

How to Contact Us

Customer Services Team - Tel: 01736 331799 Fax: 01736 331647
E-mail: contact@penwithha.org.uk
www.penwithha.org.uk

Repairs Hotline - FREEPHONE 0800 592238

PHA Emergency line - FREEPHONE 0800 592238 (5.00pm to 9.00am)

Rent Arrears FREEPHONE 0800 0279880

Energy Advice FREEPHONE 0800 7837226

Offices

Head Office

Penwith Housing Association Ltd
67 Morrab Road
Penzance Cornwall
TR18 2QJ

Hayle Office

30 Fore Street
Copperhouse
Hayle Cornwall
TR27 4DY

St Ives Cash Office

The Guildhall
St Ives Cornwall
TR26 2NE

Penzance Cash Office

Side of St John's Hall
Penzance Cornwall
TR18 2QR

We can provide translation of the information contained within this leaflet

Penwith Housing Association

Tenants Handbook



You can contact our Customer Services team about any part of your tenancy, our services or just for general advice about your housing situation. If the team cannot answer your enquiry they will direct you to the right person/team.

Your Tenancy

Under the terms of a Housing Association assured tenancy:-

- You can stay in your home as long as you wish, provided you do not break your tenancy agreement
- You cannot be evicted from your home except by a court order. A court order will only be granted in certain circumstances
- The rent you are charged is set at a level that is affordable
- Rents may be increased only once a year. Other charges can be changed after one month's notice
- You may ask the Rent Assessment Committee to check any rent increase made. This is an independent body which sorts out issues between landlords and tenants

If you were a secure tenant when Penwith Housing Association took over the properties from Penwith District Council on 16 May 1994, you may have the Right-to-Buy your home if you wish. The full details of the terms of your tenancy are set out in your tenancy agreement. If you cannot find it, ask us for a copy.

Moving In

Managing your home and neighbourhood

The staff responsible for managing your home and neighbourhood work from our Penzance offices. The staff will try to deal with any of your problems and, if they cannot give you an immediate response, they will provide you with accurate information about how and when a particular issue will be sorted out.

Useful Check List

After you have looked at your tenancy agreement with a member of our staff and have been given the keys to your new home, you may find the following checklist is helpful:-

- Make sure you know the location of the water stopcock, gas valve and electricity fuse board and you know how all the appliances work. Our staff will be able to provide any help which you may need. Tenants of newly-built houses will receive a pack with information about their particular home.
- You may be able to get help with paying your rent. If so, claim immediately.
- If you wish to pay by Direct Debit fill in a Direct Debit form. Contact us for a form.
- Inform the local gas, electricity and water companies of your new address
- Ensure the Local Council is aware that you have moved into your new home so that it can amend its Voting and Council Tax records
- Note down the reading on all meters in case there is a problem later
- Give your new address to your Bank, Building Society, etc.
- If you have just moved into the area, register with a local doctor and dentist

Each tenant receives a comprehensive 'Welcome Pack'. Useful telephone numbers are listed in the 'Welcome to Penwith Housing Association' leaflet.

The Housing Corporation's Tenants' Guarantee

The Tenants' Guarantee is a code of practice and minimum standards set out by the Housing Corporation who check on what registered Housing Associations do. Penwith Housing Association fully supports the Tenants' Guarantee and we have taken up all its requirements.

These include:-

- Housing provided by Penwith Housing Association meets local needs and conditions
- Penwith Housing Association's policies and procedures for selecting tenants will be open, fair and based on housing need
- Policies and procedures will provide equality of opportunity to all sections of the community, with particular regard to race, age, ethnic origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation or disability
- Rents will be set and maintained at levels which are within Housing Corporation guidelines
- Penwith Housing Association will provide a responsive repairs service to tenants with clearly defined service standards and timescales
- Tenants will be consulted about changes in management and maintenance that will affect them
- Tenants will be informed in clear terms of Penwith Housing Association's policies and procedures
- Penwith Housing Association will actively pursue equality of opportunity for all and will act against all form of discrimination including harassment.

