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December 2010



# Rent Arrears Policy

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**Sentinel** 

## Rent Arrears Policy

### Why do we have this policy?

This policy sets out how we deal with any rent arrears owing. The policy is set to ensure that all customers are clear about what happens when they fall into areas, and how we seek to recover rent arrears.

At all times, our approach will be firm but fair.

### Preventing arrears

When you sign your tenancy agreement we will give you information about your obligations to pay rent and what will happen if you don't pay. We will ask you for two weeks rent in advance, or evidence that because of your low income you are entitled to Housing Benefit.

We monitor rent arrears weekly, and will contact as soon as you miss your first rent payment. We will also offer you help and advice on claiming benefits, how to make the most of your money and the various ways you can pay your rent.

### If you are in arrears

It is your responsibility to pay your rent in full and on time. If you fall into arrears, we expect you to take full responsibility and pay back any money you owe.

When agreeing a repayment plan, we will work with you to understand your personal financial circumstances and take account of any other obligations you may have. We will confirm your payment plan with you in writing within 2 working days and continue to monitor the situation.

We provide additional services to our paying customers. If you are in arrears, we will remove any additional services you use such as renting one of our garages.

If your arrears persist and you fail to maintain your payment plan, we will take legal action. It is important that you keep us informed of any changes in your personal circumstances.

If you are evicted as a result of your arrears, you will be found 'intentionally homeless'; by the Local Authority and will not qualify for other social housing.

### If you move out of the property with outstanding rent or other amounts owing .

We will use our debt recovery service to pursue and recover any outstanding rent or other money owed at the end of your tenancy.

Your arrears will not simply disappear once you have left the property. We will continue to pursue the debt using tracing agents.

### Arrears complaints:

If you feel that you have been unfairly treated during our arrears process, you can make a complaint in line with our Complaints Policy.