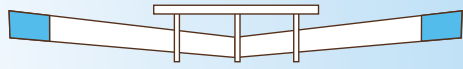


SEVEN LOCKS



HOUSING

Customer Handbook



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Seven Locks Housing Mission Statement

Seven Locks Housing aims to meet the needs of our existing and future customers by providing a continually improving, quality housing service.

Our Vision

- Deliver the promises made to tenants in the formal consultation document, on time and within budget
- Provide continually improving housing and related services that meet the needs and expectations of customers
- Increase the supply of quality affordable homes
- Contribute to the well being of our communities
- Practise business excellence and improve cost effectiveness
- Have a reputation as a first class employer

Our Values

- Keep customers central
- Treat everyone with respect and value diversity
- Practise fairness, openness, honesty and integrity
- Combine business excellence with social responsibility
- Promote environmental sustainability
- Encourage creativity, innovation and use of initiative
- Listen, learn and improve
- Be accountable and accept responsibility
- Celebrate success



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1.

Keeping Customers Central to our Business

Keeping Customers Central to our Business

Seven Locks Housing is a community based social landlord that is proud to provide affordable, well managed homes in the Harborough district.

Seven Locks Housing believes excellent organisations achieve excellence by putting customers at the heart of the business.

How are customers like you at the centre of our business?

You are involved in making the key decisions – Tenants on the Board

The Board provides vision and leadership for the organisation. All financial and strategic decisions are made by the Board. Four of the twelve Board Member places are reserved for tenants. Please see our Customer Involvement section which tells you how you could become a Board Member.

You tell us what you need now and may need for the future

All our customers are asked to complete a Profiling form. This provides us with the information we need to ensure our current services are accessible to all customers and develop the right services in the future to meet the diverse needs of our customers. If you have not already completed a Profiling form, please contact our Customer Services Team on 01858 414500 and they will send you a form.



You set the standards for our services

In consultation with customers we are developing a set of service standards so that you know what you can expect from each of our services. Seven Locks Housing will send you an Annual Report telling you what our standards are, how we have worked with customers to develop the standards, and how effectively we have delivered the standards.

You work with us to change and develop our services

Our Customer Involvement section of this handbook tells you how you can get involved in improving and changing outcomes for Seven Locks Housing services. There are a variety of opportunities to suit your interests and your availability.

You monitor our performance and satisfaction with our services

You can volunteer to join a panel of customers who are involved in the scrutiny process. The panel assesses the quality of our services and challenges our performance.

You can access information about your housing and services

This handbook provides you with the information about your home, your tenancy and the services available to you. For regularly updated information, please look at our website at www.sevenlockshousing.co.uk and look out for the quarterly Customer Newsletter, and our Annual Report on Service Standards. We also have a comprehensive set of information leaflets; for more detailed information about services see our Customer Involvement section.

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2.

How to contact Seven Locks

Repairs Freephone: 0800 1300 365

For Housing Services: 01858 414500

- Letting Property
- Rents and Rent Arrears
- Estate Services and Anti-social Behaviour

Care and Support Services: 01858 414500

- Sheltered Housing
- Lifeline Services

By phone, e-mail, website, writing or visiting us in person

Our e-mail address is: info@sevenlockshousing.co.uk

You may write to us, or visit our customer reception facilities at our main office:

1a Anson House
8 Compass Point
Northampton Road
Market Harborough
Leicestershire
LE16 9HW

Opening Times: Monday - Friday 9:00am - 5:00pm.

(Please note: We open at 9:30am on the first Wednesday of every month)



Our website

You can access our website at www.sevenlockshousing.co.uk to obtain information about us and our services, report a repair, comment on our services, or report any issues affecting your home or your community.

A range of forms, Service Standards, policies and other documents are also available to view or download from the website.

Home visit

Some customers prefer a home visit and, where we have staff available, we are happy to arrange this for you. Please contact us for an appointment.

Customer Service Standards

We will

- Treat everyone fairly and with respect.
- Make our services easy to use, giving you choices whenever possible.
- Provide facilities to meet the language and communication needs of our customers.
- Deliver services in a way that gives good value for money.
- Seek the views of our customers and involve them in monitoring and reviewing our services.
- Put matters right as quickly as possible if we get something wrong.

When you contact us by phone

- We aim to answer the call as quickly as possible if this is not possible you will be given the option to leave a message, or to continue to hold.
- We will always try to put you through to the person best able to deal with your enquiry.

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Equality and Diversity

Seven Locks Housing is committed to:

- Ensuring that it is fair and respectful in its dealings with people, communities and organisations to which it provides services and has relationships.
- Takes into account the diverse nature of their cultures and backgrounds.
- Working towards ensuring its service delivery and employment practices are of the highest possible standard of equality.

We will ensure all our activities comply with relevant legislation and codes of practice to ensure that no person receives unfair or unlawful treatment due to race, colour, ethnic, or national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, marital status or religious or political beliefs.

We recognise that discrimination denies some people equal opportunities and we are committed to challenging all forms of discrimination in our services and employment provision. As a result we are committed to developing a culture which provides equal access for everyone to receive services and employment opportunities. Seven Locks Housing Equality and Diversity Policy is incorporated into all policies and procedures of the organisation.

Other Languages

We want our services to be accessible to all our present and future customers. If you would like to speak to someone at Seven Locks Housing in a language other than English then please let us know beforehand and we will use Language Line Service to arrange personal interviews with an interpreter or provide information in your preferred language.



Hearing Impairment

If you are hard of hearing or hearing impaired then please let us know beforehand and we can arrange personal interviews with a signer present.

Visual Impairment

We can arrange for a copy of this handbook to be made available in large print for those who are visually impaired.

We can also make the handbook available on CD. Just let us know if you or somebody you know would like a large print version, CD.

Access to our Office and Naseby Square Community Hall

Our office and Naseby Square Community Hall has level access with automatic door, has disabled WC amenities and hearing loop facilities.

How We Handle Compliments or Complaints

Compliments

If you are happy with the service provided by Seven Locks we would be happy to hear from you. We want to share your positive comments with the right people. With the help of our customers, we will monitor our service regularly to make sure that we are reaching our standards.

Complaints

If you experience a problem with a service that Seven Locks Housing is providing, please tell us immediately.

Contact our Customer Service Department on **01858 414500** or your Scheme Manager or other member of staff.

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Equality and Diversity continued...

Complaints continued...

Please provide us with the opportunity to resolve any queries, mistakes or misunderstandings as quickly as possible. However, there may be times when this is not possible, or you may not be satisfied with the response.

As a learning organisation, we want to know what the issues are, therefore we monitor the number and type of complaints we receive and use the outcomes of our investigation to ensure that we improve our services. We will use the investigation into the circumstances of your complaint as an opportunity to identify any failures in our systems and processes. Your complaint will be dealt with in confidence, as quickly and simply as possible in line with our Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy. Information that you give or are asked to provide will only be used to investigate the complaint.

We encourage Customers with a complaint about our service to contact us immediately. You can do this by: telephone, in writing, email, fax or in person.

Our staff will provide a complaint form or you can download one from our website. Alternatively if you make the complaint over the telephone, the Officer taking the complaint will record it, read the content back to you so that you are clear that the details are correct and send you a copy. We will send you an information leaflet which explains the process in more detail.



Customers at the Heart of our Services

Seven Locks Housing recognises that placing customer involvement at the heart of all we do is key to our success.

By actively encouraging and supporting customer involvement we ensure that our investment in service delivery and improvement is directed where it matters most to our customers. This partnership working helps us meet our aims of improving neighbourhoods and building stronger communities where people choose to live.

Outcomes

We continually monitor the level and impact of Customer Involvement, and publish the outcomes. This enables all tenants to see clearly the difference that their involvement has made.

Our Customer Involvement Structure

We have a varied menu of options for involvement which gives all customers the opportunity to get involved at a level which suits their commitment and interest.

Listed below are the ways in which our tenants are influencing the service that we provide, helping to shape our policies, and delivering outcomes for all of our customers:

Seven Locks Management Board

The effective governance of Seven Locks Housing is the responsibility of the Management Board (the Board).

The Board works with the executive team to direct the company in accordance with its rules and objectives. It sets the values of the organisation and makes the policy and strategy decisions that are behind the day to day work of the organisation.

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Customers at the Heart of our Services continued...

Seven Locks Management Board continued...

The Board is made up of equal representation of Seven Locks tenants, Harborough District Council representatives and independent members who bring particular knowledge and skills to the company. All Board members work on an unpaid voluntary basis.

People usually become Board members because they are interested in the management and development of the company, wish to contribute to their community or they have a commitment to the provision of affordable housing. As a Board member they often find they are able to build on personal knowledge and skills that they can take into other areas of their lives including study and employment.

Training for Potential Board Members

Tenants who are interested in becoming a Board member are offered a place on the Social Housing Governance award programme. This is a university accredited professional qualification.

After successfully completing the Social Housing Governance award tenants then have the skills and knowledge to become a Board member and have the opportunity to put themselves forward for vacant tenant Board member positions.

Customer Panel

Our Customer Panel is the central group of involved Customers. These are the people who have told us that they are willing to be involved, what areas of our service they are particularly interested in and how they want to be involved. We can then make sure that we tailor involvement to the way that meets the needs of these customers and makes the best impact on our services. Members of the Customer Panel also work closely with the Resident Scrutiny Panel.



Resident Scrutiny Panel Membership

Seven Locks Housing tenants and Leaseholders can volunteer to join a panel of customers who are involved in the scrutiny process; assessing the quality of our services and challenging our performance.

Full and ongoing training is provided to ensure that residents have the knowledge and skills at their disposal to make an effective and meaningful contribution to the panel.

If you are interested in being part of our Governance or resident led scrutiny process please call the Customer Involvement Officer 01858 414519.

What are the opportunities for involvement?

All our customers may choose to be involved in any number of ways:

- Estate & Flats Inspections
- Leaseholder Group Membership
- Best Value Reviews
- Mystery Shopping
- Complete Surveys and Provide Feedback
- Disability Action Group Membership
- Tenant Void Inspector
- Corporate Newsletter Editorial Panel
- Attend a Conference
- Monitoring our Capital Programme of Improvements
- One-off Consultation Meetings
- Focus Group Meetings
- Senior Staff Appointments
- Developing Policies and Procedures
- Neighbourhood Improvements
- Electronic Consultation (E-Group)
- Reading Panel

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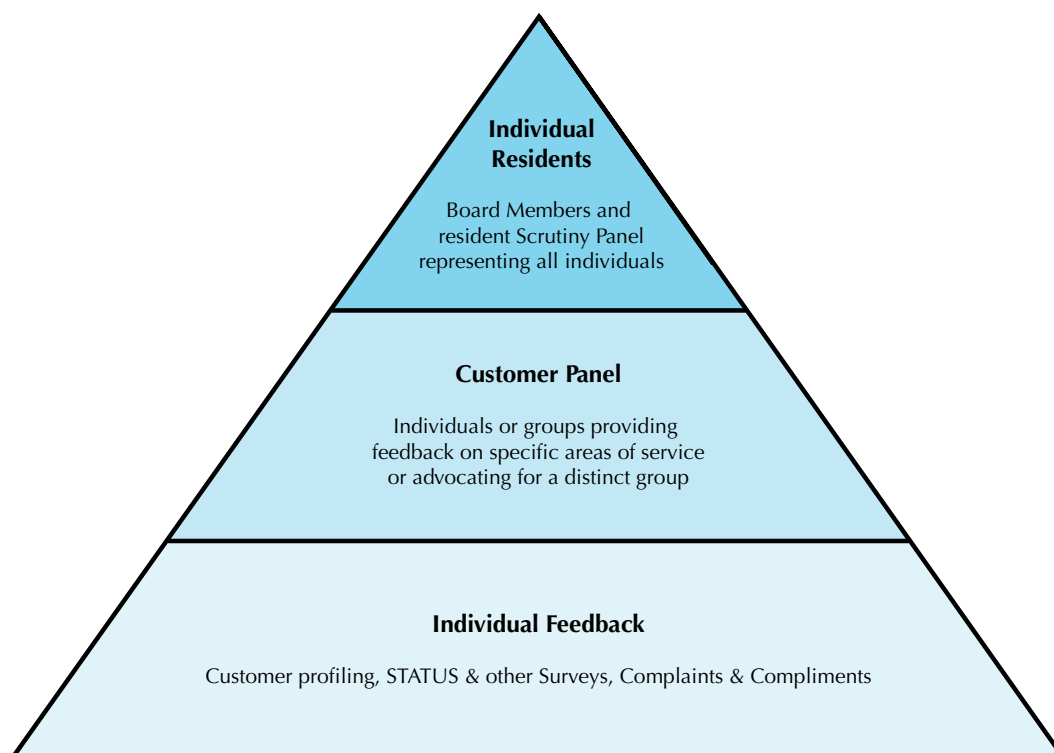
Customers at the heart of our Services continued...

