

TENANT HANDBOOK



EILDON

HOUSING

Caring, Committed, Connected, Creative



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Opening times **Mon/Tue/Thu**
 8.45am-5pm
Wed
 10am-5pm
Fri
 8.45am-4pm

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/EildonHousing/>
Twitter <https://twitter.com/EildonHousing>

A warm welcome to Eildon Housing Association



This Tenant Handbook has lots of useful information about repairs, your rights and how to get help.

If you can't find what you're looking for, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

We trust you'll enjoy your new home.

You don't have to read everything! But it's a good idea to familiarise yourself with the contents, so you know what's in here for future reference.

**Best wishes,
 Eildon Housing Association**



ABOUT EILDON HOUSING ASSOCIATION

- who runs Eildon Housing Association
- your rights in brief
- background and four Cs
- better as one – how to get involved



Eildon Housing Association is based in the Scottish Borders. It's part of the Eildon Group, which is made up of parent company Eildon Housing Association Ltd, and Eildon Enterprise Ltd.

We provide housing, care and support services to people right across the Scottish Borders region. We work in partnership with local communities and others to provide a wide range of affordable and quality homes and support and care services.

WHO RUNS EILDON HOUSING ASSOCIATION?

Eildon Housing Association (EHA) is managed by a voluntary board of up to 15 members.

Members of the board are elected at AGMs, and the board is collectively responsible for strategic decision-making.

The board is supported by a senior executive team of housing specialists who oversee day-to-day operations.

YOUR RIGHTS IN BRIEF

Find out about your rights and confidentiality, and how we consult tenants on policies and proposals.

Tenant consultation

We consult tenants on proposals to change rent and service charges, and before making or changing any policies that may affect you significantly.

Access to information

If requested, we're happy to provide you with information about:

- your tenancy terms
- repairs and maintenance
- our policies for setting rent and service charges
- admission to our housing list
- how we allocate houses

You'll also find much of this information in the **Library** section of our website.

Under the Data Protection Act 1998, you have the right to see information EHA holds about you and your household, unless this has been supplied by a person or organisation which insists on confidentiality.

You can ask us to change information we hold about you, if you can show that it isn't accurate.

Please contact us if you would like access to your file.

Confidentiality

We have a code of conduct, and all EHA staff are aware of the importance of confidentiality. We do not give information about tenants to anyone who does not both need to know and have a right to know.

SOME BACKGROUND

Eildon Housing Association started life in 1973, and we have grown to the point where we now serve nearly 50 communities in Borders towns, villages and rural areas.

Today, Eildon is recognised as one of Scotland's leading housing and care providers. We're committed to excellence in everything we do, and continue to grow, by building new homes and developing innovative new services.

Eildon Housing Association is a registered Scottish charity, and also a registered social landlord (RSL), which means we're committed to high quality standards and accountability.

All our activities are underpinned by our commitment to doing our best for the people we serve, and our core values below.



Eildon is always keen to hear your views on the way we deliver services. Our Customer Engagement Strategy is all about encouraging you to get involved.

If you would like a paper copy of the Strategy or to discuss it or any of the options below, please call your Customer Engagement Officer on 01750 724 887 or email havemyoursay@eildon.org.uk

What are your options to get involved?

Join Eildon Housing Association. It costs just £1 to become a member of Eildon Housing Association. When your application is approved by the Board, you'll receive a share certificate to confirm your membership. Once you're a member, you can vote at the Annual General Meeting (AGM), and stand for election to the Board. This allows you to have a say in the Board's decisions.

Customer Panel

The Customer Panel is a strategic engagement group where customers and Eildon senior staff work together to look at how well Eildon is delivering services and what we can make improvements on.

Scrutiny Sub Group

As part of the Customer Panel, Eildon will also create Sub-Groups that will carry out Scrutiny activities. These activities will give you the opportunity to get involved in in-depth projects that take a long, hard look at Eildon's services to see what works and to make recommendations to the Eildon Board about what doesn't.

Development Representatives

You could also become a Local Development Representative. Eildon hopes that being a Development Representative will mean that even if you can't or don't want to attend meetings, you can still get involved by telling us what concerns you and your neighbours about your local area.

Local Residents' Groups

Looking for a residents' group to discuss issues in your local area? [Please click here to find out about existing groups.](#) If there isn't a group in your area, why not start one up? Our Customer Engagement Officer can help, please give us a call on 01750 724 887

Customer Opinion Group

The Customer Opinion Group is a good option for you if you're busy and can't commit a lot of time. Eildon uses this group to gather opinions on things like changes we're proposing to policies or improvements we think need to be made to services. We will e-mail or post out consultation information and questions to you and you can respond if you have the time to do so.

CARING

We care about what we do, the people we work with, and the customers we serve.

COMMITTED

We all work together to provide affordable, high quality homes and care & support services.

CONNECTED

We are part of the communities we serve, and we believe we can make a real difference.

CREATIVE

We are ready to meet the challenges of the future with enthusiasm and new ideas.

REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

- introduction
- reporting a repair
- repair response times
- some common problems and how you can help
- modernisation programme



INTRODUCTION

This section shows different types of repair, and who has the responsibility for carrying out that repair: the landlord (Eildon Housing Association), or the tenant (you).

If you've checked these pages and are still in doubt, get in touch with us on **03000 200 217**.

The reasons for repairs and maintenance can include:

- normal wear and tear
- accidents
- safety

Repairs and maintenance can be carried out to:

- individual properties
- shared communal areas

Your rent includes a contribution towards the cost of repairs and maintenance.

Eildon Housing Association will repair damage caused by wear and tear, by storms, flooding, fire, break-in or vandalism.

Break-in or vandalism

You must report this to both the police and Eildon Housing Association, so we can claim insurance to cover the cost of the repair.

Personal items in your house are not covered by this insurance. Please make sure you have adequate contents insurance to cover any personal losses.

Accidents

If a repair is needed because you, a member of your family or a visitor have damaged the property, then you are responsible for getting the repair done, and paying for it.

If we arrange a repair and feel it has been caused by damage rather than normal wear and tear, we may send you a bill for the work.

