



**Section** **5**

**Rent and Service charges**



## **Section 5 Rent and Service Charges**

Your rent is worked out under the terms of your lease. This will normally be a percentage of the value of the share of your home we still own.

If your property is a flat, you may have to pay a service charge in addition to your rent payment. Any service charge would be payable to the management company and not to Bracknell Forest Homes.

### **Rent Reviews**

We review your rent every 12 months. We increase the rent in line with the terms of the rent review clause in the lease. This is generally based on the RPI (Retail Price Index).

### **Buying further shares (see also section 6)**

If you buy a further share in your property, we will reduce your rent in proportion to the value of the share we still own. Once you have bought 100% of the property you will no longer have to pay rent if your property is a house. We would also transfer the freehold of the property to you or to someone else such as a person buying the property.

If your property is a flat, there will be a fixed ground rent of £10 per annum once you have bought 100% of the property, and you may still have to pay a service charge.

### **Service charge accounts – Pyegrove Chase flats**

Service charge accounts are dealt with by the management company run by John Mortimer Property Management Ltd. The management company is your first point of contact for any issue relating to the flats except for rent payments.

### **Paying your rent**

You must pay your rent to Bracknell Forest Homes and any service charge to the management company. We prefer you to pay by Direct Debit.

- Direct Debit - call us on freephone 0800 692 3000/01344 382800, or email [bfh@bracknellforesthomes.org.uk](mailto:bfh@bracknellforesthomes.org.uk) and we will send you a form to complete and return to us. Direct Debits are taken from the bank on 1<sup>st</sup> day of the month or weekly. If your bank account will not support a Direct Debit, please contact us to discuss other options
- Post Office - by cash/cheque/debit card along with your Bracknell Forest Homes payment card. You can obtain a payment card from our Finance department, call us on 01344 382800



- In shops displaying the 'Paypoint' sign - please pay by cash along with your payment card
- By cheque - cheques should be made payable to Bracknell Forest Homes and sent to Berkshire Court, Western Road, Bracknell RG12 1RE. Please put your name, address and rent account number on the back of the cheque. Do not send cash through the post
- By telephone - please call us on freephone 0800 692 3000 or 01344 382800 to make a payment with your debit or credit card. You will need your rent account number to hand
- Online - log onto [www.bracknellforesthomes.org.uk](http://www.bracknellforesthomes.org.uk) and make your payment by debit/credit card. You will need your debit/credit card details and your rent account number to hand
- Housing benefit payments – made direct to us with your agreement.

## **Rent Statements**

We will send you a rent statement every three months. You should check this thoroughly and contact your Housing Officer if you have any queries about the information in your statement.

## **What happens if you cannot pay your mortgage, service charge or rent?**

**If you think you will have problems paying your mortgage**, contact your bank or building society and explain your circumstances. They may be able to re-schedule your repayments or offer other help.

**If you think you will have problems paying your service charges**, contact the management company immediately and explain your circumstances.

**If you think you will have problems paying your rent**, get in touch with your Housing Officer straight away. If you contact us we can make sure you are claiming all the benefits you are entitled to refer you to the Association's Tenancy Benefit Advisors put you in touch with people who can offer specialist advice such as the Citizens Advice Bureau make an agreement with you to pay all outstanding rent over a reasonable number of months.

## **What will happen if you do not pay your rent and other charges?**

If you are finding it difficult to pay your rent, please contact us immediately. Most problems with rent arrears can be sorted out if early action is taken.



We can give you help and advice about benefits or put you in touch with someone who can give advice on more complex problems. It may be possible to come to an arrangement to pay any arrears off in instalments. If you do not contact us or if you break the repayment agreement and your arrears continue to grow, we may contact your mortgage lender.

Legal action is a last resort and we must inform your mortgage lender before taking legal action. We will not always ask your mortgage lender to pay the money you owe on your behalf, but they may do this to protect the security of their loan. This may prompt your mortgage lender to take legal action to repossess your home.

**Please be aware, your home is at risk if you fail to pay your rent, service charge or mortgage.**