

Customer Service Standards
Rent Collection and Arrears Recovery



St. Leger Homes
OF DONCASTER



Quality Homes in Quality Neighbourhoods
www.stlegerhomes.co.uk

Translation Available

ترجمه موجود است

شیمه ناماده بین که نوسراوه کانی نیوه وه ریگیرین

Tradução Disponível

可提供翻译

Large Print, Braille and Audio Tape also available

Çeviri mümkün

ترجمه دستیاب ہے

Доступен (Есть) перевод

الترجمة متوفرة

Përkthimi në dispozicion

可提供翻譯

অনুবাদের ব্যবস্থা রয়েছে।

Traduction Disponible



अनुवाद उपलब्ध है

Quality Homes in Quality Neighbourhoods
www.stlegerhomes.co.uk

Customer Service Standards

RENT COLLECTION AND ARREARS RECOVERY

WHY HAVE SERVICE STANDARDS?

We have produced our service standards to make sure customers are clear about the level of service they can expect from St. Leger Homes of Doncaster. We will review all our service standards and involve customers in this process. We will monitor all our service standards and publish the results in our newsletter House Proud and in our local St. Leger offices. By telling you what level of service you can expect, you will know when we do not meet this standard. If this happens we want you to tell us about it so we can put it right and learn from where we went wrong.

- Your Tenancy Agreement clearly states that you are responsible for paying your rent and any other tenancy charge each week in advance.
- St. Leger Homes collects your rent and other charges on behalf of Doncaster Council—the Council then uses this income to pay St. Leger Homes to provide your housing service.
- We look at tenant rent details on a regular basis and will take appropriate action against anyone who does not pay their rent. If you fall into arrears you will receive a visit, a telephone call or letter from a St. Leger Homes officer.
- If you are having difficulty paying your rent you should contact your local St. Leger office immediately - failure to pay your rent could result in the loss of your home.
- If you have difficulty managing your money or you feel you are entitled to more benefits, we can help you.
- If you intend to apply for Housing Benefit we will provide assistance with your claim and offer you an estimate of the amount of Housing Benefit you will be entitled to. It is your responsibility to tell the Benefits Department of changes to your circumstances and to respond to any benefit reviews.



OUR CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS

We will:

Our Standards	Target	Monitoring	Where Reported
<p>Tell you how much rent you have to pay, including an estimate of housing benefit entitlement.</p>	<p>100%</p>	<p>Customer satisfaction survey</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Executive Management Team ■ Finance and Performance Committee ■ Board ■ Customer Relations Development Group ■ St. Leger Homes Website ■ Reception Notice Boards ■ House Proud
<p>Give all new tenants a payment card within 10 working days of the start of their tenancy and send a replacement card on request within 10 days.</p>	<p>100%</p>	<p>Internal monitoring arrangements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Executive Management Team ■ Finance and Performance Committee ■ Board ■ Customer Relations Development Group ■ St. Leger Homes Website ■ Reception Notice Boards ■ House Proud
<p>Offer options so you can pay your rent 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days of the year.</p>		<p>Reality checks Mystery shopping</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Executive Management Team ■ Finance and Performance Committee ■ Board ■ Customer Relations Development Group ■ St. Leger Homes Website ■ Reception Notice Boards ■ House Proud
<p>Offer a variety of ways you can pay your rent including direct debit.</p>		<p>List options available</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Executive Management Team ■ Finance and Performance Committee ■ Board ■ Customer Relations Development Group ■ St. Leger Homes Website ■ Reception Notice Boards ■ House Proud

Our Standards	Target	Monitoring	Where Reported
Send you quarterly rent statements showing details of all rent due and payments received.	Every 3 months	Reality checks Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Executive Management Team ■ Finance and Performance Committee ■ Board ■ Customer Relations Development Group ■ St. Leger Homes Website ■ Reception Notice Boards ■ House Proud
If you fall into arrears we will make realistic, affordable agreements, taking into account personal circumstances and provide these in writing.	100%	Customer feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Executive Management Team ■ Finance and Performance Committee ■ Board ■ Customer Relations Development Group ■ St. Leger Homes Website ■ Reception Notice Boards ■ House Proud
Explain why any debt is owed and satisfy you that the amount is correct.	100%	Customer feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Executive Management Team ■ Finance and Performance Committee ■ Board ■ Customer Relations Development Group ■ St. Leger Homes Website ■ Reception Notice Boards ■ House Proud
Give you details of organisations that can offer you independent, impartial advice about debt.		Customer feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Executive Management Team ■ Finance and Performance Committee ■ Board ■ Customer Relations Development Group ■ St Leger Homes Website ■ Reception Notice Boards ■ House Proud
Inform you of any debts on former tenancies within 28 days of you ending your tenancy.	Within 28 days	Internal monitoring arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Executive Management Team ■ Finance and Performance Committee ■ Board ■ Customer Relations Development Group ■ St. Leger Homes Website ■ Reception Notice Boards ■ House Proud

