Housing21

Residents' Handbook

If you would like this handbook in large print, an alternative format or another language please contact:

communications@housing21.org.uk

housing21.org.uk

Margaret, Extra Care resident

Contents

3. Welcome
4. Living with us
8. Communal facilities
10. Your local manager
11. What you can expect from our employees
13. Get involved and become an influencer!
16. Helping Hands and financial support
18. What you need to pay for
19. How to pay your rent
20. Respect, inclusion and belonging at Housing 21
21. Anti-social behaviour
23. Feedback and complaints
24. Keeping you safe: Social Housing (Regulation) Act
25. Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM)
26. Keeping you safe: your home, our priority
27. Keeping you safe: safety at home
28. Keeping you safe: damp and mould
30. Repairs
31. What you can expect from maintenance contractors
32. Repairs: what we are responsible for
34. Repairs: what you are responsible for
36. Timeline for repairs
39. If you are thinking of leaving Housing 21
40. Useful contact details

Welcome

Welcome to Housing 21. We have been providing high-quality housing with support or care for older people for over 60 years and this remains our core purpose.

As well as providing a safe and inclusive environment for all residents, we want to ensure you are involved and empowered to shape and influence any decisions about the services you receive. We believe this approach is essential to ensure our services are the best they can be and will help towards our goal of achieving at least 95 percent resident satisfaction.

We want to ensure any new homes we build and all existing properties are maintained to a high standard, designed to meet your needs. Our service is not just about providing you with a safe home; we also need to recruit and retain the best employees, people who share our values and who are dedicated to providing the best possible service to residents. All employees of Housing 21 are here to help so please do approach them with any questions you may have.

You will hopefully find answers to common queries in this Residents' Handbook, which has been produced to help ensure residents get the most out of living in a Housing 21 property. However, please be assured, this handbook does not override your rights and responsibilities in your tenancy or lease, which you should refer to for any specific questions.

We love receiving feedback, good or bad, as we are keen to learn and improve and to also put things right if we make a mistake. So, please let us know what you think so we can continue to provide the best possible service.

Bruce Moore, Chief Executive

Send an email to: feedback@housing21.org.uk

Living with us

If you're living in a Housing 21 property it will be part of a Retirement Living or Extra Care scheme.

Retirement Living provides the opportunity for you to live independently within your own property but with the added benefit of an on-site local manager during the week.

In our Extra Care properties you can continue to live as independently as possible, but with the peace of mind of having on-site Care Workers 24/7 to help if and when you need them.

Residents across all properties benefit from a range of communal facilities such as a shared lounge and gardens. Many schemes also have a guest room to allow friends and family to stay.

All of our properties are built and maintained to a high standard and we continue to invest to ensure they meet the standards you deserve and expect, whilst also meeting regulations.

We aim for all of our properties to have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of at least C or above and we do what we can to minimise our impact on the environment. More information can be found in our ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) report on our website, Housing21.org.uk

We also do our best to ensure our rents and service charges represent best value for money for our residents; more information is available in our latest Financial Statements which you can also find on our website.

You can find out more about living in a Housing 21 property throughout this handbook. If there's something you'd like to know but can't find it in here, please let us know by emailing:

communications@housing21.org.uk

This is your handbook and your feedback will help us make sure it is a useful guide for all. We hope you enjoy reading it.

About us

24,000+
Properties owned/managed

V1 Viability rating

G1 Governance rating

C1 Consumer rating

4,158
employees

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE™
We invest in people Platinum

*Guiding principles:

- 21
- Better
- Experience

61
Years of experience

220
Local authority partners

Armed Forces Covenant

Not-for-profit organisation

Pet-friendly organisation

48,000
Hours of in-house care provided each week (Extra Care)

700
Schemes

91%
overall resident satisfaction (Extra Care and Retirement Living combined)*

*figures from the 2024/2025 Tenant Satisfaction Measures

Develop 400
new homes per annum

BEST PLACES TO WORK
Glassdoor Best Places to Work 2024

100%
of properties meet the Decent Homes Standard

Information correct as of September 2025

In the context of social housing, G1, V1, and C1 are ratings used by the Regulator of Social Housing (RoSH) to assess the performance of housing providers. G1 indicates strong governance, V1 signifies sound financial viability, and C1 signifies that the landlord is meeting consumer standards.

* **21:** being a modern and forward-looking organisation
Better: never being complacent and striving for continuous improvement
Experience: seeking to provide great experience and customer service to residents

Living with us

Whether they are furry, feathered or scaly, we know your pet is an important part of the family.

Pets

All of our schemes are pet friendly, but we do have a policy in place to ensure the welfare of the animal, as well as you, your neighbours, our employees and any visitors.

If you are thinking of getting a pet, please speak with your local manager in the first instance and familiarise yourself with your Court Service Agreement which will outline any information specific to your scheme.

