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## You and GHA

As far as we're concerned just being your landlord isn't good enough. We work hard to offer you much more than that and to make sure you get the most out of being a GHA tenant. This is just a snapshot of the services available to you – more information is available. Just give us a call on Freephone 0800 479 7979.



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## Rights and responsibilities

Everything you need to know about your rights and responsibilities as a GHA tenant can be found in your Tenancy Agreement. Your housing officer will be able to help if you don't understand any part of the agreement.

You will have a Scottish Secure Tenancy which is a legal contract between you as the tenant and us as the landlord. It outlines your rights and responsibilities as a GHA tenant.

There may be circumstances in which you will have a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement. This limits your rights e.g. Right to Buy and succession to your tenancy.

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## Your tenancy rights

- You have the right to occupy your home without interference from GHA as long as you comply with your Tenancy Agreement.
- You have a right to have your tenancy in joint names with someone else who lives with you (this includes a same sex partner).
- We are responsible for ensuring that your house is repaired to keep it in a habitable condition at all times.
- If you die, other members of your household living with you have the right to succeed to your tenancy. Your tenancy may be inherited by:
  - your husband or wife
  - your joint tenant
  - your co-habitee (including same sex partner) who was living with you for at least six months beforehand
  - another member of your household
  - a live-in carer.
- You have the right to obtain copies of any of our policies or to find out about any information we hold on you. For further information, please speak to your housing officer, call **Freephone 0800 479 7979** or email **customerservicecentre@gha.org.uk**

### Tenancy Agreement

We have also produced an easy-read guide to your Tenancy Agreement, which is available on request.

### What about buying?

Some tenants have the right to buy their house – find out more on page 15 of this section.

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## Your tenancy responsibilities

- You must occupy the house as your only or principal home.
- You must take reasonable care to avoid damage to the house and to your neighbours' houses.
- You and anyone living with you should respect other people and must not harass or act in an antisocial or threatening manner towards anyone else.
- You must get written permission from GHA for any alterations or improvements you wish to make to your home. Permission will be conditional on factors such as the standard of work.
- You must take all reasonable steps to make sure you and anyone living with you or visiting you, keeps to the terms and conditions of your Tenancy Agreement.

Please contact your housing officer if you need a copy of your Tenancy Agreement in another format (large print, audio format or Braille) or in another language.

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## Rent payments

Your rent helps us pay for improvements to homes citywide, build new homes and for the day-to-day services we provide for you, including:

- Our Customer Service Centre (Freephone 0800 479 7979) which is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week for all payments/enquiries and to book an appointment for a repair to be carried out
- Tackling antisocial behaviour
- Free energy advice
- Welfare benefit advice
- Job creation programmes.

There are seven easy ways to pay your rent four-weekly, fortnightly or weekly:

1. Set up a Standing Order with your bank
2. At your local Post Office
3. At any shop that displays the PayPoint symbol
4. Call us free on 0800 479 7979 to pay by Debit or Credit Card
5. Post a cheque to: GHA, Granite House, 177 Trongate, Glasgow G1 5HF
6. In person at our city centre office at: Granite House, 177 Trongate
7. Housing Benefit – many tenants are eligible for help with their rent through Housing Benefit. Make sure you are not one of those to miss out!

**Why not pay online?**  
Visit [www.gha.org.uk](http://www.gha.org.uk)  
to find out more.

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## Difficulty paying your rent

We understand there are many reasons why people fall behind with their rent but there are also lots of ways we can help you pay. If you're worried about how you're going to pay your rent, call us free and in confidence – we're here to help.

**The number is Freephone 0800 479 7979.**

Glasgow City Council may be able to help you pay your rent with Housing Benefit. You have to apply for this service at one of the council's Housing Benefit centres.

If your circumstances change, for example if you start work or you receive a letter advising you of a rent increase, you must advise your Housing Benefit centre directly.

Our Welfare Benefits service can help make sure you are receiving all the benefits you are entitled to. Your housing officer can give you more information about this.

Please be aware, paying your rent is not a matter of choice. If you don't pay, you could lose your home.

**How & where to pay?**  
If you'd like more information please contact your housing officer or call us on 0800 479 7979.

**Housing Benefit**  
You can find the details of your local Housing Benefit centre in the 'Your information' section.

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## Customer service

You can call us on **Freephone 0800 479 7979**, 24 hours a day, seven days a week for:

- Enquiries
- Payments
- Repairs
- Complaints.

We are committed to making a difference to people's lives. That's why we are always looking to improve the way we serve you and meet your needs.

We have lots of services available to you, from safety advice to home contents insurance. We want you to be able to access these, ask any questions and tell us what you think of our performance when and in a way that is convenient to you.

You can find out more in our Customer Service Charter.

### **Our Customer Service Charter**

For more information pick up a copy from any of our offices or call us on 0800 479 7979.