You can obtain a copy of the Housing Corporation's Tenants' Guarantee from us. Your tenancy agreement is a legal contract, please take care to abide by it or you could lose your home.

Penwith Housing Association aim to provide affordable housing, an excellent housing service for tenants and to work in partnership with the wider community.



Conditions of tenancy – a brief outline

Our duties are to:-

- *Keep the structure and exterior of your property in good repair*
- *Keep in good repair and working order all existing installations for heating, hot water and sanitation and for the supply of water, gas and electricity*
- *Respect your contractual and statutory rights*
- *Respect your right to possession and quiet enjoyment of your property*

We have the right to:-

- *Change rent and other charges provided four weeks' notice is given. Rent can only be changed once a year.*
- *Be given access to the property in order to carry out inspections or repairs, provided:*
 - *this is at a reasonable time*
 - *proper notice is given to the tenant or where there is an emergency*

Your duties are to:-

- *Pay the rent promptly and regularly*
- *Take care of the property and any garden included in the tenancy*
- *Repair or replace items damaged through neglect or carelessness, either by you or other occupants or visitors*
- *Keep the interior of the property in a reasonable state of decoration*
- *Carry out repairs for which tenants are responsible*
- *Cause no nuisance or annoyance to neighbours*
- *Cause no harassment or offence to others, including staff, on grounds of race, ethnic origin, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation or disability*
- *Use the premises for residential purposes only*
- *When leaving your home, give Penwith Housing Association four weeks' notice in writing and leave the premises in a reasonable condition*

You have the right to:-

- *Exercise your contractual and statutory rights*
- *Enjoy peaceful occupation of the property*

This is only an outline. Full details are in your tenancy agreement. If you cannot find your tenancy agreement, just ask us for a copy.

Reasons for Eviction

You cannot be evicted from your home except by a court order. Generally, a court has to be satisfied that there are specific grounds for repossession and that it is reasonable, in the circumstances, to grant a possession order.

The most common grounds are:-

- *Failure to pay rent*
- *Nuisance to, or harassment of, neighbours or staff*
- *Damage to the property*
- *Obtaining the tenancy by making false statements*
- *Any other breach of the tenancy agreement*

We do not want you to lose your home and will only seek a possession order as a last resort and after due written warning.

Procedure for Possession

Before a county court will grant a possession order, Penwith Housing Association and the court must follow certain procedures:-

- *We must first issue you with a 'Notice of Seeking Possession' which must give:-*
 - the reasons for serving the Notice
 - the date at least four weeks ahead, after which Penwith Housing Association may start court proceedings
- *We will then either decide not to proceed if matters have been resolved or notify you that we intend to take the matter to court*
- *If we decide to take action, the court will write to you giving a date for the 'hearing'*
- *At the hearing, the court will:-*
 - allow you to put your side of the case
 - decide whether to grant Penwith Housing Association a possession order
 - decide on any conditions to be attached to such an order
- *If the case is referred to court, you will be liable for costs.*

You should seek legal advice and representation if you go to court.

Payment of Rent

You are responsible for paying your rent. If you have trouble paying your rent, contact the Income Recovery team on the number shown on the back page of this booklet.

For further details please read the information leaflet entitled 'Rent Arrears'.

Rent payments can be made at any of the following places:

- *Any PHA Cash Office*
- *Any Post Office*
- *Paypoint outlets - Look for logo at shops, supermarkets and garages*
- *PayZone Outlets - Look for logo at shops, supermarkets and garages*
- *Internet at www.penwithha.org.uk*
- *Telephone to allpay.net on Tel: 0870 243 6040*

Direct Debit

Why not pay by Direct Debit? Please contact us to register.

Anti-Social Behaviour and Harassment

Anti-social behaviour by others that unreasonably interferes with your rights (or your friends or neighbours) to the enjoyment and use of your home and your community. This can include harassment, noise nuisance, abusive or intimidating behaviour, threats of or actual violence, drunken or drug-induced behaviour and criminal offences.

Penwith Housing Association will investigate and attempt to sort out incidents of anti-social behaviour using mediation and legal powers where appropriate.