> "Not only have we been made to feel welcome, but so has our dog, Bruce. He loves the fuss he gets when walking around.
>
> "We're both retired, have somewhere safe to live, we're looked after here, and we can finally have our dog!"
>
> **Marlene and Graham,** Extra Care residents

Living with us

Guest room

Most of our schemes have a guest room available to hire for a small charge so you can invite visitors to stay. Alternatively, if you are visiting friends or family at another scheme you may want to stay over – or perhaps you may be considering an affordable option for a holiday or trip to another part of the country. Any overnight stays, either at your own or another scheme, need to be booked in advance; your local manager will be able to help with this.

Visitors

We know you will be keen to show off your home to friends and family so they are welcome to visit at any time – you don't need to ask permission. If you need some extra space or fancy a change of scenery, you can use your scheme's communal facilities for a catch up with visitors.

Resident information

If you would like to know more about living with Housing 21, there is a Resident Information section on our website:

housing21.org.uk/resident-information

Communal facilities

Now that you're living with Housing 21, you may want to get involved with the local community and enjoy some of the shared amenities on site, including the communal lounge and gardens. We encourage residents to come up with suggestions for activities; all ideas are welcome!

Grounds and gardens

You can enjoy the communal facilities yourself, with other residents or with family and friends when you feel like a change of scenery. Sometimes, the facilities may also be used by members of the local community. Subject to an agreement with your local manager, you may be able to use communal spaces for private occasions; if a space is reserved we will let you know in advance.

Many of our communal lounges are fitted with a hearing loop to ensure they are accessible to all.

Social activities

If you enjoy mixing with other residents, you are encouraged to arrange social events and activities to take place either in the communal areas or off site. Anyone can get involved so if you have an idea, speak to your local manager for more information.

"My favourite thing about living with Housing 21 is getting to know different people with a range of interests; this has expanded my understanding, and I don't feel alone.

Not only is it a supportive environment, but there is also the element of feeling safe and within a local community.

You will be living among people who can help you, particularly if your family do not live locally."

Denise,
Retirement Living resident

Wi-Fi

In many of our schemes, Wi-Fi is available in our communal areas and if you want to stay connected at home, you can install your own broadband.

Our schemes are fitted with standard BT phone lines so you will need to contact BT to apply for a line and then upgrade to broadband. If you are in receipt of benefits, such as Pension Credit, you could be entitled to a cheaper broadband plan. Just contact your provider directly or speak to your local manager for more information.

Parking

Most of our schemes offer car parking for residents. We ask you to be considerate of your neighbours by leaving the bays closest to the building for those with mobility issues and if spaces are limited, asking visitors to park elsewhere.

Laundry room

Laundry rooms are for exclusive use by residents. Your scheme may have a laundry rota in place which will be on display in the room. Please do not use the laundry for washing pet bedding.

Communal Living

We all make noise and it's important to know the difference between lifestyle noises - such as occasional dogs barking, children playing and household appliances being used, and inconsiderate noise - such as constant loud music, intentional door slamming and loud voices late at night.

No home is totally soundproof so you may hear some noise from your neighbours.

We ask everyone, including their visitors, to be considerate of others by:

- Turning the TV or radio down
- Wearing headphones
- Lowering the bass when playing music
- Closing doors quietly
- Putting down rugs if you have wooden or laminate floors or choosing carpet or soft vinyl flooring if you are not on the ground floor
- Not vacuuming late at night or early in the morning
- Letting your neighbours know when you are going to do any DIY

Whilst noise can be annoying, it is not anti-social unless it is excessive or happening regularly at unsociable hours (after 11pm and before 7am is generally considered unsociable).

Your local manager

Our residents tell us how important it is to them to have a local point of contact so our schemes have a local manager to provide advice and guidance and help make sure things run smoothly.

Your local manager will appoint contractors to support the maintenance of the building and grounds on your behalf, and ensure the safety, security and cleanliness of the scheme. When required, they will also:

- Provide support, whilst respecting your privacy and independence
- Agree how often they will contact you, ranging from daily to not at all
- Help in an emergency by contacting professionals or relatives
- Ensure your key contact information is up to date
- Work with organisations to help meet your needs
- Encourage social activities
- Support the Residents' Association
- Manage bookings for the guest room and communal areas
- Manage any on-site employees
- Support you to access care services if required

What you can expect from our employees

Your local manager will let you know of any scheduled time off, such as annual leave, and you may have a relief manager appointed in their absence.

Any relevant information you provide will be recorded to ensure that we deliver the service in the way you need. For example, if you have a visual impairment, we can provide material in a different format such as large print, audio file or Braille.

We will not disclose any information to any third-party organisation outside of Housing 21, unless we gain your explicit consent first, except where the disclosure is required to help prevent fraud, or if required to do so by law.

Our full privacy notice can be requested from your local manager at any time or downloaded from our website.

Professional boundaries

We recognise that for employees to provide you with the best possible service, they will form friendly yet professional relationships. However, it is important neither you or our employees confuse this for personal relationships.

We also understand that because of the quality of service provided, you may consider acknowledging this by leaving a gift to Housing 21 employees in your will. Please note it is a condition of employment that employees are not allowed to receive gifts of money, bequests of presents. They are also not allowed to act as your Executor for your Estate, be a witness to a Will or a signatory on any other legal document.

Get involved and become an influencer!

