 9079 6220**

**South Eastern HSCT**

**Down / Lagan Valley**

**028 9260 2204**

**Ards & North Down**

**028 9182 2344**

**Northern HSCT**

**Dalriada Urgent Care**

**028 2566 3500**

**Western HSCT**

**028 7186 5195**

### SOCIAL SERVICES

**Belfast HSCT 028 9504 0100**

**S Eastern HSCT 028 9055 3100**

**Northern HSCT 028 9442 4000**

**Southern HSCT 028 3833 4444**

**Western HSCT 028 7134 5171**

### TRANSPORT & TRAVEL

**Translink 028 9066 6630**

**TransportNI 028 9054 0540**

**Waterways Ireland 028 6632 3004**

## Appendices

## TENANCY AGREEMENT

This Tenancy Agreement is between Woven Housing Association (Ulster) Ltd (The Association) as your Landlord.

Woven is a Housing Association registered under the Housing Order (NI) 1976 and Industrial and Provident Societies Acts (NI) 1969 /1976.

And \_\_\_\_\_ (the Tenant)

(If there are two or more Joint Tenants, the term tenant applies to each and the names of Joint Tenants should be written above. Each Tenant individually has the full responsibilities and rights set out in this Agreement)

The tenancy is a weekly tenancy. This agreement contains rights and obligations for both parties. You are the legal tenant of the dwelling and are required to meet the terms and conditions of this agreement, together with the Association.

The Address of the premises covered by this Agreement is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(The Premises) and

the commencement of the tenancy is Monday the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

It is a secure tenancy\*/It is an introductory tenancy\*.

(\*Housing Officer to delete as appropriate)

If you are an Introductory Tenant, you will become a secure tenant on the \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_\_, provided the Association has not issued legal proceedings against you for possession of the property or the tenancy has not otherwise ceased to be an introductory tenancy by virtue of the provisions of the Housing (NI) Order 2003.

The terms of this agreement apply to both Introductory Tenants and Secure Tenants, except where it indicates otherwise.

The tenancy is also subject to Statutory Provisions contained in Housing Legislation in Northern Ireland and any other affecting legislation.

### Section 1- Rent and Other Charges

You must pay the following charges each week from the date this agreement starts which is a Monday.

#### Weekly Payments

Rent		Service Charge		Heating	
Rates		Support Charge		Other	
Total Charges					

**Changes in Rent** - The Association may vary the rent by giving the Tenant not less than four weeks' notice in writing. The Rent stated above will not be varied before April. After this, increases will not take place more frequently than annually unless the Association is directed otherwise by the Department for Communities

**Changes in Rates** - The Association will try to give reasonable notice of any variation in Rates but is not required to do so. The Association collects rates on behalf of Land and Property Services.

**Service Charge** - The charges referred to in the schedule for services (if any) can be reviewed annually, and can be adjusted when there is an increase reasonably incurred. The charge covers the cost of provision of the services.

**Support Charge (only applies to sheltered housing schemes)**. This is a condition of your tenancy. Support provided can be the following:

General support and counselling in maintaining the safety and security of the dwelling.

Assisting the Tenant to comply with the tenancy terms.

The charges may vary accordingly.

The provision of an emergency alarm system.

\* **The charges may vary annually.**

**Heating Charge (only applies to sheltered housing schemes)** – This covers the provision of heat and hot water to the dwelling.

## 1. TENANT'S OBLIGATIONS

As a tenant you have certain obligations to the Association and your neighbours. If you fail to comply with these obligations, the Association may consider ending your tenancy which may mean you having to leave your home. You should also refer to your Tenants Handbook for further guidance.

### (a) Pay the rent and other charges on time

If you are in receipt of Housing Benefit, Universal Credit or Rent Rebate whether paid directly to the Association or not, it is your responsibility to ensure that the benefit is paid. You are also responsible for advising the relevant agencies of any change in your circumstances which may affect your benefit.

If you have any difficulty paying your rent you should contact your Housing Officer straight away.