The Association will work together with other people such as the Police, Local Councils and Social Services to resolve anti-social behaviour whenever possible.

For more information please see the leaflet entitled 'Dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour'.

Joint Tenants

Tenants may be sole tenants or they may be joint tenants of the Association.

Tenants wishing to apply for a joint tenancy should complete a 'Request for a Joint Tenancy' form.

Where a joint tenancy exists, each joint tenant will be jointly and also separately liable for all duties and obligations under the tenancy. For example, one joint tenant will be legally responsible for all of the rent owed on the property, not just his or her share of it.

Assured Tenancies

Where you have an assured tenancy, you can stay in your home for as long as you wish provided you do not break your tenancy agreement. You cannot be evicted from your home except by a court order. A court can grant a possession order only on specific grounds. If the court order is not kept to, full security of tenure will be lost.

Where you have an assured shorthold tenancy, your tenancy may be time-limited depending on circumstance. If you break your tenancy agreement the tenancy may be ended without the need to obtain a court order.

Tenants' Rights

Access to and Control of Personal Information

Penwith Housing Association holds information about you. In accordance with the Data Protection Act all personal information that we hold will be treated as confidential and not passed on to a third party except those working on Penwith Housing Association's behalf or if we must pass it on for a legal reason.

You can see any of your personal information relating to your tenancy held on our files, just make a written request. When you have seen the files, if there is any wrong information you can have it put right.

If we disagree with any change you wish to make, we will record your views about it in our files.

We may charge you a fee when you ask to see full details of any information held on our files.

Succession of Tenancy

If a tenant dies, a close member of the family can take over the tenancy provided that they can prove that they have lived in the home for at least 12 months before the death and there have been no other previous successions.

Normally this applies to the surviving husband, wife or partner of the deceased who may not have been named as a joint tenant.

Other relatives are also eligible if they were a permanent member of the deceased's household. A joint tenancy automatically transfers to a surviving joint tenant.

The 'successor' will need to contact us to arrange the succession.

Consultation

We will advise you of any plans that affect you and your home. We will allow you time to give your views and take account of any points made, before final decisions are made.

We will consult you on changes to:

- *The terms of your tenancy agreement*
- *Any modernisation or improvement to your home*
- *Any housing management policy, eg. repairs, priorities, repair responsibilities, etc. that affect you.*

Consultation may be done by letter, Penwith Housing Association Newsletters, home visit or through meetings with residents' groups, panels and the Penwith Tenants' Committee, depending on how many tenants are affected and the nature of the changes proposed.

Preserved Right-to-Buy

Tenants who were secure tenants of Penwith District Council when their properties were transferred to Penwith Housing Association on 16 May 1994 retain, in certain circumstances, the Right-to-Buy their homes. This is known as the 'Preserved Right-to-Buy'. You continue to have this right if you move to another Penwith Housing Association property that was in their ownership at that time (except for sheltered accommodation) to any local authority property or to another Housing Association that offers the Right-to-Buy.

If you became a tenant of Penwith Housing Association after the 16 May 1994, you do not have the Right-to-Buy.

Homebuy

The Housing Corporation have introduced a scheme called 'Homebuy' as a way of helping Housing Association tenants onto the ladder of home ownership.

The scheme gives tenants who qualify a fixed grant towards purchase of a suitable home. This grant buys a share of the property which makes the cost lower for the buyer. The grant has to be paid back when the property is sold. The scheme is carried out by Housing Associations in Cornwall and looked after by Devon and Cornwall Housing Association. Contact us for further information.

Voluntary Purchase Grant (VPG) and the Right to Acquire (RTA)

The Housing Corporation also provides very limited funding for two other schemes to assist tenants buying a home. Contact us for more information.

Lodgers and Sub-letting

You can take in lodgers with Penwith Housing Association's consent provided you do not overcrowd your home. Sub-letting is not allowed.

You must tell us the name, age and sex of any lodger you have in your home. Lodgers share your home with you like any member of the family. They have limited rights of occupation and do not have sole use of their room. If you give them a part of the house for their use only, that is sub-letting. Sub-letting is not allowed and this means you would be breaking your tenancy agreement.