We want to ensure you're happy living with us and with the services you receive, which is why we encourage you to provide feedback and get involved in decisions that affect you and where you live.

We want to be influenced by you to improve service delivery, influence policy and know you are receiving value for money for the charges you pay. There are regular opportunities and lots of different ways to be involved:

Your local manager

Speak to, write to, call or email your local manager at any time.

Scheme meetings/ Residents' Associations

Your local manager will host regular meetings to discuss any news, updates or issues at your scheme. We actively encourage you to form a Residents' Association to create a collective and democratic voice on issues that matter most.

Surveys

We run regular surveys to give you the opportunity to make your views and priorities known. Our surveys include:

Move in survey: If you're a new resident, you may be invited to complete this survey within the first four weeks of moving in with us.

National Residents' Survey: Every year we undertake a survey to find out how satisfied you are with your home and the quality of service you receive. Part of the survey will include questions linked to the Tenant Satisfaction Measures. These are measures the Regulator of Social Housing requires all social housing landlords to report against each year.

Care survey: If you receive care directly from Housing 21, we will invite you to take part in this annual survey.

Repairs survey: We issue a repairs survey on a continuous, monthly basis to ensure we can track trends on regional and national levels.

Complaints Satisfaction Survey: If you have made a complaint to us, we will invite you to take part in our complaints survey. We publish these results every quarter to understand what we have done well and where we could improve.

Resident Engagement Groups

At Housing 21, we're committed to meaningful resident engagement and working collaboratively with you to improve and develop the services we provide. We offer a range of opportunities for you to get involved and have your voice heard.

We have several nationwide resident engagement groups that focus on different areas of our work. These groups are a great way to share your views, influence decisions, and help shape the future of our services.

Most meetings take place virtually, so you can join from the comfort of your own home, no travel required. If you're new to online meetings, don't worry, we can offer help and support to get you set up. Just speak to your local manager for assistance.

All the latest information and upcoming meeting dates can be found on our website in the Get Involved Nationally section: **housing21.org.uk/residents/living-with-us/resident-information/get-involved**

If you'd like to join one of our engagement groups, visit the Housing 21 website or email us at:

engagement@housing21.org.uk

Your voice matters, get involved and help us make a difference.

National

Here's a selection of the groups you can join:

Extra Care Forum/ Retirement Living Forum: By joining our Extra Care or Retirement Living Forum, you will act as a representative for residents and hold Housing 21 to account.

Recruitment Panel: Get involved with the recruitment of Housing 21's resident-facing and senior manager roles through this recruitment panel.

Complaints: If you would like to scrutinise our stage two complaint responses and other aspects of our complaints process, then this is the group for you.

Resident, Tom enjoys being part of several national resident forums:

"The forums offer a direct line to Senior Managers and the Board of Housing 21. I believe I can help shape improvements that will benefit our entire community. I am eager to contribute to shaping policies, services, and budgets that authentically reflect residents' needs. The forums foster open dialogue, which is crucial for building a sense of community."

Local

Scheme meetings/ Resident Associations: Get involved with influencing local decisions at your scheme including Court Service Agreements, makeovers and social activities through meetings and Resident Associations.

For more information on any of the above, please visit the Resident Information section on the website or speak to your local manager.

Helping Hands and financial support

We know that every penny counts so in addition to providing value for money, we also have a range of initiatives designed to offer you financial support (subject to eligibility).

Helping Hands

The Helping Hands service was started to find ways of supporting you to sustain your tenancy and receive the best service possible. Helping Hands is an umbrella term covering different initiatives.

Helping Hands Fund: If you're struggling with day-to-day costs or have received an unexpected bill, the Helping Hands Fund may be able to help by providing one-off support of up to £300. The fund can assist in different ways, including supermarket vouchers, contributing to vet costs, car repairs, new glasses and more. The fund can also support if you have utility debts or are having difficulty topping up your energy meter. Speak to your local manager to find out how to apply.

"Thank you for your kindness and generosity in giving us a voucher towards a washing machine and installation costs. This is such a blessing to us at a difficult time in our lives. Housing 21 is the best landlord, and we have nothing but praise for the way you look after us." **Housing 21 resident**

Benefit entitlement check: Your local manager can help you to complete a benefit entitlement check to ensure you are receiving all eligible support.

"Just to say a big thank you to Marianne (Local Housing Manager). She was very helpful to me when filling in and sorting out benefits. She is always happy and sorts out problems quickly."
Retirement Living resident

Housing Perks: Housing Perks is a mobile app that enables you to save money on every day items at participating retailers across retail, hospitality and leisure. You can receive discounts and cashback on everyday items including supermarket goods, electrical items and fashion. Simply download the app on your smartphone, use your tenancy number to log in (this can be found on your rent statement) and start saving! You can find out more at:

yourhousingperks.com

For more information about any of these initiatives, speak to your manager.

HOUSING PERKS

What you need to pay for

Your home is part of a wider scheme which offers communal facilities and shared amenities with other residents. As such there are additional charges which cover the maintenance of the building, communal areas and service delivery.

Support charge: this contributes towards the cost of your local manager and support services such as the hard wiring of the emergency call system.

