

## **CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR NEW TENANCY**

You have been allocated a house on the basis of the information provided in your housing application form. The house has been allocated to you and any members of your household included in your application and it is important that you notify us of any change to this information. This leaflet is designed to remind you of your new tenancy rights and responsibilities.

## **KEYS**

You have been issued with all available keys to the property. You may wish to consider leaving a set with a relative, as the Association will charge the tenant for any costs if we have to gain entry to the house for you.

## **REPAIRS**

All outstanding repairs should have been carried out in the property. If however there is anything still to be done, you should contact the Maintenance Section and you will be advised when the work will be carried out. Any future repairs should be reported to this office, either in person or by telephoning 0800 169 3379.

## **GAS/ELECTRICITY**

You should take a note of the meter readings in the property now, as you are responsible for all power used from when the keys are issued. It is important that you contact the relevant agency as soon as possible. If you are unsure of the Gas supplier, you should contact Transco 0870 608 1524 and for Electricity 0845 2727111.

## **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

With your new Tenancy comes a number of rights and responsibilities for both you and the Association. These will be explained to you at

your sign up by the Housing Officer and are set out within the terms of your tenancy agreement. It is important that you are aware of this important information so please familiarise yourself with the tenancy agreement and contact this office if you wish to discuss or query any aspect of this information.

## **COUNCIL TAX**

Everyone should note that it is important to contact South Lanarkshire Council to notify them of your new address for Council Tax purposes. You should refer to your handbook to obtain the appropriate contact phone numbers for South Lanarkshire Council. If you are applying for Housing Benefit, the application form includes a section relating to Council Tax rebate.

## **HOUSE CONTENTS INSURANCE**

The Association insure the fabric of the building in which you live and we strongly recommend that all tenants consider house contents insurance. We have details of a scheme run by the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations, which we will issue you with at the tenancy sign up.

## **ALTERATIONS TO THE PROPERTY**

If you are considering carrying out any alterations to the property, you must seek our permission in writing before going ahead. We can give advice about fitting showers, floor and wall tiling or any other alteration being considered. For further details, see information leaflet **Tenants Rights to Carry Out Alterations and Improvements** or contact the Maintenance Section at the office to discuss this matter further.

## **BEING A GOOD NEIGHBOUR**

You will have been given a copy of the Associations Good Neighbour Charter when you signed your tenancy agreement and we would ask you to abide by the conditions laid out within it. Being a good neighbour involves many things, and it is not just about carrying out obligations such as taking your turn of the stairs, or keeping your garden tidy. We would ask you to be considerate, and mindful of the people who live around you.

## **SETTLING IN VISIT**

When you have been in your house for around 4-6 weeks, you will receive a visit from Association staff to make sure that you have settled in, and discuss any problems you may have with your tenancy. Please complete and return your new tenancy questionnaire to staff at this time.

## **WHAT DO I DO NOW**

All you have to do now is move into your house and enjoy it. If you require any further information or assistance please contact our office and we will try to help, or issue appropriate advice as necessary.

## **RENT**

Your Housing Officer will have told you how much rent you have to pay. If you have any difficulty paying rent or wish advice about Housing Benefit, you should contact your Housing Officer urgently to discuss these matters. Rent is due in advance from your date of entry up to the 27<sup>th</sup> of the month, and on the

28<sup>th</sup> of each month thereafter(For example, rent for May will be charged and due on 28<sup>th</sup> April and so on). You will have been issued with a payment book for the bank or a card for post office payments, and your housing officer will have told you how much you have to pay and where. It is also possible to pay by Standing Order if you find this more convenient.

### **RENT ARREARS**

If you are unable to pay your rent at any time, it is essential that you let your housing officer know right away in order that an arrangement can be made which is suitable to both you and the Association. We will do everything we can to help you, providing you keep in touch with us. The Association can apply for eviction due to non payment of rent, but would only use this as a last resort. Urgent and regular ongoing contact with the Association is therefore very important if you have rent arrears.

### **HOUSING BENEFIT**

If you are applying for Housing Benefit, it is important that you complete the form and take it to South Lanarkshire Council along with your income details as soon as possible and preferably on the date you sign your tenancy agreement. If you don't do this, you could lose benefit and this will lead to rent arrears which you will be responsible for paying. Your housing Officer will give advice on completion of the form at the sign up – you should note that Housing Benefit will only be paid from the date that you move into your new tenancy.

Housing Benefit is paid to the Association on your behalf, monthly in arrears, and can take several weeks to be processed. If you are on Income Support you will qualify for full Housing Benefit, if you are on other benefits or you are

working you will probably have to pay some if not all of your rent.

### **CHANGE OF CIRCUMSTANCES**

If you are in receipt of Housing Benefit and your circumstances change, for example you start working, then it is essential that you advise the Housing Benefit section and let your Housing Officer know right away. You may qualify for extended Housing Benefit to cover the first 4 weeks that you are working and we would also discuss a payment arrangement to avoid you accruing rent arrears.

Other changes of circumstances which could affect your housing benefit include an increase in wages, pension or working families tax credit, someone leaving or joining your household, a member of your household reaching the age of 18, or a member of your household starting or stopping work. If you are in any doubt you should contact your Housing Officer or the Housing Benefit Office.

### **HOUSING BENEFIT REVISION**

Housing Benefit is reviewed regularly, and you will be issued with a new form which must be completed and returned to South Lanarkshire Council. Any delay will result in your benefit being stopped, and you will be responsible for rent due.

### **VERIFICATION OF DETAILS**

Housing Benefit Officers are now carrying out home visits to verify circumstances of applicants. It is essential that you respond to any cards or letters and keep any appointment if arranged. Tenants who do not do so will have their benefit cancelled, and will be responsible for rent due.

# **YOUR NEW TENANCY & RENT PAYMENTS**



18 Farmeloan Road,  
South Lanarkshire  
Rutherglen  
G73 1DL

Tel 0141 - 647 4917  
Fax 0141 - 647 - 5595

Infolea5//August 2004