You may prefer to carry out some minor repairs yourself. If so, you must ensure that you can complete the job safely, and to a good standard.

New property repairs

If you are the first tenant of a new property, repair requests in the first year may be passed by Eildon to the contractor who built the house.

The contractor must carry out repairs resulting from building defects during this period.

Urgent repairs will be dealt with at the time of reporting. Minor items will normally be dealt with at the end of the 12 month maintenance period.

For details of different areas of responsibility for repairs, see the following lists.

External structure and areas

Eildon Housing Association is responsible for:

- down pipes (rain and soil)
- gutters
- foundations
- damp-proofing
- fascia boards
- soffits
- overhangs
- render, roughcast, external brickwork
- porches, steps to entrances
- walls
- external decoration
- communal stairs and entrances
- floor and wall finishes
- handrails
- overflows
- roof – slates and tiles
- balconies
- chimney repairs
- fencing and walls
- garden paths and footpaths
- gates and handrails
- car ports and garages
- bin stores and drying area
- communal rotary dryers
- communal clothes poles
- communal parking areas

You are responsible for:

- chimney sweeping
- rotary dryers – replacement ropes
- clothes pole ropes
- garden sheds/greenhouse

In the house

Eildon Housing Association is responsible for:

- water pipes, stopcocks, valves and drains
- hot and cold water storage cylinders
- cupboards
- ceilings
- floors – timber, chipboard, concrete and tiles
- doors, skirting boards and door facing
- stair banisters
- internal stairs
- loft hatches
- plasterwork/board rails and shelving in store cupboards

You are responsible for:

- floor coverings: carpet, vinyl
- decoration
- pest control

Heating

Eildon Housing Association is responsible for:

- electric storage heaters
- panel heaters and fan heaters
- gas central heating system
- gas water heating system
- radiators, thermostats, timers, boilers and pumps
- solid fuel fireplaces and fires

- fireplace tiles damaged by normal wear and tear
- gas fires
- electric focal point fires (if provided by EHA, excluding light bulbs)
- gas pipes
- hot and cold water tanks
- fireplace tiles damaged accidentally or deliberately
- bleeding air from radiators
- topping up boiler pressure (combi boiler)
- setting operational programmer (timers)
- setting storage heater controls

Electrics

Eildon Housing Association is responsible for:

- electric sockets
- pendant light holders and roses
- extractor fans, mechanical ventilators
- smoke detectors
- light switches
- water immersion heater
- storage heaters
- communal TV aerial system
- wiring & circuits (including repair, but not resetting mains circuit breakers and fuses)
- common stairs lighting and light bulbs
- external lighting to development
- lights at house back and front door (excluding bulbs)
- carbon monoxide detectors (where fitted)

You are responsible for:

- individual TV aerials and sockets
- resetting of circuit breakers
- light bulbs and strip light tubes

Windows

Eildon Housing Association is responsible for:

- glass in windows
- window frames
- window fittings, catches, ropes, handles
- window locks (where fitted by EHA)
- window sills
- ventilation strips

You are responsible for:

- curtain rails & curtain poles (unless provided by EHA)

Doors

Eildon Housing Association is responsible for:

- letterbox
- doorbell on electric circuit
- outside door (front or main), hinges, frames, handles
- internal doors, handles, latches, hinges
- doorstops
- stair entry door:
 - door chain (where provided by EHA)
 - locks/repairs
 - glass in doors and screens

You are responsible for:

- doorbell batteries
- door name plates
- keys and replacement locks

Kitchen

Eildon Housing Association is responsible for:

- kitchen units and worktops
- sink bowl and drainer
- cooker control unit
- blocked drains
- taps and washers

You are responsible for:

- cooker (unless provided by EHA)
- fridge/freezer (unless provided by EHA)
- washing machine and fittings (unless provided by EHA)
- tumble drier and fittings (unless provided by EHA)
- plumbing/venting for washing machine/tumble dryer
- plugs and chains (replacements)
- blocked sink waste

Bathroom

Eildon Housing Association is responsible for:

- blocked drain
- bath/shower unit/fittings (belonging to EHA)
- toilet cistern
- toilet bowl
- wash hand basin
- taps and washers
- non-slip flooring (where provided by EHA)

You are responsible for:

- shower unit/fittings (belonging to tenant)
- toilet seat (replacement)
- plugs and chains (replacement)
- towel rails and toilet roll holders
- blocked sink/bath waste

Services

Eildon Housing Association is responsible for:

- fire alarm systems
- communal TV aerials
- lifts
- grounds maintenance
- stair cleaning (common stair only where a service charge is paid)

You are responsible for:

- individual TV aerials
- garden maintenance
- stair cleaning
- cleaning house windows

REPORTING A REPAIR

If you decide that a repair is needed and Eildon Housing Association is responsible, please report it in one of these ways:

- call us on **03000 200 217**
- online at **www.eildon.org.uk** (non-emergency repairs)
- in person at our head office in Selkirk

When you contact us, be ready to tell us:

- full details about the repair
- how and when we can access your property
- an up to date telephone number and/or email address

This will help us to brief a contractor properly, and help them to arrange a good time for carrying out the repair.

Our maintenance officers spend much of their day out and about, and may inspect repairs reported by you, and check the quality of the work before the contractor is paid. The contractor may also ask you to confirm the repair was carried out.

Emergency repairs

EMERGENCY means a risk to life, or to the property.

For emergency repairs outside our office hours, call **03000 200 217** and follow the instructions.

You will be connected to Hanover Housing who will be managing our emergency repairs from their call centre from 1 May 2018.

Please think carefully before using this number outside office hours – it's for emergencies only.

Gas

Make sure you know where your gas meter is located. If you can't find it, please ask us.

IF YOU SMELL GAS:

Don't turn electrical switches on or off.

Sparks can cause an explosion.

Don't smoke.

Don't use naked flames.

Do turn off the gas supply at the meter.

Do open all doors and windows.

Do leave the premises.

Contact SCOTTISH GAS immediately on 0800 111 999.

Water

Make sure you know the location of the water stop valve, so that you can turn off the supply if necessary.