If you do not pay your charges on time the Association may go to court to obtain legal permission to evict you from the dwelling.

**(b) Nuisance /Anti-social Behaviour**

Tenants have a responsibility for the behaviour of every person, including children, living in or visiting the tenants' home, including responsibility for their behaviour in the home, surrounding land and communal areas.

You must not or allow members of your household or any visitors to cause any disturbance or nuisance to neighbours.

There may be occasions when the Association will decide to take action to evict tenants because of nuisance or anti-social behavior.

**(c) Racial and Other Harassment**

Not to commit or allow members of his/her household or visitors to commit any form of harassment on the grounds of race, colour, religion, sex, sexual orientation or disability which may interfere with the peace and comfort of, or cause offence to, any other tenant, member of his/her household, visitors or neighbours.

Examples could be using racist language, threatening violence, using abusive or insulting words or behaviour. Damaging or threatening to damage property or possessions or, writing graffiti.

**Staff**

Not to commit or threaten to use violence, verbal abuse against staff, agents or contractors.

**(d) Give access to the Association or its agents** at reasonable times during the day (except in the case of emergencies) to inspect the dwelling or to carry out repairs or other works.

The Association will try to give at least 24 hrs notice. You must also allow prospective tenants to view the dwelling if you have given notice to terminate your tenancy.

**(e) Repairs – report repairs promptly once they become apparent**

Keep the interior and exterior of the premises, including fixtures and fittings provided by the Association, in good repair throughout the duration of the tenancy. Pay for the repair of any damage done to the premises not due to ordinary wear and tear to a standard approved by the Association. Carry out any repairs for which you are responsible as detailed in the Tenants Handbook.

Leave the premises in good repair, decoration and condition at the end of the tenancy. You will be responsible for paying the Association the cost of failure to do so.

## (f) Communal Areas

You and your guests should use communal areas responsibly and take reasonable care to keep them clean and tidy.

You must maintain security and keep fire escape routes clear and easily accessible.

## (g) Alterations

You must obtain written consent before undertaking any alterations, additions or improvements to the premises

You must not affix or attach any object, including satellite and television aerials, to the exterior of the premises without obtaining the prior consent, in writing, of the Association.

Introductory Tenants do not have the right to carry out alterations.

## (h) Gardens

Keep any garden which is the responsibility of the tenant in good tidy order.

You must not put up structures such as sheds or garages anywhere on the premises without getting the Association's written permission first.

## (i) Keys

You must pay for the replacement of any lost keys, the supply of any additional keys and any costs associated with their loss e.g. changing of locks

## (j) Vacate the premises

if informed by the Association that this is necessary for repair or rehabilitation of the premises, as long as the Association provides suitable alternative accommodation.

## (k) Vacate the premises

if there is no longer a disabled member of the family occupying a dwelling specifically designed for the disabled, as long as suitable alternative accommodation can be provided by a recognised housing authority.

## (l) POSSESSION

To take possession of the dwelling at the start of the Tenancy and not to part with possession or sub-let the whole of the premises. Not to sub-let part of the premises without the written consent of the Association; this consent will not be unreasonably withheld.

Introductory Tenants cannot sublet or take in lodgers.

### **(m) Use of Premises**

To use the premises for residential purposes as the Tenant's only or principal home and not to use as business purposes (or for any other than residential).

### **(n) Parking**

Not to park or allow the parking of any caravan, boat, vehicle or other items or goods within the premises or their neighbourhood in such a way as to cause a nuisance or annoyance to the occupiers of neighbouring or adjoining premises or in such a way as would obstruct any roadways, forecourts, communal access areas.

### **(o) Pets**

Not to keep pets on the premises without obtaining the prior consent in writing from the Association. If we give consent you must keep the pet under proper control and not allow them to cause a nuisance to any other person.

### **(p) Ending the Tenancy**

Give the Association 4 weeks notice (from a Monday) when terminating your tenancy. Give vacant possession and return the keys of the premises at the end of the tenancy and to remove all furniture, personal possessions and rubbish and leave the premises and the Association's fixtures and fittings in good condition and repair.

