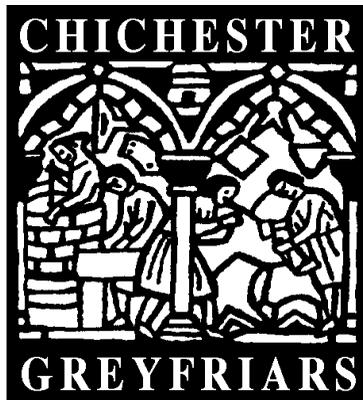


**CHICHESTER GREYFRIARS
HOUSING ASSOCIATION
LIMITED**

RESIDENTS HANDBOOK



**A Housing Association working to
support the needs of older people**

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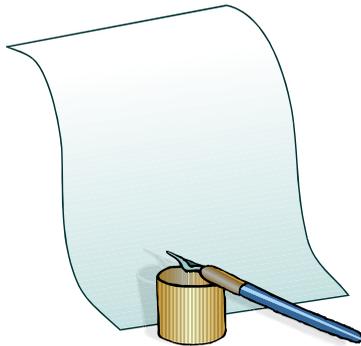
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TENANCY AGREEMENT



ABOUT YOUR ASSURED TENANCY AGREEMENT

When you become a tenant you will be asked to sign an agreement which makes you an assured tenant which means you have the right to remain in your own home for as long as you choose.

Chichester Greyfriars Housing Association, your landlord, will not interfere or interrupt that unless:

You stop using your flat as your main residence;

A court has given us possession of the property (the court can only give possession in certain circumstances set out in your tenancy agreement).

VARIATION

The Association is permitted to vary the terms of your tenancy but only under one of the following conditions:

- a) By agreement with you
- b) In respect of rent as detailed in your Tenancy Agreement
- c) By serving you with a Notice of Variation.

Before serving you with a Notice, the Association will serve you with a preliminary notice detailing the changes to be made and outlining their effect upon your tenancy. You will be given an opportunity to comment upon these changes within a reasonable period of time and the Association will consider your comments before a Notice of Variation is issued.

JOINT TENANCIES

Whenever two people are being housed the Association will offer a joint tenancy which means that:

Each joint tenant is equally responsible for meeting all of the obligations contained in the Tenancy Agreement even if one joint tenant vacates the Property.

Either or both joint tenants may apply to the Local Authority for Housing Benefit.

If one joint tenant dies the tenancy transfers to the remaining joint tenant.

If the relationship breaks down neither joint tenant may evict the other subject to any rights they may have in domestic or matrimonial proceedings. The Housing Manager should be contacted immediately for advice.

SUCCESSION

On the death of a sole Tenant who is not a Successor, the Tenancy will pass to the Tenant's spouse, civil partner, or other partner provided that he or she occupies the premises as his or her only or principal home at the time of the Tenant's death.

On the death of a sole Tenant who is not a Successor Chichester Greyfriars will consider, at its discretion, whether to offer a new tenancy of the Property or of another property to:

Another member of your family if that person lived with you for at least 12 months immediately preceding your death and the property was his/her only or principal home during that time.

Anyone else who was living with you for at least 12 months immediately preceding your death who had been caring for you and the property was his/her only or principal home during that time.

Chichester Greyfriars will only consider doing this if you are not yourself a successor and any successor would not breach the minimum age requirement of those who may reside at the Property.

When deciding whether to grant a new tenancy in accordance with this clause, Chichester Greyfriars will look at the size and type of property, any restrictions on who may occupy it and the needs and resources of the persons concerned, although these may not be the only matters Chichester Greyfriars will consider.

All applications for a new tenancy must be made to Chichester Greyfriars in writing within one month of the Tenant's death.

SUB LETTING

You must not sub-let the whole or part of the property to a third party. Should you do so the Association will be able to regain possession of the property. Under these circumstances neither you nor the person you have allowed to occupy the property will be permitted to remain.

LODGERS

If you wish to take in lodgers you must apply in writing to the Housing Manager. The Association has not agreed to the automatic rights of assured tenants to take in lodgers. Nevertheless, each application will be given sympathetic consideration.

If consent to your taking in lodgers is given then the Association will ask that you provide them with certain information regarding each of your lodgers.

Should you fail to do this the Association will be able to take action against you.

Your lodger has no rights of security under the 1985 Housing Act. They will be looking to you as their landlord and any contract is between the two of you and not the Association. You are responsible for ensuring that your lodger understands the conditions upon which you hold the tenancy and observes them otherwise consent may be withdrawn and they may be asked to leave. Please note that if you are in receipt of Housing Benefit, this may be reduced because you have a lodger. You should inform Chichester District Council of the change in your circumstances.