Service charge: this covers the cost of the amenities that you
share with your neighbours, including the following:

- Local manager service
- Our 24-hour emergency call service
- Repairs and maintenance services
- Window cleaning
- Gardening
- Heating, lighting, and upkeep of communal areas

The service charge you pay will vary depending on where you live and what services you receive. We will consult with you every year about the services you receive, and review all of the contracts annually to ensure that we have the best possible arrangements for you.

Sinking fund: A sinking fund is a contribution by a Shared Owner or Leaseholder living in a scheme to cover large, one-off expenses. These contributions are based on estimated major works that are scheduled to happen over a number of years.

Deprecation/Usage charge: This charge covers costs for long term assets that everyone has the use of, such as emergency lighting, lifts, fire alarms etc. The charge is based on the cost of the item, which is then collected over several years.

24/7 Core support charge: If you live in Extra Care, this service enables Care Workers to be on site 24/7 to deliver unplanned and emergency care, regardless of whether you receive care. Depending on location, you will either pay this service yourself or it may be funded by the local authority. Speak to your local manager for more information.

Other costs: As with any property, you will be responsible for your Council Tax, TV licence and Wi-Fi. We also recommend you take out contents insurance for personal items in your home. Depending upon the terms of your lease, your utility bills (gas, electric, water) may be covered by your service charge or may have to be paid for separately. Additional charges are applicable for care packages and domestic support with household chores.

How to pay your rent

There are different ways to make payments, the easiest way is Direct Debit. If you are having difficulties paying your rent or any other charges, speak to your local manager as soon as possible to discuss options for support and payment plans.

Direct Debit: Paying by Direct Debit is the easiest way to manage your account and reduce the risk of falling into debt. If you have recently moved in with us, your local manager will have helped you to set up a Direct Debit during your sign up. If you have been living with us for a while and would like to move to a Direct Debit, speak to your local manager who will be able to set this up for you.

You can choose to pay either weekly, fortnightly, four-weekly or monthly on a set date. Once set up, you will receive a Direct Debit mandate confirming the payment value and dates; if there are any changes to this, your Direct Debit will update automatically and you will receive a new mandate.

Standing order: If you pay by standing order, you can choose the date your rent payment leaves your account. You will need to put your tenancy number (found on your rent statement) as your reference. Anytime your rent figure changes you will need to contact the bank to change the standing order.

Bank card: You can pay with any bank card including MasterCard, Visa, Switch, Solo and Delta. You can pay online using your tenancy number (which is on your rent statement). Alternatively, you can pay in person by visiting your local manager in the office who will provide you with a receipt.

Bank transfer: If you have access to online banking, you can pay by bank transfer (BACS payment) using your tenancy number as reference (found on your rent statement).

Housing 21 bank details (for rent) are:

- Sort code: **20-06-05**
- Account number: **80664332**

Rent payment card: If you were previously issued an Allpay card you can still use this to make payments:

- At any Post Office
- At shops and garages displaying the PayPoint or Payzone logos
- By calling: **0330 041 6497** (calls charged at national rate)
- Online at: **www.allpayments.net**

Allpay is only available to existing card holders; we are not issuing new or replacement cards. If you have misplaced your card, you will need to speak to your local manager to discuss alternative payment options.

Respect, inclusion and belonging at Housing 21

At Housing 21, we want everyone to feel welcome and like they belong at Housing 21, whether they are a resident, employee, visitor or any of our partners. We believe that everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect in line with our Respect and Inclusion Charter. The charter sets out how we will aim to achieve an inclusive environment for everyone, regardless of their background or characteristics, based on four key principles:

- We treat everyone with dignity and respect
- We create an environment where everyone can be themselves
- We seek out diverse perspectives and hear all voices
- We seek to understand other cultures, practices and experiences

Everyone is afforded respect unless they do not respect others. We do not tolerate any form of discrimination, abuse or aggressions of any kind. This applies to fellow residents, our workforce and our partners. Disrespectful behaviour includes deliberately ignoring or excluding people, making harmful comments, using racist, homophobic or sexist language.

Reasonable adjustments

To make sure everyone can access our services and information we recognise that in some cases, we will have to make reasonable adjustments to cater for particular needs such as property adaptations, translations, large print documents. Please don't hesitate to request adjustments if you need them.

Anti-social behaviour

In keeping with our Respect and Inclusion Charter, we want you to feel safe in your home and comfortable to address any concerns regarding potential anti-social behaviour.

Our Anti-social Behaviour Policy and Unacceptable Behaviour Policy set out our approach to addressing such behaviour and this may include working with partner agencies where required. You can request a copy of the policy from your local manager or visit our website to read a digital version.

You are required to comply with the terms of your tenancy agreement or lease, which includes not partaking in anti-social behaviour or allowing members of your household, visitors or pets to breach the conditions.

What is anti-social behaviour?