The Association accepts no responsibility for anything left at the premises by the tenant at the end of the tenancy and will dispose of any such items as it thinks fit and without notice

## **2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ASSOCIATION**

### **Repairs**

- (a)** Provide such caretaking, gardening, lighting and cleaning services in relation to communal areas of the estate (if any) as it considers necessary and as far as possible to efficiently maintain such services.
- (b)** Maintain and keep in good repair the structure and exterior of the premises. Maintain any item in the Premises which is the Association's responsibility.
- (c)** Keep in repair and working order all pipes for the supply of water, central heating and for sanitation and all cables for supply of electricity.

## Insurance

(d) Insure the structure of the building and the fixtures and fittings it provides (The Tenant is responsible to insure their own contents/personal possessions)

## Consultation

(e) Consult with tenants on matters of management, maintenance, improvements or demolition of dwellings on the estate owned by the Association and on the provisions of services or amenities for the estate where these matters are not included in rent payments or charges for services.

(f) Provide information on allocations, transfers and exchange procedures.

## Tenants Guarantee

You will be provided with information on the Associations housing management policies as required by the guidance issued by the Department for Communities using its powers under Article 11 of the Housing Order 1992, commencement of tenancy.

## Personal Information

The Association is obliged to comply with the Data Protection legislation.

We will keep any personal information you give us strictly confidential.

## RIGHT TO OCCUPY

To give the Tenant possession of the Premises at the commencement of the tenancy and not to interfere with the Tenant's right to peaceful and proper enjoyment of the premises, as long as the Tenant complies with his responsibilities under this Agreement, except where:

- access is required to inspect the condition of the premises or to carry out repairs, alterations, improvements or other works to the premises or adjoining property
- a court has given the Association possession by ending the introductory tenancy or secure tenancy. Grounds on which the Association may seek possession of a secure tenancy are listed in the Tenants' Handbook.
- Abandonment by a tenant which allows the Association to end a tenancy and re-enter into possession without a court order if it has reasonable grounds to believe the dwelling has been abandoned and serves the appropriate notices subject to the tenant's right to appeal.

## Equal Opportunities

The Association will take every possible step to ensure that tenants are treated fairly and equally and will comply with equality legislation

### 3 RIGHTS OF THE ASSOCIATION

- (a) The Association reserves the right to add to or vary the terms and conditions set out in this Agreement. In the event of any such variation the Association will serve a preliminary notice inviting the Tenant's observations, and after consideration of these observations a further notice may be served after which the variation will come into effect.
- (b) The Association reserves the right to enter on the premises for the purpose of rebuilding or executing repairs or alteration to the premises or any adjoining premises or for the purpose of repairing or maintaining the channels, sewers, drains, watercourses, pipes and cables belonging to or running through, under or over the premises, making good all damage to the premises thereby caused.

### 4 BREACH OF TENANCY CONDITIONS

- (a) If the rent is not paid within 14 days of the due date (whether formerly demanded or not) the Association may after thorough investigation of the circumstances begin legal proceedings to recover the rent and/or re-possess the premises.
- (b) If any breach of this Agreement (including any variation) takes place the Association may, if after contact with the Tenant the breach is not remedied, serve him, her or them with a Notice Seeking Possession.

I/We accept the tenancy in accordance with the conditions set out in this Agreement.

### 5 Witnessed

Signed on behalf of the Association

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Position

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Date

---

Signed by Tenant / all Joint Tenants

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Date

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## GOOD NEIGHBOUR AGREEMENT Tenant Copy

**You have been allocated a home with Woven. Woven is a Housing Association committed to the promotion of good relations, and we believe that everyone has the right to enjoy their home and the area in which they live. To support this approach, we engage all our tenants to ask for their commitment to this Good Neighbour Agreement. This approach helps ensure that you and your family and visitors to the area can both enjoy and contribute to a safe and welcoming neighbourhood through respect, understanding and good neighbourliness.**

Woven is committed to addressing any issues you may encounter, including tackling anti-social behaviour as and when it arises. Our approach ensures the promotion of good relations and the development of stable, sustainable communities, but to do this we need your support. When such issues arise, we will ask for your commitment to positively engage with us, and to work with us to tackle the issue at hand.