OVERCROWDING

You must not permit overcrowding of the property. The permitted number of occupants for your property is stated in your Tenancy Agreement. If you exceed this number the Association is able to take action to regain possession of your property.

TERMINATION OF TENANCY

If you wish to terminate your tenancy you, your next of kin or executors must give the Association **one calendar month's notice in writing**. Keys must be returned to the office by 12 noon on the day you leave unless a prior arrangement has been made

with the Association. If you don't do this you may be charged rent until the keys are returned.

In the case of death of a tenant one calendar month's notice in writing will be required unless the flat can be re-let within this period of time in which case rent will only be due up until the date of re-letting.

AT THE END OF YOUR TENANCY

Please ensure all FOUR front door keys are returned when you vacate your flat and that the following are left in the flat:

ROYAL CLOSE

- The keys to window locks
- The key to the stair lift
- The keys to the patio door
- The key to the electricity meter cupboard
- Rotary washing line
- Tenants' handbook

ST PANCRAS

Please ensure all FOUR flat door keys are returned when you vacate your flat together with:

Keys to the front and rear entrance doors.

Keys for the gate

Please leave in the flat keys to the landing cupboard and electricity meter cupboard.

The Tenant's Handbook should be left in the flat.

RENT



YOUR RENT

The rent charged for your home has been set by the Association. It includes an amount for services which is your contribution to the upkeep and running of the estate e.g. estate lighting, maintenance of stair lifts and garden maintenance.

CHANGE OF RENT

Your rent will be reviewed once a year, and may be increased or decreased at that time. You will receive at least one month's written notice of the increase or decrease. The notice will specify the Rent and Service charge proposed.

If you do not agree with the revised rent, you may appeal to the Rent Assessment Committee to have a market rent determined. It may be higher than the rent set by the Association.

RENT POLICY

The Association in setting an affordable rent policy intends to increase assured rents at a rate close to inflation or as otherwise directed by legislation.

PAYING RENT

Your rent is a monthly rent and is due for payment on the 15th day of each month. The following methods of paying your rent are available: -

a) Bank Standing Order

If you have a bank or building society account you can arrange to have your rent paid regularly direct to the Association's bank account. The Association will provide forms for you to complete as an instruction to your bank. ***You are recommended to use this method of payment as it is convenient for both resident and Association.***

b) By Post to the Office of the Association

A cheque payable to **Chichester Greyfriars Housing Association Ltd.** may be sent to:

The Forum
Stirling Road
Chichester
West Sussex PO19 7DN

c) By Hand at the office of the Association

If it is convenient, you may pay your rent by cheque or cash at the office (address above) between 9.30 - 11.30 Monday to Thursday.

Please remember that whatever method of payment you use, it is your responsibility to ensure that the Association receives the payment by the

due date each month. Banks do make errors and the Association can only account for a rental payment when it is received.

HOUSING BENEFIT

Depending on your personal circumstances i.e. level of income, savings and amount of rent payable, you may be eligible for a rebate on your rent. The Housing Manager will be able to give you general advice, but you must make your application to Chichester District Council. Remember, your entitlement to housing benefit is a right, and if you think you may be eligible you should apply. If you receive housing benefit and your rent, income or family circumstances change, *you* must inform the Chichester District Council Housing Benefit Section as soon as possible.

NON PAYMENT OF RENT

The Association is required to act responsibly in the matter of rent arrears and like Local Authorities or commercial landlords cannot ignore non-payment of rent. It is your responsibility to ensure that your rent is received by the Association on the due date. The Association recognises that circumstances can arise where you may find yourself with genuine financial problems and consequently have trouble meeting your rental payments. Should this occur or should you for the time being need to consider an alternative method of payment of rent you should immediately contact the Housing Manager or Treasurer who will be able to advise you. The Association can only adopt a sympathetic and helpful approach to your problem if it is informed at the earliest possible time and providing you make a sensible arrangement to keep any arrears to an acceptable level during the period of difficulty.

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS FOR NON PAYMENT OF RENT

The Association expects rent to be paid on the due date but will adopt a sympathetic and helpful approach to rent arrears if the tenant

- is in genuine financial difficulty;
- notifies the association at the earliest possible time;
- makes sensible arrangements to keep any arrears to an acceptable level

As soon as non-payment becomes evident the Association will try to contact the tenant by phone to establish the reason.