If you have a burst pipe or blocked external drain, ring EHA immediately on **03000 200 217**.

If you have a water supply failure, contact **Scottish Water on 0845 600 8855**.



Electricity

If your electricity fails, take these steps to work out why:

1. Check that it's not a fuse or tripped circuit;
2. If you have a power card, check that it has enough credit, and top up if necessary;
3. Check with a neighbour. If they have no power either, it's probably a power cut.

If it is a power cut, contact Scottish Power on 0845 272 7999.

Heating

If you have gas, air source or oil fired heating and need to report a repair or leaking radiator, you can contact our heating engineer Dalex direct on **08000 385 599**.

REPAIR RESPONSE TIMES

Eildon Housing Association has a target response time for each category of requested repairs. The repair categories and their target times are set out below:

1. EMERGENCY REPAIRS

'Emergency repairs' means danger to individuals or property that calls for preventive action, to allow a repair to be carried out later, at another time.

Remove the source of direct hazard to life or property, within two hours of notification. Where services are affected, these must be restored within 24 hours (excluding power cuts or broken water mains).

Examples of emergency repairs:

- fire in electrical consumer unit
- lift breakdown
- burst water pipes or tanks
- gas leaks
- broken windows
- ground floor windows not closing/ securing
- serious water penetration
- dangerous structures

2. ROUTINE REPAIRS

'Routine repairs' means minor defects which may cause some inconvenience, but where immediate repair isn't essential. Routine repairs have a 10-day completion time target.

All routine repairs will be arranged within 24 hours of reporting and tenants will be offered an appointment by the contractor.

The following appointment time slots will be available:

Early Morning: 8am – 10am

Late Morning: 10am – 12noon

Midday: 12noon – 2pm

Early Afternoon: 2pm – 4pm

Late Afternoon: 4pm – 5pm

Early Evening: 5pm – 7pm
(Tuesdays and Thursdays only)

Saturday Early Morning: 8.30am – 10.30am

Saturday Late Morning: 10.30am – 12.30pm

Examples include most internal joinery work, plaster and building repairs.

Examples of routine repairs:

- Broken extractor fan
- Specific room lights not working
- Faulty electrical shower (if no bath, will be prioritised)
- Broken/leaking sanitary fittings (toilets, baths and wash basins)
- Re-securing loose sanitary fittings
- Renewing washers
- Doors difficult to open/close
- Broken sash cord
- Upper floor windows not closing
- Easing and adjusting windows
- Broken ironmongery for windows/ doors
- Repair broken kitchen unit doors
- Draught excluders
- Renew kitchen unit door hinges
- Internal doors / ironmongery
- Blocked / leaking roans
- Minor roof leaks not causing damage
- Missing slates or tiles
- Roof leaks to garages
- New chimney pot / can / cowl
- Rotary dryer (not ropes)
- Communal area repairs
- Loose radiator
- Noisy boiler
- Overflows running into a footpath
- Faulty locks to external doors
- Electric fire or storage heater not working
- Dripping water / waste pipes

3. QUALIFYING REPAIRS

'Qualifying repairs' means repairs which have specific timescales for responses which apply to all social landlords. Qualifying repairs are a distinct category, as tenants may be

compensated if these timescales are not met.

Qualifying repairs and their required response times are shown below:

QUALIFYING REPAIR	WORKING DAY(S)
Blocked flue to open fire or boiler	1
Blocked or leaking foul drains, soil stacks or toilet pans where there is no other toilet in the house	1
Blocked sink, bath or drain	1
Total loss of electric power	1
Partial loss of electric power	3
Insecure external window, door or lock	1
Unsafe access path or step	1
Significant leaks or flooding from water or heating pipes, tanks or cisterns	1
Loss or partial loss of gas supply	1
Loss or partial loss of space or water heating where no alternative heating is available	1
Toilet not flushing where there is no other toilet in the house	1
Unsafe power or lighting socket, or electrical fitting	1
Total loss of water supply	1
Partial loss of water supply	3
Loose or detached banister or handrail	3
Unsafe timber flooring or stair treads	3
Mechanical extractor fan in kitchen or internal bathroom not working	7

Required response times for the table opposite are calculated from the day after the repair is reported.

If these response times are not achieved, you may be paid compensation. This is calculated as £15, plus £3 for every extra working day it takes to complete the repair after the originally set date. The maximum amount of compensation is limited to £100 for any one repair.

Compensation may not always be paid, eg when circumstances outside the control of Eildon Housing Association or the contractor prevent the repair from being carried out in time.

SOME COMMON PROBLEMS AND HOW YOU CAN HELP

With some common issues, you need to help to keep your home in good condition.

In cold weather, please let Eildon Housing Association know if you plan to be away from home for more than a few days.

If you're not confident about any of the procedures below, please contact us – we'll be happy to advise.

Frost damage

Water pipes can freeze and burst in cold weather, so make sure your home is kept warm.

If you're going away from home in winter, leave your heating on at a low setting.

If you don't want to do this, turn off your water supply at the valve. Then turn on the taps, to drain the water from the system.

If you have water-filled radiators, you should also arrange for a plumber to drain these down.

Make sure you know the location of the stop valve for the cold water system. This is normally below the kitchen sink, or at floor level in the bathroom.

Use this to turn off the supply in an emergency.

Condensation

Excessive condensation can cause damp, which is bad for your health and the property. To avoid this, keep your home warm and well ventilated. This is especially important in bedrooms.

Avoid drying clothes on radiators, which creates lots of moisture in the air.

Electricity outage

If your lights go out, it's most likely to be a failed bulb, and you should check this, and replace it.

Your home has a fuse box with safety circuit breakers. These trip if the circuit is overloaded, or if you have a faulty appliance (typically a kettle or iron). If the circuit breaker trips, first switch off all plugged-in appliances.

Next, reset the switch in the fuse box by switching it down (off) then up again (on). Then, switch the appliances back on one by one to see what trips the circuit breaker. Repair or replace any faulty appliances.

If you follow these steps and the circuit breaker won't reset, contact us to arrange an electrician. If the fault is traced to your own appliance, you may be recharged.

Information about your fuse box is on the wall next to it.