Any income from lodgers must be declared and may affect any housing and other benefits you receive.

Your Home

House Contents Insurance

A domestic crisis can quickly turn into a disaster if you are not insured. You are strongly advised to take out Contents Insurance.

Penwith Housing Association insures the structure of your home but not the contents. You are strongly advised to take out an insurance policy to cover loss or damage to your belongings by fire, theft or water. Insurance can also cover decorations within the home and broken glass that Penwith Housing Association does not replace.

If a pipe bursts, Penwith Housing Association will not normally be responsible for any damage to your belongings – only for repairing the burst pipe and any associated redecoration.

Penwith Housing Association runs a Contents Insurance scheme in partnership with an insurance company that offers a low rate for cover and you can pay in instalments. Information on this scheme is available from Penwith Housing Association's Customer Services team.

Decorating

Please keep the inside of your home well decorated and clean.

You are responsible for:-

- *Painting and wallpapering walls regularly*
- *Filling in cracks or small holes in walls, particularly where shelves or pictures have hung.*
- *Painting woodwork inside your home, particularly windows, every few years.*

What Penwith Housing Association is responsible for:-

- *We carry out decoration works outside the home to every property approximately every five years. Where external walls have been painted before, they will be pressure-washed every five years and painted every ten years.*
- *If we carry out repair work which causes damage to your decorations, we will carry out redecoration to those areas affected or help towards the cost of you doing the work yourself.*
- *It is part of our contractors' job to 'make good' any damage caused during repair work. Please let us know straight away if there is a problem following the repair work.*

Adaptations for the Disabled

If you are elderly or for some other reason are having problems moving about your home and you require some adaptation work, contact the Customer Services team for help.

We have a small annual budget for adaptations. An Occupational Therapist from the Health Authority or Social Services Department may be asked to visit you and carry out an assessment. You will be informed of what work is agreed and when it will be done. If the work requires a major adaptation, it will need to be paid for by a Grant. We will help you to apply for a Disabled Facility Grant through your local council.

Examples of work undertaken are:- handrails, ramps and level access showers.

Health & Safety in the Home

Take steps to make your home a safe and comfortable place to live in.

We want you to feel safe and happy in your home.

We will do our best to make your home safe and secure by keeping the areas for which we are responsible maintained and secure. We need you to report any repairs to us at the earliest opportunity.

If you have gas central heating, we will carry out an annual service to make sure that the equipment is safe.

It is a fact that more people are injured in their own homes than anywhere else. You can play your part in stopping this happening to you and your family.

There are lots of potential fire hazards. To minimise the risk of fire in your home, you are advised not to use paraffin or bottled gas heaters. You should also avoid storing flammable substance in your home, garage or shed.

If at any time you smell gas in or outside your home, you should telephone the gas services immediately.

Smoke Alarms save Lives

Where no smoke alarm exists, we strongly recommend that you fit smoke alarms in your home. You can buy inexpensive smoke alarms from supermarkets, DIY stores and hardware shops. Make sure that they conform to the standard BS5446 Part 1 and that you follow the manufacturer's instructions for testing and changing the battery.

Take Care with DIY

DIY and gardening cause hundreds of accidents each year. Remember that some work will require permission from us before you start. This is because we may need to check plans for hidden electrical cables or other hazards which could cause injury or harm you.

Asbestos

Asbestos was used in building materials up until the mid-1980's and, as long as it is undamaged, it is safe. Penwith Housing Association has procedures for managing asbestos which include surveying buildings to identify where asbestos is present so that we can decide the safest way to deal with it. If you have any concerns about the possibility of asbestos in your home you should contact the Customer Services team.

Emergencies

It is a good idea to keep a list of emergency numbers handy to prevent delays in getting help for emergency repairs to gas, water, electricity services and any other incident which could affect your safety as well as your neighbours.

Carrying out your own Improvements

You may carry out improvements to your home provided you have our written permission.

