

# What to do when a **tenant dies**



## 1 First Steps

You should notify Stockport Homes and Stockport Council about a tenant's death as soon as possible using the contact details below:

 **Stockport Homes Group**  Call **0161 217 6016**  
Cornerstone  
2 Edward Street  
Stockport  
SK13NQ  or email **neighbourhoods@stockporthomes.org**

### Stockport Council Registrars

 Visit **www.stockport.gov.uk**  
 Tell Us Once Service **0161 474 3363** or **0161 474 3370**

To bring a tenancy to an end, you will need to provide a copy of the death certificate, name and address of the next of kin/person dealing with the deceased tenant's affairs, and the date it is anticipated that the keys will be handed in.

### For residents of Stockport Homes' Sheltered Housing or 60+ Schemes, please contact:

 **Independent Living Team**  Call **0161 218 1465**  
Cornerstone  
2 Edward Street  
Stockport  
SK13NQ  or email **independentlivingteam@stockporthomes.org**

## 2 Ending the tenancy – Advice for Next of Kin

When a tenant has died, tenancies end on the Sunday after the keys are handed in providing a completed tenancy termination form has already been completed. If you hand the keys in on a Monday before 10.00am the tenancy can end the Sunday before. All keys and fobs, including those to store cupboards, garages, sheds, post boxes and communal doors etc must be returned.

The usual four weeks' notice period is not required where a tenant has died.

Rent will remain due until the tenancy ends and the keys and tenancy termination form have been returned to Stockport Homes. If there are rent or water charges due on the account when the tenancy has ended, including arrears, these will need to be paid out of any money left by the deceased tenant (their estate) This payment does not need to be made until the will and other legal matters have been sorted out.

### Before ending the tenancy there are things that you need to do to prevent or limit any additional charges occurring.

- ▶ Clear out all furniture and rubbish including any sheds, outhouses, lofts etc.
- ▶ Take a reading of the electric and gas meters to provide to the energy supplier and arrange payment for all gas and electric bills up to the date the tenancy ends
- ▶ Turn off the water at the stopcock
- ▶ Close/lock the windows and outside doors
- ▶ Notify the Post Office where any further mail should be sent.

## 3 Help with Housing Costs

Housing Benefit or housing costs (Universal Credit) will end on the Monday following the death of a tenant. Rent will continue to be charged until the keys are returned and tenancy termination form completed and returned. It is therefore important that the next of kin who are responsible for dealing with these affairs, return the keys as quickly as possible to prevent rent arrears accruing unnecessarily.

For tenants who have had some or all of their rent covered by Housing Benefit or Universal Credit it's important to notify the relevant department know as soon as possible to avoid overpayment of benefits.

 **Housing Benefits**  Call **0161 217 6015**  
Stockport Council  
Benefits Section  
PO Box  
Stockport  
SK1 3ZY  or email **benefits@stockport.gov.uk**

## 4 Donating Unwanted Furniture

Stockport Homes Furniture Recycling Team collects and recycles donations of furniture and appliances in good condition. Collection is free.

To make a donation, complete the web page below

-  Visit **www.sk-y-light.org/furniture/donate-furniture**
-  Or email **furniture.donations@stockporthomes.org**
-  Or scan the **QR Code**



**Stockport Council's Environmental Services** can move bulky items, such as a sofa, wardrobes etc; there is a charge for this service depending on the number of items to be removed. If you claim certain benefits, a discount can be applied.

### For more information, contact the Council's Environmental Services Department

 Call **0161 217 6111**  
 or email **stockportdirect@stockport.gov.uk**

Phone lines are open Monday to Friday from 8.00am - 6.00pm

### Below is a list of charities that can move bulky items for you

**St Ann's Hospice** (can collect furniture and electrical (not gas) items)

 Call **0161 445 7990**  or email **righttobuy@stockport.gov.uk**

### Age UK

 Call **01772 552 850**  Visit **www.ageisjustanumber.org.uk/furniture-collection**

### The British Heart Foundation

 Call **0161 638 3059**  Visit **bhf.org.uk**

## 5 Support

Stockport Homes understands that dealing with the death of a family member or close friend as well as clearing a property can be overwhelming. If you are a Stockport Homes tenant, we can offer free, confidential Bereavement Counselling.

 For a referral, please email [neighbourhoods@stockporthomes.org](mailto:neighbourhoods@stockporthomes.org)

## 6 Moving after a bereavement

Some people may want or need to move after the death of someone they have been living with. If this is the case the Neighbourhoods Team can talk to you about the re-housing options available.

## 7 Right-to-buy

If the deceased tenant has applied to buy their home, you will need to tell Stockport Council's Right to Buy Team about the death.

 Call **0161 474 3221**  or email [righttobuy@stockport.gov.uk](mailto:righttobuy@stockport.gov.uk)

## 8 Taking over the tenancy

**Some people may have the legal right to take over a tenancy upon the death of a tenant. These people are:**

- ▶ Anyone who has a joint tenancy with the deceased, spouses/husband, wife or civil partner of the deceased tenant; or the partner or a family member of the deceased (if they lived with the deceased for at least 12 months before they died if their tenancy started before 1st April 2012.
- ▶ If the deceased tenant's tenancy started after 1st April 2012, succession is limited to husband/wife or civil partner only.

Please be aware that succession applies to the 'tenancy' and NOT the property. So, although people may have the right to succeed to the tenancy, if the property does not meet their needs (e.g. it is too large) they will not automatically be allowed to remain.

There is only a legal right to pass on the tenancy once. This means that if the tenant had succeeded to the tenancy e.g. following the death of a spouse/partner or civil partner, or you have taken over a tenancy after a death, the tenancy cannot be passed on again.

If you wish to take over a tenancy upon the death of a tenant, you will need to fill in a request for a 'variation of tenancy form'. If this is agreed, you will then need to sign a succession form to take over the tenancy. The Neighbourhoods Team will assist you and advise you about your legal rights.

If you want to claim Housing Benefit you would also need to complete the relevant application forms. Support can be provided by Stockport Homes Money Advice Team

 Call **0161 217 6016**  Visit [www.stockporthomes.org/advice-support](http://www.stockporthomes.org/advice-support)

## 9 Accessing our services

If you would like a copy in large print, Braille, on audio tape or CD, please contact the Social Inclusion Team

 Call **0161 474 2860**  or email [inclusion@stockporthomes.org](mailto:inclusion@stockporthomes.org)