Smoke alarms

All our properties are fitted with smoke alarms which emit a loud warning sound.

At least once a month, check the alarm is working correctly by pressing the test button until it sounds.

If you suspect it's faulty, report it to us and we'll arrange for it to be replaced.

Never try to disconnect or move it.

If the alarm is activated by mistake, eg you burn the toast, open the windows to clear the smoke from the building. The alarm may continue to sound for some time, but should eventually reset.

If you have impaired hearing, contact your housing officer, as we can provide a visual alarm.

Pest control

If you have problems with household pests such as rodents or insects in your own home, you are responsible for dealing with this. Contact Scottish Borders Council, which offers a pest control service.

If you live in a block and if the issue is being experienced throughout the block, or is in a communal area, please call us on 03000 200 217.

Gas appliance servicing

We are legally obliged to ensure your gas appliances have an annual safety check and service. You are legally obliged to allow us access to your home at a reasonable time to do this.

We aim to give you plenty of notice and do best to meet your requirements.

However, if you do not allow access, we will be obliged to force entry to carry out this essential maintenance. We will also seek to recover our costs from you, if you don't allow us access.

Other cyclical maintenance

We carry out other types of cyclical maintenance, including roof repairs, external decoration, and electrical installation testing.

We instruct our contractors to carry out this essential maintenance, and let you know when it will be carried out.

Our contractors will usually let you know when they need access. Please cooperate so that they can carry out these safety measures.



MODERNISATION PROGRAMME

When your home is due for modernisation, we will write to let you know what is proposed, and when the work is likely to be carried out.

We may delay some repair requests if we know the component is due to be replaced, and will let you know.

Typical modernisation work involves replacing kitchens and heating systems.

In most cases, you won't need to move from the property while this is done, but there will inevitably be some disruption.

We will liaise with you while this work is planned and carried out, to keep any disruption to a minimum.

YOUR RENT

- how rents are set and reviewed
- how to pay your rent
- how to get help with paying your rent
- benefits information and advice



HOW RENTS ARE SET AND REVIEWED

Rents are set in accordance with our rent setting policy. Copies available on request.

This takes account of affordability, comparison with similar housing providers, and the cost of maintaining and managing our properties.

Rents are reviewed annually. You will receive one month's notice in writing of any changes.

HOW TO PAY YOUR RENT

Rent is paid monthly in advance, although weekly payment can be arranged if you prefer.

See our [website](#) or ask your housing officer for details of different payment methods, so you can find the one that suits you best.

Service charges

Services are itemised on your Tenancy Agreement, and on your rent statement. Eildon Housing Association is not allowed to make any profit from providing services.

The service charge may be varied annually to reflect the actual costs of providing the service. You will be given one month's notice in writing of any change.

HOW TO GET HELP WITH PAYING YOUR RENT

Tenants on a low income may be entitled to receive Housing Benefit or Universal Credit to help pay rent.

For more information about applying for benefits, visit our website or contact your housing officer, Scottish Borders Council or your local Citizen's Advice Bureau.

We will do our best to help you, and may be able to advise you on budgeting or benefits. However, we cannot accept any persistent arrears. You will be expected to agree and maintain a mutually acceptable arrangement with us to clear any debt.

Not paying your rent is a serious matter, and can lead to eviction. Don't risk being evicted when we may be able to help.



BENEFITS INFORMATION AND ADVICE

If you need information, advice or help with any benefits issues, our tenancy sustainment team can speak to you on the phone or in the office, or visit you at home.

We can also help you to complete benefit claim forms, or seek other financial assistance.

To find out your entitlement to certain benefits, you can also visit [Scottish Borders Council's website](#) and complete the benefits calculator.

Money Matters

Whatever your income, it's a good idea to manage your money carefully, as this can reduce problems, prevent debt, and help you get more from your money.

When you're on a low income, it can be difficult to afford all the things you have to pay for.

For help with organising your money, [get a financial budgeting planner here](#). Our **Money Matters** leaflet also provides basic guidance on bank accounts, managing gas and electricity costs, and other household bills.

Council Tax

Tenants are separately liable for the payment of Council Tax.

If you need information on Council Tax, ring Scottish Borders Council on **0300 100 1800**.



YOUR RIGHTS AS A TENANT

- your tenancy agreement
- ending your tenancy
- right of succession
- the right to take in a lodger
- the right to sublet your home
- the Right to Buy



YOUR TENANCY AGREEMENT

The Tenancy Agreement you signed at the start of your tenancy sets out your rights and responsibilities as a tenant. It is a legal contract between you and Eildon Housing Association.

If you need further information on any aspect of your tenancy, please contact your [housing officer](#).

Security of tenure

Under your tenancy agreement with Eildon Housing Association, you have security of tenure and are protected by law. This means that you cannot be evicted from your home without a court order.

ENDING YOUR TENANCY

You can end your tenancy by giving Eildon Housing Association at least 28 days' written notice.

Do this by sending us an email, writing us a letter, or giving us a call and asking for a form.

Before you move out

The Tenancy Agreement you signed requires you to do the following before you leave:

Leave the house, garden and common areas in a clean and tidy condition.

- Remove all your furniture and belongings (including rubbish) from the house, garden and common areas.
- Remove carpets, underlay and flooring from the house (unless your housing officer advises you otherwise).
- Empty and clean all stores/cupboards (including kitchen).
- Clean your toilet, sinks, bath, shower, and any other sanitary ware.
- Remove all belongings (including rubbish) from the garden and any common areas such as stairwells, bin stores, drying areas, paths or walkways.

Remove any fixtures and fittings you have installed, and put right any damage caused.

- ❑ Disconnect and remove all appliances, such as cooker, washing machine, fridge (unless they belong to Eildon Housing Association).
- ❑ Disconnect and remove any light fittings and lamp shades (unless they belong to EHA), and leave the connection in a safe condition.

If you have installed a shower with EHA's permission

If you want to take the shower with you:

Ensure that the remaining parts of the installation are left in a safe condition, and finishes repaired to the original condition.

If you don't want to take the shower with you:

We will inspect it. If it meets EHA's current standard and is in an acceptable condition, it can be left.