All proposals for alterations to your home must be submitted for approval before you start work. Some typical improvements include:- *putting up extra kitchen cupboards, fitting a TV/radio aerial or satellite dish, building a driveway or car port.*

You do not require permission for internal decorations.

If you remove any of Penwith Housing Association's fittings, we may require you to replace them at the end of your tenancy.

We will only refuse permission for reasons of safety or detriment to the property. You should also check if you need to obtain Planning Permission and Building Regulations approval. You are responsible for applying to the local council for these. You will need to submit full details and plans, if appropriate, to us and the council, together with the name(s) of those who will carry out the work. If you would like to discuss your plans please contact us. You must not start work before you have our permission.

We may accept the responsibility for maintaining particular installations, especially central heating and gas fires, provided:-

- *You obtain our permission first*
- *The work is properly carried out by a contractor approved by us*
- *It only requires maintenance that we would normally carry out*
- *You agree to leave it intact at the end of the tenancy*

You will be asked to sign an agreement for this.

Looking after your Personal Garden

We are responsible for repairing:

- *Access paths and steps to your front and back door (not patios or garden paths)*
- *Fences bordering Penwith Housing Association land and public rights of way*
- *Maintaining our dividing fences*

You are responsible for looking after your own garden:

- *Keeping it tidy and cultivated and free of rubbish*
- *Making sure shrubs, hedges and trees do not become a nuisance to neighbours*
- *Not removing any trees or large shrubs without the written consent of Penwith Housing Association.*
- *Maintaining garden paths and patios*
- *If you keep a dog, making sure that when it is in the garden it does not become a nuisance to neighbours*

You will need to obtain permission to:

- *Erect a large shed, greenhouse or store*
- *Lay a path or patio*
- *Install a driveway or parking space*

Car Parking

If there are designated parking areas, please use these to ensure easy access for emergency vehicles

If you have parked in a prohibited area or you cause an obstruction for emergency vehicles your car may be removed

Most estate roads are public roads. Untaxed vehicles are subject to prosecution by the Police and will be towed away

Car parking areas are not to be used to carry out extensive repairs to vehicles

Parking of larger commercial vehicles and lorries is not permitted within residential areas

Any abandoned or untaxed vehicles will be removed.

Rubbish and Litter

All household refuse must be disposed of in the bins provided unless you take it to recycling facilities or a refuse centre.

Household rubbish is collected weekly by the local council who is also responsible for cleaning the streets and generally dealing with litter and any tipped rubbish. The Council will take away larger items for you by arrangement, subject to a small fee.

Alternatively, there are refuse centres (or civic amenity sites) where you can take any rubbish or items for recycling.

Bin stores are cleaned out regularly. If there is any dumped rubbish around your estate let us know so we can arrange for it to be cleared away.

Living in Flats

We don't expect neighbours to be best friends but by having mutual respect and consideration living in a flat can be easy.

We ask you to:

- *Keep staircases and other areas clean and tidy*
- *Not obstruct the entrance hall, staircase or landings*

To minimise noise and nuisance by:-

- *Keeping the volume of records, radios and TVs at reasonable levels*
- *Using refuse collection areas properly and making sure surrounding areas are not left in an untidy state*
- *Not allowing anything to be thrown or dropped from balconies or windows*

Communal Areas

We are responsible for the care and maintenance of common entrances, halls, stairways, lifts, passageways, access pathways, waste and drain covers, communal gardens and any other common parts including electric lighting.

We employ cleaners to look after some communal areas. If you live in a flat, you and your neighbours are responsible for keeping your own landing and balconies clean. If we have to have them cleaned, the cost will be passed on to you as a service charge. Where there is a cleaning service, entrance halls and stairs will be cleaned on a regular cycle. To find out who is responsible for your estate and how to contact them, contact our Customer Services team.

Your local council is responsible for main roadways and footpaths giving access to your property, street lighting, grass verges and public open spaces.

Lifts and Door entry systems

We employ a specialist firm to maintain lifts. If there is an emergency, you hear the alarm or there are any other problems, contact us as shown on the back page.

Door entry systems are installed to control entry into a building.