Training & Support

Seven Locks Housing provide full training to enable any customer to become involved in the management and improvement of the services provided to their home and community. We ensure that all of the available training is publicised widely, and we regularly review the training requirements to make sure that what we develop and offer, meets the needs of our customers.

At Seven Locks Housing, customer involvement is focussed on achieving improved outcomes for our services, our customers, and our neighbourhoods and communities.

If you want to find out more and get involved to make a difference, please contact our Customer Involvement Officer on 01858 414519.





Your New home

- Your tenancy will start from the date on your tenancy agreement (usually a Monday). You are responsible for the payment of the rent and all other charges from that date, regardless of when you actually move into the property.
- We will normally expect you to move into the property within two weeks of you taking up the tenancy. If you do not intend to move in straight away, you must let us know the reason for the delay.
- Familiarise yourself with the terms of your tenancy agreement and what your rights and obligations are. These will be found in your tenancy agreement which you were given a copy of when you signed for the tenancy. If you would like a Braille version or a CD version, or a copy in your preferred language please ask at the Seven Locks Housing office. Useful advice is also given in this Handbook.
- Where you have a gas supply to your home, check your gas safety certificate. This tells you that your gas supply has had a safety check and any gas appliances that are fitted in your home are in good working order and are safe for you to use. An annual gas safety check will be completed – please ensure you give us access to do this – it is so important, it is part of your tenancy terms and conditions that you allow us access to carry out this work.
- Check that you have the manual of operation instructions for any gas appliance fitted in your home.
- Notify the gas and electricity supplier that you have taken up the tenancy and request a meter reading on the date you received the keys to the property. If you were responsible for the utility bills at the property you are moving from, inform them that you are moving and give them your new address.

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Your New home continued...

- Notify the Council Tax department at Harborough District Council that you have taken up the tenancy of the property and inform them of the date you will be moving in. If you were the householder at your previous address, inform them of the date you are moving out so they may make the correct adjustment to your bill.
- Water Charges – for non-metered properties in the Market Harborough area, you should check with both Severn Trent Water (for water supply) and to Anglian Water (for waste).
- If you are on a low income and think you may be entitled to help with paying your rent you should contact the Benefits Section at the Council to ask them to assess whether you are entitled to help to pay your rent. Normally Housing Benefit cannot be backdated so make your claim as soon as you take up the tenancy. Housing Benefit can only be claimed for the property at which you are actually living and cannot be paid for two properties at once except in certain circumstances. If you are currently receiving benefits that automatically qualify you for Housing Benefit please remember that you still have to make your claim direct to the Housing Benefits Section at the Council.

Our Lettable Standard

All Seven Locks Housing properties are prepared to a pre-determined standard before new customers move in. We call this our Lettable Standard. Please see our information leaflet which explains our standard and what you should expect in your new home.



Settling in to your new home

- We will visit you in your home by arrangement within six weeks of the start of your tenancy to check whether you have any queries about your rent or tenancy.
- We will carry out any outstanding repairs and maintenance work within the timescales we have advised you.
- Occasionally, we may have a property which does not meet our standard; in this case, Seven Locks will refer to our guidelines and agree a decoration allowance with you and issue vouchers.
- We aim to achieve customer satisfaction with our lettings service. We will survey everyone who is let a Seven Locks Housing property to see whether we meet our customer needs and find out how you want us to improve.
- We monitor all our services to ensure they comply with the standards set by our government regulator.
- If you would like us to explain any of our service statements in more detail, or want more information about our services, our Area Housing Officers will be happy to help you. Please telephone us on **01858 414500**.

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Your New home continued...

Your Tenancy Agreement

Your Assured Tenancy Agreement is a contract between you and Seven Locks Housing. It is the most secure form of tenure and outlines clearly the duties, rights and responsibilities of both parties. These must be kept to, to ensure that you, other Seven Locks Housing customers and your community, have the right to the 'quiet enjoyment' of your home and that you take care of the property and any garden to the standards required by your landlord. Equally it is a commitment by Seven Locks Housing to you, to demonstrate that we will:

- Do everything possible to uphold your rights
- Repair and maintain your property in good order
- Work to ensure that you enjoy living there at all times without interference from anyone else

The tenancy agreement covers the full range of important issues which are the terms and conditions of your occupation of the property. In the event that the tenancy agreement is broken, Seven Locks Housing will take necessary actions (managerial or legal) to uphold the tenancy agreement in the interests of Seven Locks Housing and our customers.

If you want to discuss your Tenancy Agreement with your Area Housing Officer, please contact us on **01858 414500** to arrange an appointment.



Home Contents Insurance

It is the **customer's responsibility** to ensure that their home contents are insured. Please make your own arrangements for this as Seven Locks Housing only insures the building.

Seven Locks Housing does not insure your decorations, furniture or other belongings from loss in a fire, theft, vandalism or water damage.

Seven Locks Housing's insurance covers the **structure** of your home only.

You are strongly advised to take out household contents insurance.

Estates and Flats Inspections

Estates and flats are inspected as part of our management service to you. The aim is to give you and our Area Housing Officers a chance to work together to make our communities a better place to live. We also invite relevant parties to join in, including the Police, our Grounds Maintenance Contractors and other agencies. We will walk around your area or block of flats and identify any problems, discuss environmental issues and talk about possible solutions.

A programme of inspection walkabouts is published – please join us.

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5.

Paying Rent and Service Charges

How To Pay Your rent

You should pay your rent each and every week, as it becomes due each Monday. If you prefer to pay your rent on a monthly arrangement, you must ensure this is paid in advance.

What options are available?

Every Seven Locks Housing customer receives a Rent Payment Card.

The card is issued by Allpay.net and contains your unique rent account reference number.

Please use this card to pay your rent at any UK Post Office



or wherever you see the Paypoint sign.





Local Paypoints are:

Co-op Food store	93 Main Street	Broughton Astley	LE9 6RE
Spa & Post Office	82 Main Street	Broughton Astley	LE9 6RD
Foodmania Ltd	3-5 Devitt Way	Broughton Astley	LE9 6NQ
Mercury News	113 Station Road	Countesthorpe	LE8 5TD
Midlands Co-op	26-30 Main Street	Fleckney	LE8 8AJ
Midlands Co-op	13 Main Street	Great Glen	LE8 0NR
Midlands Co-op	17 Main Street	Houghton-on-the-Hill	LE7 9GE
Co-op	Main Street	Houghton-on-the-Hill	LE7 9TD
Co-op Travel	High Street	Kibworth	LE8 OHS
Midlands Co-op	George Street	Lutterworth	LE17 4EE
St Marys Texaco	Market Street	Lutterworth	LE17 4EH
Central Stores	Central Avenue	Lutterworth	LE17 4NZ
Midlands Co-op	Coventry Road	Market Harborough	LE16 9BX
Montgomery News	83 Bath Street	Market Harborough	LE16 9EJ
Star Service Station	A6 By Pass	Melton Road	LE16 7TH
Midlands Co-op	Main Street	Scraptoft	LE7 9TD
Mercury News	3 High Street	Fleckney	LE8 8AJ
Mercury News	28 High Street	Kibworth Beauchamp	LE8 0HQ
Mercury News	17 Linden Drive	Lutterworth	LE17 4SS
Mercury News	12-13 St Marys Place	Market Harborough	LE16 7DR

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Paying Rent And Service Charges continued...

How To Make A Payment

To pay your rent using the **Rent Payment Card**; present your card at one of the outlets and you can pay by; **cash/cheque/debit or credit card**. Your card will be swiped, your payment entered and you will be given a receipt as proof of payment (keep this in the plastic wallet provided).

Direct Debit

You also have the choice to pay by Direct Debit; simply contact us on **01858 414507** and we will be happy to help you to set up this payment method through Allpay.net.

We can do this over the phone!

Internet Payment Service

To make a payment you need: access to the internet, your rent payment card, your debit card, and a valid email address. Log on to **www.allpayments.net** website.

You will be asked to enter your unique **Rent Payment Card number**. When you do this for the first time you will be asked to enter a password, (you will have to provide this password every time you use the internet payment service). You will also be asked to enter your email address.

When you have completed the process to this stage, the system will confirm that your payment will be sent to Seven Locks Housing. You can then enter the amount you wish to pay and the details of your debit card.

The transaction will be authorised immediately.

Your confirmation, authorisation code and payment reference will be provided on screen. This information will also be sent to the email address you have supplied.



Telephone

The Allpay telephone number is: **0844 557 8321**. Allpay.net's automated telephone payment system uses interactive voice response technology. So if this is the method you choose **you can make payments 24 hours a day**.

Text

Alternatively you may prefer to text your payment using your mobile phone. To use this method you will have to register with allpayments.net. The Allpay telephone number is: **0844 557 8321**.

Standing Order

You can still pay your rent by Standing Order through your bank account.

Please do not send cash through the post.

What If You Lose Your Rent Payment Card?

If you lose or damage your Rent Payment Card; simply contact us on **01858 414507** and we will arrange a replacement free of charge.

What Happens If You Have Rent Arrears?

Your rent is used to pay for the costs of repairing, improving and managing your home. If we don't get the rent that is due we can't meet our obligations to you, so paying your rent is important. You may contact us by telephone during office hours to discuss your account on **01858 414500**.

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What Happens If You Have Rent Arrears? continued...

If you do not pay your rent, an arrears recovery procedure will commence. This consists of a progressive staged process. It is really important for you to contact us and explain. We are keen to agree an amount to reduce your arrears by weekly or monthly instalments in addition to the current rent. All repayment agreements will be realistic and appropriate and can be changed to reflect a change in your household's income or circumstances.

There are legal processes which we will take if you do not take the opportunity to agree a payment plan with us and maintain the payments. Failure to do this will result in the serving of a Notice of Seeking Possession. **As a final resort, we may apply to the Court to regain possession of your home.**

We always aim to prevent such serious actions by a successful informal arrangement. Our Area Housing Officers are happy to provide help and advice in arrears cases and we want our tenants to feel able to discuss the situation with us in confidence. Please call 01858 414500.

You may be able to get Legal Assistance in order to appoint a solicitor should you be summoned to Court.

If you have difficulty in paying your rent please contact your Area Housing Officer as soon as possible so that help and advice can be given to try and resolve your problems at an early stage.

Do not wait until you have built up a large debt.

The sooner we know about any problems you are having in paying your rent, the easier it will be for us to help you with a payment plan.



If you are in rent arrears because the Benefits Agency has, for some reason overpaid money to you or that you think you may be entitled to additional benefits such as Housing Benefit or Working Families Tax Credit to help you pay your rent, then please contact the Benefits Department of Harborough District Council.

If you are receiving Income Support or Income Based Job Seekers Allowance and are in arrears with your rent, you can ask the Benefits Agency to pay an amount from your benefit each week directly to us in order to reduce your outstanding debt. For more information please contact your Area Housing Officer.

Service And Other Charges

A service charge is the cost of facilities or services that we (the landlord) provide over and above the cost of those to the individual property.

Seven Locks Housing leases and tenancy agreements include provision for variable service charges.

The type of service that will have a service charge are:

Grounds and tree maintenance

This includes the cost of cutting grass, taking care of shrub beds, hedges and trees, as well as looking after some tarmac/paved areas. The cost of keeping neighbourhoods and other land owned by Seven Locks Housing clear of dumped rubbish, and the cost of pest control to communal areas.

Cleaning

The cost of cleaning the common parts of a block of flats or a sheltered scheme, shared between all of the homes in that block.

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Service And Other Charges continued...

Security services

The cost of providing and maintaining electronic door entry systems.

Electricity and communal lighting

The cost of fuel bills for lighting and other electrical equipment in communal areas of blocks, plus the cost of electrical safety checks to these areas.

Communal TV aerials

The maintenance costs of communal TV aerials together with the capital cost of the aerials upgraded for digital TV.

Fire Fighting

The cost of providing and maintaining fire fighting equipment.

Sheltered scheme additional communal facilities and services

The cost of communal furnishings, furniture etc.

Information and advice will be available relating to charges and eligibility in respect of housing and other benefits to assist with the payment of these charges.

Service charges will be based on the actual cost of providing the service and will be reviewed each year. You will receive four weeks notice in writing detailing any changes.

Occasionally we may seek to introduce new services. When this happens we will notify you, and make a decision taking your views into account. If new service charges are required we will notify you of these at least 4 weeks in advance of them coming into effect.



What If You Have Difficulty Paying Your Rent Or Service Charges?

Should this problem arise please do not hesitate to contact your Area Housing Officer as soon as it occurs. We appreciate that our customers may occasionally get into difficulty with rent and service charge payments and will do all we can to help you. Please call **01858 414500**.

It is in both our interests that you do so.

Seven Locks Housing and our customers depend on the income received from rent to pay for the services we provide. It is therefore in all our interests that we try to minimise rent arrears.

You will receive a rent statement every 3 months. If you wish to talk to someone about your statement, or to check the balance of your account between statements, please contact us on **01858 414500**.

If you do not pay your rent, Seven Locks Housing will try to recover it from you. Rent arrears are one of the main grounds on which we can go to Court to obtain either a possession order or eviction notice under the terms of your tenancy agreement. If we do this, you will have to pay court costs and legal expenses as well as the rent you owe and **you may lose your home**.

