

Housing Management



We and our Managing Agents aim to be fair and transparent in the way we offer a tenancy, let our homes and offer housing advice. We will take into account the housing needs of tenants and potential tenants.

Allocations

We will:

- Allocate our properties in accordance with published policies
- Offer practical assistance with making an application for housing, where requested, or appropriate
- Offer tenancies or terms of occupation which are compatible with the purpose of the accommodation, the needs of individual households, sustainability of the community and to make best use of our housing stock
- Arrange and carry out accompanied viewings at an agreed time with you
- Arrange for you to attend a meeting to sign your tenancy and collect your keys.

Letting our properties

We will:

- Carry out a pre-void inspection at your property before you move out,
- Inform you of any repairs that you have to carry out before you move out and the amount you will be recharged if you do not carry out this work
- Advise of when and where you need to return the keys to your home when the tenancy ends
- Advertise your property to minimise the time that properties are empty between each letting.
- We aim to re-let homes within published timescales.

Housing advice

We will:

- Work in partnership with other agencies to prevent homelessness, under occupation and overcrowding
- Provide you with a name of the Managing Agent dealing with your case
- Provide advice by telephone and/or in person
- Ensure that we work with applicants to help them to remain in their own homes wherever possible
- Ensure staff are made aware of current legislation to ensure we are able to provide a signpost to relevant housing advice
- Provide services in line with current policy and legislative requirements
- Ensure that you are made aware if there are any operational matters which impact upon our ability to operate our policies and that this information is given to tenants and stakeholders
- Publish and have readily available a copy of these Service Standards so you know the standard of service to expect from us
- Listen to your feedback to improve services
- Review our policies in accordance with legislative changes and good practice.

Customer Service

We will:

- Provide a range of different contact methods and provide a range of different ways you can communicate with us
- Ensure that our staff are polite, friendly, helpful and listen to your enquiry
- Treat you with fairness and respect
- Respond to the needs of our tenants, adapting our approach as required
- Provide telephone interpretation services where required
- Train staff in diversity and safeguarding issues
- Refer you to other agencies when we cannot assist you
- Introduce ourselves and show identification when we greet or visit you.

When you telephone us we will:

- Answer telephones as quickly as possible
- Provide the name of the caller when we answer your call
- Tell you the name of the person we are transferring your call to
- Keep the use of voicemail to an absolute minimum during office hours
- Provide an out-of-hours telephone emergency service.

If you write or send us an email we will:

- Respond fully to letters, emails, online comments, requests for information
- Include a named person, telephone number and email address on all written correspondence.

When you visit we will:

- See you as quickly as possible
- See you as soon as we are available if you don't have an appointment, or offer to make an appointment for an alternative time
- Provide a private interview facility to discuss confidential matters
- Arrange for someone to sign, translate or interpret for you
- Provide you with a clean, tidy, comfortable and smoke free environment

If we visit you at home, we will:

- Arrive on time or contact you if we are delayed
- Give you an AM or PM appointment if we are to carry out work
- Not enter your home unless a responsible adult is present
- Not smoke or use inappropriate language
- Leave a calling card if no one is at home when we visit.

Repairs

If we or one of our approved contractors have to carry out repairs at your home, we will:

- Keep noise to a minimum and use dustsheets to protect your furnishings
- Only use a list of Trading Standards approved contractors
- Only use radios or play music with your permission
- Keep all materials and tools in a safe position and inform you if it is necessary to obstruct doorways, stairs etc
- Respect privacy when carrying out repairs
- Inform you if we need to turn off services, tell you before we do and when you can expect them to be turned back on
- Inform you if we need to leave your home during the course of the job, tell you why and when you can expect us back
- Ensure essential utility services are working at the end of each day
- Provide temporary heating if we are not able to put your heating back on at the end of each working day
- Clear away all our materials and rubbish when the job is finished.

Tenancy management

We will:

- Provide you with the contact details of your Managing Agent when you sign up for your tenancy
- Publish on our website contact details of your Managing Agent
- Carry out a home visit after you have signed your tenancy and carry out periodic inspections of your home in accordance with our legal obligations
- Provide a tenancy agreement and an information pack which will be explained to you when you sign up for your tenancy
- Explain clearly your rights and responsibilities as a tenant when you sign up for your tenancy
- Work with you to avoid and resolve tenancy breaches
- Support you to maintain your home and sustain your tenancy
- Carry out checks to identify illegal occupation, property misuse and fraud
- Signpost to appropriate agencies for tenancy support.

Income management

We will:

- Provide a signpost to relevant advice and support if you are experiencing difficulties with paying your rent and charges
- Investigate all cases of rent arrears after a missed payment by making early contact with you
- Offer a variety of ways to pay your rent and charges
- Give you a minimum of 4 weeks' notice of any proposed increase or decrease of rent or charges
- Provide clear details of the rent and service charges for individual properties at the time of signing for your tenancy
- Encourage you to contact us at any point during your tenancy if you are worried about maintaining your rent payments
- Provide a signpost service on advice on how to apply for benefits or help with housing costs
- Provide rent statements when requested
- Make arrangements wherever possible to help you pay your rent arrears over a reasonable agreed period
- Decide what appropriate action we will take when you owe us money, which could include legal action
- View eviction as a last resort where other debt recovery action has failed
- Provide an estimated final rent account balance when you give us notice to end your tenancy