To maintain security:

- *Make sure that the door is shut behind you*
- *Only allow access either from your flat or at the main entrance if you know the visitor*
- *Never leave the entrance door open or propped open*

If you lose your communal door key or fob we can provide another but we do make a charge for this. Proof of identification will be required.

The Law and Animals

You are allowed to keep domestic pets in houses and some flats although, if you live in sheltered accommodation, you will require permission beforehand. We expect pet owners to ensure that pets do not cause any nuisance to neighbours or the local community.

Please remember that:

- *Certain types of dogs need to be registered*
- *Outside your home, dogs must be kept on a leash or at least under control*
- *Dogs must wear identification showing how to contact the owner*
- *Court action may be taken if your dog fouls public areas, harms anyone or disturbs neighbours*
- *Remember that exotic pets need careful looking after. If you want to keep more than one pet, make sure that you have adequate space.*

Home Security

Most burglaries are made through doors and windows, usually through the back of the property.

These are some simple measures to take:

- *When leaving your home, make sure that all windows and doors are properly secured. Don't forget your keys because the Association does not keep a spare set*
- *Consider fitting a burglar alarm, mortice locks and window locks.*
- *If you are going away, try to get a neighbour to keep an eye on your home*
- *Try to prevent obvious signs that the property is empty, such as milk bottles on the step or newspapers in the door*
- *Join a Neighbourhood Watch scheme or even consider setting one up.*

Free advice is available on how to secure your home from the Police Crime Prevention officer.

Major Works and Improvements

If we are planning to carry out major work to your home, you will be contacted and details of the work involved will be explained. You will be consulted about the work and any choices you may have.

In some exceptional circumstances we may have to move you so that we can carry out works. If this happens we will:

- *Reimburse you for the cost of removals plus a 'home loss' payment*
- *If possible, before you move, you will be given the choice of returning to your home*
- *Your rent during any temporary rehousing period will be no more than the rent you normally pay.*

Bogus Callers

Some criminals trick their way into homes so they can steal. This simple guide may help you avoid this problem.

- **Do** use a door chain and spyhole if you have one. Sheltered tenants should discuss the use of door chains with their warden
- **Do** ask callers for their identity card
- **Do** refuse entry to a stranger or someone you are not sure of
- **Do** ring the police if you are not sure about the claims of someone calling at the door.

and

- **Do not** allow anyone into YOUR home if you are not happy about them
- **Do not** believe someone claiming to be an official without the proper identification
- **Do not** part with cash on the promise that work will be done in the future
- **Do not** keep more money in the house than you need.

Always check that people visiting your home are genuine. All the Association's staff and contractors will be able to show you their identity cards. Make sure you ask to see it before you let them into your home.

Remember, a genuine caller will never mind you taking precautions.

Home Safety Advice

Keep all medicines, plastic bags, sharp objects, matches and cigarette lighters out of reach of children

When cooking, do not leave handles of cooking pots sticking out where they can be knocked

Do not switch off electric appliances with wet hands

Do not leave electric cables trailing across a room

Never attempt to use an electrical appliance without a plug

Switch off all electric mains switches before changing a fuse

Do not leave toys or other objects on the stairs

Never open or close a door by pushing on the glass

In winter, ensure dripping overflows do not form icy patches (remember that the Association will repair overflows).

Energy Efficiency

Penwith Housing Association produces an energy advice leaflet which contains information on:

- *Savings on water consumption*
- *Making best use of heating systems*
- *Using thermostats and controls*

PHA also has a dedicated FREEPHONE number which can be used to obtain impartial energy advice - see the back page for details.

Guarding Against Fire

Electrical Appliances

Some electrical appliances have been designed to be left on all the time. All other electrical appliances should be switched off and unplugged when you are not using them.

Never remove a plug by pulling the flex. Always use the plug.

Remember – one socket, one plug. You could start a fire by putting several adaptors into one socket. Always use the right size fuse in a plug.

Look for Warning Signs of Dangerous Wiring – hot plugs, fuses blowing, lights flickering and scorch marks on plugs and sockets. Do not run electrical cable where you cannot see it.

