



**TENANT'S HANDBOOK  
AND HOME INFORMATION**

2017

## **1. Welcome to your home**

Welcome to your home. Hall Bros want you to be happy and safe in your home and we hope that you will enjoy living in one of our properties.

This handbook gives you most of the information you need to know about renting your home. It also tells you where to find more information or help about particular issues.

### **Please read it thoroughly!**

If any section of the handbook leaves you wanting more information or raises questions, please contact the office - we are always happy to help you.

### **Please note in particular:**

- Only the person or persons named in the Tenancy Agreement is allowed to reside in the property;
- Excessive noise coming from the property will not be tolerated.

Clauses in the Tenancy Agreement relating to these matters will be fully enacted.

## **2. Moving in**

There are several things you need to do when moving in to one of our properties:

1. You must sign a Tenancy Agreement. We will give you a copy of the signed and dated agreement which you should keep safely because it is an important document which sets out your rights and responsibilities.
2. You must complete an application form which contains information about yourself and your next of kin.
3. You must pay two months rent in advance. This covers the first month of your tenancy and the last month.
4. You must create a Direct Debit with your bank or building society for the monthly rent. We will ask you to complete an Instruction and we will send it to your bank on your behalf.
5. You must notify the utility organisations – Severn Trent (water), EON (electricity), and Coventry City Council (council tax) of the exact date you move in. We will also notify these agencies of these dates to ensure that their record keeping is accurate. We will also pass on to EON the electricity meter readings at the date you moved in.
6. You must make your own arrangements with telephone and internet providers and television licensing.

### **3. Your Tenancy Agreement**

Your Tenancy Agreement is a legal document and you should take the time to find out what rights it gives you and what you are responsible for. We use a type of tenancy agreement called an Assured Shorthold Tenancy.

A Tenancy Agreement in two names is called a joint tenancy, because both parties are jointly responsible for all aspects of the tenancy, for example, the payment of rent and the behaviour of visitors.

### **4. Your rent**

#### **How do I pay my rent?**

We prefer that all rents are paid by monthly Direct Debit.

Payments are regularly checked so we will know if you are falling behind with your payments.

#### **What if I fall behind with my rent?**

If you do find that you have problems in paying you should tell us immediately, so we can agree a way of assisting you to get back on track.

If you fall behind with your rent but do not contact us, we will contact you. We will write to you telling you what your arrears are and ask you to contact us. If no effort is made to repay the rent, then legal action will be taken to recover the money that you owe. If you still do not pay, then this will lead to eviction. We will go to court for permission to legally evict you.

### **5. Your rights and responsibilities**

#### **What are my rights as a tenant?**

- You have the right to privacy and respect for the way you live, as long as it does not interfere with the rights of others.
- The right to safe and well-maintained housing and for repairs to be carried out within the timescale set by Hall Bros, depending on their urgency.
- The right to be safe and free from harassment.

#### **In return we ask you to:**

- Pay your rent on time.
- Keep your home in good condition.
- Be considerate to your neighbours.
- Take responsibility for your visitors.
- Report repairs/broken equipment to the office.

- Keep noise and disturbance to a minimum.
- Ensure that your dustbins are properly filled and made available to be emptied by the Council.
- Take responsibility for your house keys and hand them all back at the conclusion of the tenancy.
- Agree with our representatives a time and date for handing over the property at the conclusion of the tenancy.

## 6. Fire precautions

It is important that you are aware of the risks from fire in the property and that you know what to do if fire breaks out. All our properties are fitted with smoke alarms. These are vital lifesaving devices and **should never be tampered with**. Also, you should:

- **Never** leave cooking unattended, and avoid leaving children in the kitchen alone with cooking on the hob.
- Be especially vigilant when cooking with oil. Your tenancy agreement forbids the use of chip pans and these should never be used. **Never** throw water on a cooking oil fire.
- Make sure cigarettes are put out properly, use a proper ashtray and **never** smoke in bed.
- Don't overload electrical sockets.
- Turn off appliances when not in use. Don't even leave them on standby.
- Keep matches and lighters out of reach and sight of children.
- Make sure any candles are secured in a proper holder and away from materials that may catch fire – like curtains. Children should not be left alone with lit candles.
- Test your smoke alarm once a week. If it is not working telephone Hall Bros.
- Keep the exit route from your flat clear so you can escape in an emergency.
- Close doors at night, especially the doors to the lounge and kitchen to prevent fire spreading.