If you have fitted additional wall tiles in the bathroom or kitchen and they are in poor condition, they must be removed.

Carry out obligatory repairs identified by Eildon Housing Association

Before you leave, we will arrange to visit you to:

- discuss any matters relating to the condition of the house, and what you need to do
- identify any other repairs that are your responsibility

If you then carry out repairs and the house falls short of the required standard, we will recharge you for the cost of any work required.

Leave the house in reasonable decorative order

If the decoration is broken, chipped, torn, stained or marked, the areas affected should be redecorated.

Provide us with your forwarding address

If you can't hand the keys in at our office when you leave, we will offer an alternative arrangement.

RIGHT OF SUCCESSION

A tenancy ends with the death of the tenant. If you die, then certain people living with you have right to take over your tenancy.

This is known as 'succession'. Succession rights are detailed in Eildon Housing Association's policy on succession, which is available on request.

THE RIGHT TO TAKE IN A LODGER

Before you take in a lodger, you must get permission in writing from Eildon Housing Association.

You must provide details of the name, age and gender of the lodger, and the amount of rent you propose to charge.

You cannot take in a lodger if this will result in overcrowding. Your Tenancy Agreement states the maximum number of people who can live in your home.

THE RIGHT TO SUBLET YOUR HOME

You must have written permission from Eildon Housing Association to sublet all or part of your home. You must provide details of the name, age and gender of the lodger, and the amount of rent you propose to charge.

Your request will not be refused unless there is good reason, ie if the sublet would result in overcrowding. If permission is granted, you can initially sublet the property for a maximum of six months. This can be extended at the discretion of Eildon Housing Association.

Tenants with arrears or outstanding housing-related charges may not be eligible to sublet their home. Please contact your [housing officer](#) for more information about subletting.

THE RIGHT TO BUY

'Right to Buy', which allowed tenants of social housing to buy their homes, ended for all council and housing association tenants in Scotland on 31 July 2016.

LIVING IN YOUR HOME

- improvements
- adaptations
- keys and locks
- insurance
- pets
- gardens and external areas
- household rubbish
- safety in the home



IMPROVEMENTS

You have the right to carry out improvements to your home, but you must get Eildon Housing Association's permission before carrying out any work.

Alterations that would reduce the safety or value of your home will not be given consent. By improvements, we mean any alteration or addition to your home, including the following:

- any addition or alteration to Eildon Housing Association's fixtures or fittings, or related to services, eg fitting a new kitchen sink
- putting up a satellite dish or garden shed
- carrying out external decoration

Eildon Housing Association cannot unreasonably refuse you permission to make improvements, but may impose certain conditions, eg the work must be carried out to a certain standard.

Improvement works will not be taken into account in determining rent levels.

In some cases, planning permission may also be required from Scottish Borders Council. Our staff will be happy to help you apply.

Under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, Scottish secure tenants (SSTs) and short Scottish secure tenants (SSSTs) may be able to receive compensation from Eildon Housing Association for improvements they have made to their home, when they leave.

You can only get compensation for certain improvements started on or after 30 September 2002. To qualify for compensation, you must have received written permission from Eildon House Association to carry out the improvement, and your tenancy must have ended. For more information, visit the [Scottish Government Website](#), or ask your housing officer for details.

ADAPTATIONS

If your home needs to be adapted in some way, eg a handrail or ramp at the entrance to your home, or a bath replaced with a shower, we can often do this through funding from the Scottish Government.

Anyone applying to us for an adaptation like this must be referred by a specialist – typically an occupational therapist.

Funding for such adaptations is provided annually and sometimes

gets used up quickly. If this happens, requests must be put on a waiting list until more funding is available.

If you have difficulty using any areas or fittings in your home, ask your housing officer to advise you on applying for a home adaptation.

KEYS AND LOCKS

Your keys are your responsibility, and Eildon Housing Association does not hold any spare keys to your property.

Make sure you have a spare key, and keep it in a safe place. If you lose or forget a key and need to break a window or force a door, this will be expensive for you.

You need to get our permission before fitting any additional lock to your front door.

INSURANCE

Eildon Housing Association's insurance covers the structure and fixtures of your home. It does not cover contents (unless provided by us).

You are strongly advised to take out your own insurance to cover replacement of your belongings,

re-decoration and making good damage caused to your home in the event of theft, fire or accident.

A good insurance broker will advise you on the best policy, and give you a free quotation. Your housing officer can advise you on policies specifically designed for tenants of social housing.

PETS

If you want to keep a pet, you must apply to Eildon Housing Association for permission. If your home is a flat, only one pet per household is allowed.

This includes domestic pets, exotic or caged animals, poultry, ducks, pigeons, rabbits, bees or other livestock or breeding animals.

This same applies if you want to look after an animal for a limited period, such as while a relative is in hospital. You must still get permission, and only one pet per flat is allowed.

If you're given permission to keep a pet, you must take all reasonable steps to supervise it, and keep it under control. This includes keeping dogs on a leash while outside your home but within the development. Dogs must be kept on a leash while outside your home but on Eildon Housing Association property.



No cats or dogs (apart from guide dogs) are allowed in sheltered or very sheltered housing, unless your flat has its own main door access.

If you have a pet, please ensure that your neighbours aren't disturbed, and the property and surroundings are kept clean and hygienic.

GARDENS AND EXTERNAL AREAS

Eildon Housing Association maintains any shared garden areas around your home.

If you would like to look after part of the garden, please contact your housing officer.

If you have exclusive use of a garden, it must be maintained as described in the Tenancy Agreement, and kept tidy.

HOUSEHOLD RUBBISH

For refuse collection times, see the [Scottish Borders Council website](#).

Large items, such as furniture or mattresses, must be collected by special arrangement, by contacting Scottish Borders Council.

If you live in a development with a communal bin store, you are still responsible for making sure your refuse is put out for collection at the correct time each week.

SAFETY IN THE HOME

A few hints and tips to keep you and your home safe.

Fire safety

You can help prevent most fires by taking a few simple precautions.

Before you go to bed, close all the doors in your home. If a fire starts, this will help to prevent it from spreading.

