Homesitters®

We stay while you're away

Complete peace of mind for you, your pets, and your insurers

Homesitters®
We stay while you're away

Have a homesitter and you'll wonder how you ever managed without.

While you're away, our employees will stay in your home and look after everything – pets, garden and security – providing complete peace of mind for you, your animals and your insurers.

Homesitters is Britain's leading home and pet sitting company, providing complete peace of mind for property owners and their insurers. We have 40 years' experience of looking after our clients' pets and most treasured possessions, and we've completed over 100,000 bookings.

The concept is simple: we provide a live-in service while you're away, so your home is secure and well-maintained and your pets enjoy companionship in familiar surroundings. We have an extensive network of homesitters across England, Wales and Scotland, all meticulously vetted and fully insured, and we provide 24/7 back-up throughout their stay.

Our clients don't just call us when they go on holidays or business trips. We care for homes that are awaiting probate, sale or repossession or are between tenants, and we offer caretakers and site management for empty properties too.

Homesitters can provide homesitters for as long as required – from just a couple of days to months or even years. We normally have a two-day minimum charge, however we also offer a special one-day service for clients attending events such as weddings or funerals, so you can relax in the knowledge that your home and pets are in safe hands.

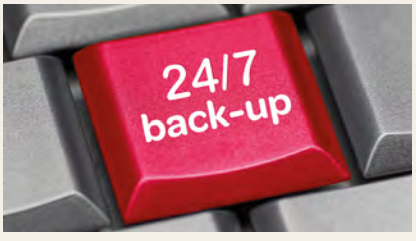
Why use Homesitters?

Happy pets.

Animals are at their most content in their familiar surroundings, following their usual routines.

Security.

Deter burglars, squatters and vandals, guard against burst pipes and weather damage, and potentially reduce your insurance premiums.



Reassurance.

We offer 24/7 back-up and we are fully insured. Our homesitters are trustworthy and fully vetted: they are our employees, not contract workers.

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Our experience, vision and values

Homesitters was established in 1980 to offer a pioneering solution for those concerned about leaving their property vulnerable to burglary or damage, and to offer pet owners an alternative to kennels or catteries. While we may have many imitators, our dedication to quality has ensured that Homesitters remains the number-one choice for property owners and their insurers.

If leaving your possessions with a relative stranger sounds like a daunting prospect, you may rest assured that all Homesitters' employees are meticulously vetted and fully insured, and that we provide 24/7 back-up throughout their stay.

Our service has become an indispensable part of going away for many of our clients. Some have been with us since the 1980s, with the vast majority of new clients rebooking within two years.

At Homesitters, our vision is to deliver an exemplary, high-quality service. Serving our clients for 40 years and now with over 100,000 bookings, we have remained resolutely focused on this goal.

To us, every client is a VIP. We strive to understand their individual needs and to select homesitters who will provide exactly the right service. We are proactive and flexible, always happy to accommodate reasonable requests – for us, the most important rule is to keep our clients happy! Of course, none of this would be possible without our homesitters themselves. We seek to nurture our staff, to trust each other and to be trustworthy in return.

Our team strives to make the Homesitters name synonymous with five core values:

- Total quality control
- Integrity
- Accountability
- Discretion
- Honesty

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Our services: domestic sits

Homesitters provides live-in homesitters to look after fully furnished homes while the owners are away. They safeguard possessions and valuables, and often care for domestic pets, poultry, farm livestock and gardens too, in line with a detailed brief provided by the client.

Unlike some firms, Homesitters is not an agency. Our homesitters are our employees, under our direction and bound by our Terms of Employment while in your home. We keep our homesitters up-to-date with advice and current topics so that they can provide the best possible service for our clients and their pets.

Whatever your requirements, we always provide a homesitter who is suitably experienced for the task at hand – with our extensive network of mature and responsible employees across England, Wales and Scotland, we can offer a diverse range of skills and experience to meet our clients' specific needs.

The presence of our homesitters deters burglars, squatters and vandals, maintaining unrestricted insurance cover and potentially securing reduced premiums. They also guard against weather or water damage and ensure your home is aired and kept in good order, ready to welcome you home at the end of your trip.

Homesitters always carry out their responsibilities in accordance with your instructions. They will be discreet at all times, and fully respect confidentiality. They will not leave your home unoccupied for any period exceeding three consecutive hours during daylight or one hour after dark. Where 24-hour cover is required we can arrange a couple, so that the property is never left unattended.