### Being a Good Neighbour

Woven requires all tenants to treat their neighbours with respect. By being a good neighbour, you will be contributing to a more positive, confident, and outward looking community.

### About this Agreement

As a Woven tenant, we require you to sign this Agreement as a commitment to uphold the good neighbour ethos of your area.

### What can you do to be a good neighbour?

There are many things you can do to be a good neighbour. Some examples are listed below:

*Respect for your neighbours and their property.*

*Fairness in dealing with everyone, irrespective of their religion, race, ability, culture or political belief.*

*Care for the elderly, the lonely, and the vulnerable.*

*Accept that everyone is different and be tolerant of the lifestyles of others, particularly with regard to noise levels.*

*Be responsible for the behaviour of your children and anyone visiting your home.*

*Respect the rights of children and young people to play and meet in a safe and happy environment.*

*Residents are respectful of the environment in which they live through upkeep of a clean and tidy neighbourhood.*

*Recognition that a good community spirit benefits all. Healthy inter-action and mutual support is key to dealing with local problems.*

*Keep pets under control and in accordance with the Woven Policy on pets.*

*Park vehicles in designated areas, showing respect for neighbours.*

*If a problem arises, all residents have the right to approach Woven. This will enable the problem to be addressed and an agreed outcome to be reached to the satisfaction of all concerned.*

*Residents in flats or other shared buildings have additional responsibilities given that they live in close proximity to each other. This may have additional implications, for example, noise levels and shared access areas.*

*Support community activity and encourage others within their household to do the same.*

Within the above agreement, people have a right to choose the extent to which they engage in their community.

### **What is Anti-Social Behaviour?**

Anti-social behaviour is defined as acting in a manner that causes, or is likely to cause alarm, harassment or distress to one or more people in another household.

### **Woven Responsibilities**

Woven will respond to complaints of anti-social behaviour. This may include interviewing the complainant, alleged perpetrator, and engaging with other agencies, for example, the Police Service for Northern Ireland, or the Housing Executive. When necessary, Woven will use legal powers to deal with anti-social behaviour.

### **Declaration**

I / We have read and agree to all principles of the 'Good Neighbour' Agreement.

Your agreement with Woven Housing Association:

It is acknowledged that each signatory pledges to respect the rights of his/her neighbours in the community and to fully exercise his/her responsibilities within the context of the agreement.

I agree that whilst I am a tenant of Woven, I will do everything I can to be 'a good neighbour' and will not behave in a manner that may be considered 'anti-social.'

I understand that if any member of my household, or visitors to my home act in a way which can be considered as being anti-social, Woven will take action for breach of my tenancy agreement which may lead to legal action being taken against me.

Signed (Tenant) Date

Signed (Tenant) Date

Address

Witnessed by (Woven) Date



## PRINCIPLES OF CUSTOMER CARE

### Our customers:

*We will treat you with respect - courteously, fairly and equally - and provide you with choice.*

*We will answer your calls and correspondence with us promptly and aim to connect you with the person who is best able to deal with your enquiry.*

*We will greet you respectfully, identify ourselves properly and treat your enquiries with due attention and confidentiality.*

### Our Tenants:

*We will provide you with and comply with the Tenancy Agreement, Tenant Handbook, and all information relevant to your tenancy.*

*We will maintain your property in line with our commitments.*

*We will provide clear, up to date and relevant customer information. We will ensure it is published, distributed (where applicable) and made available online.*

## STANDARDS OF CUSTOMER SERVICE

**We aim, at all times, to provide the highest possible quality of service through adhering to the standards set out below.**

### Respect: We will...

...treat you, and expect to be treated in return, with respect - it forms the basis of all our interactions;

...treat you, and expect to be treated in return, courteously and helpfully.