Put out all cigarettes. Last thing at night, make sure all cigarette ends are out, and empty out ashtrays. Do not smoke in bed.

Unplug all appliances when you are not using them, and before you go to bed. Never leave a burning candle unattended.

Make sure there is a guard around your fire.

Never dry anything near fires, cookers or portable heaters.

Do not put a portable fire near curtains.

Keep matches where children cannot see or reach them.

Do not overload electrical power points.

Never use an appliance with a damaged flex.

Check your smoke alarms regularly.

Do not store materials in your home,

outbuildings or shared area which could catch fire or explode (eg Calor Gas).

Decide what escape route you would use if a fire broke out in your house.

Make sure everyone you live with knows what to do if a fire breaks out.

Close the door of the room where the fire is, to stop flames and fumes spreading.

Get everyone out of the house as quickly as possible.

Phone 999 for the Fire Brigade.

Gas safety

If you smell gas:

Don't turn electrical switches on or off – sparks can cause an explosion.

Don't smoke or use naked flames.

Do turn off the gas supply at the meter.

Do open all doors and windows.

Call SCOTTISH GAS immediately on 0800 111 999.

Make sure you know where your gas meter is. If you can't find it, please ask – we should be able to help.

If you have a gas fire, do not paint the casing. Painting gas fire casings can cause toxic fumes when the fire is switched on.



Kitchen safety

Always keep a fire extinguisher and fire blanket handy in case of a fire in your kitchen, and familiarise yourself with how to use them.

Never leave a chip pan unattended on the cooker.

If a pan catches fire, don't try to move it. Turn off the heat if it is safe to do so, and try to smother the fire with a damp towel.

If you can't control the fire, close the kitchen door, leave your home and call the Fire Brigade from a safe place.

Electrical safety

Don't put cables under carpets or rugs, or staple them to skirting boards or walls.

Don't leave cables lying where someone could trip over them or knock over an electrical appliance.

Don't attempt to repair any electrical problem yourself. Contact Eildon Housing Association on 03000 200 217 as soon as possible for advice.

Accidents or incidents

Report any accidents or incidents to us as soon as possible, if you feel there are any property-related issues.

YOU AND YOUR NEIGHBOURS

- good neighbourly relations
- making a complaint to Eildon Housing Association



GOOD NEIGHBOURLY RELATIONS

We're all part of the same community, and it's great that most tenants with Eildon Housing Association get on well, respect each other's space and lifestyles, and support each other when in need.

But sometimes, neighbours may have problems, often due to lifestyle clashes, such as different ages, cultural backgrounds, or work or sleeping patterns.

Most issues can be solved early on by simply talking to each other. But at other times, it's important to know what you and your neighbours' rights are, and when it's best to contact Eildon Housing Association.

This section gives an overview of what to do if you have issues with your neighbours.

Your agreement to respect others

When you signed your Tenancy Agreement, you agreed not to annoy, disturb or cause a nuisance to your neighbours.

You also agreed not to allow anyone living with you or visiting you to act in any of these ways.

If your neighbour is a tenant of Eildon Housing Association, then he or she has also agreed to these tenancy conditions.

Your commitment to behaving responsibly is particularly important in common areas, where noise, vandalism and the behaviour of children can all lead to disputes.

Tenant responsibilities

Your Tenancy Agreement is a legal document which provides a basis for legal action if it is breached.

It gives the legal definition of nuisance and antisocial behaviour, and what will happen if such behaviour occurs. See the table on next page for examples.

Keeping to the Tenancy Agreement will help to prevent anti-social behaviour from arising.

Neighbour issues and antisocial behaviour

The term 'anti-social behaviour' covers a wide range of issues, from

inconsiderate behaviour to serious criminal activity.

The broad categories are:

TYPE	EXAMPLES
Neighbour nuisance	Excessive noise, occasional disturbances, behaviour of neighbours and their family or friends, car repairs.
Medium level antisocial behaviour	Vandalism, dumping rubbish, threatening or abusive behaviour.
Serious antisocial behaviour	Violence, drug dealing.
Harassment	Behaviour deliberately intended to intimidate, dominate or harass an individual or certain groups, such as minority ethnic people, people suffering from a mental illness, or people with a disability.

Tackling the problem yourself

It's often best to try to sort out the problem yourself, by talking calmly to your neighbour. They may not be aware that they are causing a problem.

Sometimes, reporting the problem to Eildon Housing Association makes it worse, by making it 'official'. Although we handle all complaints confidentially, your neighbour may draw conclusions about who contacted us.

People can feel annoyed that the landlord has been involved, without an effort to address the situation directly. So always speak calmly to your neighbour as a first step.

If you would like some advice on how to do this, please get in touch with your housing officer, who will be happy to help.

MAKING A COMPLAINT TO EILDON HOUSING ASSOCIATION

If you call or contact Eildon Housing Association to make a complaint about your neighbour's behaviour, we will ask you to confirm the details in writing.

This is to provide clarity, in case further action is needed.

Be prepared to tell us the following:

- who is causing the problem, if you know
- who the problem is affecting
- where it is happening
- when it is happening
- why it is happening
- what you want us to do about it

Next actions

As a landlord, we need to speak to both parties, and hear what each has to say, so we will contact your neighbour.

If they accept that your complaint is valid, then we will remind them of their tenancy obligations in writing. This may be sufficient.

Sometimes, a neighbour will respond by making a complaint about you. If this happens, and we can't help further, we may pass on your complaint to another agency, eg mediation services.

Mediation services

If Eildon Housing Association feels that mediation is a good idea, it will discuss this option with you first. Mediation works best where both parties accept that there is a problem, and are keen for it to be solved. We will only refer you to the mediation service if all parties agree.

Mediators are trained and experienced volunteers who do not judge who is right or wrong, but help the parties to listen to each other, identify what they want, clarify issues, and negotiate an agreement.

The aim is to help you and your neighbour sort out your differences together, to prevent disputes from escalating.

If you are referred to the mediation service, Eildon Housing Association will have no further involvement until an outcome has been achieved.