If rent remains unpaid 21 days after the due date and there has been no communication from the tenant a letter will be sent confirming the amount owed and requiring payment within 10 working days.

If no communication or payment is received within the required period the Housing Manager will visit the tenant in order to identify the reasons for non-payment and provide information on where to obtain advice on any Benefits which may be available. The purpose of the visit is to agree sensible arrangements to clear the debt over a period of time.

A letter will be sent confirming the agreed arrangement.

If payments are received in accordance with the arrangement no further action will be taken. A letter will be sent when the arrears have been cleared.

If payments are not received in accordance with the arrangement a letter will be sent requiring that any outstanding amount be paid within 5 working days and advising that legal action will be taken if the required payment is not received.

Legal proceedings will only commence with the approval of the Chairman (or in his/her absence the Vice Chairman) and one other member of the Executive Planning Committee.

MANAGEMENT OF YOUR ESTATE



COMMUNAL AREAS

The Association is responsible for arranging for the proper upkeep and maintenance of the common parts. This includes the common grassed areas and private parking areas on both schemes and the halls, stairs and landings at St Pancras.

PARKING

Residents' shared parking at Royal Close is available in the three private car parks and where available in the lay-bys and on the public roads near flats 22-37.

At St Pancras tenants will be provided with keys to the gates in order to gain access to the private car park.

There are no designated parking areas for particular flats or blocks and residents should ensure that they and their visitors consider the mobility of their neighbours when deciding where to park.

REFUSE DISPOSAL

You are responsible for your own refuse disposal. Communal bins are provided by Chichester District Council for refuse, recycling and green waste at. Please try to ensure all refuse areas are kept clean and tidy to minimise health risks from vermin and pests. All refuse should be properly wrapped in a plastic bag before disposal.

You must ensure that you use the correct bin for the type of rubbish being disposed of. Lists of items are displayed on all bins.

ROTARY WASHING LINES

These are provided by the Association. You must take the line down and store away when it is not in use. Washing must not be put out to dry on a Sunday.

PETS

Residents who own a cat, dog or other pet prior to being a resident may be permitted to bring it with them when they first take up their tenancy but not to replace it once the pet has died.

It is explained to each applicant that pets are not permitted at Royal Close or St Pancras except in the above situation. The reasons for this decision are several – small flats are not ideal for dogs and sometimes cats; there are no individual gardens and caring for a pet can be burdensome during times of illness or infirmity.

We do have a few pets at Royal Close and their owners must ensure that their animals are supervised and do not cause nuisance by barking or fouling. You must obtain the written consent of the Association before keeping any animal. If your pet becomes a nuisance and complaints are received about it you may be asked to remove find

it another home. Do not let your dog run free on the estate and if fouling occurs please clear it up.

FEEDING THE BIRDS

If you want to feed the small birds you should use a bird feeder – do not sprinkle seed on the grass.

No other food should be put out to feed birds or other wildlife. This can encourage vermin and attract foxes.

STORE ROOM / SHED

At Royal Close a storeroom is available for tenants to store one bicycle or a mobility scooter at their own risk. A key is available from the Maintenance Officer on payment of a non-refundable deposit.

At St Pancras a similar arrangement is available in the shed and again a non-refundable deposit is required for a key.

NB GREYFRIARS DOES NOT INSURE TENANTS' EFFECTS.

INTERCOM DOORBELLS

All flats at St. Pancras and first floor flats at Royal Close have intercom doorbells. This allows you to find out who is calling before opening the door automatically from upstairs in your flat. It is very important to know the identity of the caller before doing so.

SMOKE ALARMS

Each flat has a smoke alarm which is wired into the mains and has a battery back-up should the power fail. Please test the alarm weekly by pressing the test/hush button on the alarm cover for up to 20 seconds. Regularly check that the green light is on. The red light on the cover should flash approximately once per minute. Keep your smoke alarm clean – don't let dust and cobwebs build up, as this can cause false alarms.

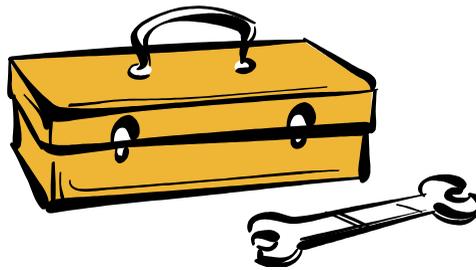
STAIRLIFTS

Each first floor flat has the facility of a stairlift for the use of tenants and their visitors. When you move in you will be shown how the stairlift works. The stairlifts are inspected annually both by our insurance company engineers and under a service contract.

