






-  Legal processes when ending the tenancy.
-  Extra requirements if the premises is shared.

North Herts Council

We will:

-  Provide information and advice through leaflets and on the council's website, with links to additional websites.
-  Seek funding for energy efficiency schemes and encourage their uptake.
-  Respond to Service Requests (complaints) within three working days (sooner in an emergency).
-  Offer tenants help with writing to their landlord if needed.
-  If the problem which has been reported to your landlord is unresolved within 14 days, we will send the tenant a Request for Housing Disrepair Assessment form to complete.
-  Assess completed forms within five working days of us receiving them.
-  If all necessary information is provided, and the complaint is justified, we will contact the tenant and arrange to visit, to assess the issues first hand.

 **Note:** If the landlord has served an Eviction Notice, this informal, advisory assessment stage may be omitted, and we may notify the tenant and landlord that we intend to carry out a Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) inspection.

-  Send a schedule of necessary works to the landlord, copied to the tenant.
-  Review the landlord's response and take the most appropriate course of action to resolve the hazards.

Feedback

Please let your council case officer know if you are unhappy with our response and we will try to either resolve matters for you or explain why we have come to a decision.

If you are still unhappy, you can report it through our internal complaints system, at <https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/comments-compliments-and-complaints> or at Customer Service Centre, Council Offices, Gernon Road, Letchworth Garden City, SG6 3JF.

If, after completing our complaints procedure, you remain dissatisfied, you can complain to the Local Government Ombudsman on 0300 0610614, or at PO Box 4771, Coventry, CV4 0EH. Tenants renting a dangerous or unhealthy home may also take their landlord to court under the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act. The court may order the landlord to carry out repairs and pay compensation.

This leaflet sets out what tenants, landlords and the council should each do to ensure homes in North Herts are safe and warm.














Tenants' Charter





Tenants



Pick the right property for you:

-  Can you afford the rent, plus heating costs?
-  If the property does not have a good Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) and you cannot afford to heat it, condensation and subsequent mould growth is more likely to occur.
-  Check the letting or managing agent is registered.
-  Check and sign a proper tenancy agreement – it is usually an Assured Shorthold Tenancy.
-  Pay rent and bills on time.
-  Carry out basic tasks to your home, such as cleaning, clearing sinks, and renewing light bulbs.
-  Regularly check smoke and carbon monoxide alarms – at least monthly.
-  Report disrepair or damage promptly and in writing to your landlord or their agent and keep a copy.
-  Allow a reasonable time for them to put things right.
-  Contact your landlord again if you have not received a satisfactory response.
-  If your landlord is a Social Landlord (Housing Association) and they do not





provide an adequate response to your service request, contact their complaints service. If still unresolved, you can also complain to the Housing Ombudsman, at: <https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk> or phone 0300 111 3000.







-  Contact the council on 01462 474000, or at <https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/contact-us>
-  Provide all the details requested to enable your service request (complaint) to be assessed.

Landlords



-  Check your tenant has the right to rent your property.
-  Ensure the property is free from hazards as defined by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).

At the start of the tenancy, provide your tenant with:

-  a written tenancy agreement (usually an Assured Shorthold Tenancy).
-  a full inventory of the condition of the property and contents and allow your tenant to update it as necessary.
-  a copy of the How to Rent checklist for private renters.
-  your contact details and those of any agents for reporting any problems.

-  a copy of the property's Energy Performance Certificate.
-  a copy of the annual Gas Safety Inspection certificate, and ensure any necessary works are carried out by a Gas Safe Engineer.
-  a copy of a valid Electrical Safety Inspection certificate (valid for up to five years).
-  The qualified, competent persons who inspect the gas and electrical installations will set a date for the next inspection and test. Ensure this is carried out, give your tenant a copy of their report each time, and written confirmation of completion of remedial works.
-  Give at least 24 hours' notice to your tenant if you need to enter their home (except in an emergency).
-  Respond to complaints within 14 days (or sooner if urgent) and put them right promptly.

Comply with all housing laws, including:

-  Install working smoke alarms. Carbon monoxide alarms are usually also required.
-  Place any Tenancy Deposit in a recognised Tenancy Deposit Scheme. Your tenant should be given evidence that this has taken place.