### Keep safe and plan your escape

Plan your escape NOW. Be prepared and don't wait until it happens. Your flat is in a building designed to be fire-resisting. A fire should not spread from one flat to another, so that you need not leave your home if there is a fire elsewhere in the block. That said, if in doubt, get out. Always leave if your flat is affected by smoke or heat or if told to by the fire service. Your stairway is designed to be safe for escape throughout the course of a fire. Always use the stairway to descend to ground level if escaping.

## 7. Insurance

Hall Bros is responsible for insuring the building in which you live, but we are not responsible for insuring your personal contents, decoration and belongings.

We strongly advise that you take out your own personal household insurance. This should cover you against burglaries, damage to your belongings if you have a fire or other accident, and damage caused to or by other people.

## 8. Smoking

We have a non-smoking policy and ask tenants not to smoke in the property as this can cause unpleasantness for succeeding tenants. Smoking in any **communal areas is strictly forbidden by law** and this must be adhered to.

## 9. Access to the property by Hall Bros

Please note that as landlords we have a right to access the property for the purpose of maintenance and for other reasons. We will give you reasonable notice of this, normally at least 24 hours.

We also need to carry out periodic inspections of the condition of the property, for example where gas is installed our contractors need to carry out annual gas inspections.

## 10. Electricity

Your electricity supplier is normally EON. **Please do not change your supplier without notifying us.**

Your electricity is controlled by highly sensitive circuit breakers. These switch off if there is a slight fault in any appliance, such as a toaster, iron etc. If this occurs, to reset, simply switch all the circuit breakers to the off position and switch them all on again, one by one.

## 11. Car parking

In most properties there is a non-allocated car parking space for each apartment. This is provided for one private, roadworthy, taxed and insured car belonging to you. We would ask that when guests/visitors arrive you would ask them to park with due consideration to all other tenants. Under no circumstances may commercial vehicles be parked on the site.

## 12. Balconies

If you have a balcony it must be kept clean and tidy. Under no circumstances should washing, or any other items, be placed over the balcony or French door rails. No items, other than plant pots, should be kept permanently on the balconies.

### **13. Leaving your home**

When you move out of your home, for whatever reason, you must give us a minimum of one calendar month written notice of your intention to leave. In cases where there is a joint tenancy agreement, a notice to terminate a tenancy by one tenant will end the tenancy of all joint tenants.

#### **If you move to another Hall Bros property**

This will incur an internal moving charge of £100, payable before you move.

When you leave your home, you are responsible for the following:

- √ Clearing your home including any loft spaces, sheds, garages and garden of all your personal belongings.
- √ Putting right any damage that has occurred, for example, making good the walls where shelves etc., have been taken down.
- √ Ensuring decorations are left in good order.
- √ Cleaning all surfaces, fixtures and fittings, including bath, toilet, basin, kitchen units/sink, etc.

If you do not meet any of these responsibilities, we will re-charge you for any work that you should have done. We will arrange to inspect your home before you move out and agree these details with you. We will also require a forwarding address and contact number.

Before you leave your home for the last time you need to ensure you have:

- √ Read any gas, electric and water meters and send the readings on to your suppliers so they can close your accounts with them.
- √ Told Coventry City Council for the purposes of council tax.
- √ Told other service providers such as telephone and television services.
- √ Re-directed your post to your new address (the Post Office will help with this). It is in your own interest to ensure this re-direction. Once you have left the property, there is no guarantee that posted mail will remain confidential to yourself.

You also need to ensure that your rent account is up to date. You are responsible for rent up to the last day of your tenancy and we will still seek outstanding rent after you have left the property.

**Finally, please return keys no later than midday on the day of your departure or you will be liable for additional rent.**

## **Useful telephone numbers**

### **Hall Bros:**

The address of our office is:

Hall Bros  
2 The Square Business Centre  
Manfield Avenue  
Walsgrave  
Coventry  
CV2 2QJ

Office telephone	024 7661 2121
Email address	info@hallbrothers.co.uk

### **Coventry City Council:**

Council Tax Department	024 7683 1111
Other departments	024 7683 3333

**Severn Trent Water:** 08457 500 500

**EoN:** 0345 3033020

**BT:** 0800 800 150

**Emergency Contact:**  
**TO BE USED ONLY IN CASES OF ABSOLUTE**  
**EMERGENCY— 07981 738076**