Record keeping

It's a good idea to record details of antisocial behaviour for future reference. Make your own notes, or call us for a diary sheet. It's important to record the following details:

- date
- times
- details of nuisance
- effect on you, eg lack of sleep
- other information, eg details of witnesses
- police involvement

If you contact the police, make sure you ask for an incident number, as this can be used as evidence in court.

Multi-agency approach

Eildon Housing Association works in partnership with other agencies to deal with neighbour nuisance and antisocial behaviour.

Our partners include environmental services, police, social work and mediation services, and the Safer Communities team at Scottish Borders Council.

In some cases, these agencies have more powers to deal with a problem, or can take action more quickly.

Legal action

When all non-legal solutions have been tried or ruled out, a number of legal options can be considered. These include:

Statutory nuisance

Environmental Services has statutory powers to deal with and enforce action against anti-social behaviour such as noise and refuse.

Antisocial behaviour orders (ASBO)

Local authorities and police have powers to deal with persistent nuisance, harassment and criminal behaviour. The breaching of an ASBO is a criminal offence.

Short Scottish secure tenancies

If a tenant of Eildon Housing Association becomes the subject

of an ASBO, then we are entitled to serve a notice on the tenant, converting the Scottish secure tenancy into a short Scottish secure tenancy (SSST). This means that for a period of 12 months, we are able, at any point, to seek repossession of the property.

Grounds for eviction

If a tenant causes serious antisocial behaviour, and persistent and repeated nuisance, or deliberately ignores official warnings about breaking tenancy conditions, we will ask the court to grant a decree for eviction.

Before we can take legal action against someone, we need to have evidence that proves they have been a nuisance.

If we take legal action, it's likely you will need to give evidence in court. Let us know if you are worried about giving evidence. In most cases, the sheriff will want to hear your version of events. Occasionally, there are circumstances where the housing officer is allowed to speak on your behalf.

Legal action can take months to go through the court process. You need to keep on recording evidence, and reporting the problem in the meantime. We will keep in contact and give you all the help we can.

When the case goes to court, the sheriff will listen to all the evidence and then decide whether the tenant should be evicted or not. We need to satisfy the sheriff that we are acting reasonably in seeking to evict someone.



Mixed tenure housing

Eildon Housing Association has some mixed tenure housing, where some of the residents are not EHA tenants, but may be owner occupiers, for example.

If a non-tenant complains to us about a tenant, the same rules apply.

If you are experiencing anti-social behaviour from a non-tenant, we will provide support and assistance, and try to solve the problem through informal non-legal approaches such as mediation.

OTHER TENANCY INFORMATION

- furnished tenancies
- moving house
- help with your tenancy



FURNISHED TENANCIES

Eildon Housing Association has a small number of properties where we have provided items such as carpets, curtains or white goods. These properties are usually let as shared accommodation.

With these properties, there is a small service charge included in the rent to cover the cost of maintenance and replacement of these items.

If you need furniture, charities can also help. They will also appreciate furniture you don't need if you are moving on.

For more information about start-up packs or second-hand furniture, please speak to your housing officer.

MOVING HOUSE

If you need to move, Eildon Housing Association may be able to help you.

Transfers

If your current home is unsuitable for you, we will try to help you transfer to another Eildon Housing Association property. If you wish to transfer, contact your housing officer to arrange a time to discuss your request.

Mutual exchanges

You may want to move by swapping your home with another tenant of Eildon Housing Association. You can also apply to exchange with the tenant of another housing association or local authority.

If you want to find an exchange, you can search for people interested in exchanging with you all over the UK, by using the Homeswapper website.

Homeswapper uses the details you supply to automatically match you to other interested tenants. Use Homeswapper by logging onto www.HomeSwapper.co.uk and registering to use the service.

When you have identified a person to exchange with, both parties must complete a mutual exchange application form. We will then make a home visit and contact your landlord, before making a decision.

HELP WITH YOUR TENANCY

Our tenancy sustainment team offer help, information and advice to tenants who are taking on a new tenancy, or who are finding it difficult to manage their tenancy.

We can provide information and advice to help you:

- maximise your income (advice on benefit entitlement, support with benefit claims)
- draw up simple budget plans (manage rent and bill payments)
- set up payment plans (eg fuel bills)
- move into your new home
- apply for grant funding for furnishings, carpets, kitchen appliances
- contact services including Citizens Advice Bureau, social work and support agencies



SHELTERED HOUSING

- staff and security
- facilities



STAFF AND SECURITY

General information is given below. More detailed information can be provided by the staff or found on the [Eildon Housing Association website](#).

Location staff

Housing support staff at each property provide advice and support to tenants, and help ensure safety and security.

Staff are on site during the day, and contact tenants regularly to ensure that all is well. This contact is reviewed regularly.

The staff team cannot provide nursing, personal or domestic care for tenants. If this is needed, staff will help tenants to access it through health and social work services.

For more information, see the [Eildon Housing Association website](#).

Domestic staff

Domestic staff at each location are responsible for cleaning communal areas (though not individual tenants' flats), and assisting with meals.

Staff call and the Hanover call handling service

In an emergency, tenants in sheltered housing can call staff using their pendant trigger. There are call points in each flat, and in the communal areas.

If a relative is visiting, and the tenant takes ill or is in difficulty, please use this system.

When staff are on duty, the call goes through to the staff handset. When they are off duty, it goes to the Hanover call handling service.

Tenants will know the system has been activated, because a tone will sound in the flat, and the red button on the call point in the flat will light up.

The system is completely private. Staff can only hear tenants speaking when the call point or personal trigger has been activated.

Your GP's number, emergency keyholder and other emergency information are held by the Hanover call handling service operator. Please let your coordinator know right away if this information changes.

Door entry system

If you have a door entry system, it's there for security. Before letting anyone into the building, make sure you know who they are.

If you don't know them, always ask who they have come to see, before opening the main door.

If you're suspicious, call the coordinator or Bordercare alarm system.

All EHA sheltered housing is fitted with self-opening main access doors operated by tenants' key fobs.

Security and the master key

The coordinator has a master key for all flats and rooms. Rest assured that the master key is only used in emergencies. Your privacy will be respected absolutely.

