

# **3. Moving into** & living in your new home

# Local Amenities

When moving into your new home it is important you know where your local amenities are.

## Meter Readings and Utility Providers

You must take a meter reading for your gas, electric and water as soon as you enter your new property as you are responsible for the usage from when you get the keys - please use the table below to jot down your information.

You can find out who supplies your gas by contacting the Meter Number Helpline on 0870 608 1524.

You can find out who supplies your electric by contacting Yorkshire Electric Distribution 0845 330 0889.



## Key Safe Number

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	Location	Reading	Date	Supplier
Water				
Gas				
Electric				
Stopcock				

# Local Amenities

Please tick if you are happy with the location of the amenities below and if you are unsure on any of the following, your Area Coordinator will find the information for you.

Local Amenities	
Doctors	
Dentist	
Local Food Shop	
Pharmacy	
Post Office	
Bank	
Place of Worship	
Library	
Leisure Centre	
Cinema	

# Alterations to your Property

You can carry out certain alterations inside your home provided you have written permission before you carry out the work. Qualified installers must carry out all approved alterations and any special conditions/requirements that are necessary must be met for example planning permission.

Pickering and Ferens Homes reserves the right to require you to make good any alterations that have not been carried out as specified and/or where there has been poor workmanship and/ or where there has been no prior authorisation for the work to be undertaken. If we have to do this then you will be recharged the full cost of any such remedial works.

*If you want to carry out any alterations, please contact Pickering and Ferens Homes on 01482 223 783 where the Customer Support Team will be able to advise you further.*

# Insurance

People have the right to decide whether or not they insure their belongings. Some people decide not to do so. However fires, thefts, or other emergencies such as flooding may occur which could result in heavy personal losses. If this happens, then Pickering and Ferens Homes does not have any obligation to give financial assistance or compensation.

Sometimes people also inadvertently cause damage to other people's property. For example a bath or washing machine may overflow and cause damage to another property and other people's belongings. In these cases Pickering and Ferens Homes and the other resident(s) may expect to be recompensed. Insurance does not need to be expensive and any good insurance company would be glad to provide a quotation. We recommend that you insure the contents of your home and internal decoration.

It might be a good idea to insure against other types of mishap. Pickering and Ferens Homes insurance covers only the structure and the fixtures of your home, you could therefore be liable to replace certain fittings, such as a sink unit if you damage them. We would therefore advise you to include this in your insurance cover.



# Identification

Our staff and contractors carry identification. Contractors will usually have contacted you in writing or by telephone to arrange a visit unless you have reported an emergency to be dealt with.

Gas, electricity and water providers and all other legitimate callers will all have some means of identification. You should therefore not allow anyone into your home that you do not know unless they can satisfy you as to their identity and business.

If you have the slightest doubt about a person's authenticity, ask them to wait or call back whilst you check their reason for calling.

Where applicable contact Pickering and Ferens Homes on 01482 223 783 for advice.

# Household Security

Never leave your home empty without making sure that the windows are secured and the doors are locked.

Don't invite thieves by having your curtains drawn in the daytime or by leaving notes for callers.

When you go on holiday make sure that you cancel newspapers, milk and so on.

It is also a good idea to tell a neighbour and let them know your holiday address or contact information. Never leave cash or valuables on view. Always lock up before you and make sure your windows are secure.





# Car Parking

On most schemes, car parking bays are provided for you and your visitors.

Please use them, they have been designed so your vehicle does not block the roads or damage grass verges or block footpaths.

Please always park carefully. Inconsiderate parking can cause a danger to other drivers, cyclists and pedestrians. It can also seriously affect access for emergency services. At all times, please keep the parking bays and roads tidy.

## > Can I reserve a specific parking space?

No, you cannot reserve a specific parking space. Please do not complain if someone parks in the bay you usually park in, all spaces are for residents and their visitors. However please show consideration to neighbours who have disabilities and who need to park nearer their front door, by parking in an alternative bay if there is one available.

## > Are there any garages?

We do not have any garages on our sites.