### Equality: We will...

...treat all people fairly and equally regardless of age, gender, religion, political opinion, race, marital status, dependent status, sexual orientation or ability / disability in accordance with our Equality duty under Section 75 of the NI Act 1998.

### Choice: We will...

...offer you choice as far as possible in relation to all service delivery areas including allocations, maintenance and complaints;

... where possible and reasonable, offer alternative format of information, including translation and interpreting services;

... provide core services online to ensure convenience and choice and, if you have additional needs, endeavour to supply specialised services and accessibility.

### Confidentiality : We will...

... not ask you for personal information unless it is relevant to your enquiry;

- ...handle all information you provide confidentially and in accordance with Data Protection law, as outlined in our Customer Privacy Notice;
- ...ensure our employees are trained and equipped regularly on up to date data protection legislation and best practice;
- ...where available, provide interview rooms to ensure privacy;

### **Introduction and Identification - *We will:***

- ...address you by your name (when known);
- ...fully introduce ourselves before commencing any discussions with you;
- ...when meeting customers, wear name badges or carry appropriate, verifiable ID;
- ...attend to you within two minutes of your arrival at our offices and, if you have an appointment, a member of the relevant team will see you within five minutes of your arrival (ten minutes, if you do not have an appointment);
- ...if unable to deal with your enquiry during your visit, respond within three working days and if we cannot directly assist, we will explain why and attempt to refer you to the appropriate body;
- ...display any alterations to office opening hours (Belfast and North West - 8:45am - 4:45pm Monday to Thursday, and 8:45am - 4.30pm Friday) and change answering messages accordingly;
- ...display the opening times of residential offices;
- ...supply names and contact details in letters / emails;

### **Correspondence - *We will:***

- ...aim to respond to your letters and emails as soon as possible after receipt of your correspondence and aim in all cases to respond within our standard of 5 working days;
- ...in rare cases, where it is not possible to respond fully within 5 working days, send an acknowledgement, explain the reason for the delay and respond in full within 15 working days from receipt of your correspondence;
- ...send an automated reply to website correspondence, a personal acknowledgement on the first working day after receipt and a response from a relevant staff member within 5 working days from the acknowledgement;
- ...respond directly to all social media comments and organise response with relevant staff.

### **Telephone - *We will...***

- ...endeavour to answer all calls within 3 rings;
- ...greet you appropriately so that you know you are through to a member of the Woven Team;

- ... call you back within 2 working days of receiving your message;
- ... give you the option to leave a voicemail message, where the person you wish/need to speak to is not available to take your call;
- ... offer you translation and/or interpretation services on request.

### **Complaints - We will...**

- ... acknowledge complaints within 5 working days and aim to respond in full within 15 working days. (On occasion, additional time may be necessary.);
- ... apologise where mistakes have been made and aim to put matters right as soon as possible;
- ... produce, publish and make available in print and online, a clear and comprehensive Complaints Policy and Procedure. (see Appendix 5)

### **Publishing information - We will...**

- ... provide clear, up-to-date, relevant information in plain English and annual performance data against standards and targets;
- ... publish hard copy information where applicable and ensure availability of all relevant material online;
- ... ensure that appropriate Association publications are available in our offices and receptions;
- ... keep our website up to date and provide relevant online information in an easy navigable and accessible format;
- ... use our social media platforms to signpost tenant services and information.

### **Tenant Services - We will...**

- ... provide tenants with a property suitable to their needs and with appropriate, fully functional amenities and services;
- ... if eligible, place you on the waiting list within four weeks of applying for a transfer of accommodation;
- ... let you view your home before accepting it;
- ... conduct a thorough sign-up process ensuring all information is supplied at the commencement of tenancy and conduct a survey four weeks from commencement of your tenancy;
- ... provide you with, and comply with, a Tenant Handbook and Tenancy Agreement;
- ... promote and support a range of tenant involvement and engagement mechanisms;
- ... consult with you on any major changes in the way we manage your tenancy or regarding any building work planned for your home;
- ... provide a Response Maintenance and Planned Maintenance service for the upkeep of properties and we will complete all repairs and work within agreed timescales.