### **[www.gha.org.uk](http://www.gha.org.uk)**

A copy of Our Customer Service Charter can also be downloaded from our website.

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## Complaints

We are determined to put our customers at the heart of everything we do and provide the best possible service we can.

If we don't get things right first time, we will listen and learn so we can stop the same thing happening again.

Your views are important to us as they let us know how and where we can improve. If we have made a mistake or you are unhappy with our service, we aim to make it as easy as possible for you to tell us. And we will always try to deal with your concern promptly.

Hopefully there will be many more occasions when we do get things right and we would like to hear your positive comments and compliments too.

### **To make a complaint, comment or compliment:**

- Call us on **Freephone 0800 479 7979**
- Call in person at your local housing office
- Write to the Customer Service Centre,  
**Lipton House, 170 Crown Street, Glasgow G5 9XD**
- Email us at: **customerservicecentre@gha.org.uk**

**Want to know more?**  
Pick up a leaflet  
about how to make a  
complaint from any of  
our offices or call us  
on 0800 479 7979.

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## Getting involved

Consultation means we will ask for your views before we make changes to how we manage, maintain or improve your home or neighbourhood. This could include things like the Repairs and Maintenance service or rent and service charges. Tenants' groups can also register with GHA and take part in consultations.

We want you to get involved and help us improve our services and the way we work to meet your needs. You can get so much out of getting involved!

You can raise issues and concerns of people living in your area and make a real difference to your community by helping us to improve the way we work.

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There are lots of different ways for you to get involved:

### Your local housing committee

You can join a tenant-led committee at your Local Housing Organisation. Contact your LHO for more information.

### The RTO Federation

We work with Registered Tenant Organisations (RTOs) to establish a structure of representation and focus. This means RTOs can help influence GHA services, policies and decisions at a strategic level. Contact the Customer Engagement Team on 0141 274 6309 for more information.

### Customer Review Teams

These teams assess our services from a customer's perspective, highlighting what works and what could be done better. Contact the Customer Engagement Team on 0141 274 6309 for more information.

### Tenant Panel

If you want to join our Tenant Panel and get involved in specific housing issues which interest you, contact the Customer Engagement Team on 0141 274 6309.

#### Want to know more?

Pick up our leaflet 'Your guide to getting involved' from any of our offices or call us on 0800 479 7979.

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## Glasgow Gold

Glasgow Gold is a tenant reward scheme that recognises and rewards tenants who adhere to their tenancy agreement.

Glasgow Gold members receive:

- The Gold Standard newsletter every quarter
- A Glasgow Gold membership card which can be used to receive discounts in shops, restaurants and businesses across Glasgow
- Access to education grants to provide between £50 and £500 towards the costs of continuing or further education
- Access to Community Chest Grants to provide between £50 and £500 towards a project of benefit to members of the community
- Golden Neighbour Awards – opportunities to recognise a neighbour for their care and consideration within the community.

To find out more please call **Freephone 0800 479 7979**.

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## Treating you fairly

Our Equality and Diversity Strategy ensures that everyone has equal access to our services. We aim to make sure that our services are relevant, responsive and sensitive to the needs of our existing and future customers and that all sections of the community have equal access to those services. To find out more please call **Freephone 0800 479 7979**.

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## Buying your home

Substantial changes were made to the Right to Buy legislation following the introduction of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, effective from 30 September 2002.

The most important changes are to the terms and conditions attached to the Right to Buy, including changes to the initial qualifying period and to the way in which entitlement to discount is calculated.

There have also been changes to the types of houses which cannot be bought through the Right to Buy and the procedures. These changes are known as the Modernised Right to Buy. To find out more please call **Freephone 0800 479 7979**.

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## Moving to another GHA house

We currently use a points based system to allocate houses on the basis of housing need. If you want to move to another GHA house, please contact your local housing office or call **Freephone 0800 479 7979**.

### **Our allocations policy**

If you would like a copy of this please contact your housing officer or Freephone 0800 479 7979.

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## Ending your tenancy

If you want to end your tenancy, you must give us at least four weeks' notice in writing. This gives us time to find a new tenant for the property.

- You must leave the property clean, empty and in a reasonable condition.
- You must repair or replace any broken fixtures and fittings you are responsible for before you leave the property.

If we have to carry out repairs which you are responsible for, need to clean the property, or have to arrange for items to be moved, we may charge you. You must also tell your gas and electricity suppliers you are leaving the property so they can read your meters.

### **Other people you may need to tell are:**

- Your bank or building society
- Your children's school or nursery
- The Housing Benefit and council tax offices
- Your doctor
- Your dentist
- The Jobcentre
- The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA)
- You will also need to fill in a change of address form which you can get from a Post Office (there is a small charge payable for this).

You must return your keys to us by no later than Noon on the day your tenancy ends. If you do not return them by Noon, we may have to charge you an extra week's rent.