

Guidance Notes – Ending your Tenancy

You must complete a 'Termination of Tenancy' form giving 4 full weeks' notice if you are moving to:

- Housing Association accommodation
- Another Council property that is not within your current council district
- Private rented accommodation
- A nursing or care home
- Accommodation with family or friends

The 4 weeks' notice must always take effect from a Monday and your termination date must also be a Monday. Your notice period can only start once we have received your signed termination form. Termination forms can only be signed by the tenant(s) or a person with Power of Attorney. If completed by a Power of Attorney we will need to see proof of this status.

Cleaning & clearing the property

The property, including the loft, must be left clean and clear of rubbish and all personal belongings, including white goods and furniture. Carpets should be taken up and removed from the property. Gardens should also be cleared of personal belongings and rubbish; the grass should be cut and any trees, bushes or hedges cut back to a reasonable standard. Sheds and outbuildings should be cleared of all personal belongings. Any medical aids, such as bath seats, should be returned to NHS supplies or Social Services.

Any items that are left in the property, gardens, sheds or outbuildings will be regarded as unwanted and may be disposed of. Please note that you will be charged for the cost of disposal.

Any repairs that you are responsible for, as the tenant, should be completed and any alterations should be reinstated, unless agreed otherwise in advance. **If we need to carry out repairs because of damage or alterations to the property you will be charged for the cost of the repairs.** At the end of this guidance note is a list of approximate costs that may be charged if we need to repair or clear the property.

Please ensure that final gas, electricity and water meter readings are taken and **leave all gas and electricity meter keys in the meters, as these cannot be transferred to a new property.** Please note that we will share your data with utility companies so final bills can be calculated. You can find full details of how we use and share the information you give us on our web site at www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk.

Please close all windows and doors and ensure that the property is securely locked.

Advertising the property

As soon as we receive a signed termination form we will advertise the property on the Kent Homechoice website so we can find a new tenant. This is because the process of re-letting the property takes a number of weeks – and with thousands of people on the housing waiting list we have a duty to fill empty properties as quickly as possible. We hope you understand our reasons for this. If anybody contacts you asking to view your property, having seen it advertised online, please do not show them around. A member of the Neighbourhood Management Team will carry out viewings with any potential new tenants once you have returned the keys.

Rent and benefits payments

Full rent continues to be charged during the notice period. If the keys are not returned by midday (12 noon) on the agreed termination date, an amount equivalent to the weekly rent and service charge will continue to be charged until the keys have been returned. If you are responsible for paying the rent please ensure this is paid up in full. If you are in any doubt about the amount payable, please contact the Income team on 01303 853 300 or via email at Housing.Income@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk.

If you are in receipt of Housing Benefit or the housing element of Universal Credit (UC) please tell the Council's benefits department or the Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) that you are moving. Folkestone & Hythe District Council will not notify these departments. You will need to discuss your entitlement to any benefits during the termination period with the relevant department.

Other things to consider

As well as benefits departments you may need to inform a number of other companies/organisations that you are moving, including:

- Gas, electricity and water providers – please take your own final meter readings
- Telephone, broadband, sky/cable TV providers
- Doctors, hospitals, dentists, opticians, schools
- Royal Mail – please arrange for mail to be redirected, if necessary
- Banks, building societies and credit card companies

Returning keys

Clearly labelled keys should be returned to the main Council offices no later than 12 noon on the Monday the tenancy ends. Keys should be returned on a Friday or a Monday if possible, as we have staff available on these days to accept keys. If keys are not returned on time the Council will continue to charge you rent for the property. **You can return the keys early but please be aware that our maintenance contractors may start work in the property immediately.**

Recharges

Below are examples of approximate costs that may be charged to the deceased tenants' estate if the property is not returned clean and in a good state of repair and decoration (except for any repairs that are the responsibility of Folkestone & Hythe District Council). This list does not cover all of the things that may be recharged but gives examples of the most common issues.

Replacing internal doors, if the doors were changed or damaged	£118 per door
Removing a garden shed or greenhouse which you put up	£94 – minimum, depending on the size and amount to be cleared
Filling in a pond	£48 per square metre
Clearing rubbish, furniture or other belongings from your property. If there are large items or a large amount of items left this charge will increase.	£94 – minimum, depending on the amount of items to be cleared

Clearing rubbish from your garden. If the clearance needs to be removed in a skip, you will also be charged this cost	£94 – minimum £198 – per skip
Clearing a loft	£58
Clearing an outside store	£29 – per store
Removing wall lights, non-standard DIY electrical fittings, for example: metal light switches, plug sockets, down lighters and any non-standard light fitting	£19 – per light fitting £12 – per double socket
Removing shelving	£4 – per shelf
Removing wall cabinets	£6 – per cabinet
Floor covering can only be left with the agreement of your neighbourhood manager, if FHDC have to remove floor covering that you have left, the costs are: Floor tiles Other types of floor coverings	£5.82 – per square metre £56
Removing graffiti	£6 – per square metre