

## **GARAGE ARREARS RECOVERY POLICY**

### **Aim of Policy**

- We aim to maximise the income of the Group through the delivery of an effective and efficient arrears recovery service.
- Non-payment of garage rent is a breach of the terms and conditions of the tenancy. We will take immediate action to repossess garages if the tenant does not pay the rent due promptly.
- We will apply our arrears recovery consistently and fairly, and will not discriminate against any debtor on grounds of their race, colour, ethnic or national origins, religion, sexual orientation, disability, gender or age.
- We will regularly consult with interested parties to seek their views on the effectiveness of the service that we provide and how we could improve it.

### **Objectives of Policy**

- Definition of policy basis for prevention and management of garage arrears.

### **Statement**

1. This policy is concerned with the recovery of garage rent arrears from customers who are currently tenants of the Group or occupy properties owned by the Group.
2. The recovery of rent arrears for the property in which a tenant currently lives is covered in our **Current Tenant Arrears Recovery Policy**. The recovery of rent arrears from people who were formerly tenants of the Group is set out in our **Former Tenants Arrears Recovery Policy**.
3. We will comply with all relevant legislation and regulatory guidance in relation to rent arrears recovery.

### **Policy**

#### 1. Rent Statements

- 1.1 We will enable tenants to monitor their garage rent payments by sending all garage tenants a quarterly statement setting out the balance on their account.

## 2. Rent Payment Methods

2.1 We will provide a range of different ways in which tenants can pay their rent. We believe that this helps to minimise arrears by giving tenants the choice of the most convenient payment option.

2.2 Payment by Direct Debit is the Group's favoured payment method. This is the cheapest method for the Group and means that the tenant does not have to take any action when garage rents are reviewed.

## 3. Security of Tenure

3.1 The availability of a garage is not usually essential to a tenant's well-being in the same way that being able to continue to occupy their home is. We will therefore take immediate action to repossess garages where rent is not being paid or is paid late, and we will not usually allow tenants to pay off garage arrears in installments.

## 4. Additional Costs

4.1 If the tenant does not return the keys to a garage and we have to change the locks to get entry, or the tenant leaves belongings in the garage and does not respond to attempts to contact him/her, we will normally recharge the costs of the lock change and/or clearance to the tenant.

## **Performance**

We will measure our performance on garage arrears management through regular review of the following performance indicators:

- The total amount of arrears
- The number of Notices to Quit
- The number of evictions

## **Policy Review**

The Operations Director in conjunction with the Neighbourhood Services Manager and the Arrears Recovery Manager will review the operation of the Garage Arrears Recovery Policy, in consultation with resident groups, on an annual basis.

**Approved by: Sentinel, Hart and Oakfern Boards. 13 January 2005 (SHG.15/05)**