Examples of such behaviour may include, but are not limited to:

- Hate Incidents and Hate Crime which relate to any of the Equality Act 2010 including racism, sexism or behaviour relating to a disability or sexual orientation
- Violence, verbal abuse, threats, harassment, and intimidation
- Noise complaints and nuisance: persistent and excessive noise which is causing distress to others
- Drugs, substance or alcohol abuse related incidents: including drug dealing, drug use and drug related criminal activity. Nuisance and disorderly behaviour relating to substance or alcohol abuse.
- Environmental abuse: fly tipping, graffiti, criminal damage, and arson
- Animal related nuisance: animal fouling in communal areas or not under proper control
- Other criminal behaviour: prostitution, gang related crime, gun/knife crime and other weapons

What is not considered anti-social behaviour?

- Disagreements between residents
- Domestic, every-day living noise and DIY at reasonable times
- One-off parties or celebrations (unless they escalate into ASB)
- Lifestyle differences
- Cooking smells
- Social media disputes between residents

Anti-social behaviour

Addressing anti-social behaviour

If you experience anti-social behaviour and it is safe to do so, we recommend trying to address this directly with each other in the first instance, respecting any differences. If this does not resolve the problem, your local manager will be able to provide support.

We seek to resolve anti-social behaviour at the earliest possible stage. We have a range of remedies available, including but not limited to:

- Meetings
- Mediation
- Warning letters
- Acceptable Behaviour Contracts
- Good Neighbour Agreements
- Refusal of mutual exchange requests

Where appropriate and proportionate, we will consider legal action including:

- Civil Injunction, including exclusion orders and power of arrest
- Closure orders
- Community Protection Notice/Warning
- Notice of Seeking Possession which could result in eviction

Feedback and complaints

We want to provide the best service to you, so we would like to find out about exceptional service, as well as where things could be improved.

We want to hear from you about:

- The quality of our service
- Experiences with employees
- Something we've done
- Something we've not done

If you have had a less than satisfactory experience with us, we will always try to resolve the issue as quickly as possible. If you are unsatisfied with the outcome, you can escalate to our two-stage complaint process for further investigation.

Timeline of complaints activity

If you have a complaint, you can report the incident by email, phone, in writing or in person to your scheme manager or the Complaints Team at:

feedback@housing21.org.uk

The complaint will then be investigated as part of the two-stage complaints process.

Stage one:

- The complaint will be acknowledged by the relevant Regional/ Operational Manager within five working days
- A response will be provided within 10 working days of acknowledgement
- If you're unsatisfied with the outcome, or how your issue has been handled, you can escalate to stage two

Stage two:

- The complaint will be acknowledged by the Complaints Team within five working days
- A response will be provided within 20 working days of acknowledgement by the relevant Managing Director or Director relevant to the issue
- If you are still unsatisfied you can escalate with the Housing Ombudsman:

  Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

  Write to: Housing Ombudsman, PO Box 152, Liverpool L33 7WQ

  Website: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

  A copy of our Complaints Policy and Reports are available on our website or upon request.

Keeping you safe: Social Housing (Regulation) Act

In April 2024, the Social Housing (Regulation) Act came into effect giving residents in social housing more protection to ensure you are living in safe, quality homes with reputable landlords. Under the new law, the Regulator of Social Housing is able to take strict action against landlords who fail to meet four consumer standards:

- The Safety and Quality Standard
- The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard
- The Neighbourhood and Community Standard
- The Tenancy Standard

For Housing 21, this means we must report our performance against 22 Tenant Satisfaction Measures to the Regulator of Social Housing every year and share our results with you.

The latest results can be found on our website or at your scheme.

If at any time you are concerned Housing 21 is not meeting these standards, contact:

Kris Peach
Consumer Standards Lead
kris.peach@housing21.org.uk

Bruce Moore
Health and Safety Lead
bruce.moore@housing21.org.uk

Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) Housing 21's approach

The Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) Standard, set by the Regulator of Social Housing (RoSH), requires all registered housing providers to collect and report on resident satisfaction annually. This is to ensure greater transparency and accountability, enabling residents to better understand and assess their landlord's performance.

What are TSMs?

- **A total of 22 measures:**
  - 10 management information measures (from landlord-held data)
  - 12 perception-based satisfaction measures (from tenant surveys)
- **These measures cover five key themes:**
  - Keeping properties in good repair
  - Maintaining building safety
  - Respectful and helpful engagement
  - Responsible neighbourhood management
  - Effective handling of complaints

Measuring our performance

We regularly measure how well our services are performing to make sure we're meeting the needs of our residents. These results help us understand what's working well and where we need to improve.

To find out more and view the latest results, visit the **Performance** section of Housing 21 website:

housing21.org.uk/residents/our-performance

To view scores for a specific property, search for your scheme on our website and download the latest report.

You can also speak with your local manager who will be able to provide a copy of the latest results.

Keeping you safe: your home, our priority

At Housing 21 we believe you should not live in fear of abuse, neglect or violence from anyone including people you live with or family members and we are committed to preventing and detecting any risk of harm.

We will work with partner agencies to investigate any incidents of suspected or actual abuse for people with care and support needs.

Anyone who confides in us about abuse will be supported in a non-judgemental way. We take the stance of 'Nothing About Me, Without Me' which promises open discussions before any advice or action is taken; nothing will happen without your knowledge.