Questions about your rent account?

Computer records are kept of all your rent payments and should you wish to discuss these or any other matters about your rent please contact us on 01858 414500.



6.

Housing Benefit and Advice

Harborough District Council can arrange to have Housing Benefit paid **directly** to Seven Locks Housing – this is either full payment or part payment of your rent. It remains your responsibility to pay the water and sewerage charges directly to the utility provider.

Many of our tenants qualify for Housing Benefit to help pay their rent. If you think you may be entitled to claim please contact **Harborough District Council**. Alternatively, you may collect a form from Seven Locks Office which you should return to the Council for processing as soon as possible.

Please remember that the rent you pay to Seven Locks Housing does **not** include Council Tax, which you should pay directly to Harborough District Council.

Seven Locks Housing is committed to continuously improving its services, and will be developing new ways to make paying your rent more convenient for you in the future. We will keep you informed and involved in any developments.

Claiming Housing Benefit and other Benefits

If you are having difficulty paying rent you may be entitled to housing benefit.

- To be able to claim Housing Benefit you must be liable for payments of rent and live in the property for which housing benefit is claimed.
- Housing Benefit covers rent and some service charges however, it will not be paid in respect of water charges.
- The amount of benefit you get depends on the rent you pay and your personal circumstances (for example, how many children you have, whether you are disabled, your age and whether other people live with you, your income and savings).



If Housing Benefit is awarded, it is very important that you **report any changes** of circumstances in writing to the **Benefits Department** at the **District Council** without delay. This could help to avoid an **overpayment** of benefit.

Where an overpayment occurs on your benefit, you may have to pay this back from your current benefit. This may mean that your current benefit does not cover the whole cost of your rent and you will have to make up the shortfall yourself. You are strongly advised therefore to ensure that all your details are correct at the time of making an application and that any changes are notified to the Benefits Department.

Claim forms can be picked up from Harborough District Council, Seven Locks Housing office or you may ask for a form to be sent to you by writing to or telephoning the Benefits Department at Harborough District Council.

Claim forms must be completed and returned to the Benefits Department at Harborough District Council as soon as possible to avoid a delay in the date housing benefit starts.

If You Have Difficulty Managing Your Rent or Tenancy

Seven Locks Housing employs a Tenancy Support Officer who may be able help you if you are having difficulty maintaining your tenancy. We can give advice on benefits and managing debts. The sooner you contact us the sooner we can help. You can obtain independent advice from the Citizen's Advice Bureau (locally based in Market Harborough and Lutterworth), or Harborough District Council's Tenure Sustainment Officer on 01858 828282.

Seven Locks Area Housing Officer or Tenancy Support Officer will advise you to:

- Ensure that you are getting all the benefits and allowances to which you are entitled.
- Work out payments you can afford and help with debt management.
- Offer on-going support and advice.

Please contact us for an appointment on 01858 414500.



7.

Repairs, Improvements and Adaptations

Responsibility for repairs

Seven Locks Housing aims to provide a cost effective repairs and maintenance service. We are responsible for all repairs to the structure of your home and for all fixtures and fittings supplied by Seven Locks Housing. Our customers are responsible for internal redecorations and a few other minor repairs – these are outlined on page **37**

How To Report A Repair

Before you report a repair, please look at page **37** of this section which will help you to identify the fault or defect.

When you report a repair, please be prepared to give us the following important information:

- Your name, address and telephone number.
- As much detail about the repair or defect as you can. Tell us what has happened and what problems are being caused.
- The location of the repair at your home (inside or outside, which room, which part of the fixture, etc).
- The times when someone is usually at home to give our workman access to carry out the repair.

Helping Seven Locks Housing with as much detail as possible when reporting a repair will help to ensure that you get your repairs done quickly and properly.

Please remember that it is your duty as the customer to tell Seven Locks Housing about any defects that occur in your home. This will enable Seven Locks Housing to complete the necessary repairs.



Seven Locks Housing has right of access to your home under your Tenancy Agreement to carry out repairs that we feel are emergencies. For example, if a pipe burst in your home whilst you are away and the water was damaging other properties and homes, we would force entry to your home in order to fix the burst pipe.

We would ensure that your home was made secure once the repair had been carried out, and we would contact you upon your return to tell you what had happened.

If Seven Locks Housing feel that a repair is necessary but you refuse us access to your home, we may apply to the County Court to obtain an order making you grant Seven Locks Housing access. This course of action is a last resort only and the vast majority of our customers cooperate with us in order to get their repairs done.

The Repairs Process

If a repair is an Emergency or an Urgent repair, Seven Locks Housing will order the work straight away. For other repairs we may be able to order it straight away depending on the information you give us. Where it is not clear what the extent of the problem is, we will arrange to visit you and assess the problem. The visit will be within 5 working days of you reporting the repair.

Please note: In cases where the repair is not clear and we inspect the problem, our repair response times will only be effective from when the assessment of the situation was made and an order passed on to our contractors and not from when you first report the repair. When the repair is completed, you will be asked to fill in a satisfaction questionnaire and tell us what you think about the way in which people who did the work treated you and your home. Please let us know if you are satisfied with the standard of work.

Seven Locks Housing also post-inspects a proportion of its repair work to ensure that we are satisfied with the standard of work on the property. Our Surveyor may visit you a little while after the work is completed to do this.

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Repairs, Improvements and Adaptations continued...

The Repairs Process continued...

Security services

Seven Locks Housing spends a lot of money on day to day repairs and we are committed to providing an efficient and value for money repairs service to maintain our properties and your homes.

However, we accept that things can go wrong sometimes. If you experience any delays in getting your repair(s) done, or if you are unhappy about the quality of the work or about how a member of staff treated you, then please let us know and Seven Locks Housing will try to resolve the issue immediately.

If you are still not happy, you are welcome to use the Seven Locks Housing Complaints Procedure. Further information is in Section 2 of this Handbook.

What is a Responsive Repair?

The definition of a responsive repair is:

Repairs that are made in response to tenant's requests for help to maintain the standard of accommodation in an individual dwelling, for example – to repair a broken window, unblock a drain, fix a broken boiler.



Repair Response Times

Category	Time in which repairs should be completed	Some examples
0 =	Immediate response attend and make safe – This service is provided 7 days a week, 365 days of the year. Follow up visits may be needed in some cases depending on the scale of the repair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dangerous structures • Gas leaks • Board up for security
1 =	Emergency repair to be completed within 24 hours of being reported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaking pipes, tank or cistern • External doors where insecure • Broken windows (board to secure) • Failure of electrical supply • Total/partial loss of heating between 31st October and 1st May
2 =	Urgent repair to be completed within 3 working days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dangerous light fitting • Leaking waste pipes • Rotten stairs
3 =	Repairs to be completed within 5 working days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renew wash hand basins • Roof repairs • Overflow running
4 =	Repairs to be completed within 15 working days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dripping taps • Plaster work • External doors where they are secure
5 =	Repairs to be completed within 20 working days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renewal of sink unit • Replacement of skirting • Paths • Gates • Fascia boards, soffits



Repairs, Improvements and Adaptations continued...

Who Is Responsible For Repairs?

Item	Seven Locks Housing does repair	Tenant does repair	Comments
Boiler	✓		
Internal Banister	✓		
Baths	✓		
Brickwork	✓		
Ceilings	✓		
Chimney stack/pots	✓		
Cisterns	✓		
Cookers		✓	
Communal Areas to flats	✓		
Cupboards	✓		
Damp proof course	✓		
Decoration – internal		✓	
Doors to communal areas	✓		
Doors – external	✓		
Door locks		✓	Except where customer has lost their keys or are of pensionable age
Downpipes – rain/soil	✓		
Electric heaters	✓		Where provided by Seven Locks Housing
Electric plugs		✓	
Electric wiring/ socket/ switches	✓		



Who Is Responsible For Repairs?

Item	Seven Locks Housing does repair	Tenant does repair	Comments
Fences		✓	Except where there are boundaries with public footpaths or roads
Gas fires provided by Seven Locks Housing	✓		
Floor tiles	✓		Only those fitted by Seven Locks Housing
Floorboards	✓		
Foundations	✓		
Fuses to plugs		✓	
Central heating pipes, radiators, timers and thermostats	✓		
Glazing		✓	Unless crime reference number given
Guttering	✓		
Immersion heaters	✓		
Replacement keys		✓	Unless of pensionable age
Kitchen fittings/ worktops	✓		
Light bulbs		✓	
Lighting pendants	✓		
Overflow pipes	✓		
Painting – external	✓		



Repairs, Improvements and Adaptations continued...

Who Is Responsible For Repairs?

Item	Seven Locks Housing does repair	Tenant does repair	Comments
Paths to front and rear entrance doors	✓		Does not include paths laid by tenants
Paths – public	✓		
Plaster	✓		
Roof, roof tiles / slates	✓		
Sink and drainer	✓		
Sink base unit	✓		
Skirting boards	✓		
Smoke detectors	✓		Where provided by Seven Locks Housing
Stairs	✓		
Taps	✓		
TV aerials		✓	Seven Locks will repair communal aerials
Wash hand basin	✓		
Waste plugs and chains to bath, sinks and wash hand basins		✓	
Water heating	✓		
Water supply	✓		
Toilet pan	✓		
Toilet seat		✓	Unless of pensionable age
Window frames	✓		



Emergency Repairs

An emergency repair can be needed at anytime by anyone.

An emergency repair should be reported immediately to 0800 1300 365.

Some examples of emergency repairs requiring immediate response are:

- Gas escapes from pipes or appliances.
- Fumes from solid fuel appliances (coal fires) filling the home.

If there is an **escape of gas** in your home you must:

- Put out all naked flames (candles, cigarettes) immediately.
- Do not operate electrical light switches or door bells (a spark might cause an explosion).
- Open all doors and windows and keep them open until the gas leak stops.
- Turn off the gas supply at the meter.
- **Telephone National Grid 0800 111 999**
- Contact Seven Locks Housing. If necessary, call from a neighbours house, a call box or a mobile phone for your own safety.
- Do not return to your home until you are told to do so by a qualified person dealing with the emergency.

If a **coal fire starts to send fumes** into your home you must:

- Open all doors and windows.
- Vacate the house of all people and pets and do not re-enter the property until a qualified person tells you to do so.
- Turn off any gas or oil appliances as you leave.
- Report the problem straight away but do not endanger yourself by making a phone call from your home. If necessary, call from a neighbours house, a mobile phone or a call box for your own safety.
- **Telephone our repairs contractor on 0800 1300 365**



Repairs, Improvements and Adaptations continued...

Emergency Repairs continued...

coal fire starts to send fumes continued...

- Do not try to re-ignite the fire.
- Do not return to your home until told to do so by a qualified person attending the emergency.
- Even if you only suspect you have a problem, please let us know - it is better to be safe than sorry!

If there is an **electrical problem** that has occurred because you just switched on or plugged in an appliance you must:

- Check the trip switches that will be near the electric meter.
- If one of the trip switches has 'tripped' off, unplug all your appliances and move the switch to 'on'.
- Plug in your appliances one by one and if the switch 'trips' again you can identify which appliance is faulty. If the appliance is your own, you will need to get it fixed by a qualified electrician at your own expense. If you have any doubts, please report the repair.



CARBON MONOXIDE (IMPORTANT – PLEASE READ THIS)

Every year, around 50 people nationwide die from Carbon Monoxide poisoning. The majority of these deaths are caused by defective or faulty domestic heating appliances in the home. Carbon Monoxide is highly dangerous and can kill, sometimes without causing any warning symptoms.

Carbon Monoxide is a gas produced when any fossil fuel (coal, smokeless coal, gas, oil, paraffin) is burnt. Carbon Monoxide kills people because they are not aware that it is poisoning them. This is because it is:

- Colourless – (you cannot see it).
- Odourless – (you cannot smell it).
- Tasteless – (you cannot taste it when you breathe in through your mouth).

Every time fuel is burnt in your home, a small amount of Carbon Monoxide gas is given off. The problem with the gas starts when there is an insufficient airflow to and from the appliance. This allows small amounts of the gas to build up into dangerously large amounts that can threaten all warm-blooded mammals (people and pets).

Carbon Monoxide kills because it is absorbed into the blood stream quicker than life giving oxygen.

This prevents oxygen from getting into the bloodstream, and so the victim starts to suffocate. Once Carbon Monoxide gets into your blood, it is very hard to get rid of it. Levels of Carbon Monoxide can build up in your blood little by little over a period of time.



CARBON MONOXIDE continued...

Some symptoms of Carbon Dioxide poisoning include:

Pressure across the forehead, collapsing, fast pulse rate, headaches, heavy, rapid breathing, drowsiness, coma, on going flu-like symptoms, weakness, dizziness, nausea. If you suspect you are suffering from Carbon Monoxide poisoning, please seek medical advice immediately.

