

## **Income Management Service Standards Our Commitment to you**

**East North East Homes Leeds recognises that some times during your tenancy, you may experience difficulties paying your rent. The income management service aims to give a firm but fair service to all our customers and to create a culture of reducing rent arrears without creating financial hardship for all our customers.**

### **When you sign up for your tenancy we will :**

- provide you with high quality, accurate information relating to the rents and other charges due.
- provide a choice of ways to pay that are convenient to tenants, leaseholders and residents.
- assist you, as you require, with claims for Housing Benefit and other benefits, and process relevant documents to the Leeds Benefits Service.
- arrange to visit you within 28 days of you moving into your home and discuss any problems you may have, including paying your rent.
- encourage you to contact us at any point if you are worried about or experiencing problems in paying your rent.
- offer you the service of an Advice and Support Worker, or suggest other agencies who may be able to give you advice on benefits, your welfare rights and how to manage money.

### **If you have an enquiry about your rent account we will:**

- offer you a confidential interview and try to deal with your enquiry immediately. If we cannot deal with it there and then, we will reply to you in writing within 10 working days.
- provide you with a statement of your rent account within 10 working days of you asking for one and we will also give you a statement of your rent account every year.

### **Every effort is made to prevent tenants from falling into arrears, but if you fall into rent arrears we will:**

- contact you if you who fall into rent arrears at an early stage before debts become difficult to manage.
- agree how you will pay these back, and will confirm in writing any agreement made.
- help you with difficult debt situations by providing access to money management advice sometimes with external specialist agencies.

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#### **If you fail to maintain an agreement with us to pay your arrears we will:**

- take legal action to recover your debt but if we do we will explain your legal rights to you and let you know what will happen if we have to take you to court.
- tell you, you in writing, that we are going to go to court, and what the outcome of any legal action might be.
- take action to recover possession of your home if you fail to make payments as ordered by the court.

#### **We are always looking to improve services and we will:**

- review and update payment methods, according to tenants, leaseholders and residents needs and emerging technology.
- maximise your entitlement to Housing and other benefits by providing benefits and money management advice.
- recover debts using a variety of recovery methods, including payment arrangements agreed with customers, deductions from income, pursuing legal action to repossess homes and debt collection agencies.
- consult and involve you as the service is developed and provide detailed information on options available.
- advise you of the annual rent increase in February or March each year.
- provide a rent statement to you 4 times a year.