

# Ending a tenancy after a bereavement



**This leaflet gives advice on how to end the tenancy of a family member or close friend, in the event of their death. We appreciate that this can be a difficult task and hope this information will assist you at this difficult time.**

## Before you end the tenancy

Please make sure there is no one who has succession rights to the tenancy. If you want to know more about who can succeed the tenancy, please contact your neighbourhood officer.

## How to end the tenancy and the information you will need

To notify us of the death of a tenant, please contact your local customer services team or visit the office. You will need to share with us the following information:

- ◆ Your name, address and telephone number.
- ◆ The name and address of the late tenant and the date the tenant died.
- ◆ A copy of the death certificate. A tenancy cannot be ended until we have received a copy of the death certificate.
- ◆ Your relationship to the deceased and whether you are the executor of their estate. If

so, we will need a copy of the Will and a copy of the Grant of Probate, once available.

- ◆ If you were a friend of the deceased we will need the details of any relatives they had as, for legal reasons, the next of kin should normally be the one to end the tenancy.
- ◆ When you hope the property will be cleared of possessions and when the keys will be returned.

**Please note** that if the tenant lived in a retirement living scheme you will need to contact the retirement living officer who will make the necessary arrangements.

## How much notice is required?

We understand that family members may need time to make arrangements and to clear the property. We usually prefer four weeks' notice to end a tenancy, starting on a Monday. However, in some situations we will accept less or more notice depending on the individual case.

## Rent

Full rent is payable until the tenancy is ended and the keys returned to us. Any outstanding rent is payable by the deceased estate and similarly, if any rent has been paid in advance, this will be paid out to the executor of the estate/next of kin.

If the deceased was in receipt of housing benefit for all or part of the rent, it is automatically cancelled from the date of their death, as per Government regulations which apply to all state benefits. Full rent is payable from this date onwards.

## Clearing the Property

### Please make sure:

- ◆ The property is left in a clean and tidy condition.
- ◆ All personal possessions, furniture and any rubbish are removed, including items from the loft and any sheds.
- ◆ Carpets and floor coverings should be removed.
- ◆ You leave any instruction manuals (e.g. for central heating) in a prominent place in the property.
- ◆ The garden is cleared of personal items and left in a tidy condition.
- ◆ The bin(s) are left in an appropriate place.

If you have bulky waste for recycling or disposal you can contact your local Council to find out where the nearest household recycling centre is. They may also offer a collection service for a small fee.

**Please note that if we have to remove any unwanted possessions or clean the property at the end of the tenancy, we may make a charge for this.**

## Handing in the property keys

Keys should be returned, in person to your local office — you will be given a receipt. Please do not post them or leave them at the property.

If the tenant lived in a retirement living scheme the keys will be collected from you, at a pre-arranged appointment, by the retirement living officer.

**We hope that we have covered most of the questions often raised, but if you are still unsure of something or need clarification, please do not hesitate to get in touch.**

## Checklist

It's not always easy to think of everyone who needs to be notified and everything that needs to be done so you may find the organisations listed below useful:

- ◆ **Registrar of Births, Marriages & Deaths** — 0345 678 9016
- ◆ **Council Tax** — 0345 678 9002
- ◆ **Housing Benefit** — 0345 678 9001
- ◆ **Cruse Bereavement Care** — 0808 808 1677
- ◆ **Samaritans** — 116 123

### You may also need to cancel:

- ◆ Gas
- ◆ Electricity
- ◆ Telephone/broadband
- ◆ Hospital appointments
- ◆ TV subscription
- ◆ Post

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