We are unique in that we have a 24/7 backup telephone service in the unlikely event of a homesitter falling ill. If they need to leave for any reason, a replacement homesitter matching your requirements can be swiftly organised.

Our employees are fit, active and mostly in their 50s, 60s or 70s. In the main they are retired – from a wide range of occupations – and all are securely settled in their own homes. We investigate their backgrounds covering the last 20 years, and take up reliable references from past employers and people of professional or social standing who have known them well for at least 5 years.

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Our services: pet sitting

If you are a pet owner, you are probably reluctant to use kennels, catteries or other boarding establishments. Vets advise that pets are creatures of habit, happiest and healthiest when life is comfortable and straightforward with no surprises. Cats and dogs in particular may worry when suitcases appear, associating them with separation and, worse, a trip to the cattery or kennels.

A dog's natural instinct when a member of their pack goes away is to guard the territory until they return. Being separated from both the territory and the pack can result in significant separation anxiety, presenting in symptoms such as pining, loss of appetite, gnawing, kennel cough, diarrhoea and self-harming.

Domestic cats may appear to be very independent but they too are territorial animals, attached to their home environment and frightened of unfamiliar places and smells. Most cats also appreciate human company – albeit on their own terms! Separation anxiety in cats who are isolated or left in a strange place can result in symptoms such as loss of appetite, spraying, scratching, hiding and excessive meowing.

When you're away, the kindest arrangement for your pets is to leave them at home in familiar surroundings, following their usual routine. That's exactly why Homesitters was set up. We provide a nationwide live-in pet-sitting service throughout the year, for domestic pets, birds and farm animals including poultry. We are particularly skilled with cats and dogs, with over 100,000 bookings' worth of experience, but we are happy to discuss care for all creatures great and small.

Using a homesitter not only ensures the happiness of your pets, it can also simplify your pre-holiday workload considerably. Even if you have a menagerie of dogs, cats, small furry creatures, poultry and ponies, you can make arrangements for them all with just one call!

Our employees include retired farmers and smallholders, so we're happy to check and feed livestock. We provide field care for horses and ponies, and we have a limited number of homesitters who will provide full stable care, though this does not extend to exercising.

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Our services: probate sits

Properties are particularly vulnerable when awaiting probate, and unfortunately burglars are keen readers of obituaries and death notices. Once word gets around that a home is unoccupied, it is all too easy for an unwanted visitor to turn up with a van and pick off cherished antiques and irreplaceable heirlooms, adding to a family's grief at the worst possible time.

Insurance cover is often restricted while properties are awaiting probate. Police and insurers strongly recommend that someone should move into the deceased's home before the funeral takes place, and that they should remain in residence until probate is granted, or at least until all valuables have been moved to safe storage.

At Homesitters, we are used to moving fast to protect these high-risk properties. We can provide a live-in homesitter for as long as needed to protect against burglary and damage, care for possessions and pets, and maintain unrestricted insurance cover.

We also offer a special one-day service so the property of the deceased is not left vacant during the funeral. For their peace of mind, funeral attendees may also wish to use this service to secure their own home and care for any pets in their absence.

Our services: commercial sits

Homesitters provides caretakers to look after empty or sparsely furnished properties which may be between tenants or awaiting sale or repossession. Our employees carry out site-management duties and ensure that the property is secure and well-presented, and in good order for the new owners or occupiers. We work for commercial property landlords e.g. care homes, clinics while vacant, throughout Britain. Additionally we support estate agents and law firms, protecting property values and reducing insurance premiums and maintenance costs.

- The property will not be left unoccupied by the registered caretaker for any period exceeding three consecutive hours during daylight or one hour after dark. Where 24 hour cover is specified, the property will not be left unattended by caretakers.
- Smoking in the property is prohibited and visitors are not allowed.
- The registered caretaker should never let anyone into the client's property without prior authorisation from the client or after agreement with Head Office.
- We can provide a caretaker for any length of time, from a couple of days to a few years. Our longest Commercial sit exceeded 10 years.

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Some frequently asked questions

What will the homesitter do while he/she is here?

Our homesitter will live in your home to safeguard the security of the property. He/she will keep the areas of the home that they use clean and tidy; will water houseplants; take telephone messages; deal with callers; provide grass-cutting and light garden maintenance, and care for all pets and livestock according to your instructions.

If you want the homesitter to take on additional tasks it is essential that these are discussed with us at the outset to ensure that we make the most appropriate selection. There may be an additional charge for such tasks. Homesitters Limited cannot accept any responsibility for activities outside those stated on our Terms and Conditions and detailed on our confirmation of booking.