# Complaints

## COMPLAINTS POLICY

Woven Housing Association Ltd (later referred to as “the Association”) is committed to providing its customers with a high standard of service at all times\*. However, the Association accepts that there may be occasions when you are not satisfied with the service, which you have received and, as a result, you may wish to make a complaint. There may also be situations where you feel that you wish to suggest improvements to the way in which we deliver our service.

All complaints will be registered, logged and monitored weekly. Details of the volume of all complaints received will be reported annually in Woven’s *Annual Report*.

We welcome your comments and will use them to monitor performance standards, to promote accountability and to improve efficiency, introducing changes in the way we deliver our service where this is shown to be desirable.

All complaints will be dealt with promptly and in a professional manner by appropriate member/members of staff. Confidentiality will be preserved as far as is possible, however, some complaints will require the involvement of third parties if they are to be properly investigated and in such cases, confidentiality cannot be strictly guaranteed.

Complaints relating to nuisance or harassment by neighbours will be dealt with separately, under the Association’s Anti-Social Behaviour Policy. A copy of the policy can be obtained from any of our offices.

## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE for those using the Association’s services

A complaint should be made in the first instance, giving all the details which are relevant, including your name, address and the nature of the complaint. The Association will accept your complaint in writing (including email and other alternative formats) or verbally (by telephone, face to face or through an interpreter).

If you would prefer to put your complaint in writing and need help with this please ask our office staff for assistance. Alternatively, independent advice may be obtained from your local Citizens Advice Bureau, The Housing Rights Service, or other appropriate body. Those who do not wish to make a complaint may ask for their comments to be recorded so that all areas of concern may be addressed. You should note, however, that we cannot deal with anonymous complaints.

## Stage 1

The Association will acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days and endeavour to provide a full reply within 15 working days. If information is required from others in order to properly address your concerns this may take longer and we shall keep you advised of when you can expect a full reply.

## Stage 2

Once you have received a full reply, if you are still unhappy you should either address your written complaint to or ask that your verbal complaint be noted and passed to the relevant Director at the Association's Head Office. The Director will consider your complaint and provide a full reply within 15 working days.

## Stage 3

If you remain dissatisfied after you have received the Director's response you may appeal against the outcome. At this stage you must put your appeal in writing to the Chief Executive, at the Association's Head Office. The Chief Executive will consider your appeal and provide a full reply within 15 working days. If, after investigation, it is established that we did not meet our standards or we failed to perform our duty, we shall apologise, offer an explanation and take steps to ensure that the same problem does not occur again.

*Reasonable expectations of tenants are contained in the 1992 DOE (NI) Tenants Guarantee and our own published Standards.*

## The NI Public Services Ombudsman

If you remain dissatisfied after you have exhausted the Association's Complaints Procedure, you have a right to bring complaints about the Association's actions to the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman. It is normally expected that you will have used Woven's internal complaints procedure before bringing a complaint to them.

**Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (& Northern Ireland Local Government Commissioner for Standards)**

**Progressive House, 33 Wellington Place, Belfast, BT1 6HN**

Telephone: **028 90233821**

Email: **nipso@nipso.org.uk**

Text phone: **028 90897789**

Web: **www.nipso.org.uk**

Free phone: **0800 34 34 24**

## INCOME / OUTGOING BUDGET TABLE

Writing out a budget can be very helpful in getting finances sorted out. It involves balancing the money coming in with the money going out in order. It's best to budget for the length of time between getting your main regular source of income. So, if you get paid monthly, do a monthly budget, and if you get your pay or benefits weekly, do a weekly budget.