The duty staff member holds the master key at all times, and no unauthorised person can gain access to your flat. Don't put any extra locks or chains on your door, as this will prevent staff from reaching you in an emergency.

Even when living in sheltered housing, you should be security conscious at all times. Always lock your front door if you leave your flat.

If there's a theft from your flat and the door was left unlocked, it is unlikely that your insurance company will consider your claim.

Fire alarm system

Each development is fitted with a fire alarm system with smoke detectors throughout, and self-closing fire doors in communal areas. Local staff will issue you with a procedure and explain what to do in the event of a fire.

FACILITIES

Information regarding sheltered housing facilities is detailed below. Please contact Eildon Housing Association or visit our website for full details.

Repairs

Tenants in sheltered housing can report repairs in the normal way (see Repairs and Maintenance section on [p8](#)), [via the website](#), or repairs can be reported to a staff member if preferred.

If you notice a repair required in the communal area, please tell a staff member.

Communal lounge and social activities

The communal lounge and dining area is for informal socialising, and for social events.

You're welcome to organise your own social activities, and invite friends, relatives and other people from the community to join in. You can manage any funds raised, and staff are happy to give assistance and advice.

Guest room

As a tenant, you can have friends and relatives to stay in the guest room. Make a booking with the staff when you want to use the room. A small charge will be made.

Sometimes, if there's an emergency, staff may need a guest room. If the guest room is needed for someone supporting a seriously ill tenant, another visitor may be asked to give up the guest room. If this happens, you're welcome to put up visitors up in your flat for a few nights.

Laundry

A laundry room with automatic washing machines and tumble driers is provided for tenants' use. Ask the staff to explain the arrangements and how to use the machines. A drying area is provided outside the laundry.

Television

If you're a tenant of sheltered/very sheltered housing, you don't need to buy a separate TV licence. Please ask staff on site for details.

Pets

See [Pets](#) on [p28](#) for our general policy on pets.

In sheltered housing, pets can sometimes cause problems, so no cats or dogs (except guide dogs) are allowed in sheltered or very sheltered housing.

If your flat has its own main door access, the circumstances will be considered. If evidence suggests

you are unable to look after the pet, we regret that you will not be given permission to keep a pet.

Meals

Meals are offered at each location for an additional charge. Please ask staff on site for details.

Regulation and inspection

As a sheltered housing support service provider, Eildon Housing Association is registered with the Care Inspectorate, which is responsible for the registration, inspection and monitoring of care and support services in Scotland.

The Care Inspectorate regularly inspects our services to ensure they meet the Scottish Government's National Care Standards.



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

- how do you complain
- what if you are still dissatisfied?



We are committed to providing high quality customer services. We value complaints, and use information from them to help us to improve our services.

If something goes wrong, or you are dissatisfied with our services, please tell us. We regard a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about

- our action or lack of action
- the standard of service provided by us or on our behalf.

What can you complain about?

You can complain about things like:

- delays in responding to your enquiries and requests
- failure to provide a service
- our standard of service
- dissatisfaction with our policy
- treatment by or attitude of a member of staff
- our failure to follow proper procedure.

HOW DO YOU COMPLAIN?

You can complain in person at our office, by phone, in writing or by email.

When complaining, tell us:

- your full name and address
- as much as you can about the complaint
- what has gone wrong
- how you want us to resolve the matter.

Normally, you must make your complaint within six months of the event you wish to complain about, or finding out that you have reason to complain. However, you may not make a complaint more than 12 months after the event itself.

What happens when you complain?

We always tell you who is dealing with your complaint. Our complaints procedure has two stages:

Stage 1 – frontline resolution

We aim to resolve complaints quickly, and close to where we provided the service. This can mean an on-the-spot apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong, and immediate action to resolve the problem.

We will give you an outcome for Stage 1 complaints in five working days or less, unless there are exceptional circumstances. If we can't resolve your complaint at this stage, we will explain why.

If you are still dissatisfied, you can ask for your complaint to be investigated further through Stage 2.

Stage 2 – investigation

Stage 2 deals with two types of complaint:

- those not resolved at stage 1
- complex complaints requiring detailed investigation.

When using Stage 2, we will:

- acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days;
- discuss your complaint with you, to understand why you're still dissatisfied, and what outcome you are looking for;
- give you a full response to the complaint as soon as possible, and within 20 working days.

If our investigation is likely to take longer than 20 working days, we will tell you before 20 days pass. We will agree revised time limits with you, and keep you updated on progress.

WHAT IF YOU ARE STILL DISSATISFIED?

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

After we have fully investigated, if you're still dissatisfied with our decision or the way we dealt with your complaint, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) to assess it.

You can contact the SPSO in person at:
4 Melville Street
EDINBURGH
EH3 7NS

or by post at:
SPSO
Freepost EH641
EDINBURGH
EH3 0BR

Complaints about factoring

If your complaint is about a factoring service, and you are still dissatisfied after our investigation stage, you can go to the First-tier Tribunal (Housing and Property Chamber). www.gov.uk

Complaints about care services

If your complaint relates to a care service we provide, you can choose whether to complain to us, or the Care Inspectorate.



Information about the Care Inspectorate complaints procedure is on their website www.careinspectorate.com, or you can contact them:

The Care Inspectorate
Ettrick Riverside Business Centre
Dunsdale Road
Selkirk
TD7 5EB

Tel: 01896 664400

Significant performance failure

The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) can consider issues raised with them about significant performance failures.

A 'significant performance failure' is defined by the SHR as 'something that a landlord does or fails to do that puts the interests of its tenants at risk, and which the landlord has not resolved'.

This normally relates to the landlord's failure to meet its legal requirements or tenant commitments, and will affect many or all of the landlord's tenants.

If you are affected by a problem like this, you should first report it to us. If you have told us about it but we have not resolved it, you can report it directly to the SHR.

For more information, see the SHR website housingregulator.gov.scot, or call 0141 271 3810.



**The Weaving Shed, Ettrick Mill,
Dunsdale Road, Selkirk TD7 5EB**



**Customer service: 03000 200 217
Main switchboard: 01750 725900**



housing@ildon.org.uk



www.ildon.org.uk



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