Legislation dictates that, generally, if homesitters are required to stay on your property all the time, they have to be paid for that time. Our employees will be inclined to stay in your home voluntarily; we find they are very content to occupy their free time with their own interests such as writing, sketching and embroidery.

What happens if the homesitter has a problem?

Our homesitters are selected to react sensibly to emergencies and if advice or extra help is needed they have only to phone Head Office. 24 hour telephone support is in operation even on Christmas Day, and we have a back-up system of troubleshooters who are available at short notice.

How can I be sure that my pet will be happy with the homesitter?

Most of our employees choose to become homesitters because they miss the company of pets and welcome the opportunity to care for animals. When you book, we take a very full brief on your pet's requirements and normal routine. We then select the appropriate pet sitter whose abilities, experience and attitudes match your requirements. Usually there will be an opportunity for a preliminary meeting long before the assignment, and you will see how your pet reacts to the homesitter. Later, you can go away confident that your pet will be safe and happy on familiar territory.

What about food and living costs?

The homesitter will expect a normal standard of comfort and warmth, but with a careful eye on the household budget. We ask you to leave a food allowance for one person (£8.60 per day. £8.80 per day from April 2020). If the homesitter brings his/her partner (only with your permission, of course) you will not be expected to pay for food for the second person. If the homesitters are providing 24 hour cover, we would discuss different arrangements.

What happens if I think a homesitter is unsuitable?

Our selection procedures make this very unlikely, but for your peace of mind we like you to meet the homesitter as soon as possible; then if there is any problem you can telephone us and we will re-select.

What happens if my return is delayed?

The rules state that the homesitter should not vacate your home until you return (except by express arrangement with you and with Head Office). We advise our homesitters to leave a margin at the end of an assignment to allow for any delay.

Should the delay be so unusually lengthy that our homesitter is unable to remain in residence, he/she would alert Head Office, and we would arrange a suitable replacement to take over.

What if someone else is going to be present during the homesit?

Normally it is not our policy to accept responsibility for a property where other people are resident during our assignment – the security of the property and its contents is lessened if more than one person has responsibility for opening windows and unlocking doors. However, we are happy to discuss special arrangements if we are given full details at time of booking. We can, for example, usually provide companionship – and discreet supervision – for fit older people in self-contained accommodation. We do not offer nursing care, nor can we provide anything which could be construed as 'caring'.

Should you anticipate workmen being present during our assignment, it is essential that you brief us at the time of booking. With full details of any extra duties and the likely disruption to the household, we can usually provide a suitable homesitter.

What about insurance?

All our employees have been subject to detailed enquiries regarding county court and high court judgments, criminal convictions and bankruptcy. In addition, the company's main insurances include Employer's Liability, Public Liability and Professional Indemnity cover. The policies complement the client's own insurances and are written to look after the client and the homesitter. Insurers welcome Homesitters Limited and many give premium reductions to policyholders who use our services.

Will the homesitter need to use my car?

Homesitters are sometimes permitted by the client to drive the client's car; usually this is for a specific purpose where the homesitter's car might be unsuitable. Because of the varying circumstances, Homesitters Limited can accept no responsibility for any incident involving a client's car; any homesitter driving a client's car would not be covered by Homesitters Limited insurers. Any arrangements for a homesitter to drive a client's car should only result from a specific agreement between the driver and the client.

Why you can be confident

Successful homesitting requires:

- **sensitivity to your requirements**
- **the ability to listen**
- **meticulous attention to detail**
- **controlled flexibility**

How do we achieve this?

1. We ensure that you are looked after by the same administrator, who will build up a detailed knowledge of your situation and requirements. Our administrators are carefully selected for their sensitivity and intelligence. If 'your' administrator is not immediately available to assist you, another member of the team will pick up the reins.
2. We hold information in the strictest confidence and security. Our Head Office staff are carefully vetted (as are our homesitters); our office, computer network and data are fully protected and secure.
3. Our aim is to make your departure – and return – as easy as possible, leaving nothing to chance. You can cover as much detail as you wish at the preliminary meeting with the homesitter. At that meeting – or later if you prefer – you can use our checklists to prepare a comprehensive brief; this avoids unnecessary delays when you are trying to leave for the airport!
4. As part of their conditions of employment, our employees have rules which they must observe for all assignments. Additionally, we give our homesitters a substantial manual to cover all aspects of homesitting. They have to follow detailed procedures, and we keep them up-to-date with regular newsletters.
5. We keep in touch with our homesitters whilst on assignment. We also provide 24 hour telephone support for our clients and homesitters; this is a human, not a telephone answering machine! In the event of a homesitter becoming ill or having a personal crisis which results in him/her having to leave a homesit, we provide an appropriately qualified replacement homesitter very speedily.
6. We obtain detailed feedback following assignments to ensure that we provide a service tailor-made to our clients' requirements. We value your comments and suggestions.