We are committed to supporting victims of abuse or neglect including:

- Financial
- Psychological
- Sexual
- Domestic
- Physical
- Modern slavery
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Organisational
- Discrimination

If you are experiencing any form of abuse or neglect, or have concerns about another resident:

- Speak to, telephone or email your local manager or any other Housing 21 employee
- Contact organisations from the safeguarding directory, available from your manager
- Call your local authority

For domestic abuse:

Call the police on 999 if you are in immediate danger.

If you can't speak:

- Leave the line active and listen to any questions
- Cough or tap your phone
- If prompted and on a mobile, press 55 when prompted (not straight after dialling 999). Police cannot track your location but will recognise the call

Keeping you safe: safety at home

Emergency call system

We know how important it is to feel safe at home which is why all of our properties have a 24-hour emergency call system, managed by Appello*.

In Retirement Living, the system is linked to the on-call Appello Team whilst in Extra Care, you will be connected straight to the on-site Care Team in the first instance or Appello thereafter.

The call systems in our newer schemes have a built-in video door entry system for reassurance so you can see and hear visitors before opening your front door.

Building and Fire Safety

Housing 21 is committed to ensuring the safety of our residents, visitors and employees. Safety inspections, including a person-centred fire risk assessment, will be carried out before the start of your tenancy.

Housing 21 services and maintains its properties to ensure full statutory compliance and your ongoing safety. We may sometimes need to access your property to carry out inspections, such as servicing your boiler.

If you have any concerns relating to building safety, please contact your manager or operations manager. For further information, you can read the Building and Fire Safety Guide in the Resident Information section of our website or by searching 'Building safety'.

*Residents living in Kent PFI use the Tunstall system

Doors and gates

We want you to feel happy and secure in your home so ask wherever possible to help keep your scheme secure by ensuring doors/ gates are closed securely behind you and by not letting strangers or uninvited guests through.

Keeping you safe: damp and mould

As part of our response to the introduction of Awaab's Law in October 2025, we take any reports of damp and mould very seriously. Condensation is a common issue found in buildings. However, if left untreated it can cause mould to form on walls and furniture and can aggravate health problems. A lot of everyday actions, such as cooking and showering, can produce water vapour so it is important to know how to effectively manage condensation and reduce the risk of damp and mould forming.

1) Stop moisture build up

- Wipe down surfaces where moisture settles
- Cover boiling pans
- Do not hang washing over radiators
- Close bathroom and kitchen doors to prevent steam

2) Ventilate the home

- When cooking or washing, open windows or use extractor fans
- When drying clothes inside, do so in small rooms with the windows open
- Open windows for a while during the day or use trickle/ night vents
- Allow air to circulate around furniture and cupboards. You can do this by making sure cupboards and wardrobes are not overfilled and there is space between the furniture and wall

3) How to heat the home

Maintain a low heat when the weather is cold or wet, this is more effective than short bursts of high heat

- Set your heating to provide warmth in all rooms, including those which are unused
- Avoid using paraffin or flueless bottled gas heaters
- Use a dehumidifier if required

First steps against mould:

Mould is a living organism which needs killing to remove. To resolve minor cases of mould:

- Wipe down affected areas with fungicidal wash. Ensure that the cleaning product you use carries a Health and Safety Executive (HSE) approved number and always follow the manufacturer's instructions for use and storage
- Dry clean mildewed clothes and shampoo carpets
- Do not use bleach or washing up liquid
- Do not brush or vacuum mould as this releases spores into the air, increasing the risk of respiratory problems

If you are concerned about damp and mould in your property:

Not all damp is caused by condensation. Damp can also occur when a fault in a building lets water in from the ground or outside.

Penetrative damp and rising damp are the two types to be particularly aware of. Penetrating damp occurs when water is coming in through the walls, roof or cracks. For example, it may travel under a loose roof tile, leaking pipe or waste overflow. Rising damp is relatively rare. The usual evidence of rising damp is a 'tide mark' on the walls that shows how the water has risen up through the walls. If there are signs of rising damp it can mean there is a problem with the damp proof course.

If you suspect penetrating or rising damp in your property, or are concerned about mould, inform your manager immediately.

Repairs

We carry out most of the maintenance to Housing 21's property, fixtures and fittings, including decorating and maintaining the communal areas and exterior of the building.

The only exception is if damage has occurred because of misuse or neglect by either yourself, your pet or your visitors, in which case those responsible would be required to fund the repair separately.

Occasionally it may be necessary to undertake major building repairs, such as a roof renewal or a full refurbishment of the scheme. We will ensure you are fully consulted before we do any work and invite your comments regarding specification and choice of contractor.

For most major works, we will invite the contractor to the scheme in advance to talk about the work involved, how it may affect you and how any disruption will be managed.

Requesting a repair

When requesting repairs for issues Housing 21 is responsible for your home or communal areas, you will need to speak to your manager. If the problem arises when your manager is not available, such as on a weekend, you can find contact details for an alternative manager on your notice board, or report it through Appello (details at the end of the handbook).