CARE MUST BE TAKEN WHEN USING THE STAIRLIFT SO THAT ARMS AND FEET ARE NOT CAUGHT WHILST IN TRANSIT.

ENSURE THE SEAT CONNECTS WITH THE CHARGING POINTS BOTH AT THE TOP AND BOTTOM OF THE STAIRS ON EACH JOURNEY.

REPAIRS TO YOUR HOME



REQUESTING A REPAIR

You can let us know that a repair is required in any of the following ways:

Telephone the Maintenance Officer on
01243 785219 Monday–Thursday 9am-1pm

Write to the office at The Forum, Stirling
Road, Chichester, West Sussex P019 7DN

Send an email to
chigreyfriars@btconnect.com

When requesting a repair, please give your name, address and telephone number, the nature of the repair. Contractors require notice to attend your home normally between the hours of 9.00 a.m. and 4.30 p.m. Monday to Friday to carry out works, or at any other times in an emergency.

On no account should you instruct a builder/contractor to carry out a repair or works yourself. All instructions must come from the Association so that proper account is made of expenditure and works are controlled. If you request a repair directly to the contractor then you will be liable to pay the account yourself.

WHAT REPAIRS ARE THE ASSOCIATION RESPONSIBLE FOR?

1. Repairs to the external structure of the property.
2. Maintenance of common areas.
3. Drainage systems.
4. Gas, water and electricity services.
5. Annual servicing of gas boiler.
6. Repairs to gas heating and hot water systems.
7. Replacement of fixtures & fittings which in the opinion of the Association have reached the end of their useful life. i.e. kitchen units, worktops, baths, basins, wc pans.
8. Joinery repairs eg internal and external doors. Letterboxes
9. Repairs to windows.
10. Repair/replacement of extractor fans.
11. Entry phone and communal TV aerial systems.
12. Redecoration to the exterior and communal areas.
13. Servicing and repair to stairlifts carbon monoxide detectors and smoke alarms.

WHAT THE ASSOCIATION ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR:

1. Internal redecoration to your home. Floor coverings, curtain battens and rails.
2. Cookers and other white goods.
3. Replacing light bulbs or fuses in your home.
4. Replacing lost or stolen door keys.
5. Repair of any gas or electrical appliance fitted by you.
6. Damage caused to the Association's premises, fixtures and fittings by you, your family, or other occupants of the premises.
7. Sinks, basins, baths or toilets blocked by your waste. (In these cases, the Association will, if required, arrange for the blockage to be cleared, but you may be required to pay the Association for all costs incurred.)

The foregoing is not an exhaustive list of all the responsibilities of the Association or the tenant, but is intended to indicate the main responsibilities of both parties. If you are in doubt as to where responsibility lies, please contact the Maintenance Officer.

Remember: You may have to pay Chichester Greyfriars Housing Association Limited for any repair necessary to your home as a result of damage caused by negligence or malicious damage.

HOW LONG WILL REPAIRS TAKE?

The Association will always endeavour to commence works within the time limits stated.

Priority Codes	Starting Times
Emergency Repairs	Within 24 hours
1 Urgent Repairs	Within 5 working days
2 Essential Repairs	Within 28 working days
3 Routine Repairs	Within 6 months

The time limits given will run from the date of notification on the Maintenance Officer's records. The Association cannot be held responsible for delays caused by conditions beyond its control, i.e. exceptional weather conditions, spare parts not being available, industrial action, reasonable access on your part.

When an order is raised with a contractor you will be given a copy. The contractor will contact you to arrange a convenient time to call and carry out the work. When the job has been completed you should complete the pro forma at the bottom of your copy of the order and return it to us using the post boxes on your scheme. This enables us to monitor the performance of all the contractors and take up any issues raised promptly to ensure they are resolved.

DISSATISFACTION OR DELAY

If you are dissatisfied with the way maintenance work has been carried out, or delays in works being started please contact the Maintenance Officer or the Housing Manager.

EMERGENCY WORKS - IMMEDIATE ACTION WITHIN 24 HOURS

If you require assistance with any of the following outside office hours you should

Ring **0845 6030602** for assistance.