Visit our website for case studies and testimonials.

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An example homesit

You tell us your requirements; dates, duration, situation, special responsibilities etc.

To ensure that we have a full brief, your administrator will ask about your home (age, size, facilities, location, etc.) and will discuss security considerations and domestic and gardening duties. They will also want details of anyone else with access to your property in your absence.

If you have pets to be cared for, they will take details of their breed, age, temperament, state of health, any medication, sleeping arrangements, diet, exercise and grooming routine. This detail is essential in matching you to the right pet sitter. Similarly, should you have livestock to be cared for, a careful brief will be taken on the duties and responsibilities involved.

Your administrator will discuss your preferences for a home and pet sitter e.g. male/female/couple, with own car, happy to have pets on the bed. All homesitters are non-smokers, without accompanying pets.

We then select the nearest homesitter to you who most aptly suits your requirements.

Our service is nationwide and we have employees in all areas.

We contact you with details of the homesitter and put you in touch with him/her.

At this stage, most clients like to meet their homesitter, which we encourage – not least because you can check that your animals like their pet sitter! We ask you to reimburse the homesitter's travel allowance for this visit directly, prior to your departure.

When you have told us that the homesitter is suitable, we send you a booking confirmation.

The homesitter arrives at the specified time; goes through our checklists with you (if not already covered on the initial visit) and receives a final briefing.

You set off on your trip secure in the knowledge that your home, possessions and pets are being carefully looked after while you are away.

We keep in touch with our homesitters whilst on assignment and provide them with 24 hour telephone support.

When you return, the homesitter has your home ready to welcome you.

He/she reports to you anything that has occurred during your absence, and accounts for any expenditure. Your homesit ends and our homesitter leaves at a time convenient to you both.

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Insurance Companies

There is conclusive evidence that the risk of burglary is massively reduced if homes are left occupied when owners go away. Increasingly, insurers are encouraging homeowners to leave their homes in the hands of homesitters. Homesitters' clients take better-than-average care of their properties. They plan ahead; they are prepared to spend substantial sums to protect their homes and possessions; and they are likely to make fewer claims.

In recognition of this, the following insurers will consider Homesitters' service within their underwriting criteria. In addition, the majority will give premium reductions off household insurances to those policyholders who use our services – as indicated in their individual entries. This is what they say about themselves:

AVIVA

"The **Distinct** policies have been specifically designed for the more discerning affluent customer, realising that these customers require a bespoke insurance solution suited to their lifestyle. Distinct cover comes complete with a service that's flexible and first class in every way. Aviva have gone to great lengths to make sure that your cover and support are perfect for you, your circumstances and your lifestyle.

Cover is provided by a set of unique policies that ensure your household possessions, cars and holidays are truly covered. With bespoke, in-depth cover, Distinct adds a level of service that's second to none. Aviva will look after any claim you need to make swiftly; with empathy but without fuss. A personal, dedicated specialist will do what it takes to turn around an unfortunate event.

In short, Aviva have tried to think of everything, including a range of additional, practical benefits, to give you complete peace of mind.

The service provided by Homesitters is also recognised as a benefit and therefore we reward our clients with a discount at renewal if this service is used."

www.aviva.co.uk/distinct

CHUBB

"A leading global insurance organisation, Chubb consistently earns high ratings for its financial strength (indicating its claim paying ability). The Chubb **Masterpiece** policy is acknowledged for providing the most comprehensive cover for fine homes, art, contents, cars and other valuables. It also offers cover for identity fraud, aggravated burglary and car jacking.

To help customers avoid being under-insured and out-of-pocket, Chubb provides a complimentary home appraisal service. Chubb experts record a home's features and rebuild costs, to ensure that it is adequately insured."

www.chubb.com/international/uk

Covea Insurance

"Covea Insurance plc is one of the UK's leading insurers and has gained an enviable reputation for delivering service excellence and quality, tailored insurance products to protect against risk.