PREVENTING CARBON MONOXIDE FROM BUILDING UP

- All gas appliances must be serviced annually to ensure that the flow of air to and from the appliance(s) is adequate.
- All oil burning appliances must be serviced annually for the same reason as above.
- All open flues to boilers, fires etc., must be cleared of debris.
- Only use a qualified person to carry out repairs and maintenance to any gas, solid fuel or oil-burning appliance.
- Do not use any appliance you suspect is not working properly.
- Never block or obstruct ventilation grills, airbricks or air flues, as this will cause Carbon Monoxide to build up.
- Do not use any appliance other than for the purpose it was designed for (for example, never use a cooker to heat up a room).

If you suspect you have Carbon Monoxide gas in your home, here is what to do:

- Open all doors and windows to your home.
- Vacate the house of all people and pets and do not re-enter the property until a qualified person tells you to do so.
- Phone **0800 1300 365** from a neighbours home, a mobile phone or a call box. Do not call from inside the property.
- If there is a coal fire, let the fire burn itself out.
- If there is an oil or gas fire, turn the appliance off.
- Do not turn on any appliance until you are told to do so by a qualified person.



CARBON MONOXIDE continued...

Solid fuel fires may be faulty if:

- The fire burns too weakly or fuel is left unburnt.
- A weak flame is being produced.
- It is producing fumes or smoke into the room.

Gas fires or boilers may be faulty if:

- They are cracked or have flaking cement around the ceramic panels.
- The panels are cracked or damaged.
- The panels are discoloured.
- There is any blackening to the front of the fire.
- You can hear gas flowing but there is no flame.
- The pilot light has gone out or keeps going out once relit.
- You have no hot water even though you have put the boiler on.

Seven Locks Housing will treat any problem with your heating system likely to pose a health and safety risk as an emergency, with a response time of attending and making safe immediately. Our contractor will:

- Ventilate the rooms of your home.
- Carry out a safety test on the heating appliance/s or systems.

If the heating appliance/s or systems fail the test:

- They will advise you not to use the fire or boiler and will affix a notice instructing that the appliance must not be used until further notice.
- They will disconnect the appliance wherever possible and leave it in safe condition.
- They will provide temporary heating appliances in your home if required.

Please report emergency repairs to 0800 1300 365.

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Repairs, Improvements and Adaptations continued...

Gas Servicing

Seven Locks Housing undertakes an annual service of our gas appliances (those that heat your water and heat your home for example). This is important because we do not want our customers to be put at risk of carbon monoxide poisoning or potentially dangerous gas leaks.

Please allow our contractors to enter your home and service the appliances or contact them if they call whilst you are out to arrange another date when the servicing can take place.

Any appliance not serviced regularly could potentially produce Carbon Monoxide. Do not put the lives of yourselves, your family or pets at risk – help Seven Locks Housing to ensure the annual service takes place.

Rechargeable Repairs

These are repairs that we will charge you for in addition to your rent. We will charge you for repairs if you cause (or allow to be caused) deliberate damage to or neglect of your property. You will be charged the full cost of the repair (this includes an administrative charge and VAT). Where items are damaged through deliberate act or neglect, you will be required to do these repairs and we will inspect them to ensure they have been done to a satisfactory standard.

In cases where Seven Locks agree to complete the repair on your behalf, you will normally be asked to pay for the repair before it is completed, although in some cases you will be given the option of paying in installments. Here are some examples of where a recharge will apply:

- Making good bad DIY or tenants' own 'improvements'.
- Replacing locks after keys have been lost.
- Re-glazing windows where they have been broken.



Please check the list of who is responsible for the repairs and other work to your home before you report a repair.

Code of Conduct for Seven Locks Housing Staff and our Contractors

We require that our staff and contractors ensure that any work on your home is done with a minimum of disruption to our customers. All people authorised to work on or in your home are required to:

- Introduce themselves and show their identity card to you.
- Explain the nature and purpose of the job to you.
- Behave in a proper and professional manner at all times by not smoking, using bad language or playing radios.
- Take care of your property and possessions and protect them from dust, paint etc.
- Keep your home secure at all times.
- Keep safe all materials and equipment used on the site to avoid danger to occupants and visitors.
- Reconnect and test services such as water, gas and electricity at the end of each working day.
- Clear any rubbish arising from works from the garden and other areas outside the property.
- Comply with any Health and Safety legislation and relevant codes of practice.
- Comply with our Equal Opportunities policy.
- Agree with you the extent of the removal of carpets, furniture etc., and their condition before the work starts.

Seven Locks Housing maintenance staff and contractors always carry identification. Please always ask to see it.



Repairs, Improvements and Adaptations continued...

Home Improvements

In addition to the day to day, empty property and cyclical maintenance carried out, Seven Locks Housing is committed to a long term programme of major works and improvements to your home.

By the year 2013 we will have completed the following major investment programme:

- Modernising kitchens in around 1600 homes.
- Modernising bathrooms in around 1300 homes.
- Replacement of external doors in around 1300 homes.
- Installing or upgrading heating systems in around 900 homes.
- Replacing communal entrance doors to flats.
- Re- roofing programmes.

During this time we will also be carrying out ongoing improvement projects to your homes throughout the district such as:

- Cavity wall insulation.
- Roof insulation.
- Security works.
- Upgrading existing communal digital TV aerials.
- Environmental improvements.

Following on from the major investment programme works we will commence works on an on-going basis of programmed renewals. This work will involve the planned replacements of major elements of your homes such as windows, roofs, kitchens and bathrooms where they have reached the end of their life cycle.



Temporary moves (known as decants)

There may be certain circumstances in which it is necessary for your health and safety, to vacate your home whilst essential repairs are carried out.

Seven Locks Area Housing Officer and a Surveyor will discuss with you your personal circumstances and what assistance Seven Locks will offer you. Seven Locks Housing will try to ensure the move is as trouble free for you as possible.

Seven Locks Housing has produced detailed information for tenants who may have to move out of their home whilst major works are taking place.

You are also entitled to know:

- Seven Locks Housing plans for improvements.
- The arrangements for consulting you about any improvements to your home.
- The policy relating to giving alternative/temporary accommodation and information about any disturbance or decoration allowance payments to which you may be entitled.

Tenants Own Improvements

You have a right to carry out your own improvements, at your own expense, but you must write to Seven Locks Housing and obtain written consent before the work begins – in accordance with your Tenancy Agreement.

You may need to obtain Planning Permission and Building Regulation approval if the improvement you wish to carry out requires it. You, and not Seven Locks Housing will pay any costs incurred in obtaining Planning or Building Control permission. Planning and Building Control permission is obtained from Harborough District Council.



Repairs, Improvements and Adaptations continued...

Tenants Own Improvements continued...

'Improvement' means any alteration or addition to the property and includes:

- Any addition or alteration to the landlord's fixtures and fittings, and any alteration to services.
- Structural alteration.

Seven Locks Housing will not refuse consent unreasonably. When your tenancy ends you may have a right to compensation for improvements carried out to your home. Seven Locks Housing will tell you whether or not you qualify.

You will be recharged for any work required to repair damage caused by you including putting right any alterations you have made to your home which do not meet our standards. You may be charged for these repairs at the end of your tenancy.

Right to Compensation

The right to compensation applies to the following improvements if you have been given permission for the work and have proof of expenditure

- Baths, showers, hand-basins and toilets.
- Kitchen sink drainers and work surface for preparing food.
- Storage cupboards in kitchens and bathrooms.
- Central heating, hot water boilers and other types of heating.
- Thermostat radiator valves.
- Cavity wall and loft insulation.
- Pipe, water tank or cylinder insulation.
- Draught-proofing or external doors and windows.
- Double glazing, secondary glazing or other window replacement.
- Rewiring, power, lighting or other electrical fittings (including smoke detectors).
- Security measures (other than burglar alarms).



Interior decoration (painting and wallpapering) does not qualify for compensation. Compensation consideration will only be made at the end of your tenancy at your request and, a 'notional life' depreciation will be deducted.

Aids and Adaptations

Seven Locks Housing knows that many of its current and future customers may have different living requirements due to their disability or that of a family member.

We want to provide homes where people really want to stay, and sometimes this means altering your home as your needs change.

We work closely with Leicestershire County Council Social Care Services to provide adaptations and equipment that not only help people maintain their independence, but it can also greatly improve their quality of life.

What is an adaptation?

An adaptation is some kind of alteration to your home to make it accessible and help you move around it independently. This could be alterations to the kitchen, bathroom or any other part of your home to make it easier for you or a member of your household to use your home to do everyday personal tasks. It may also include extra equipment, fixtures and fittings.

Who may benefit from an adaptation?

You or anyone in your household who is elderly, disabled, or less able to manage everyday personal and domestic tasks, or your carer, to make it easier for them to take care of you.



Repairs, Improvements and Adaptations continued...

Minor Adaptations

Seven Locks Housing will carry out minor adaptations costing £1,000 or less generally without the need for a referral from Leicestershire County Council Social Care Services.

Minor adaptations can include the following:

- Fitting lever taps.
- Fitting a half step.
- Fitting hand rails
- Fitting grab rails.
- Fitting a key safe to the outside of the property.

Major Adaptations

If your home needs a major adaptation (see list below) you will be referred to Leicestershire County Council Social Care Services for an occupational therapist to assess your home and your needs: Major adaptations may include the following:

- Installing a level access shower.
- Making your home wheelchair accessible (where possible).
- Fitting a replacement kitchen for wheelchair access.
- Providing a ramp.
- Fitting a stair lift, step lift or vertical lift.

Sometimes, it may not be reasonable or practicable to adapt your home. If this is the case, we will try to find you another more suitable home to move to.

This can be done by:

- Exchanging with another tenant ('mutual exchange').
- Transferring to another home.
- We may be able to assist you in your move through the Tenants Incentive Scheme.

If you would like more information on any of these options, please contact us.



Who To Contact About An Adaptation?

Call us and ask to speak to our Property Services Team on 01858 414500. They will tell you whether an occupational therapist will need to assess you or whether one of our surveyors may need to visit you. If you need an assessment we will refer you to Leicestershire County Council Social Care Services or you can contact them yourself on **01858 465331**.

How long might I have to wait?

Simple adaptations such as installing grab rails, lever taps or fitting a key box outside of the property should usually be completed within 28 working days. More complex adaptations may take a while longer.

In addition you have the right to apply directly to Harborough District Council by contacting Environmental Services.



8.

Tenancy Information

Joint Tenancies

A joint tenancy is a tenancy which is equally shared. Each tenant is jointly and severally liable for the tenancy, this means:

- Each tenant is responsible for all of the rent.
- A breach of tenancy by one person is a breach by all.
- A notice served on or by one of the tenants applies to all.
- The whole tenancy can be ended by just one of the joint tenants giving the valid four weeks notice to quit.

When is a joint tenancy issued?

Shared joint and several liability needs trust between the parties, so a joint tenancy is best used for:

- Married couples/Civil partners
- Established partners (mixed or same sex).
- Close family members.

What are the other issues to be considered about a joint tenancy?

Joint tenants who are not recognised as couples under Housing Benefit regulations are only entitled to Housing Benefit on their share of the rent not on the whole amount, therefore two claims for Housing Benefit are needed.



Succession

Succession is when a member of your family may inherit the tenancy of your home when you die. However, there are legal and contractual conditions in your tenancy agreement attached to the rules of succession. Please refer to your tenancy agreement or speak to your Area Housing Officer to see if you qualify.

We may refuse to grant succession to the tenancy to someone if it is not their only or principal home and they have not been living with you (the tenant) throughout at least, the previous twelve months prior to your death. Checks will be made and proof of eligibility will be required.

If more than one member of your family has a right to the tenancy, they should agree who will claim it. If they cannot agree, they should all make a claim and we will decide, to whom we will offer the tenancy. We will advise all applicants for the tenancy of our decision. All claims to the tenancy must be made to us, in writing, within a month of the death of the tenant.

In order to make the best use of available housing stock, if the property is adapted for special needs that are not required by the successor's household or, it is larger than needed or not suitable in any other way we may require potential successors to give up the property and we will find them alternative accommodation.

All applications for succession of tenancy will be managed in a sensitive, fair and efficient manner, ensuring the accommodation is used effectively.



Tenancy Information continued...

Assignment

What will happen to your family who normally live with you if you are not able to continue to live in the property?

Your tenancy may be assigned to someone who would be entitled to succeed to the tenancy upon your death. For example, your spouse, partner or family member could have the tenancy assigned to them.

This would depend upon the qualification that the property was their only or principal home and they had lived with you throughout at least the previous twelve months.

A written request to assign the tenancy would be required from the tenant and also from the person qualifying to take over the tenancy.

The reason for the assignment would be investigated by Seven Locks Housing and we will ask for proof that the person requesting to take over the tenancy is the person entitled to succeed in the event of your death.

If the assignment was sought as a result of a Court Order under the Matrimonial Causes Act 1973, Matrimonial and Family Proceedings Act 1984 or Children Act 1989, the assignment would be completed in accordance with the courts decision made under this law.