To do this, you will need to provide:

- Your name, address and daytime telephone number
- Type of repair
- Details of the issue, including the make/ model of any appliance and size of any leak
- Location of the repair e.g. in which room
- When you will be in so we can arrange an appointment (if the issue is at your home)

Upgrading/ altering your home

Regardless of your home ownership status, you are required to check with your local manager before carrying out any adaptations or alterations.
Depending upon what is being requested, you may need to complete an Alterations and Improvements Form which will grant permission for any work to be completed.

Aids and adaptations

If you have a disability or a long-term health condition you may be entitled to equipment or modifications that can support you to live in your home. These are called 'aids and adaptations.' Your manager can speak with you about the details of this, and about how we can help you to access this support.

What you can expect from maintenance contractors

Maintenance contractors used by Housing 21 are expected to follow a code of conduct which includes health and safety standards and acceptable behaviour. The full code is available from your manager.

They should:

- Contact your manager upon arrival
- Keep appointments and be punctual
- Never smoke on site
- Introduce themselves and show identification
- Be polite, presentable, friendly and professional
- Be patient
- Be aware of your cultural needs
- Respect your home
- Leave everything safe, clean and tidy

If you are unhappy with the conduct of your contractor or the quality of their work, please inform your manager. You can also feedback about the quality of any repairs in our National Residents' survey or Repairs survey.

The following pages provide guidance on responsibility for repairs. Please note, this is for guidance only and does not override your lease or tenancy. In the event of requiring repairs, you should always speak to your manager in the first instance.

What we are responsible for

Area	Issue	Specifics
Building	Exterior	Structure, roof, external window frames and glazing, external doors and ironmongery, gutters, downpipes
Security	External door locks	
	Letter plates	
Water services	Hot and cold water pipes and taps (including tanks and cylinders)	Outside the property in communal areas and in roof spaces above residents' properties (may differ for bungalows)
Sanitary installations	Maintaining drainage pipes	All areas
	Ball valves and siphons	In communal areas
	Sanitary ware	Sanitary ware
Garages	Structure	Roof, gutters, downpipes, shutters, doors

Area	Issue	Specifics
Communal areas	Decoration	Paint, wallpaper, flooring
	Electrical	Wiring, consumer units, fuses, circuit breakers, switches, batten holders, power points, immersion heaters, electrical heating, wiring in roof spaces above residents' properties
	Public lifts	
	Ventilation	Systems, fans
	Gas installations	
	Fire safety	Extinguishers, alarms, detection
	Entry phone system	
	TV aerial	Standard and emergency
	Lighting	

What you are responsible for

Depending on whether you rent or own/ part own your property, there will be some differences in what repairs you are responsible for within your own home. Housing 21 will not commission repairs that you are responsible for but can provide information on local contractors.

		Resident in rented home		Resident in owned or shared ownership home	
Issue	**Specifics**	**Resident**	**Housing 21**	**Resident**	**Housing 21**
Water pipes	Internal pipes, including damage caused by freezing		✓	✓	
Sanitary installations	All sanitary ware including sinks, baths, wash hand basins WC pans, cistern, seat and lid		✓	✓	
	Blocked internal pipes and traps		✓	✓	
	Waste disposal units		✓	✓	
	Shower		✓	✓	
Electrical installations	Electrical central heating and fires		✓	✓	
	Immersion heaters		✓	✓	
	Consumer unit, fuses, circuit breakers		✓	✓	
	Individual satellite and aerials	✓		✓	
	Plugs and fuses	✓		✓	
	Fittings and appliances including those supplied with your home e.g. storage heaters, cookers		✓	✓	
	Standard lightbulbs (not strip lighting)	✓		✓	

Issue	Specifics	Resident	Housing 21	Resident	Housing 21
Gas installations	All fittings and appliances e.g. cookers, feature fires, individual boilers		✓	✓*	✓*
	Annual service		✓	✓*	✓*
Decoration	Paint/ wallpaper/ tiling	✓		✓	
	Flooring	✓		✓	
	Adjusting doors for floors		✓	✓	
	Filling minor cracks/ holes	✓		✓	
Fixtures and fittings	Plugs and chains for sinks and baths	✓		✓	
	Curtain poles	✓		✓	
	Coat/ hat hooks	✓		✓	
	Cupboards and wardrobes	✓		✓	
	Internal glazing		✓	✓	
Safety/ security	Replacement for lost keys	✓		✓	
	Smoke alarms		✓	✓	
	Internal doors, hinges, closers, locks and latches		✓	✓	
Insurance	Contents insurance	✓		✓	
Cleaning	Including carpets and appliances when moving out	✓		✓	

*Responsibility will be dependent upon the terms of your lease.

Timeline for repairs

We understand that if there is a problem, you want it resolved as quickly as possible so in order to ensure the most serious issues are addressed first, we have organised repairs into three categories:

Emergency: The most serious of issues that we will seek to resolve in 24 hours.

Urgent: Important repairs that need to be addressed quickly that we will seek to resolve in seven calendar days.

Routine: Issues that need addressing but are less urgent and can be scheduled in.