- Dangerous structures
- Flooding by burst or storm
- Blocked drainage systems
- No lighting/power
- No heating/hot water
- Water leaks, i.e. those which cannot be contained without loss of service.
- Glazing repairs where security or danger is involved

The out of hours service is available:

- Monday to Thursday: 1pm - 8am the following day.
- Thursday to Monday: 1pm - 8am
- All bank holidays: 24 hours
- Christmas Eve to 2 January: 24 hours

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONTROLLING THE HEATING AND HOT WATER BOILER

Leave heating on constant

Manage heating by using the room thermostat – when the weather is warm your heating will not come on.

The hot water comes on demand as you turn on the tap.

CHECKS TO MAKE WHEN YOU HAVE NO HEATING (Royal Close)

1. Has the thermostat been turned down low? If so, turn it up and see if the heating then comes on?
2. Is it a warm day which means the heating will not come on as it is not required?
3. Is the time clock set for the heating to be on at all times? If it is set for particular times make sure these match with the time you are expecting the heating to come on.
4. Have you got hot water?
5. Check the display window on the front of the boiler. Is there a symbol showing in any of the corners of this window? If so there is a problem with the boiler and you should report it as an emergency repair request.
6. **DO NOT PRESS THE ON/OFF BUTTON (this is the black button at the bottom left hand side of the panel).**

CHECKS TO MAKE WHEN YOU HAVE NO HEATING (St Pancras)

1. Has the thermostat been turned down low? If so, turn it up and see if the heating then comes on?
2. Is it a warm day which means the heating will not come on as it is not required?
3. Is the time clock set for the heating to be on at all times? If it is set for particular times make sure these match with the time you are expecting the heating to come on.
4. Have you got hot water?
5. The fault indicator button is located in the centre of the panel near the bottom of the boiler. If it is flashing there is a fault. You can press the re-set button which is located to the top right of the fault button. If the fault indicator continues to flash you should report it as an emergency repair request.

In the event of a **fire** telephone 999

In the event of a **gas leak** telephone 0800 111 999

PRIORITY ONE URGENT REPAIRS

Maximum period for work starting 5 working days

Faulty locks to entrance doors

Failure of communal aerial system

Replacement of faulty electrical switches

Replacing cracked sanitary ware, i.e. basins, sinks, wc cisterns

PRIORITY TWO ESSENTIAL REPAIRS

Maximum period for work starting 1 month.

Repairing minor plumbing leaks, i.e. drip leaks from sink traps, overflows discharging into the open, drip leaks on heating systems

Repair of roofing faults causing leaks

Window repairs not covered by Emergency Repairs

PRIORITY THREE ROUTINE REPAIRS

Maximum period for starting 6 months.

Joinery repair/replacements doors/windows

Repairs to guttering and down pipes

Replacement of baths (subject to condition)

Replacement internal door furniture, handles/locks/Hinges.

Roof repairs not covered by Priority Two.

Minor repairs to floors

N.B. In some cases the Priority Coding will not apply, e.g.- replacement of joinery components will be carried out in conjunction with the Association's annual redecoration programmes; repairs to external boundary walls and fences will be carried out at the Association's discretion, subject to condition and availability of funding.

ALTERATIONS TO PROPERTY

You may carry out improvements to your home subject to our written consent. We will not unreasonably withhold our permission but we can grant permission subject to conditions, for example where planning permission is necessary.

Improvements are defined as alteration or additions to the landlord's fixtures and fittings such as external decorations, aerials, services, heating, kitchens and bathrooms.

Consent to any of the above is subject to the work being carried out to a professional standard and in some instances the resident agreeing that additional fixtures must be left upon the termination of the tenancy. Where structural alterations are being considered the resident will be required to obtain approval under the Building Regulations from the Local Authority.

Where it is found that work has been carried out without permission from the Association, it will normally be required that such work be reinstated to the original condition at the expense of the tenant.

Where tenants wish to carry out any external alteration to the dwelling, planning consent will normally be required and the Local Authority should be consulted. In such instances the Association will carefully consider what effect such an alteration will have on the whole of the estate before giving permission.

SKY+ and SKY HD AERIAL POLICY

If you wish to have Sky+ or Sky HD an additional aerial cable needs to be installed in your flat. This can be arranged by the Maintenance Officer and is subject to residents paying the cost themselves.