If an assignment were to be granted by Seven Locks Housing, the person taking over the tenancy from you would countersign the existing tenancy.



If you want to discuss a succession or an assignment with your Area Housing Officer, please contact us on 01858 414500 to arrange an appointment.

Relationship Breakdown

During the breakdown of a relationship, many complex issues may need to be sorted out. One of these issues concerns the tenancy you or your partner or both of you have with Seven Locks Housing.

Remember that if you have a joint tenancy, you are both responsible for the rent and all conditions of the tenancy agreement.

Legal points:

- Joint tenancies can be brought to an end by a tenant giving four weeks notice to quit, in writing and a new tenancy may be created for one of the partners (usually the one with childcare responsibilities). Rent arrears should be cleared first.
- If there is no agreement between partners the Courts can decide to whom the tenancy is assigned.
- If one partner has been driven from the home by domestic violence or the threat of violence the Courts can bring Possession Proceedings against the perpetrator.



Tenancy Information continued...

Relationship Breakdown continued...

Seven Locks Housing will:

- Have information available on the rights and responsibilities regarding relationship breakdown.
- Offer an objective, sensitive, flexible approach, taking account of a range of housing related problems.
- Ensure that equal opportunities and regard to poverty is taken into account.
- Offer private facilities or home visits to discuss sensitive issues. Offering same sex/same cultural background interview (where possible).
- Officers will have detailed guidance on a range of measures and legal options available. Officers will have training to ensure a victim centered approach to relationship breakdown is taken in cases of domestic violence.
- Confidentiality will be assured and information given by a tenant will only be passed on to relevant agencies with written permission from the tenant.

Where domestic violence is a part of relationship breakdown a separate Domestic Violence Policy and Procedure will be followed.

- Any action taken will take individual household circumstances into account.
- The aim will be to ensure that accommodation is provided to the adult with whom the children live. In all cases advice and assistance will also be offered to the outgoing partner to help them find accommodation.
- Seven Locks Housing will work closely with other relevant organisations when responding to cases of relationship breakdown.



Living in flats

If you live in a flat you must ensure that you do not place items in the stairwells, landings and corridors. Fire Risk Assessments are carried out to reduce the likelihood of fires in the communal areas of flats. In order to reduce the risk of escape route obstruction or trip hazard, you must keep the stairwells, landings and corridors clear.

- Obstructions such as bicycles and prams can be a hazard, as well as a fire risk, and obstruct fire escape routes. You must not leave these or any other items in the stairwells.
- You must not throw anything from any landing, balcony, corridor or window in your property or in the areas shared with other people.
- Paraffin heaters, portable gas appliances and flammable liquids are fire risks and therefore must not be stored in flats, garages or storage/bin areas.

Where Seven Locks Housing may want to arrange cleaning of stairwells, landings and corridor areas, we will consult those tenants affected and notify them of the appropriate service charge for doing this work.

Pets are sometimes the cause of nuisance and consequently residents in flats must be sensitive to these concerns and take steps to minimise any nuisance or disturbance to neighbours.

Long periods of absence from your home

The terms of your Tenancy Agreement with Seven Locks Housing state that *“You have security of tenure as long as you live in your home as your only or principal home. You must tell us as soon as practicable if you will be away from your home for more than one month so that we know you have not moved out of your home”*.

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Tenancy Information continued...

Long periods of absence from your home continued...

These rules are laid down to allow us to manage the available stock of housing efficiently and fairly.

If your own personal circumstances mean you are not able to comply with one or any of the rules you must let us know immediately and Seven Locks Housing will look at your reasons and give you a decision in writing.

If you do not discuss these reasons with us we may think you have abandoned your home and start legal steps to recover the tenancy from you. All our tenants are required to inform Seven Locks Housing if you notice any of our properties appear to be abandoned or unoccupied on a regular basis.

You are responsible for the payment of your weekly rent from the date the tenancy starts to the date the tenancy ends (by giving Seven Locks Housing four weeks Notice to end your tenancy or the tenancy is ended by a Possession Order issued by a Court). This applies even if you are in hospital or residential care.

If you are entitled to receive Housing Benefit and you have not yet moved into your new home or have moved out for any reason, even temporarily, please remember that you cannot normally claim Housing Benefit from two addresses. Your Housing Benefit entitlement will only relate to the property in which you are actually sleeping, except in certain circumstances. If you are unsure contact the Housing Benefit section at the District Council.

There are special Housing Benefit rules which apply if a tenant is remanded in custody or serving a custodial sentence. In either case it is vital that both Seven Locks Housing and the Housing Benefit Section at the District Council are informed without delay.



Failure to do so may result in large rent arrears building up on your rent account and this could jeopardise your eligibility for re-housing upon release from prison.

There are also special rules for entitlement to Housing Benefit if you have to go into hospital for a long period of time or need a period of residential care. You must make sure that both the Housing Benefit Section and Seven Locks Housing are kept informed of your progress and intention to return to your home.

Lodgers

The terms of your Tenancy Agreement with Seven Locks Housing allows you to take in a lodger (or lodgers) as long as this does not cause the property to become overcrowded. You must inform Seven Locks Housing in writing of the lodger's name (or lodgers' names).

If you are claiming Housing Benefit or in receipt of any other kind of benefit entitlement or occupancy discount, you must also inform all the relevant authorities without delay as it may affect the way your benefit entitlement is calculated. Failure to do so could result in back dated calculations that could affect your rent account and result in legal action being taken against your tenancy.

Please remember that as the tenant of the property it is your responsibility to ensure that all the terms of the tenancy contract are complied with. If you take a lodger (or lodgers) into your home you would be held responsible for their conduct and behaviour.



Tenancy Information continued...

Sub-letting

You must obtain prior written consent from Seven Locks Housing to sub-let part of your home. You must not sub-let the whole of your home.

Sub-letting is when you give up part of your home, for the exclusive use of someone else. Assured tenants may only sub-let part of your home, with the landlord's consent.

If you unlawfully let the whole of the property, it will no longer be considered to be your main home (your tenancy agreement refers to this as "your principal home"). This is really important as this may lead to losing all the legal rights of your tenancy with Seven Locks Housing. If you want to discuss a long term absence, taking a lodger or sub-letting part of your home talk to your Area Housing Officer at Seven Locks Housing.

Gardens

You must keep your garden in a tidy condition, lawns must be cut and hedges trimmed and the garden should be cultivated to a good standard. If your garden is overgrown and there is no good reason why you can't do it we may clear it and charge you for the work. If you think you may be eligible for assistance under the Needy Tenants Garden Scheme, ask your Area Housing Officer if you are eligible to apply for assistance. You must also not cut down or remove any tree or hedge at your home without prior written consent from Seven Locks Housing. Tenants are not permitted to move or change boundaries. Tenants are required to apply for permission to erect a fence or boundary wall.



Car parking

You and your visitors must not park vehicles anywhere within the boundary of your home except on an approved 'hard standing' (a driveway or paved area intended for parking). Caravans, motor homes, trailers or commercial vehicles must not be parked at your home or on any communal parking areas without our agreement in writing.

You must not dismantle or repair any vehicle on communal parking areas. We also do not allow residents to drive, park, dismantle or repair any vehicle, caravan, trailer or boat on any verge or communal grassed area.

When parking vehicles you must not obstruct access to any property, service road or block access for emergency vehicles.

If your home has a designated residents' parking area only you and your visitors may park there. Where communal parking areas are provided only residents and their visitors may park there and no individual tenant has the sole use of a specific car parking bay. If parking controls are necessary we will consult residents on the installation of barriers for which a service charge will be made.

We do not allow residents to keep vehicles without tax and/or a valid MOT certificate on our communal parking areas unless the owner has contacted the DVLA to obtain a **Statutory Off Road Notification** (SORN). If vehicles are left on communal parking areas we will take action to remove them. Please contact your Area Housing Officer if you see an abandoned vehicle or have any other queries.



Tenancy Information continued...

Pets and Other Animals

Unless you live in a flat which has a communal entrance, you are allowed to keep one dog or one cat. You may keep caged birds, fish and small caged animals without obtaining written approval. Permission must be sought if you wish to keep any other types of animal. All animals must be kept in accordance with the law.

You must keep any animal or pet under control at all times, and not allow any animal to foul or damage your home or any other property, or cause any nuisance or annoyance to anyone else. If your pet or pets cause persistent nuisance to others we may request that you seek alternative accommodation for your pet or pets. If you fail to do so we will commence legal action for breach of your tenancy conditions.

Garages

There are numerous garage sites located throughout the district available for rent. You should contact Seven Locks offices for information relating to site locations and current availability.

Garage rents are payable weekly in advance, payable by monthly Direct Debit. The garage must not be sub-let. Garages must not be used for any other purpose than housing a motor vehicle belonging to the tenant or a member of his family living with him or her. Parking space is in high demand in the area so it is only fair that garages are used for cars.

If you are found to be using your garage to store household items or are running a business from it and are parking your car outside, you are in clear breach of your agreement with Seven Locks Housing and we will seek possession of the garage subject to you using the garage for its proper purpose.



You are not permitted to store flammable or hazardous materials in your garage such as petrol, bottled gas etc.

The garage should be kept in a clean and tidy condition and tenants must also permit a duly authorised officer of Seven Locks Housing to enter and examine the premises after proper notice is given.

Running a Business from Home

Your tenancy agreement states that *'You must not carry on a trade or business from or in your home'*.

If you do so without first asking permission, you will be in breach of your tenancy agreement and Seven Locks Housing could take legal action against you.

If you do wish to ask permission you must write to your Area Housing Officer. Please make sure that you have first obtained any planning permission or other consents before you ask us.

If our permission is given and your business causes annoyance to your neighbours our permission will be withdrawn.

You must not display any business advertisements or signs on your home unless you ask our permission.



9.

Nuisance and Anti-Social Behaviour

Joint Tenancies

Everybody has the right to live peacefully in his or her home. It is therefore a condition of your tenancy that you do not cause a nuisance or allow a nuisance to be caused to neighbours, or those living near you, by people living with you or visitors to your home. We expect all our customers to be considerate towards their neighbours.

Seven Locks Housing, as your landlord, has a duty to ensure that you have quiet enjoyment of your property and are able to live in your home in peace and conduct your daily lives without harassment or interference from anyone else, be they neighbours or visitors to neighbours, adults or children within the vicinity and locality.

The tenant or tenants of a property will be held **responsible** for the **conduct** of the following people whilst such persons are in their homes, in the vicinity of their home or in the locality:

- The tenant(s) themselves who reside at the property.
- Visiting adults.
- Children of the tenant(s) who reside at the property.
- Children of any visitor(s).

Behaviour that is considered to be 'anti-social' includes (but is not exclusive to):

- Noise.
- Nuisance from vehicles (parking / maintenance).
- Domestic violence.



- Harassment (racial or sexual).
- Intimidation (or threat of physical violence).
- Verbal abuse.
- Boundary disputes.
- Rubbish and misuse of communal areas.
- Pets and animals.
- Alcohol and drug abuse.
- Damage to property.
- Poorly maintained gardens.
- Nuisance from business use.
- Criminal behaviour (Drug dealing, theft, prostitution).
- Any behaviour that may be deemed as provocative and not in keeping with attempting to maintain good relations with neighbours.

Please remember that noise, especially in flats and communal areas, can disturb your neighbours and lead to complaints and ill feeling and must therefore be kept to a reasonable level.

Noise is sometimes impossible to prevent but difficulties can be avoided if you show consideration and respect for others by:

- Limiting noise late in the evening.
- Not playing loud music.
- Giving neighbours advance warning of occasional late night parties.
- Restricting building work or noisy housework such as washing and vacuuming to hours that would cause least disturbance.
- Preventing dogs from barking.



Nuisance and Anti-Social Behaviour continued...

If you have children or visiting children, it is your responsibility to ensure that they do not cause damage to property and nuisance to others and that you have control over their behaviour.

If you are being constantly disturbed we suggest that you first have a polite talk with your neighbour, explaining the problem to make them aware of the situation. If this fails to resolve the situation, contact your Area Housing Officer or Harborough District Council Environmental Health Department, who also have powers to deal with nuisance problems and can sometimes serve a Noise Abatement Notice.

There are a number of ways that Seven Locks Housing can address anti-social behaviour. Some of these may be in conjunction with other agencies such as the Police, Council, Probation, Social Services or the Health Authorities:

- 1. Mediation** – Seven Locks Housing will first of all try to sort any problems between residents by meeting with the people involved to try and arrive at a satisfactory and long-lasting solution for all those concerned. In some circumstances, we may use an independent mediation service. You may be asked to contribute to the cost of this service.
- 2. Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABC's)** – these are agreements between people who continue to cause anti-social behaviour of a more minor nature. An agreement is drawn up between the perpetrator and the landlord (also involving other bodies), with the perpetrator promising not to repeat such behaviour whilst being allowed to remain in the area. The contract is monitored (usually over a period of 6 months) and any breaches could lead to more formal legal action being taken.
- 3. Anti-social Behaviour Orders** – these exclude persons acting anti-socially from an area in order to protect the residents or threaten more severe penalties (imprisonment,



fines) if they continue to act anti-socially. They will be used in more serious cases of persistent anti-social behaviour.

