

Highland Residential

ARREARS POLICY

Statement of Intent

Highland Residential is committed to the principles of good corporate governance and sustainability and will endeavour to develop fair and consistent policies, procedures and practices.

General Principles

As rent is our main source of income, we recognise the importance of ensuring arrears are kept to a minimum and, where arrears do arise, we take early and effective action to control them.

We will offer all residents advice and assistance to try and prevent them losing their home for non-payment of their monthly charges.

This policy and the accompanying procedures are designed to ensure that we can achieve this task and will apply to all existing Short-Assured Tenancies & Private Residential Tenancies.

Methods of Payment

We will offer our residents as many convenient payment methods as we can, providing they are cost effective for us to administer.

The Prevention of Arrears

All applicants will be assessed on their financial ability to meet the monthly rent and service charge payments. All new residents will be reminded when they sign their tenancy agreement of their responsibility to make regular payments. They will also be advised at this time of what they should do if they are unable to make a payment.

We will discuss the various methods of making their monthly payments and help them select a method that suits their particular circumstances.

We will issue all residents with a statement of their rent account when they receive their tenancy review notice. Additional statements will also be available on request.

We will arrange to visit all new residents within eight weeks of them moving in to their property, this enables Highland Residential to address any issues with receiving the 1st payment since sign up.

We will check all credit balances on a monthly basis and any genuine credit balances will be returned to the resident if appropriate. A credit balance on a resident's rent account may be used by us to off-set against any other tenancy related debts owed by the resident to us.

Highland Residential is your contact for Mid Market Rent
Call us on 01463 701271 or email: lettings@highlandresidential.co.uk
Landlord registration: 309140/270/24411
Letting Agent Registration: LARN 1808008

Highland Residential (Inverness) Limited, is a trading company and wholly owned subsidiary of Albyn Housing Society.

Company Registration No. SC527445

Managing Arrears

All payments are due on the first day of each month and should be paid on or before this date. There are no rent-free periods during the period of the tenancy. All rent accounts will be monitored by accounts staff on a weekly basis and any resident who has an arrear on their account will be contacted by them and encouraged to discuss the arrear. If any resident is experiencing debt problems, we will signpost them to the Money Advice section of the relevant Local Authority or any other appropriate agency that we are aware of.

We will use a variety of methods to contact residents including letter, telephone, text, visits and email.

If a resident fails to make a repayment arrangement or breaks their agreement on more than three occasions without good cause, we will issue a Notice of Proceedings for Recovery of Possession.

We will only issue a Notice of Proceedings for Recovery of Possession if we intend to take legal action for arrears. We will not use such notices to try and force residents to engage with us.

When we have issued a Notice of Proceedings for Recovery of Possession, we will contact the tenant on a regular basis and attempt to have them clear their debt. We will do this for four weeks after the Notice has been issued.

Highland Residential is authorised to initiate legal action against any resident in terms of this policy and the accompanying procedures.

Legal Action

Once legal action has started, we will not normally accept any further agreements until the case calls in The First Tier Tribunal. Any exceptions to this rule must be approved by Highland Residential.

We will notify the local authority of the landlord's intention to apply to the First Tier Tribunal for an eviction order. Notification must be in the prescribed form (Section 11 Form) under the Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003.

No payments will be accepted during this period as being payments of "rent" and we will not create a new tenancy agreement by accepting such payments towards the arrears.

Sub Accounts

All sub accounts and owner occupier accounts will be monitored on a monthly basis and appropriate action will be taken for all accounts with a debit balance.

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Applications for a Joint tenancy

We will consider applications to assign a tenancy or for a joint tenancy from a tenant who has rent arrears on the condition that the arrears are less than one month's rent or the person who is taking over the tenancy or being added to the tenancy clears the arrears prior to signing the new joint tenancy agreement.

Former Tenant Arrears

We will pursue former tenant debts using our own resources and may instruct solicitors to assist with proceedings.

Monitoring

Highland Residential will produce a monthly report which will detail how we are performing against our targets and will highlight any areas of concern.

A quarterly report will be produced for the which will include performance against target for our gross and net arrears, the level of arrears exceeding 3 months, the level of former tenant arrears and details of the legal action that has been taken to recover arrears.

Review

This policy will be reviewed on a three-yearly basis from the date of implementation, which will be the date the policy is approved by the board of directors, or earlier if deemed appropriate.

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