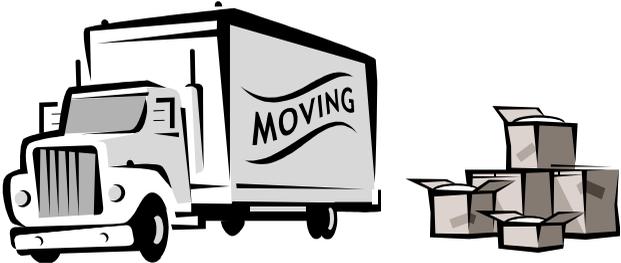
EXTERNAL DECORATIONS

The Association will decorate the outside of your home, at regular intervals normally every 4 years and at their discretion. (See also alterations to property).

INTERNAL DECORATIONS

You are responsible for decorating the inside of your home, which should be carried out at regular intervals in accordance with the obligation in your Tenancy Agreement to maintain the Property in good order. On vacation of the flat at the end of a tenancy the decorations must be in good order or a charge may be payable to reinstate them.

REQUEST TO TRANSFER



REQUEST TO TRANSFER

The Association's Waiting List policy includes a section for those tenants who either need or want to move.

Requests are assessed and registered as either Band A or Band D. Those registered within Band A are those who have a medical condition which makes their current accommodation unsuitable. This includes couples living in 1 bedroom accommodation who require 2 bedrooms because the medical condition of one of them requires the additional room.

Tenants who request a move because they have issues living in a particular development will need to satisfy the Housing Manager of the relevant circumstances. The application will be awarded Band D.

Applicants applying to move from a 2 bedroom flat to a 1 bedroom will be awarded a Band A priority.

Tenants transferring to another property are responsible for ensuring the property they are vacating is left in good decorative order.

A copy of the policy and an application form is available from the office on request.

**COMMUNICATION,
PARTICIPATION,
CONSULTATION,
COMPLAINTS**



COMMUNICATION

The Association believes that the basis of good Housing Management is good communication.

You are urged to contact the Association as quickly as possible if you have any problems regarding your tenancy.

To help you contact the right person to deal with your problems see below: -

- 1) Problems of a general nature,
complaints, suggestions, advice
HOUSING MANAGER
- 2) Problems of rent arrears, rent payments,
financial problems or queries
TREASURER
- 3) Problems and suggestions about repairs
or maintenance
MAINTENANCE OFFICER

The Housing Manager and Treasurer may be contacted by phone or in person at:

Chichester Greyfriars Housing Association Ltd.
The Forum
Stirling Road
Chichester P019 7DN
Telephone: 01243 531482 9.30 - 11.30
Monday to Thursday

You can also write to them at the above address or send an email to chigreyfriars@btconnect.com.

The Housing Manager and Treasurer do not work on the same days so please enquire if you wish to see a particular member of staff.

The Maintenance Officer may be contacted on 01243 785219 from 9 am–1 pm Monday - Thursday or a message left on his answering machine.

For details on how to raise a request for a repair or what to do when an emergency repair is required outside office hours please see the section about Emergency Repairs./

PARTICIPATION

Active encouragement is given by the Association to its residents to assist in the general running and upkeep of its estates.

SUMMER MEETINGS

You are invited to an annual meeting during which there is an opportunity to raise any matters with the Management Board and officers about the management of the estate, rent policy, future plans and so forth. In addition there is usually a guest speaker on a topic of interest and a chance to meet other tenants during refreshments.

TENANT BOARD MEMBERS

There are two places on the board for tenant members on the board which illustrates the association's commitment to a participation management style. Members are elected by tenants for an initial 3 year period and allowed to stand for a second period. You will be informed each year of the current status of each member and invited to submit a nomination when a vacancy arises and take part in the ballot.

CONSULTATION

Tenants will always be consulted when certain changes are being considered:

a) CHANGES TO THE TENANCY

The terms of an assured tenancy can only be altered by agreement, in writing, of both the tenant and the Association. Changes to the rent and service charge can be made by giving the tenant not less than one calendar month's notice in writing.

b) CHANGES IN HOUSING MANAGEMENT

Before making any significant changes in housing management the Association will write to each resident concerned informing them of the proposal and inviting comments within a reasonable time – normally 28 days. Housing management refers to management, maintenance, improvements and the provision of services or amenities.

The Association will take into consideration any comments or representations made within the specified period by its residents or a recognised residents' association before a final decision is reached. The Association reserves the right to vary its proposal in the light of comments

received and this variation will not constitute a new proposal or require further consultation. Residents who were consulted on the proposal will be notified of the final decision.

Where works of an urgent nature are required, or in an emergency, the Association reserves the right to take the necessary action to deal with the emergency without prior notice.