4. **ASB Injunctions** – these are Court orders and may also be used against those who act anti-socially. When an injunction is broken, the person on whom the injunction has been served is considered to be in contempt of Court and is liable to serve a prison sentence. The injunction may be enforced by the power of arrest.

5. **Other actions** – there are other actions which may be considered such as; Premises Closure Orders, Parenting Contracts, Good Neighbour Agreements etc.

6. **Notice of Seeking Possession** – This is the first warning stage of formal legal action which may lead to Court and possibly, possession of your home.

7. **Possession Action** – Breaches of the Notice of Seeking Possession will result in Seven Locks Housing applying to the Court for possession of a person's home if they themselves or a visitor or visitors to their home have persistently acted in an anti-social manner. This may lead to an eviction for the tenant from their home.

Seven Locks Housing will only refer a case to the Court for possession of the property as a last resort, and we will work with all parties concerned to settle any neighbourhood problems before more forceful action has to be taken.

Any customer reporting anti-social behaviour will be supported by their housing team. All cases will be dealt with as sensitively as possible and we assure you of the utmost discretion when dealing with your problems to ensure that your own personal safety (and the safety of your household) is not compromised.

If you are having problems and suspect nuisance or anti-social behaviour is taking place in your neighbourhood, please contact us on 01858 414500 or at info@sevenlockshousing.co.uk

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10.

Transfer, Mutual Exchange, Homeswapper

Seven Locks Housing aims to meet the needs of its existing tenants who have a genuine requirement to move to alternative accommodation, to encourage and assist existing tenants whose present home is unsuitable and to transfer those who under occupy family homes to smaller properties. It is important to make the best use of the company's housing stock. See our website or contact our offices for further information.

Eligibility for a Transfer

To be eligible for consideration for a transfer to alternative accommodation the tenant, or tenants, must register on Harborough Home Search and must:

- Have maintained a clear rent account for a minimum of three months prior to being offered alternative accommodation.
- Not be subject to legal action for breach of tenancy conditions, e.g. Notice of Seeking Possession or Suspended Possession Order.
- Have maintained the property and the garden/external area in a condition, which is in accordance with the conditions of tenancy, such that the property can be re let without the requirement for major expenditure or delay. (The Tenancy Services Manager may waive this requirement where due to age, disability or other health problems, a tenant has been unable to maintain the property or garden).
- Have been a tenant or tenants of their current property for a minimum of 6 months.
- Must have a genuine need to move to alternative accommodation.
- Applicants will normally be offered a property of the size and type appropriate to their household size as indicated in the transfer policy.
- We will inspect your property before making any offer and agree any works or rent payments required.



Eligibility for a Transfer

Where an applicant feels that they have been unfairly excluded from being granted a transfer, they shall have the right to appeal using the Appeals procedure.

- The applicant should notify Seven Locks Head of Housing in writing that they wish to appeal against the decision made, providing any information or evidence they wish to be taken into consideration.

Mutual Exchange

As an Assured tenant you have the right to exchange your tenancy and home with another Seven Locks Housing tenant, a tenant from another housing association or a tenant from another Local Authority.

- Please be aware that if you were a tenant of Harborough District Council before the transfer to Seven Locks Housing took place you will have certain preserved tenancy rights.
- If you then exchange with a tenant from another housing association your preserved rights will be affected. (If you wish to discuss the implications of how you will be affected you should contact your Area Housing Officer before you complete a mutual exchange).
- Harborough Home Search maintains a register of tenants wishing to exchange or swap homes locally. Tenants should make the initial contact with a potential swap themselves. However, if you wish to be considered for an exchange, you must obtain permission from Seven Locks Housing. Please contact your Area Housing Officer on 01858 414500 or by using info@sevenlockshousing.co.uk.



Transfer, Mutual Exchange, Homeswapper continued...

Eligibility for a Transfer continued...

- Before you can exchange your tenancy you must apply in writing for permission to Seven Locks Housing. The tenant with whom you are wishing to exchange should also apply, or in the case of a tenant from another housing association or Local Authority, to their own landlord. Once these applications are received each landlord must either give permission for the exchange to happen or provide a reason as to why the exchange cannot take place within 42 days from the date of your application.

Applications for exchange will not normally be refused unless:

- Either tenant is under a Notice of Seeking Possession or legal proceedings have begun following a legal Notice.
- Either property is specifically designed to help a disabled person or other special features that the new tenant does not need.
- Either property is too large or too small for either tenant.
- Before permission to exchange is given your rent account must be clear. A visit will also be made to your home by a Area Housing Officer and a Maintenance Officer to check the property.

If you wish to discuss a Mutual Exchange with your Area Housing Officer, please contact us on 01858 414500 or at info@sevenlockshousing.co.uk



Homeswapper www.homeswapper.com

Seven Locks Housing participate in Homeswapper and is **free** to our tenants. The system is web based and offers residents a wide choice for mutual exchanges both locally and nationally. The service operates on a similar basis to an estate agency web-site and includes property location maps and photos (where available).

Please note: Homeswapper applicants are also subject to the mutual exchange criteria and permission requirements.



11.

Shared Ownership Right to Buy and Right to Acquire

Shared Ownership

Seven Locks Housing will be looking at providing solutions to those customers who would like to own their own home but do not have the financial means to buy on the open market. One of the ways of providing low cost home ownership is Shared Ownership, or part-buy, part-rent as it is sometimes called.

The principles behind Shared Ownership are:

- You purchase a 'share' in the property and rent the rest from Seven Locks Housing.
- The share is normally 50% that you can purchase with a mortgage, your own funds or a combination of the two.
- You may also have the opportunity to buy more shares in your property if you wish to at a later date.
- You normally have to be a first time buyer.

If you are interested in further information about Shared Ownership, please contact 01629 761547

Preserved Right to Buy

The statutory right of a secure tenant to buy his or her home at a discount from a public sector landlord was introduced by the Housing Act 1980. The Right to Buy under Part 5 of the Housing Act 1985 is the right of a secure tenant to buy the freehold or a long lease of the house or flat of which he or she is the tenant.

Qualifying tenants (those who were tenants of Harborough District Council before the stock transfer on 3rd December 2007) are entitled to buy the property at a discount, which depends on the length of his or her qualifying period of public sector occupation.



The longer the period of tenancy, the higher the discount will be (up to a maximum amount that is prescribed for houses and flats). Details of actual discount levels and procedures are laid down in the Government produced booklet, which is available from Seven Locks Housing Office.

Your Right to Buy your Home

Please make an appointment to contact your Area Housing Officer if you wish to discuss the issues involved. Seven Locks Housing has a clearly defined legal duty to process all Right to Buy applications, which is outlined in the booklet.

It is very important to note that, if you were a tenant at the time when Harborough District Council transferred its housing stock to Seven Locks Housing on 3rd December 2007, you will retain the opportunity to purchase your home under the Right to Buy process. If you became a tenant after this time, then you may apply to purchase under the Right to Acquire procedure.

There are exceptions to the Right to Buy and Right to Acquire:

- If it is sheltered housing for the elderly or for disabled persons.
- If it is particularly suitable for, or designated as being for elderly people.
- If it is used as temporary housing.
- If your landlord has rented your property from someone else and therefore does not actually own the property.

Also, if you sell your property within three years of buying it or five years for properties sold after 3rd December 2007, you will have to repay some of the discount you received back to Seven Locks Housing.

If you want to discuss buying your home with your Area Housing Officer, or would like Seven Locks Housing to send you information on the Right to Buy or Right to Acquire, please contact us on 01858 414500.

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Shared Ownership Right to Buy and Right to Acquire continued...

Your Right to Buy your Home continued...

If you want to discuss buying your home with your Area Housing Officer, or would like Seven Locks Housing to send you information on the Right to Buy or Right to Acquire, please contact us on 01858 414500 or by using info@sevenlockshousing.co.uk.

Your Right to Buy your Home

The Right to Acquire applies to property provided or acquired with Government Grants on or after 1 April 1997, and to property transferred to housing associations landlords from Councils on or after that date (e.g. Seven Locks Housing). There are a number of ways in which the Right to Acquire differs from the Right to Buy:

- Discount allowed is prescribed by regulation and applies to the area in which the property is situated. Therefore, unlike Right to Buy, there is no set discount across the board for all the properties. The discount you get will vary from property to property or from location to location. The current discount allowed is £10,000 maximum but this may be subject to change.
- Certain rural areas are exempt from the Right to Acquire.
- There are exemptions for groups of special needs housing and sheltered schemes.
- There is no tenants' delay procedure applicable to the Right to Acquire.
- The landlord may offer the tenant a sale of an alternative dwelling but the tenant does not have to accept.



If you are a new tenant of Seven Locks Housing but have held a previous tenancy with a qualifying landlord such as another housing association, then that tenancy may count towards your qualifying period. For instance if you had held a tenancy with another housing association for one year before taking a tenancy with Seven Locks Housing, then you would be eligible for the Right to Acquire after another year.

The process for Right to Acquire is substantially different to that of Right to Buy and Seven Locks Housing will process any application received as quickly as possible for all interested parties. It is still the duty of the landlord to process all applications received and to comply with the requirements of the legislation. If your tenancy transferred to Seven Locks Housing on the 3rd December 2007, you may be entitled to the Preserved Right to Buy. If you became a tenant on or after 3rd December 2007, you will be entitled to the Right to Acquire as set out above.

If you want to talk to your Area Housing Officer about buying your home, please contact us on 01858 414500.



12.

Sheltered, Supported and Extra Care Services

What are Sheltered, Supported and Extra Care Housing?

Sheltered, Supported Housing and Extra Care, is specially designed rented accommodation for elderly or vulnerable people who enjoy independent living. It provides comfortable accommodation with a Scheme Manager providing contact Monday to Friday during working hours and additional contact and support provided by 'Lifeline' emergency alarm system 24 hours a day.

The benefits of Sheltered Housing are:

- Own flat
- Independent living with support with 24 hour lifeline support
- Higher level security
- Peace of mind, with help on hand in emergencies
- A support plan, agreed between you and the Scheme Manager, to meet your individual support needs
- Companionship and being part of the community
- Social opportunities
- Laundry

The benefits of Supported Housing are:

- Own flat/bungalow
- Independent living with support with 24 hour lifeline support
- Community Visit if requested



- A support plan, agreed between you and the Scheme Manager, to meet your individual support needs
- Companionship and being part of the community
Social opportunities

The benefits of Extra Care are:

- Own flat / studio apartment
- Independent living with support
- Higher level security
- Peace of mind, with help on hand in emergencies
- A support plan, agreed between you and the Scheme Manager, to meet your individual support needs
- Companionship and being part of the community
- Social opportunities
- Meal provided from on site kitchen
- Bathing facilities
- Laundry
- 24 Hour care available on site

What does a Scheme Manager do?

The Scheme Manager is responsible for providing support services within a Sheltered, Supported Housing or Extra Care housing scheme. A Scheme Manager's main duty is to provide general support and take a co-ordinating role to help a resident to access other services, such as Home Care, Health Services, Social Services and Social Activities.

These will be identified with each individual in a personal Support Plan. In an emergency such as an illness or a fall, the Scheme Manager will contact relatives call a doctor or the emergency services as required. Each of our Supported properties has an alarm connected via intercom to the Lifeline Service and they will respond 'out of hours', or if the Scheme Manager is not on site.

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Sheltered, Supported and Extra Care Services continued...

What is a Support Plan?

This is a confidential document for every person living in Sheltered or Supported accommodation, which we are required by our funders to complete individually for every person. It will help to identify things you need assistance with and help us to provide or direct you to the most appropriate support to help you to stay independent and look after your health and wellbeing. By signing the Support Plan you are agreeing to information being passed on confidentially and only where you agree that we can. All completed documents are kept securely in our offices. The Support Plan is reviewed every 6 months or anytime sooner if your circumstances change.

Supporting People Grant

If you receive support from a Seven Locks Housing Sheltered Scheme Manager, you may claim supporting people grant to help pay for these support charges.

Leicestershire County Council collects the Supporting People charges for people living in Leicestershire. If you are in receipt of Housing Benefit you will not be charged for services. If you are not in receipt of Housing Benefit you are expected to pay the full cost, although you may be able to have your charge reduced by opting for a Fairer Charging Assessment.

Fairer Charging applies to Home Care as well as Supporting People Charges. A Visiting Assessment Officer from Leicestershire County Council will contact you and complete a Fairer Charging Assessment Form. You will be asked a number of questions about income, benefits, savings and also about costs you have as a result of a disability. The information needed includes:



Income

- State Retirement Pension
- Occupational Pension(s)
- Income Support
- Pension Credit
- Incapacity Benefit
- Carers Allowance
- Any other income
- Savings and property (capital). This may include Bank/Building Society Accounts, Premium Bonds, National Saving Certificates, Shares and other investments

The Fairer Charges Assessment will not include Attendance or Disability Living Allowance. It will also ignore any earnings you may have from work and parts of War Pensions

You will need to prove any expenditure in relation to:

- Rent
- Service Charges
- Council Tax
- Mortgage Payments
- Domestic Fuel Payments
- Metered Water
- Building Insurance
- Medical Costs
- Any other expenditure, e.g., cleaners, gardener

If you have savings or capital of more than £21,000 (£43,000 for couples) you will be assessed as being able to pay the full Supporting People cost and, in this case, you will not need to provide details of your income and expenditure.

