

YOUR RENT AND SERVICE CHARGE

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Setting the Rent

The Housing Corporation provides a formula for calculating “Target Rents”. It takes into account property values and the average income of working people in the area. As a result, residents in similar properties in the same area will pay a similar rent.

Some of our rents are lower than Target Rents. We are required to bring our rents into line with them, but we are not permitted to increase our weekly rents by more than RPI (Retail Price Index) + 0.5% + £2 in any year.

If your tenancy started before 15 January 1989 you will have a Secure Tenancy and your rent is still set by the local Rent Officer Service. You can appeal to the independent Rent Assessment Panel if you are unhappy with the rent that is set.

Your rent pays for the maintenance of our properties, the servicing of our debts and our running costs.

Setting the Service Charge

These charges are added to your rent and pay for services such as cleaning the communal areas, grounds maintenance, communal lighting, the maintenance of fire equipment and furniture (if provided).

Service charges for the year are set by sharing the budgeted cost between all the residents in a particular property.

Both rents and service charges are reviewed every year with effect from the first Monday in April.

Paying Your Rent

Your rent is payable weekly and in advance. If you wish to make monthly or fortnightly payments, this is acceptable, as long as the payments are still made in advance.

You can make rent payments in the following ways:

- By cash or cheque at our offices.
- By standing order. Please contact your Housing Officer for a standing order form
- Housing Benefit. We will assist you with making a housing benefit application.
- By internet banking on line. You will need to ask us for your personal reference number and our bank account details.

Rent Arrears Policy

Collecting the rent is vital to the Association. While we will assist and advise residents who are in arrears with their rent, our approach to recovering the debt has to be strict.

We deal with rent arrears and income collection in line with policy approved by the Board of Management. Please contact us if you would like a copy of the policy.

- We will contact you by letter or telephone if you are in arrears
- We will give you the opportunity to make an agreement to pay the arrears
- We may take legal action in the County Court if you fail to pay your rent or break an agreement to pay, which could lead to you losing your home
- Our Housing Officers are available to advise and support if you are having money problems. Please be sure to contact your Housing Officer as soon as possible if this is the case.

Housing Benefit

It is your responsibility to apply for housing benefit, although we will help you to complete the form.

We will want your Housing Benefit to be paid directly to us on your behalf, and you will be required to give your permission on the application form.

You must inform the Benefits Office and your Housing Officer of any changes in your circumstances that could affect your entitlement.

Our staff are available to assist if you have problems with your claim, so please contact us as soon as possible to ensure problems are resolved quickly.