We will always forewarn you of any upcoming repairs and tradespeople will not be allowed to enter your home if it is empty without your permission, unless in an absolute emergency. If we are unable to meet these timeframes due to circumstances outside of our control, we will keep you informed of progress.

Issue	Details	Emergency 24 hrs	Urgent 7 days	Routine 28 days
Total loss of	Power	✓		
	Water	✓		
	Gas supply	✓		
	Heating to your home	✓		
Blockages	Flue to open fire	✓		
	Toilet pan, soil pipe or foul drain when no other toilet available	✓		
	Kitchen sink which is unusable	✓		
	Bath, shower or basin		✓	
	Drains		✓	

Timeline for repairs (cont.)

Issue	Details	Emergency 24 hrs	Urgent 7 days	Routine 28 days
Partial loss of	Water		✓	
	Power (excluding local power cuts)		✓	
	Heating (i.e. single radiator/ heater not working)		✓	
Leaks	Major water leak	✓		
	Minor water leak		✓	
	Major roof leak	✓		
	Minor roof leak		✓	
Faulty or not working	Tap that can't be turned off	✓		
	Tap that can't be turned on		✓	
	TV/ satellite aerials in communal areas		✓	
	Door entry phone not working	✓		
	Lifts	✓		
	Emergency call monitoring system	✓		
	Fire alarm system	✓		
	Toilet not flushing properly		✓	
	Minor electrical faults		✓	

Timeline for repairs (cont.)

Emergency: The most serious of issues that we will seek to resolve in 24 hours.

Urgent: Important repairs that need to be addressed quickly that we will seek to resolve in seven calendar days.

Routine: Issues that need addressing but are less urgent and can be scheduled in.

Issue	Details	Emergency 24 hrs	Urgent 7 days	Routine 28 days
Insecure	Window, door or lock providing external access	✓		
Damage	Rotten timber flooring	✓		
	Loose or detached hand rail	✓		
	Loose or detached stair tread	✓		
	Power or lighting socket	✓		
	Minor plaster or paint damage following other repairs			✓
	Non-urgent carpentry, joinery, plastering, plumbing or electrical work			✓
	Non-urgent external repairs e.g. paths, fencing, guttering			✓
	Non-hazardous flooring repairs			✓
Graffiti	Abusive or offensive graffiti	✓		
	Non-abusive or offensive graffiti			✓

If you are thinking of leaving Housing 21

We understand circumstances change and in the future, you may want to leave us. If you are thinking of moving, the first thing to do is to inform your manager who can advise on the process.

This will be different depending upon whether you own your property outright, have a shared ownership home or you rent a property with us.

Outright ownership and shared ownership

The terms and conditions linked to the sale of your home will be set out in your lease and will depend on whether you own your home outright or through shared ownership. Speak to your manager who will be able to help.

Until the sale completes, you will need to continue paying all charges, as well as any associated costs including the services charge, 24/7 core support charge (Extra Care only), utilities and Council Tax.

Rented properties

You can end your tenancy at any time by giving four weeks' notice in writing. Your rent and service charge will continue to be charged until we receive your keys. Speak to your manager who will be able to advise on the process.

For all the information you need visit our website:
housing21.org.uk/residents/living-with-us/leaving-housing-21/

Mutual exchange

We understand you may want to exchange properties with either another Housing 21 resident or a resident from another social landlord.

We do support mutual exchanges, subject to any incoming resident meeting our eligibility criteria and your rent account being clear of any arrears. Speak to your manager in the first instance to find out more about the process.

Home Swapper is a mutual exchange service for residents living in social housing, find out more on the website:
www.homeswapper.co.uk

Emergency contact and repairs

- Appello emergency contact:
  Tel: 0333 321 6450
- National Gas Emergency Service:
  Tel: 0800 111 999

Complaints

- Housing 21: Tel: 0303 123 1622
  enquiries@housing21.org.uk
  Website: www.housing21.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/complaints
- Housing Ombudsman: Tel: 0300 111 3000
  info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk
  PO Box 152, Liverpool L33 7WQ
  www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk
- Local Government (Social Care) Ombudsman:
  Tel: 0300 061 0614
  PO Box 4771, Coventry CV4 0EH
  www.lgo.org.uk
- Care Quality Commission
  National Customer Service Centre:
  Tel: 03000 616161 enquiries@cqc.org.uk
  Centre Citygate, Gallowgate, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4PA
  www.cqc.org.uk

Data protection

- Housing 21 privacy statement:
  www.housing21.org.uk/corporate/privacy
- Data Protection Officer:
  Tel: 0370 192 4000
  dataprotection@housing21.org.uk
  Housing 21, Tricorn House, 51-53 Hagley Road, Birmingham
  B16 8TP

Paying your rent

- Pay your rent online:
  www.housing21.org.uk/resident-information/pay-your-rent
- Pay your rent (Allpay card only):
  Tel: 0330 041 6497
  (calls charged at national rate)
  Website: www.allpayments.net

Main Switchboard

- Tel: 0370 192 4000

Trustpilot

Let us know about your experience living with Housing 21; leave us a review on Trustpilot.

SCAN ME

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