Growth in people's personal wealth has increased substantially in recent years and, combined with their busy lifestyles, has shown that the larger and more complex an individual's requirements, the greater is the need for a tailored insurance solution. Our **Executive Home** and **Executive Plus** policies provide this solution, giving a complete range of covers that you would expect to find – and even more, like a personal claims concierge service that will assist you in dealing with all eventualities throughout the entire claim.

Covea Insurance support the service that Homesitters provides, considering it to be an effective risk management service. Our customers who use Homesitters' services receive a 5% discount off their renewal premium."

www.coveainsurance.co.uk

&home legacy

"Home & Legacy have been providing high value insurance since 1995 and are now recognised as one of the leading, high value insurance providers in the UK. We offer flexibility, stability and competitive pricing and because we don't rely on one single insurer we can quote for most risks, including those unusual risks at exclusively negotiated rates.

Home & Legacy offer a high level of cover that you won't typically get from a standard insurance policy. Our range of household policies provide extensive choice, offering comprehensive buildings, contents, fine art and personal possessions cover. In addition to our household products, Home & Legacy also offer motor insurance for single vehicles or family fleet as well as a suite of landlord let property insurance. All of these are available on a stand-alone basis.

Our personal and completely confidential service gives you access to our experienced account handlers. You will be able to discuss your requirements in complete confidentiality and arrange a flexible, tailor-made solution to meet your needs. Home & Legacy has many years of experience in helping our clients protect their homes and possessions and, from experience, know that even when a property is left unoccupied for just a few days, there is an increased risk of burglary and water damage from leaks that have gone unattended.

We support Homesitters services which can act as a reliable source of home care while clients are away from their homes."

www.homeandlegacy.co.uk

See overleaf for more insurers

NFU Mutual
INSURANCE | PENSIONS | INVESTMENTS

"Established in 1910 and now with over 300 local offices throughout the UK, NFU Mutual is well placed to offer a more personal approach to insurance. Our agents and staff take time to get to know you, understand your needs and only then tailor advice and products to suit you.

You can rely on NFU Mutual's home insurance to offer quality, comprehensive cover and a friendly, efficient claims service. **Home and Lifestyle Plus** has been specifically designed with clients in mind who need £100,000+ cover for their home contents. This policy includes legal expenses insurance as standard and offers worldwide cover for contents and jewellery, plus the option to add annual travel insurance.

To policyholders who use Homesitters' service, NFU Mutual is pleased to offer a premium discount."

www.nfumutal.co.uk

OAK
PART OF THE RSA GROUP

"Oak Underwriting plc specialises in high net worth insurance solely dedicated to high value homes, fine art, antiques, collections, silver and jewellery. The management and staff have many years experience in the high net worth market and have developed a rare combination of tailor-made policies, experienced underwriting, quality service and worldwide protection.

Oak Underwriting plc provide a tailor-made policy that covers virtually every eventuality for your home, its contents, your personal possessions and valuable collections. The policy is a blend of quality of cover and service, including a number of key features and benefits specially designed for the High Net Worth client. In addition to the household policy Oak are able to insure the client's family motor fleet, annual travel and RAC motor breakdown with the option to pay 0% interest free monthly instalments.

Being strong believers in the Homesitters' service, Oak support usage with a 5% discount off renewal premiums."

www.oak-underwriting.co.uk

RSA

"The RSA Group (formely Royal & SunAlliance) dates back to 1710 and has grown since to be one of the largest insurers in Europe and their thirst for innovative products and a first class service has not changed since. Throughout their history, RSA have met the insurance needs of individuals whose requirements don't meet the norm.

Today the insurance needs of similarly eminent individuals are catered for through the **Primechoice** contract, which is only available through insurance brokers. Primechoice was launched in 1996 and recognises the need for a product and service that is second to none providing expertise, knowledge and understanding of the insurance needs of the High Net Worth individual. The cover provided is exceptionally broad and there is a range of additional covers which can be purchased to meet most requirements."

www.rsagroup.com

ZURICH®

"A part of Zurich Financial Services, one of the largest insurers in the world with over 70,000 employees, **Zurich Private Clients** specialises in providing the High Net Worth and Ultra High Net Worth individuals with all of their insurance needs.

All under a single policy with one renewal date, we can offer bespoke cover for your home, holiday home, motor, boat and travel needs. To make sure you get the best possible service and cover, our **Ultimate** policy includes a complimentary visit from one of our client managers. This client manager will visit your property to help you take care of your property and determine your insurance needs.