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Sheltered, Supported and Extra Care Services continued...

Supporting People Grant continued...

This means that, if you have savings or capital of more than £21,000 (£43,000 for couples) a Fairer Charging Assessment will not reduce your Support Charges.

Your income will be compared to a standard amount set by the government each year. If your weekly income is less than the standard amount then you will not have to pay your support charge. If your weekly income is higher than the standard amount then you will have to pay your support charge or make a contribution towards the cost, this decision will depend on your amounts.

Your assessment will be reviewed every year. If there are any changes to your income or savings please do not hesitate to contact The Fairer Charges Team at any time for re-assessment.

Who to contact for help and advice:

If you have any questions contact the Supporting People Team.

By telephone: 0116 2645882

By email: [mailto: adultsocialcare@leics.gov.uk](mailto:adultsocialcare@leics.gov.uk)

By post: Leicestershire Supporting people, 4-6 Brook Street, Syston, Leicester. LE7 1GD.



How to apply

Support Providers have New Client/New Housing Benefit Claimant request forms that are completed for new and existing tenants. This form provides the option for people to request a Fairer Charging Financial Assessment or a Welfare Benefits Check. Requests for applications for an assessment can also be made direct to the Supporting People Team.

What Should You Do If You Suspect A Child Or Vulnerable Adult Is Being Abused?

In an emergency always call 999

Service providers in Leicestershire work together to stop abuse.

If you or someone you know is a victim of abuse, help is available to stop it and make sure it does not happen again.

Talk to someone you trust; this may be:

- Area Housing Officer
- Scheme Manager
- GP, Nurse or Home Help
- Member of staff or a volunteer or a carer at a day centre or residential home
- Sheltered or Supported Housing Manager
- Trusted relative, friend or neighbour
- Local Social Care Office



13.

Safety in the Home

Seven Locks Housing wants customers to have the peaceful and safe enjoyment of their homes.

Statistically, you are more likely to have an accident at home than at work. However, there is no reason why this should be if you are careful and think 'safety'.

We would like to address the issue of safety in your home by offering some sensible advice about how to avoid accidents in your home.

Fire

Almost all fires can be prevented as they start with people not realising the potential hazards caused by everyday things around the home. In particular are items that we use for heating and cooking.

There are two **major threats** from **fire**:

1. From the fire itself that burns and destroys just about anything if it is not stopped.
2. From the smoke that is produced from the burning. The smoke can render people and pets unconscious so that they cannot deal with the fire or escape it and may become victims of the fire itself.



Chip Pans and Deep Fat Fryers

- Never fill a pan more than a third full of oil or fat.
- Never ever leave the pan unattended when the heat is on.
- Never put food in the pan if the pan is smoking. Turn off the heat and leave the pan to cool down before cooking anything.

If the pan does catch fire:

- Do not move it – leave it where it is.
- Turn off the cooker **IF IT IS SAFE TO DO SO**. Do not lean over the pan or you may get seriously burnt.
- Cover the pan with a damp cloth or tea towel and leave it for at least 30 minutes. This will cut off the oxygen that enables the fire to burn and it will go out. **NEVER THROW WATER** on a pan fire as it will float on the water and spread.

If you are in doubt as to whether or not to put out the fire yourself, then don't. Close the door to the kitchen and call the fire services on 999.

Open Fires

- Always place a fireguard in front of the fire.
- Do not place clothes on the guard in order to dry them.
- Do not overload the fire so that there is a risk of fuel spilling onto the carpet.

Portable Heaters

- Always place a fireguard in front of the fire.
- Always sit at least 3 feet away from a portable heater. If you sit too close, your clothes may catch fire. If this happens, roll the person up in a rug or curtains and cover the flame. Call an ambulance on 999.
- Do not drape clothes over the heater.
- Keep furniture away from any portable heater.



Safety in the Home continued...

Smokers

- Never leave a lit cigarette or pipe unattended – it may fall onto an armchair or a carpet that will catch fire and give off potentially lethal dense smoke and fumes.
- Never smoke in a chair if there is a risk of you falling asleep.
- Always keep matches and lighters safe and out of the reach of young children.

Candles and aromatherapy oil burners

- Never light near curtains or flammable materials – fabric, wood or plastic.
- Make sure you use a level surface and appropriate holders for any candles or burners.
- Do not leave unattended.
- Extinguish when leaving the room or when going to bed.

Fire safety routine

Many fires start at night when people are asleep. Here are a few simple tips that may help to keep you and your family safe:

- Switch off and unplug electrical appliances not designed to be left on.
- Make sure no cigarettes are still alight and do not smoke in bed.
- Before emptying ashtrays, ensure that the contents are no longer burning.
- Switch off all portable heaters.
- Close the doors to all rooms.
- Have electricity blankets checked regularly by a qualified electrician and follow manufacturer's instructions for use.



Electrical fires

Electrical appliances cause more fires in people's homes than anything else.

They can be avoided if you take the following steps:

- Switch off all electrical appliances at the end of an evening.
- Never tug at the flex when taking out a plug – this may cause the wire in the flex to shear away and cause a short circuit which could cause a fire.
- Make sure that all your plugs conform to British Safety standards (BS1363/1363A).
- Always fit a plug properly – ensure that the flex grip at the bottom of the plug is gripping the flex.
- Never run an electrical appliance from a light fitting – the current can overheat the wiring and a fire may start as a result.
- Do not run flexes under carpets or rugs – again the overheating wire may make the material catch fire.
- Use short flexes rather than long ones. Check them regularly for defects (holes etc.).
- Do not overload sockets with adaptors. Use multi-plug sockets blocks instead – these will have additional protection in them to prevent overheating or blowing out.
- Use a residual circuit breaker (RCB) with your appliances – this will automatically cut off the current should an appliance malfunction and keep it and you safe.
- Always use the correctly rated fuse for an appliance.



Safety in the Home continued...

Electrical fires continued...

3 Amp Fuse (Red) Up to 750 watts	5 Amp Fuse (Black) 760 – 1250 watts	13 Amp Fuse (Brown) 1260 – 3000 watts
Computer	One bar fire (1kW)	Microwave
CD Player	1kW kettle	2/3 kW fire
MP3/iPod	Percolator	High speed kettle
Electric blanket	Vacuum cleaner	Washing machine (with heater)
Sewing machine	Spin dryer	
Table or standard lamp	Fridge	
Black and white TV	Colour TV	
Electric rollers	Washing machine (no heater)	
Electric razor	Hair dryer	
Electric toys	Hand iron	
Clock	Electric drill	
Radio		

Always look at the rating on the appliance before replacing a fuse.

Electrocution

Also bear in mind that as well as causing fire, poorly maintained or fitted electrical appliances can give you a severe or even fatal electric shock. The use of a residual circuit breaker (RCB) will help to prevent this from occurring.

It is your responsibility to ensure that all the appliances that you provide for your home are in proper, safe working order. Please consult a qualified electrician if you are in doubt.



Smoke alarms

A smoke alarm can give you those precious few minutes that can give you and your family the chance to get out away from danger safely.

Seven Locks Housing provides smoke alarms (both audio and visual versions for those with hearing problems) and these will be installed to all relevant properties.

If the alarm sounds:

- Assume there is a fire and evacuate.

If alarm sounds and no fire or smouldering items are found, check for the following:

- Smoking, has anyone been smoking in the property, the devices are sensitive enough to be set off with the smoke from a cigarette, pipe or cigar. Check all ashtrays.
- Cooking, has any food been burnt or over cooked such as toast or grilled bacon.
- Candles, being lit for decoration purposes, some candles give off a light smoke/vapour which if in close proximity of the detector can set the detector off. Similarly, when the candles are extinguished they give off a light smoke which can activate the alarm if close.
- Open fireplace, should the fire (coke/coal/log) be started with newspaper and firewood or similar then it is possible under certain circumstances this will activate the alarm.

The alarm will stop sounding once you have got the smoke out.
If the alarm does not stop, then ring repairs for service.



Safety in the Home continued...

Smoke alarms continued...

Warning

The units cannot be switched off or isolated.

Do not attempt to open the unit or remove it.

How to operate your smoke alarm

1. Test the alarm weekly by pressing the test/push button on the cover.
Note: the test button is slightly different on different models but they are all marked with the words 'test and push'. The alarm should sound and a red light on the cover will flash rapidly. All alarms in the house will sound if the test button on any of the alarms is pressed for 10 seconds.
2. Regularly check that the green light is on. The red light on the cover should flash approximately once per minute.
3. Keep your smoke alarm clean don't let dust and cobwebs build up, as this can cause false alarms.
4. Do not paint your alarm.
5. Ensure that you cover your alarm with the dust cover supplied when redecorating or any building work in progress.

False Alarms

Smoke alarms can sometimes be set off accidentally. If your alarm sounds and there is no sign of smoke, fire or noise to indicate a fire, get your family to a safe place before investigating.



You can identify which alarm has detected a problem when they are in a continuous alarm state by looking for a rapidly flashing red light on the cover of one of the alarms.

To silence a nuisance alarm, press the test/push button on the cover of the alarm with the rapidly flashing red light. This will silence all the alarms and the red light on the alarm cover will flash once every 10 seconds to tell you that it has reset automatically.

If the alarm continues to sound, you should ring the number shown below:

**Seven Locks Housing Free Phone Repairs:
0800 1300 365**

What To Do If A Fire Starts

Once a fire starts, you have very little time to act so whatever you do, use this time wisely:

- If possible, close the door to the room where the fire has broken out. This will help to delay the spread of the fire and smoke.
- Before you open a door to a room that you suspect has a fire in it, touch the door with your hand. If it feels warm or hot, do not open the door. If the door is opened, air will rush into the room and make the fire more intense and more dangerous.
- Get everyone out of the building as quickly as possible. Do not try to get possessions or belongings. Make your way out safely and try not to panic.
- Call the fire service on 999 from a safe location (mobile phone, call box or neighbours house).
- Do not return to the home unless a fire officer tells you that it is safe to do so.

If you are cut off by fire

- Try to remain calm.
- Keep doors closed and block gaps with towels or sheets.
- Open any available windows and attract attention or help.



Safety in the Home continued...

If you are cut off by fire continued...

- Crouch on the floor where the air will be better to breath (smoke rises).
- If necessary, throw mattresses and pillows out of the window for you to jump on them if you are in real danger.
- Lower yourself down first and then jump onto the mattresses below.
- The fire service should attend within a very short time.

General Accidents In The Home

Some additional advice for preventing accidents in the home:

- Do not polish under carpets or rugs.
- Make sure that stairs and landings are clearly lit.
- Put guards at the top of stairs to prevent youngsters falling down them.
- Wipe up spills from the kitchen floor immediately.
- Repair holes in carpets and lino to prevent people from tripping over them.
- Make sure stair carpets are securely fitted.
- Keep all poisonous chemicals out of the reach of children.
- Do not store chemicals in bottles or other containers not meant for them.
- Do not lean when using any type of ladder – move the ladder.
- If using materials that give off strong fumes (e.g., glue) ensure that any room is well ventilated.

Security and Crime Prevention

Being and feeling secure in your home is important to us all. Seven Locks Housing regularly work closely with the local police and our customers to establish what we can do together to improve security of your homes.



Sometimes simple solutions like leaving a room light on while you are out can deter any would-be intruder. However, we are committed to carrying out a range of security works to our homes such as fitting spy holes in doors, door chains, fitting locks to windows, improving communal lighting and installing door entry systems where appropriate.

All Seven Locks Housing staff, Jeakins Weir Maintenance Operatives and contractors appointed by Seven Locks Housing carry Identification Cards (ID) and these will be shown to you prior to them entering your home. Our staff will always try to make a prior appointment to visit your home. **Always ask to see a person's ID Card before you let them into your home.** If you have any doubts about anyone coming into your home, please telephone Seven Locks 01858 414500.

To deter burglars:

- Make sure that you've closed all windows and locked all doors before you go out.
- Close ground floor windows and windows near drainpipes, flat roofs or canopies at night.
- Never leave your keys under a mat or on a string inside the letterbox.
- Do not leave notes for callers when you are out – this gives away the fact that you are absent to people who may want to burgle you.
- If you go away, cancel milk or newspaper deliveries because if they are left to build up, this is an obvious sign that you are away that might encourage someone to burgle you.
- Always ensure that your back door is locked before answering the front door.
- Put the chain on the door before opening it – especially to people who have made no prior appointment with you.