GENERAL CONSULTATION

The Association, being small in size, is able to contact all residents within a short period of time, either personally or by letter. It is also willing to hold open meetings on items of major concern where further explanation of a proposal is required. Residents likely to be substantially affected by the proposal will be invited and given the opportunity to express their views.

The Association acknowledges the rights of its residents to form a residents' association and where there is sufficient interest from residents this will be encouraged. Any residents' association must be properly constituted and open to all residents of Chichester Greyfriars Housing Association.

Two places on the Association's board are reserved for tenants – one for a tenant from Royal Close and one from Arthur Ingram Court. Elections are held when a vacancy occurs and all tenants invited to make a nomination and vote.

COMPLAINTS

Tenants should contact the Housing Manager or the Treasurer of the Association in writing if they have any query or complaint about the association or the service it provides or they wish to inspect their records. A copy of the Complaints Procedure is available from the office.

If you have a problem or complaint which you feel cannot go through our usual channels of communication or you have specific complaints against members of the Association's staff you should contact either the Chairman or the Vice Chairman. Correspondence should be marked 'In Confidence' and sent to the office of the Association.

INDEPENDENT HOUSING OMBUDSMAN SCHEME

Housing Associations are expected to sort out complaints about the service it provides under their own complaints procedure policy. However, where this procedure has been used and the complainant is still not satisfied, tenants and applicants have recourse to the Independent Housing Ombudsman

INSURANCE SAFETY AND SECURITY



INSURANCE

The Association is responsible for insuring the "Structure" of the building, but it is your responsibility to insure the "Contents" of your home. Please remember that Contents should include items like Television and Videos on rental agreements, and if your insurers feel that you are under-insured, they may only meet part of any claim.

If you store items in the store at Royal Close or the sheds at St Pancras you should insure these as they are not covered by the Association.

Your Tenancy Agreement makes you responsible for the internal decorative condition of your home. Equally you should insure against Third Party Liability to cover injury to visitors or their property whilst visiting your home and damage to your neighbour's property, goods or decorations. You could be liable if your washing machine, for instance, overflowed and damaged adjoining properties.

You are, therefore, most strongly advised to take out a Comprehensive Contents Policy to cover a realistic value of your Contents plus Tenant Liabilities and Third Party Liability as above.

If your Contents or Decorations are damaged as a result of water penetration, etc., your first approach for redress must be to your Contents Insurers.

Your Contents Insurers may wish to involve our Buildings Insurers, but should you, or they, try to

claim on our Insurers, neglect or negligence on our part has to be proved by you, and you will appreciate this can be very difficult.

If you have no Contents Insurance your chances of redress from our Insurers are virtually nil, unless you can prove neglect or negligence on our part.

Your decorations and possessions have been bought with your own money, and you are strongly advised: to protect them with adequate Insurance.

The National Housing Federation ***My Home Contents Insurance Scheme*** offers an affordable insurance policy where premiums can be paid fortnightly by cash as well as by direct debit. For information telephone 0845 337 2463.

The Association does not advocate this or any scheme, you would be advised to obtain at least two quotes for insurance.

SAFETY

ELECTRICAL SAFETY

Follow these simple rules for electrical safety:-

Switch off appliances not in use and remove plug from the socket especially at night

Only use good quality plugs that conform to British Standard 1363 or 1363A.

Ensure plugs are wired correctly and that the clamp grips the outer sheath, not just the leads.

Never run an electrical appliance from a light fitting.

Use short, undamaged flexes and check condition regularly. Do not run them under carpets or rugs as the protective covering can be damaged.

Ensure cables do not cross areas where you are walking.

- 7 The law requires you to use a qualified electrician.

GAS SAFETY

If you smell gas you should:-

- 1 Put out cigarettes.
- 2 Do not use matches or naked flames.
- 3 Avoid using electrical switches.

- 4 Open doors and windows to get rid of the gas.
- 5 Check to see if a tap has been left on accidentally or if a gas or pilot light has blown out
- 6 If you think there is a gas leak, turn off the whole supply at the meter and call
TRANSCO – 0800 111 999

FIRE

The Association's properties comply with the regulations for safety at the time of construction. Where fire precautions have been installed these are not to be interfered with. At St Pancras you should take care not to wedge open fire doors or remove door closures and ensure escape routes in case of fire are not blocked i.e. doorways, stairways and hallways.

To minimise the risk of a fire starting in your home:

Do not hang decorations around light fittings.

Do not air clothes over or around convector heaters or cookers.

Do buy a fire extinguisher or a fire blanket (a 51bs dry powder extinguisher is recommended for home use).