## > Can I repair my vehicle on the scheme?

You should not undertake major vehicle repairs anywhere on the scheme. When carrying out minor routine repairs you must make sure that you do not cause damage to surfaces or disturb your neighbours. Please make sure that you leave the ground clean and tidy after the repairs.

## > What happens to abandoned/scrap vehicles?

Abandoned and scrap vehicles are an eyesore and they will need to be removed from the scheme. If known the owner(s) may be charged for the removal. If you have a vehicle which needs disposing of, look in the Yellow Pages for breakers, or contact the local authority - Hull City Council - 01482 300300, East Riding of Yorkshire Council - 01482 393939.

## > Can I park my caravan in the car parking area?

You should not permanently park your caravan in the parking areas. Caravans may only be parked near to a Pickering and Ferens property while loading and unloading is being carried out.



# Booking the Guest Room

Pickering and Ferens Homes' five Sheltered Housing Schemes are located at Ada Holmes Circle, Greenwood Avenue, Christopher Pickering Lodge, Hessle High Road, Malin Lodge, Maybury Road, Broadway Manor, Holderness Road and Humber View, Victoria Dock. Each of the five schemes has a guest room available to hire on a short-term basis.

The guest rooms are predominantly for the use of the family, friends or carers of residents who live in the Sheltered Housing scheme to stay nearby to offer support to them. The guest room can also be used by friends or family who are visiting for social reasons.

The charge for the guest room is £24 per night including VAT.

The following terms and conditions apply to anyone booking a guest room:

1) All bookings are to be made directly through the site Scheme Manager. You will be asked to complete a booking form and you will be given a full copy of the terms and conditions.

2) Priority will be given to bookings made by family, friends or carers of residents who live in the Sheltered Housing scheme,

up to four weeks before the date the room is required. Should another resident from the surrounding Pickering and Ferens Homes 'village' wish to hire the guest room, they can only do so from four weeks prior to the date the room is required, subject to the room being free.

3) Bookings can only be made a maximum of six months before the date the guest room is required (please note point 2)

4) If a booking is made for a leisure visit and another resident needs the guest room to support them through illness, we reserve the right to cancel the booking in order to facilitate this.

5) Should we receive any complaints regarding behaviour of guests they will be asked to leave and will not receive a refund. We may also refuse any future booking requests.

6) The full cost of the guest room booking, regardless of length of stay, must be paid on arrival.

7) The room is to be left tidy and in a reasonable state; bins should be emptied and beds should be stripped

8) Should there be any damage, breakages, loss of keys or additional cleaning required following departure, the hirer of the room will be recharged the cost of replacement/repair.

9) Any repairs which the hirer identifies during their stay should be reported directly to the Scheme Manager, or by telephoning the office on 01482 223783. If there is an emergency repair out of hours, please telephone 0845 057 7087.

We hope that anyone hiring the guest room enjoys their stay and that they find the facilities clean and comfortable. If there are any queries or concerns however, please let us know.

# Rent Collection

Your maintenance contribution (rent) is payable every week. You will have been advised of the full rent charged when you signed up for your property. Please pay your rent weekly in advance, or four weekly in advance. If you would like to make your payments at different frequencies please speak to your Area Coordinator.

## > How do I pay my rent?

Pickering and Ferens Homes offers a variety of ways in which residents can pay their rent and service charges. These include making payments by Direct Debit, or by using a personal Payment Card.

For security reasons cash is not collected by the association's staff. Rent accounts are normally credited with payments within 5 working days. To help residents keep a record of their rent account we will send them regular account statements.