Around the home

Make sure there are adequate, secure fireguards for all fires and heaters.

Place portable heaters where they will not be knocked over, away from exits, furniture and furnishings and where no objects can fall onto them.

Take care with lit cigarette or pipes.

Make sure chip pans are no more than one-third full of fat or oil and do not leave the pan unattended. If the pan does catch fire do not throw water on to it or move it. Turn off the heat if you can safely do so, cover the pan with a damp cloth and leave it to cool for at least 30 minutes. Call the Fire Brigade by dialling 999.

Keep matches and lighters well out of reach of children.

Keep fire exits clear at all times and make sure 'Fire Doors' are always closed

Keep paraffin and other flammable liquids in a safe place, preferably outside the house. Fill paraffin appliances outside the home and never move them when alight.

Do not put mirrors above a fire.

You are strongly advised to fit your own smoke alarms and test them regularly. If you fit your own smoke alarm, please notify the Association. Never remove the batteries unless they have proven faulty.

In Case of Fire

- Call the Fire Brigade at once (dial 999).
- Close doors and windows to slow down the spread of heat and smoke.
- Do not open a door if you think there is a fire behind it. A closed door slows down a fire allowing you valuable time to warn others in the building and to get out.
- Do not use water on a fire involving electrical apparatus, fat, oil or spirit. Instead, switch off the gas or electricity supply if a heater or an oven is involved and smother the fire with a mat, woollen blanket or overcoat.
- Do not return to the premises to collect personal possessions or pets. Get out, call the Fire Brigade and stay out.

It is a good idea to keep an approved fire extinguisher or fire blanket in your home. Fight the fire only if you are sure it is safe to do so.

A person whose clothing catches fire should be rolled in a rug, blanket or overcoat. Small burns can be held under a cold running tap to reduce the pain. Serious burns must be covered with a dry cloth and medical aid sought at once.

Condensation

To limit condensation

- Keep each room in your home ventilated and warm
- Dry your clothes outside, if possible. If not, keep the windows open
- When cooking keep lids on saucepans and turn down the heat as soon as the liquid in them has boiled.
- Make sure the steam from your bath or shower can escape out of a window.
- Paraffin and liquid gas appliances produce excessive condensation so make sure that rooms where they are used are well ventilated. If you live in a block of flats, do not use such appliances on safety grounds.
- Mould can be washed down carefully with a mild bleach solution or an appropriate fungicidal wash.
- Make sure that tumble driers are vented to the outside.

Where you have a damp proof course make sure the soil is kept below it. Do not seal or cover up any air bricks or vents, it is better to have a slight draught than damp or condensation.

Moving Out

If you wish to move out of your home, you will be required to give Penwith Housing Association four weeks notice in writing. A 'Notice of Terminating your Tenancy' form is available from the Association. An inspection of your home will be made by appointment to check it meets the conditions of tenancy, such as the standard of decoration etc.. As all tenancies start and end officially on a Monday, if you wish to move out mid-week, you will need to give notice to the following Monday.

If you have a joint tenancy and only one tenant wishes to leave then that person should inform the Association. Speak to your Neighbourhood Manager for further advice.

When you move out you should make sure that the property is in good repair and good decorative order. All furniture and rubbish must be removed before returning the keys to the Association. If you do not clear the property, you will have to pay the standard charge for the removal of the contents in accordance with your Tenancy Agreement.

The following is a useful checklist to follow:-

- Notify the telephone, gas, electricity and water companies that you are leaving the property
- Inform the local authority of your move so that it can amend its Voting, Council Tax and Housing Benefit records
- Note down the readings on your meters personally on the day you leave
- Give your new address to your Bank, Building Society and PHA
- Tell your doctor and dentist your new address
- Hand in your key to the Association no later than noon on Monday or you may be charged an extra week's rent
- Replace or repair any fixtures you have broken or you will be charged for the work by the Association
- Please leave the property clean and in good decorative order – just as you would hope to find your new home

Penwith Housing Association wants you to enjoy your home. If you have any questions or problems just get in touch with us as shown on the back page.