You can talk to the charity 'Crimestoppers' on 0800 555 111 to report crime anonymously. Anonymous means that your name is not known or made public. Crimestoppers will never ask for your name. Your call will not be recorded. Your call or online form will not be traced. You will not have to make a statement to the police. You will not appear in court.



Safety in the Home continued...

Rubbish disposal

General household rubbish (domestic waste) will be collected by the District Council's refuse collection service. All waste must be placed in the plastic waste bags or wheeled bin provided by the Council, and left in a safe place that does not cause any obstruction. You must also not allow an accumulation of rubbish or waste in or around your home. If we need to remove rubbish from your property we will do so and recharge you for doing so.

For extra collections of large bulky items such as beds, furniture, televisions and fridges you should contact Harborough District Council who will for a charge, arrange for their disposal.

If you want to contact the District Council about refuse collection, their contact details are 01858 828282

Pests

If you have a problem with any pests such as rats, mice, wasps, bees or ants nests, you should contact Harborough District Council Pest Control Officer, there may be a charge for this service. If the pests are also causing damage to your home you should contact Seven Locks Housing on 01858 414500 and we will arrange for an inspection and repair of any damage caused.

You must also not leave food or allow an accumulation of food waste in or around your home as this can attract unwanted pests such as mice or rats.



Satellite dishes

If you wish to install a satellite television dish you must contact your Area Housing Officer for permission.

Where there is an existing integrated receiver system installed, we will not grant permission.

We are willing to grant permissions to install a satellite dish subject to the following conditions:

- All work must be carried out properly and professionally to our satisfaction and you will be required to provide installer details.
- No expense must be incurred by Seven Locks Housing.
- It will be the tenant's responsibility to seek any necessary planning permission and pay any fees incurred.
- Upon completion of the work you must notify us.

The Town and County Planning Act, Order 1995 states that, you should install a satellite dish where it has the least damaging effect on the outside appearance of a building. A dish should be well screened and blend in with its background.

Harborough District Council's Development Control may require you to move any badly sited dish even if planning permission is not needed. If you refuse to re-site it at your own expense to a position agreed with the planning officers you will be asked to make a planning application, for which a charge is payable. If you fail to apply for permission or it is refused, then you may be served with an 'Enforcement Notice' requiring you to move the dish. Failure to comply with an enforcement notice is an offence that may lead to a fine.

Any installer you use should be a member of the Confederation of Aerial Industries and will advise you on the careful siting of satellite dishes. A satellite dish must be removed when it is no longer in use.



Safety in the Home continued...

Simple Energy Saving Tips

TVs: On average a traditional cathode ray tube (CRT) television set uses 100 watts of power when in use and about two watts on standby.

Newer LCD and plasma screens are higher users of energy, with the largest models consuming up to 400 watts when in use and about four watts on standby.

DVD players: Consumers can safely switch off most DVD players/recorders, hard disk recorders or video recorders purchased in recent years, according to the Energy Saving Trust. They should not need to retune the devices when they are switched back on or have to contend with the dreaded flashing clock as the machines usually retain their settings. However, manufacturers recommend that some satellite TV receivers be left in standby when not in use so they can receive updates.

Computers: It may not be practical to turn a computer on-and-off if it is to be used throughout the day.

However, the Energy Saving Trust suggests turning the monitor off when not in use.

Peripherals like printers and scanners should also be turned off when not in use.

Leaving unnecessary items on standby is said to cost each household an average of £37 a year.

Unplug Chargers When Not in Use: If chargers for devices such as mobile phones and MP3 players were unplugged when not in use, the UK could save enough electricity each year to power 115,000 homes.

Chargers are not huge energy consumers in their own right, but across the UK those left plugged in cause unnecessary waste. If a charger feels warm when it is plugged in without being attached to a device it is still converting energy.



Turn Off Lights When Leaving Rooms: According to the Energy Saving Trust there is no truth in the belief that turning lights on causes a surge that uses up more electricity. *“If you are going out of a room for half an hour, or even 10 minutes, turn the lights off,”* – quoting the Energy Saving Trust... *“It does not harm the electricity supply or the bulbs. There is no point in burning electricity for no reason.”* Switching to energy efficient light bulbs could save you money.

Wash Clothes at Lower Temperatures: Washing clothes at 30C as opposed to 40C, uses 40% less energy and is generally as efficient, according to the Energy Saving Trust. Modern powders are designed to be more effective at lower temperatures. Run your washing machine or dishwasher only with full loads. Over-dependence on tumble dryers can also contribute to energy wastage.

Consumers are encouraged to make sure they buy Energy Saving Recommended models when buying new appliances such as washing machines and fridges.

Turn The Thermostat Down: Turning the thermostat down by 1C can cut more than 10% from the average central heating bill.

Check that your water isn't too hot. Dripping taps can waste enough water in a week to fill a bath.

A major source of heat loss is through walls and windows so double glazing, closing curtains, cavity and loft insulation can prove to be cost-effective ways to save energy.

Use the timer for your heating to come on before you get up and go off when you go to bed.



14.

Ending the tenancy

If you want to end your tenancy, then please follow this quick guide. Tick the box to the left of each item as you work down the list.

- You must give a minimum 4 weeks notice in writing (starting from a Monday) of your intention to give up your tenancy. This also applies when the tenancy is terminated because of the death of a tenant. To end the tenancy, the person responsible for handling the deceased tenant's affairs must also give 4 weeks notice in writing.
- You must make sure that all the fixtures and fittings are in reasonable condition. Any alterations to fixtures and fittings that you provided must be in good order and must be left in the property. You may be entitled to compensation for any improvements you carried out to the property. This would be subject to the type, age and condition of the improvements you carried out.
- We will recharge you for any neglect or damage caused to the property if you haven't put these right by the time you leave the property. Our charges will include administration and VAT.
- All furniture, floor coverings and effects must be cleared out of the property and any surrounding garden or communal area. All sheds or out buildings must be cleared out. The garden should be tidy and free from rubbish. Special collections of rubbish and bulky items may be requested from the Council. A charge may be made for this service and they will require up to 14 days notice to arrange the collection.



- The keys must be handed into Seven Locks Housing Office by 12 noon on the Monday at the end of the notice period at the latest. After this time you will become responsible for a further week's rent.
- Seven Locks Housing will not be held responsible for any items left in the property after the tenancy ends and you have handed in the keys. If you leave any items, goods or rubbish in the property we will dispose of them and you will be recharged for our expenses including administration and VAT charges, for doing so.
- You must leave your garden in a tidy and cultivated state – failure to do so will result in Seven Locks Housing tidying your garden and recharging you for doing so.
- You should ensure that you have informed your gas, electricity and water supplier that you are leaving the property and have arranged for the meters to be read and a final bill issued to you for the period up to you handing in the keys.
- If you are in receipt of Housing Benefit the Benefits Section will need to be informed of your change of address and, if you still wish to claim Housing Benefit a new claim form will need to be completed. Remember that you can only receive Benefit on one property at a time except in certain circumstances. Harborough District Council Tax department will also require your change of address.
- Notify Royal Mail of your new address and ask for your mail to be re-directed to your new address.



15.

Useful Contacts

Please find the following information about services provided by other organisations which may be useful to you:

The District Council provides all of the services below from the following location:

Harborough District Council
Council Offices
Adam and Eve Street
Market Harborough
LE16 7AG
Tel: **01858 828282**

HOUSING BENEFIT APPLICATIONS

All Housing Benefit applications have to be made through the District Council.
Tel: **01858 828282** Email: benefits@harborough.gov.uk

HOUSING APPLICATIONS

To apply for housing, register with Harborough Home Search
Tel: **01858 828282** Email: hhs@harborough.gov.uk

COUNCIL TAX

The District Council is responsible for collecting Council Tax and processing Council Tax benefit applications.
Tel: **01858 828282** or email: counciltax@harborough.gov.uk



REFUSE AND RUBBISH COLLECTION

Rubbish collection is a District Council function.

Tel: **01858 828282** or email: wastemanagement@harborough.gov.uk

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

You may need to contact Environmental Services if you are suffering from (for example) noise nuisance, domestic drainage problems or pest infestation in your home.

Tel: **01858 828282** or email: environmental@harborough.gov.uk

LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL SOCIAL SERVICES

Leicestershire County Council provides the following Social Care:

- Home care services
- Residential and day care services
- Services for adults with learning/physical disabilities
- Disabled adaptations
- Children's social services
- Youth offending services and youth workers
- Welfare rights registrar

Tel **0116 2323232** for the main switchboard for Leicestershire County Council and ask to be put in touch with the relevant department.

Social Care number: **01858 465331**

(out of hours emergency number 0116 2551606)

The number above will give you access to the following services:

Adoption, drug abuse, Aids/HIV, fostering, child protection, home help services, community care mental health, meals on wheels, welfare rights advice, domestic violence.

strong foundations, stronger communities...



Useful Contacts continued...

For independent advice on a wide range of problems and issues, contact the Citizens Advice Bureau Tel: **0844 848 9009**

SHELTERED HOUSING AID AND RESEARCH PROJECT

Offer free independent advice on housing and homelessness

13 Welford Road
Leicester
LE2 7AD
Tel: 0116 254 6064

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Confidential help with Domestic Violence can be obtained from the following numbers:

Victim Support	Tel: 0845 30 30 900
Womens Aid Federation	Tel: 0808 2000 247

DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE

Confidential help and advice about problems with drugs and alcohol:
Alcohol and Drug Advice Centre (Leicester)

Tel: **0116 229 545** or **0116 2229 555**
Addaction (Leicestershire) Tel: 0116 2550 121



THE SAMARITANS

The Samaritans motto is *'whatever you're going through, we'll go through it with you'*. For someone to talk to in private about your problems, please use the following number:

Tel: **08457 909090**

For people with hearing or speech disabilities
Telephone: 0845 790 9090 or 0845 780 9192

ALZHEIMER'S SOCIETY

If you know someone who is suffering from dementia and needs to find out more facts, or just needs someone to talk to, the Alzheimer's Society have a listening and support service:

Tel: **0845 300 0336**

AGE UK (Age Concern) LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND

Age UK is a charity dedicated to supporting older people throughout their later lives.

Tel: **0116 299 2233**

DISABLED AND INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTRES

Disabled and Independent Living Centres give carers, older people and healthcare workers the opportunity to try out products and equipment to help them manage the tasks of daily life. Assist UK is a national organisation which co-ordinates Disabled and Independent Living Centres across the UK and will give you details of your nearest centre. Please call **0870 770 2866** for further details, or check their website: www.assist-uk.org/assist_uk_centre_details.asp



Useful Contacts continued...

NHS DIRECT

- Advice on what to do if you are feeling unwell
- Advice with health concerns for you or your family.
- Information about local health services
- Information about self-help and support organisations

Tel: **0845 4647**

VOLUNTARY ACTION SOUTH LEICESTERSHIRE

Voluntary Action South Leicestershire work in partnership with a number of organisations and aim to help voluntary groups in the district. They offer services such as:

- Befriending Service
- Carers Service (supporting carers)
- Transport Scheme (voluntary drivers)

Tel: **01858 433232**

24 HOUR NATIONAL GAS EMERGENCY NUMBER (National Grid)

If you think that you can smell gas ring:

Tel: 0800 111 999 or 0800 371 787 for deaf or hard of hearing customers.

To enquire who your gas supplier is, contact: 0870 608 1524

Any other gas supplier enquiries: 0845 6056677



CRIMESTOPPERS

Crimestoppers are a charity organisation that enables people to report crime in their area or neighbourhood without having to reveal their name or address.

Tel: **0800 555 111**

Tenant Services Authority

The Tenant Services Authority is the regulatory body for registered social landlords like Seven Locks Housing. They ensure that Seven Locks Housing conducts its services in line with national standards and also produce the Assured Tenant's Charter – a list of your rights that is produced separately to this handbook.

The Tenant Services Authority can be contacted on:

Tel: **0845 230 7000** Website: www.tenantservicesauthority.org

Or write to:

Tenant Services Authority
Maple House
149 Tottenham Court Road
London
W1T 7BN

or
Tenant Services Authority
4th Floor
One Piccadilly Gardens
Manchester
M1 1RG

strong foundations, stronger communities...



Useful Contacts continued...

HOUSING OMBUDSMAN

Housing Ombudsman Service

81 Aldwych
London
WC2B 4HN

Telephone: 0300 111 3000

Minicom: 020 7404 7092

Fax: 020 7831 1942

Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk

Seven Locks Housing has done its best to ensure that all of the contact details in your handbook were accurate at the time of printing. Telephone numbers and addresses do change, so please let the Customer Involvement Officer know on 01858 414519 if you notice any changes.



Notes:

SEVEN LOCKS

HOUSING

Seven Locks Housing Limited

1A Anson House, 8 Compass Point,
Northampton Road, Market Harborough,
Leicestershire, LE16 9HW

Telephone: Customer Services

01858 414500

Repairs freephone

0800 1300 365

Email: info@sevenlockshousing.co.uk

Fax: 01858 419156

Minicom: 01858 414547

Log onto: www.sevenlockshousing.co.uk

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