Please call us if you require:

- An up-to-date rent statement
- Additional information with regard to applying for Housing Benefit
- Advice because you are having difficulties paying your rent
- You wish to make your payments by Direct Debit and require a form

You can pay your rent in a variety of ways:

- Direct Debit – You can pay your rent by Direct Debit weekly, two-weekly or four-weekly. This way you do not have to remember to make your payments as it will automatically come out of your bank.
- Rent Payment Card – you can pay your rent at any Pay Point (supermarkets, post offices and other outlets where the PayPoint symbol is displayed). We will order you a payment card if this is your chosen option.
- In addition residents can use their payment card reference number to pay their rent and service charges via the internet. This can be done by logging on to [www.allpayments.net](http://www.allpayments.net), and by following the online instructions
- If you pay by direct debit, if there are any changes to your Housing Benefit (If applicable) we can adjust what you need to pay and you do not need to do anything.
- Debit Card – You can make rental payments by calling into or phoning our offices. You will need to quote the account number and sort code on your card.
- Resident Portal – You will be given a unique ID to access the resident portal. This allows you to view your rent account and make payments at any time on line.



# Rent Arrears Recovery

You need to make sure your rent account is always up to date and where possible, in advance. We will send you regular rent statements however it is your responsibility to keep an eye on your account on a regular basis to make sure you are not falling into arrears.

If you need any further information on your rent or rent account, you can contact our Rents team or the Resident Services team, on (01482) 223783.

Pickering and Ferens Homes believes its rent arrears policy is fair and we will offer help and support to those residents who find themselves in arrears either due to financial hardship or because of difficulties with Housing Benefit payments.

When a new resident signs up for a property, they will be asked to make rent payments from the day the Licence to occupy starts. This also applies to those claiming Housing Benefit, however once the claim is up and running the resident will no longer be required to make separate payments themselves if they are in receipt of full Housing Benefit.

For new and existing residents, Pickering and Ferens Homes' staff will liaise with Housing Benefit staff to make sure that claims are processed as quickly as possible however residents should take ownership of their own Housing Benefit claim and be prepared to take action/ supply the necessary information required to set the claim up or maintain an existing claim.



# The Key Principles of the Control of Current Rent Arrears Policy are: -

- Pickering and Ferens Homes accept that residents may wish to pay their rent at different intervals i.e. weekly, fortnightly or monthly. This is acceptable as long as payments are made on a regular basis, in advance and at agreed intervals.
- Residents will be sent regular rent statements. It is important that you check your statement carefully and make arrangements to pay any outstanding balance. Residents can also check their rent account on-line to ensure that payments are up to date.
- Residents will normally be advised by letter of the amount and the reason for the arrears. They will be advised to contact the office if they have any queries. We realise that in some cases a visit or telephone call to the resident is more appropriate.
- Should your account fall into arrears, we will determine the circumstances of the resident and we will use our knowledge of the resident to provide the correct contact. For example if it is known that a resident has difficulty getting out of their home then a home visit should be arranged. If English is not the resident's first language then it may be appropriate to use the telephone interpretation service.
- Whichever contact takes place the Resident Services Area Coordinator will advise you of the amount of the arrears and the reason they have accrued. An agreement should be reached to pay the arrears with consideration being given for the resident's ability to pay. An Agreement to Pay Arrears form should also be signed by the resident. Any agreement made will be sent to the resident confirming the details.
- The Area Coordinator will keep a record of the agreement and monitor payments on a weekly basis.

- If the arrears continue to accrue we will escalate the policy. Further letters will be sent and a meeting will be arranged with the resident to discuss the situation further. The resident will be invited into the office or a home visit will be arranged.
- Pickering and Ferens Homes will accept the payment of arrears in instalments. However, this must be agreed with the Resident Services Manager and must reflect the resident's ability to pay on a regular basis.

- If a resident does not respond to repeated attempts to ensure repayment of arrears Pickering and Ferens Homes will have no option but to notify the resident that they will be served with a Notice to Quit which could result in them losing their home.

Pickering and Ferens Homes are however keen to assist any resident who finds themselves in financial hardship.

We can arrange a home visit to you to discuss your concerns and also sign-post you to organisations which offer free independent advice. You can also contact the Citizens Advice Bureau at the address below:

Hull and East Riding (Hull) Citizens Advice Bureau  
The Wilson Centre (1st floor)  
Alfred Gelder Street  
HULL  
East Yorkshire  
HU1 2AG

Telephone - 01482 224608