Do make sure that radiant fires are guarded especially when elderly people or children

are in the room or the room is left empty.

Do make sure cigarettes and matches are out before emptying ashtrays.

Do close doors and windows at night to prevent the spread of fire.

Do buy flame-proof clothes and furnishings whenever possible.

Do keep all matches and lighters away from children.

If a **chip pan** catches fire:-

Turn off the heat.

Cover the pan with a damp cloth or lid to smother flames

Do not move the pan and do not try to put the flames out with water as you may be seriously injured.

Call the Fire Brigade on 999

If someone's **clothes catch fire**:-

- 1 Lay the person on the floor, roll them in a rug, curtain or cover to put the flames out.
- 2 Call for an ambulance on 999.**

If your **home** catches fire: -

- 1 Close the door of the room where the fire started.
- 2 Make sure everyone leaves.
- 3 Call the Fire Brigade on 999**

ACCIDENTS IN THE HOME

FALLS

Sixty per cent of deaths from accidents in the home are the result of falls. You can guard against this type of accident by following a few simple rules:-

- 1, Do not polish under carpets or rugs.
- 2, Make sure stairs and landings are kept clear and that they are well lit
3. Wipe up any liquids spilt on the kitchen floor immediately.
4. Repair or cover any holes in your carpets or lino to avoid tripping.
5. Make sure your stair carpets are securely fixed.

POISONING

The second major cause of death in the home is poisoning. To avoid this:-

1. Keep all medicines in a locked cabinet.
2. Keep all house & garden chemicals e.g. Bleach, weed killer out of reach of children.
3. Do not store household or garden chemicals in soft drink bottles or any container that would confuse someone about the contents.
4. Return unused medicines to the chemist or flush them down the toilet.

FROST PRECAUTIONS

Normally, all of the Association's water tanks and pipes are lagged. Where this is apparently not so please inform the Association.

During severe cold conditions, keep a low heat circulating throughout your home.

Check that all stop cocks are accessible and in working order.

SECURITY

KEYS

You are responsible for your own keys and if you lose them and the lock has to be forced you may be charged for a new lock. It is suggested that you leave a key either with your neighbour or a member of your family or friend who lives nearby.

If you lock yourself out and have not left a key with someone then you can contact the Emergency Repair Service (**0845 6030602**). You will however be charged for Chichester Careline's Mobile Warden to come out and gain access. The locks are suited and you should not call a locksmith and give instructions for the lock to be changed.

TO DETER BURGLARS

1. Make sure you have closed all windows and locked doors whenever you go out.
2. At night make sure ground floor windows are closed.
3. Do not leave keys under a mat or on a string when you are out.
4. Do not leave notes for callers outside when you are out.

5. If you go away for a few days do not forget to cancel regular deliveries such as milk or newspapers. In case anything happens when you are away and you need to be contacted leave your address with the police or your neighbours.
6. Before you allow callers into your home you should ask them to prove their identity and use the door chain. Representatives from the Gas or Electricity Boards carry identity cards. Ask to see the identity cards and look at them carefully. If in doubt call the police.

Royal Close is a 'NO COLD CALLING ZONE'

Please report all incidents to

Sussex Police on **0845 60 70 999**

You will understand that the above advice is not exhaustive and the Association does not accept liability for any accidents or breaches of security that may occur.

If you are leaving the Property vacant for more than 4 weeks, for example while in hospital or on holiday, you must inform the Association so that the Maintenance Officer can keep an eye on the property.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS



NATIONAL GAS EMERGENCY SERVICE	Emergency	0800 111 999
SOUTHERN ELECTRIC	Emergency	0800 783 8866
PORTSMOUTH WATER PLC	Emergency	023 9247 7999
POLICE	Emergency	999
NO COLD CALLING ZONE		0845 607099970999
CARELINE		01243 778688
ST RICHARD'S HOSPITAL		01243 788122
SOCIAL SERVICES		01243 642555
THE PENSION SERVICE		0800 035 0078
CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU		0844 477 1171
CHICHESTER DISTRICT COUNCIL		01243 785339
WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL		01243 777100
AGE UK		01243 536174
THE SAMARITANS		01243 826333

**PLEASE MAKE A NOTE OF THE
FOLLOWING:**

Where my main water stopcock is:-

Where my gas stopcock is:-

**Where my electric shower isolation
switch is:-**

Isolating stop valve: using a coin or screw
driver

TURN OFF - turn screw to the vertical
position 

TURN ON - turn screw to the
horizontal position 