INCOME	WEEKLY	MONTHLY
Income Support / Jobseekers Allowance		
Employment and Support Allowance		
Housing Benefit		
DLA / AA		
Tax Credits		
Child Benefit		
Wages/Salary		
Other		
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		
OUTGOINGS	WEEKLY	MONTHLY
Rent / mortgage		
Rates		
Electricity / gas / home heating oil (or other)		
Mobile phone / phone / internet / TV packages		
Food / household		
Alcohol / Tobacco		
TV Licence		
Vehicle expenditure / Travel / bus fares		
Clothes		
Newspapers / magazines		
Fines		
Loans / hire purchase payments		
Credit / store cards		
Savings		
Other		
<b>TOTAL OUTGOINGS</b>		
<b>TOTAL INCOME MINUS TOTAL OUTGOINGS</b>		

## RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT

### Did you know that you could be having a much greater say in how we deliver our Services?

We are committed to partnership working with residents and community groups. We welcome involvement from all - residents, tenants, home owners and anyone who use our services; all have a contribution to make. There is a wide variety of involvement mechanisms in place, from organised groups, one off events, face to face and online consultation. We also welcome your own ideas on how we can involve you and improve our partnership work.

## RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT MENU

**Tenant Scrutiny Panel:** Work with staff to examine services provided by Woven and help to identify and recommend improvements. Training Provided.

**Newsletter Group:** Meet with staff to create and review content for Woven's community newsletter and website Tenant Zone.

**Regional Panel:** Meet with staff to discuss 'everything Woven' to help steer our services and community events.

**Scheme Walkabout / Inspections:** Join staff to walk around our housing schemes and help identify areas for improvement.

**Community Events:** Work with staff to survey the interests of their community and be involved in organising relevant community events. Join in with events in your area as and when you can.

**Interested Tenant Register:** Join our list of local tenants, interested in being kept up to date with events and opportunities in your area. Take part as often as you wish.

**Tenant Surveys:** Tenants can have their say on the services and opportunities provided by Woven by completing short surveys. Take part as often as you wish.

**Active Tenant:** Tenants who are willing to get involved in organising and planning local activities on their own schemes.

**Policy Panel:** Tenants reviewing and making recommendations on Woven's Policies.

**Mystery Shopping:** Tenants who complete training can take part in an annual shopping which independently looks at Woven services and make observations / recommendations for improvement.

**Residents' Forum:** Representatives from each of the Regional Panels sit on a strategic forum, meeting quarterly to discuss province wide issues, to be kept informed of Woven business and have input into services.

*For information or to express an interest contact our Community Involvement Officers.*

# CONTACT INFORMATION FOR YOUR TENANCY

YOUR HOUSING OFFICER IS:

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YOUR MAINTENANCE OFFICER IS:

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YOUR COMMUNITY ASSISTANT\* (WHERE APPLICABLE) IS:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

Address:

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YOUR COMMUNITY ASSISTANT'S OFFICE HOURS (where applicable) ARE:

Mon: \_\_\_\_\_ Tue: \_\_\_\_\_

Wed: \_\_\_\_\_ Thur: \_\_\_\_\_

Fri: \_\_\_\_\_

\*See **Community Assistant Service** in section on **YOUR COMMUNITY**



Laganwood House  
44 Newforge Lane  
Belfast BT9 5NW



028 9042 7211



info@woven.org.uk



www.woven.org.uk

Exchange House

2nd floor, Queens Quay  
Londonderry BT48 7AS

028 7136 0015

## TEXT MESSAGING SERVICES

You can text us on **07375 343 344** For the following services, you can text: **RENTS** to contact your Housing Officer; **BAL** for your latest account balance; **REPAIR** report repair; **DD** set up Direct debit; **CARD** order new payment card.

**FOR EMERGENCY REPAIRS (SERIOUS PLUMBING OR ELECTRICAL FAULTS ETC) OUTSIDE OFFICE HOURS, PLEASE CALL 0330 123 1097 (GLASS REPLACEMENT IS TENANT'S RESPONSIBILITY.)**