Also, our Ultimate policy is the only policy to include a concierge service, which can help you on anything from home improvement advice and event management to making business or leisure travel arrangements. All of our home policies already include worldwide cover for all valuables and contents and in addition to that we also offer a comprehensive travel policy that can include winter and hazardous sports.

Here at Zurich Private Clients we highly endorse the services provided by Homesitters."

www.zurich.co.uk/privateclients

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Terms of Business

Summary of charges for 2020

Looking after your home and possessions *Christmas and New Year holidays will incur a supplementary charge*	£47.00 per day
Looking after dogs *(includes up to 1 hour 45 minutes of duties)*	£2.60 each per day *(3 dogs or more will incur a supplementary charge)*
Looking after cats *(includes up to 1 hour 45 minutes of duties)*	£2.10 each per day
Food allowance	£8.80 per day from 1 April 2020
Travel	£0.45 per mile

Prices shown do not include VAT which will be added at the current rate.

Charges in Detail

Legislation requires that our employees are remunerated at an hourly rate at least equal to the National Living Wage (plus holiday pay) for all 'working time'. Understandably, such time must be carefully defined.

We aim to keep our charges as low as possible whilst complying with legislation and maintaining our very high standards. Our charges cover **Responsibility, Time** and some **Allowances**:

1. For all new clients a setting-up free of £30 + VAT is invoiced on receipt of the booking. This is to cover some of the costs of establishing the client record. It is non-refundable, unless we are unable to provide a homesitter for the first assignment.

2. All bookings are subject to a non-refundable deposit, based on the length of your booking, unless we're unable to find you a homesitter.

3. Our bookings are *normally* subject to a two day minimum charge.

4. The basic daily charge (£47.00) is for our selection, administration, supervision and insurance of the homesitter, and for 1.75 hours of the homesitter's 'work'; this may include dog walking, household duties and garden care. *(See 'Conditions' overleaf)*

5. 'Domestic pet' means a household pet which requires attention from the homesitter (e.g. cat, dog), but excludes an animal requiring very little or no attention (e.g. hamster, goldfish). The pet charge (i.e. one cat at £2.10 per day) is for responsibility. Our charges for work hours are realistic. For example, we could not expect one homesitter to care for the home and exercise three large dogs all within 1.75 hours – we would agree a charge with you for the extra time.

6. Our charges are based on a 24 hour day. During that day the homesitter will not leave the property for any period of absence exceeding three consecutive hours in daylight or one hour after dark. During the assignment the homesitter will perform his/her duties for an average of 1.75 hours per day. In exceptional circumstances, should the 'work' hours exceed 1.75 hours per day, extra hourly charges will apply.

7. Special rates apply at the discretion of Homesitters Limited in cases where additional animals or special care are involved and/or where more than normal homesitting responsibilities are required – for example, where the client requires a homesitter to remain on the premises 24 hours a day. Clients should ask for a quotation at time of booking.

8. You provide a food allowance for the (one) homesitter, and travelling allowance. We are required to charge VAT on these items. *(See 'Notes for Clients' overleaf)*

9. Our Cancellation Charge Waiver is strongly recommended. Bookings which do not have the benefit of this cover are subject to cancellation charges. *(See 'Cancellation Charges' on the back page)*

10. We accept MasterCard, American Express, Visa, Visa / Debit, Electron, Connect, Solo and Maestro (Switch).

11. Overdue invoices incur interest at a rate of 6% over HSBC base rate. *(See 'Conditions' overleaf)*

12. Bookings are only accepted subject to our Terms of Business which include the conditions shown overleaf.

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Conditions

1. Acceptance of the services of a homesitter is deemed acceptance of the conditions of our Terms of Business and agreement to pay our charges.

2. Unless other terms have been agreed, assignment invoices must be settled in full at least 14 days prior to the commencement of the assignment; all other invoices must be settled within 7 days of invoice date. Invoices unpaid by the due date can render the booking liable to cancellation without notice and without any liability on the part of the homesitter or of Homesitters Limited.

3. We reserve the right to impose supplemental charges:

   (a) for credit if invoices are not paid promptly, and
   (b) when the client has asked us to commence work on the booking and subsequently cancels the booking.

4. The homesitter is engaged to stay on the client's property as agreed (subject to permitted absences) and perform certain specific duties whilst residing in the client's home for the duration of the client's absence. Such duties can include care of household pets, the tending of plants and lawns, light housework, and the noting of messages for the client. These duties shall not normally exceed 1.75 hours per day. When not carrying out his/her duties, the homesitter will be free to remain on the client's premises or explore the local area, provided that any period spent away from the premises does not exceed three consecutive hours during daylight and one hour after dark.