Rent Arrears Recovery

Our aim is to ensure tenants pay their rent. We will ensure that our officers are trained and able to offer advice if you have difficulty paying your rent. If you need a private interview to discuss your situation, we provide one either by appointment or on a 'drop in' basis or we can visit you in your home if required. If you fall into rent arrears there can be serious consequences:

- You could lose your home.
- You will be charged for any court costs and costs related to eviction as well as your rent arrears.
- You would still be liable for the debt even if we take possession of your tenancy.

- You may be considered intentionally homeless if you are evicted due to rent arrears and will therefore not be re-housed by the Council.

Useful Information

Throughout the rent recovery process we will make sure there are experienced and helpful officers on hand to help you and give advice on debt management. You may also wish to seek advice from the Citizens Advice Bureau or a solicitor.

Paying your rent

You can pay your rent by the following methods:

- By Direct Debit – you should contact your local St. Leger office for a mandate.
- St. Leger Cash Offices – cash, cheque or debit card. Cheques should be made payable to Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council. You should write your name, address and rent account number (shown on your swipe/payment card) on the back of your cheque. You should bring your swipe/payment card with your cheque.
- By post – cheques or postal orders. You should write your name, address and rent account number (shown on your swipe/payment card) on the back of your cheque.
- By phone – debit card. You should phone your local St. Leger office. You will need your debit card details and your rent



Customer Service Standards

RENT COLLECTION AND ARREARS RECOVERY

account number (shown on your swipe/payment card) to hand. You can also use the Council's automated telephone payment service—0845 1305910, select option 3.

- By standing order through your bank. You should contact your local St. Leger office for the necessary form.
- You can make payments via the Internet by using St. Leger Homes' website.
- By salary deduction, if you work for the Council or St. Leger Homes – you should contact your local St. Leger office for the necessary form.
- Any Post Office – cash or cheque. Cheques should be made payable to Post Office Ltd (you should write your name, address and rent account number on the back of your cheque). You must have your swipe/payment card in order to pay at the Post Office and always obtain a receipt.
- Any outlet displaying the Payzone sign — shown on the back of your payment card —cash or debit card. This will allow you to make payments in person outside St. Leger Homes opening hours. You must take your payment card and obtain a receipt.

How is rent charged?

Rent is charged on a weekly basis over 48 weeks and is due every Monday. Alternatively you may pay fortnightly or monthly, providing all rent is paid in advance.

Rent is set according to a formula set by the Government. The formula replaced a points system and came into effect from April 2003. Rent is now based on:

- Property value.
- Number of bedrooms.
- Local earnings figure (as advised by the Government).
- Government-set 'phasing in' rent increase arrangements to make sure that when the system was introduced, there were no dramatic changes in rent levels.

Please see our separate leaflet on the Rent Formula.

Putting things right

We always try to provide the best service we can and ensure we meet the standards we have set. However, if you are not happy with the service, you should contact a St. Leger office or our Customer Care Officer. There is more information on making a complaint in our leaflet "Access and Customer Care" - our Compliments, Complaints and Comments Policy is available on request from any of our offices.

We will survey our customers from time to time about the services we provide to gauge satisfaction levels and to identify any areas of weakness. We would appreciate your assistance in providing information on your experience of our services and we will use this information to continuously improve.

Contact Details

Central Rents Team	01302 862873
Rents North East Area	01302 734106 / 735923
Rents South East Area	01302 737467
Rents North West Area	01302 734156
Rents South West Area	01302 735822
Customer Care Officer	01302 862726

Other Service Standard Leaflets

St. Leger Homes have produced ten sets of Customer Service Standards around specific areas of service delivery. Other leaflets available detail our standards for the following Service areas:

- *Access and Customer Care*
- *Applying for a Council House*
- *Delivering Decent Homes*
- *Empty Property Management including Allocations to New Tenants*
- *Equality and Diversity*
- *Involving Tenants and Residents*
- *Leaseholder Services*
- *Responsive Repairs and Maintenance*
- *Tenancy and Estate Management, Anti-Social Behaviour and Neighbour Disputes*

St. Leger Homes of Doncaster Limited
St. Leger Court
White Rose Way
Doncaster
DN4 5ND

St. Leger Homes of Doncaster Limited is a company controlled by Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council. A company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales, Registration No. 05564649.