

Service Standards

Rent

At Wansbeck Homes our aim is to be:

'A caring organisation committed to quality services, affordable homes and working together to build confident communities.'

We recognise the importance of providing a range of services and facilities to assist in the prompt collection of rent income and other charges.

Our aim is to take a firm but fair approach to the collection of rent arrears, providing tenants with quality advice and agreeing payment plans where required. We will offer assistance to tenants who cannot pay their rent but take firm action against those who will not pay. This service standard sets out how we will do this.

We will:

- Have trained staff available to receipt your payments and provide help and advice.
- Provide a wide range of ways for you to pay your rent including Direct Debit.
- Encourage you to contact us at any point if you are worried about or are having problems paying your rent.
- Send you a rent statement every three months. You can ask for a rent statement at any time.
- Ensure that every effort is made to prevent you from falling into arrears by making contact with you as soon as arrears start to build up.
- Agree affordable payment arrangements with you – if these are kept we will take no further action.
- Give you advice on whether you may be entitled to help with your rent through benefits.
- Help you with debt situations by providing access to debt and money advice.
- Assist you fill in housing benefit claim forms, register your claim and send forms with supporting documents to the Council's Housing and Council Tax Benefit Department.

- If we take legal action to recover your debt, we will inform you in writing and explain your rights.
- Increase your rent and services charges in April each year. You will receive 4 weeks notice in writing whenever your rent is reviewed.

You can help us by:

- Letting us know if you intend to change the method and/or frequency of your payments, for example, stopping a Direct Debit.
- Making sure you remember to increase your payment each year when you are advised of the annual rent increase.
- Letting us know if you have any query about your rent statement.
- Letting us know if you lose your Allpay payment card so that we can promptly order a new one.
- Letting us know if you have difficulty in paying your rent.
- Letting us know of any changes in your income or household which would affect your ability to pay your rent.
- Contacting us if we write to you or leave a card through your door.
- Letting us know if you need help to complete forms such as housing benefit applications.

We will monitor our Rent management in the following areas:

- The percentage of rent collected.
- The percentage of rent arrears.
- The number of tenants owing over £1,000.
- Requests for rent refunds processed within 28 days.

Performance

We will set challenging targets to monitor our performance against service standards. The results of our performance can be found on posters displayed in our offices, in our newsletters and on our website www.wansbeckhomes.co.uk.

Our service standards have been developed with residents and will be reviewed every two years.

Contact us

For all enquiries you can contact us on 0844 800 3800.

Our phone lines are open:

Monday to Thursday	8.45 am to 5.00 pm
Friday	8.45 am to 4.30 pm

Outside these hours, emergencies can be reported on 0800 0279 766. This service is available during weekends and bank holidays.

Email: info@wansbeckhomes.co.uk

Website: www.wansbeckhomes.co.uk

Fax: 01670 532241.

What if we do not meet your expectations?

Report your concerns to a member of staff who will try to resolve the problem.

If you are dissatisfied with the response given you have the right to make a formal complaint via Wansbeck Homes' complaints procedure. Full details of the complaints procedure are available at your local office or by calling 0844 800 3800.

We are always happy to receive any compliments about our services or hear of any suggestions you may have.

Head Office:

Front Street West, Bedlington, NE22 5TU

Local Offices:

3 & 4 Dawson House, Poplar Street, Ashington, NE63 0BY

The Bungalow, Woodhorn Road, Newbiggin-by-the-Sea, NE64 6HG