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Dudley
 Metropolitan Borough Council
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Housing fraud

It is estimated that nationally in the region of 50,000 social rented homes are being occupied or used fraudulently blocking access to affordable homes to those people who need them most. Housing tenancy fraud is estimated to cost the UK £900m every year.

Examples of housing fraud include false applications for housing, unauthorised sub-letting, wrongly claimed succession, key selling and identity fraud.

Three of the most common ways in which people commit housing fraud are:

Not telling the truth when applying for a property

When a person gets a council or housing association property by giving false information in their application they are committing housing fraud. They also commit fraud if they do not tell the council about changes in their circumstances.

Renting out (sub-letting) a property without permission

When a tenant rents out their council property without the knowledge or permission of the council they are 'unlawfully sub-letting'.

For example, the tenant continues to pay rent directly to the council but charges a higher rate to the person they are sub-letting to. The tenant (who should be living in the property) then keeps the extra money.

Living in a property after someone has died without the right to do so

When a tenant dies, fraud happens if someone continues to live in the property without notifying the council. The tenancy can sometimes pass to another family member, this is called 'succession', but the council will decide.

What the council is doing

The council is an active member of the national fraud initiative and undertakes local data matching exercises to identify housing fraud in Dudley. We also work with other social housing providers to share information, data and good practice to prevent and detect housing fraud.

We also undertake identity checks on applicants and existing tenants at appropriate times and carry out key fob exchanges and other practical measures to identify or exclude unauthorised occupants from other properties.

Reporting fraud

You may be suspicious of another tenant if:

- you think they have another home
- you've seen them collect rent from a neighbour
- other people seem to be living at the property
- new people move into the property

If you suspect fraud is taking place you can report it to Housing Services by calling Dudley Council Plus on 0300 555 2345.

You can also use Dudley Council's fraud hotline message service on 01384 814242 or the council website at: www.dudley.gov.uk/fraud

You don't have to give your name or address when reporting suspected fraud.

Tell us - we'll do the rest.

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