5. We reserve the right to either:

   (a) impose supplemental charges at any time before the homesit commences or at any time during the homesit or at the end of the sit and/or
   (b) terminate this agreement immediately without any liability on our part if:
      (i) there is a material change in the nature of the assignment which could not have been reasonably forseen by either party or
      (ii) the assignment does not match the client's original description and necessitates more time, special requirements, responsibilities, expertise or cost on the part of the homesitter.

   With the agreement of the client we shall be entitled at any time up to the date of the invoice to vary the price quoted to the client. In the absence of agreement of the client to such variation, either party may cancel the booking without penalty.

6. All our homesitters are our employees for the duration of the assignment and our charges are inclusive of all PAYE and National Insurance contributions.

7. We make every effort to maintain high standards of integrity and reliability among our homesitters and provide personnel in accordance with bookings. However, we cannot accept liability to the client other than for loss or damage to property or for death or personal injury resulting from our negligence. In no circumstances shall our liability to the client for loss or damage to property exceed £5m.

8. It is agreed that it is the client's responsibility to adequately insure the property and its contents and any pets and livestock with an insurance company of good repute and that such insurance shall continue for the duration of this agreement.

9. The client shall not, otherwise than through Homesitters Limited, engage any employee of Homesitters Limited or any person who within 12 months of the date of the engagement was such an employee to provide homesitting services whether paid or unpaid. In the event of breach of this condition the client shall indemnify Homesitters Limited against all loss, damage and expenses suffered by Homesitters Limited in consequence of the breach up to a maximum of £7,000. Our homesitters are not authorised to accept bookings which must be made by application to Homesitters Limited at our offices.

10. No variation of these Terms and Conditions will have effect unless confirmed by us in writing.

11. Our Terms of Business are published merely as an "invitation to treat", but subsequently they may form the conditions of a contract. We reserve the right to alter our published Terms of Business at any time.

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We stay while you're away

Notes for Clients

The content of these notes may differ slightly from the content of the homesitters brochure. These notes supersede any brochure of earlier date and should be read in conjunction with our current Tariff.

HM Revenue & Customs have advised us that if clients are required to provide food and/or travel allowances to our employees then we must account for appropriate VAT at standard rate, as these items constitute part of the charge of our services. Accordingly – with regret – we have to invoice clients for VAT (which you pay to us) on the food and travel expenses (which you pay direct to the homesitter, prior to your departure).

Travel Allowance

We ask the homesitter when travelling by car to make a note of the exact mileage from home to the homesit. We suggest that he/she should be reimbursed by you at the current rate for running costs only *(see Summary of Charges on page 1)*. If he/she travels by public transport, we suggest that the homesitter be reimbursed the standard-class fare; any companion will pay his/her own fare. These reimbursements also apply when homesitters visit clients for preliminary meetings. It is helpful for the homesitter to receive his/her preliminary travel allowance at the conclusion of the initial meeting.

Food Allowance

We ask you to leave an allowance *(see Summary of Charges on page 1)* for the homesitter; this is to cover all food including basic provisions, so the homesitter will not need to use anything from the store cupboard or freezer. This food is for one person only; should the homesitter bring a partner (only with your permission, of course) you would normally not be expected to provide food for the second person.

Health and Safety

All our homesitters are our employees whilst on the homesit and we have a duty to ensure that their health and safety are safeguarded, and to ensure that we are not requiring them to work in excess of the maximum hours of work stipulated by the employment protection legislation. Accordingly, we ask you to give us full details of the tasks you will require the homesitters to carry out during a homesit. If you have particular requirements which means that the homesitter will have to work for more than 1.75 hours per day, we ask you to give us full details as soon as possible because special arrangements may need to be put in place.

We are also under a duty to ensure a safe place and system of work for our employees. Homesitters are specifically instructed not to undertake any tasks which they believe may put their health and safety at risk. You are asked to identify any special features of any tasks you will require the homesitter to carry out which will have the potential to injure him/her (for example, a large or heavy dog which requires lifting into a car). In addition, you are asked to identify any features in your property which may be a hazard to the unwary or to those who are unfamiliar with your home (for example, uneven or slippery floors, low beams, loose rugs or dark corridors) or your garden (for example, overgrown steps or terraces, obscured wells, loose ornaments or walls).

Emergency Contact Numbers

It is essential that you supply us with the telephone number(s) of an emergency contact in your absence – preferably this should be you at your temporary location.

If you are travelling, or prefer not to be disturbed in any circumstances, please supply us with home/work/other telephone numbers of somebody who is:

- able to assist should advice be needed on domestic or pet problems
- a key holder for the burglar alarm
- able to authorise essential expenditure in your absence (e.g. repairs to the heating system)
- contactable for the duration of our assignment
- aware of his/her delegated authority
- keyholder for the property.

GDPR

As a client of ours, we believe your personal details, are very important – and to keep the information you share with us as safe as possible, we've updated our privacy policy in line with the requirements set out by the General Data Protection Regulation.

We will only ever use the details you share with us to help us make the best possible decision regarding homesitter selections for you and nothing else.

If you want to receive a copy of our privacy policy please contact our Data Protection Compliance Manager at admin@homesitters.co.uk

Cancellation Charges

A Cancellation Charge Waiver of £2.60 per day + VAT (minimum £13.00 + VAT, maximum £52.00 + VAT regardless of assignment length) is available.

Our Cancellation Charge Waiver is not available for bookings which are made less than 21 days before the start of the assignment.

When the appropriate payment has been received, no cancellation charge will be applied.

Our Cancellation Charge Waiver does not cover the setting-up fee, waiver payment, or any other loss whatsoever.

Cancellation charges are as follows (all plus VAT):

	Notice of cancellation received by us – calendar days before the assignment due to start:			
	0-2	3-10	11-20	21 or more
% of net charge	100	75	50	25

Minimum cancellation charge £75.00 + VAT
(Notice of cancellation is acceptable by email or on our telephone answering machine.)

Shortened assignments

Where an assignment is *shortened* within 20 days **before the start**, it may be necessary to make a charge to recompense the homesitter for the time committed.

When an assignment in progress *ends early* at the client's request, it is usually *not* possible to arrange a refund or a credit.

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Reservation Form

Strictly Private and Confidential

You can also complete this form on our website, visit: www.homesitters.co.uk/booking-form

Homesitters Limited
First Floor Offices, 34 Market Square,
Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP20 1TW
Tel: 01296 630 730
admin@homesitters.co.uk

All information about you, your property and any assignment is held in strict confidence by Homesitters Limited, in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), and will not be disclosed to any other party. Selecting the homesitter most appropriate to your needs requires much care and thought. Please complete all sections of this form; your administrator will telephone you on receipt of your booking, to discuss your requirements in detail. If there is any change to any of the information which you provide, please let us know immediately. PLEASE USE BLOCK LETTERS THROUGHOUT. **If you require further space, please use a separate sheet.**

Name

Address

Postcode

Telephone Number:

Home

Work

Other

Email:

Homesitter to arrive:

Day | Date | Time

Homesitter to depart:

Day | Date | Time

Would you accept: ☐ 1 person ☐ 2 persons ☐ Either

Would you prefer the homesitters to be: ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Either

Is there anything you would prohibit? *(Please specify)*

Is your home a: ☐ House ☐ Bungalow ☐ Flat

Please describe it, e.g. Approximate age

No. reception rooms | No. bedrooms

Approximately how many houseplants require care?

Do you have a garden? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please describe it, e.g. size/greenhouse/homesitter duties

Is the property situated in a: ☐ Town ☐ Country ☐ Isolated ☐ London

Is it easily accessible by public transport? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Would it be best for the homesitter to bring their own car? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Is there off-road parking? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you have any pets to be cared for, please give details:

No. of pets: Dogs | Cats | Other

Age, size, breed:

Dog(s)

Number and duration of walks:

Cat(s)

Other pets/livestock

Do you have any other requirements? e.g. Swimming pool care, alarms to be set, messages to be taken.

Will any other persons have access to your home during your absence? (Please note we do not undertake homesits with people in residence.)
☐ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, please specify

In an emergency, whom should we contact in your absence?

Name

Address

Postcode

Telephone Number:

Home

Work

Other

Where did you first hear of Homesitters?
Was it ☐ a publication ☐ on the internet ☐ word of mouth ☐ Other

If known, please name media source

If Other, please specify

Do you have any other comments?

Signed | Date

Post, email or complete this form online – see details above

We acknowledge receipt of reservations very promptly, but occasionally the reservations fail to reach us! If you do not receive acknowledgement within 2 business days of when we should have received your booking request, **please telephone us**.

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