

# HARROGATE BOROUGH COUNCIL TENANTS' HANDBOOK

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## **WELCOME**

Welcome to Harrogate Borough Council. This handbook gives you information about our services and your tenancy.

We want you to enjoy living in your home and we strive to provide the best services possible. We aim to treat customers fairly, impartially and equally. We will treat you as we would expect to be treated ourselves.

Harrogate Borough Council is one of the top performing council housing services in the country and we are constantly looking at ways to improve our services and would welcome any feedback or comments about this handbook and our services.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Cabinet Member (Housing)



### **Who to contact**

Your Housing Officer, based at your Neighbourhood Housing Office is the main person to contact about any issues or problems concerning your home. See inside cover for office details.

**My Neighbourhood Housing Office is:**

**The telephone number is:**

**My Housing Officer is:**

**For enquiries regarding any Council service please ring 01423 500600**


## ABOUT US

The Council has approximately 3900 homes. We provide services throughout the Harrogate District including Ripon, Knaresborough, Boroughbridge, Pateley Bridge, Masham and Harrogate areas.

We have three Neighbourhood Housing Offices at Kennion Road, Harrogate; Albany Avenue, Harrogate and the Town Hall, Ripon. Applications for housing, including transfer requests, are dealt with by the Housing Needs Centre, Victoria Park House, 18 Victoria Avenue, Harrogate.

### Information

This handbook contains information about your tenancy with Harrogate Borough Council. It gives information about services that you may find useful whilst you are a tenant. There is an index and a glossary of terms at the back of this book.

Where you see this symbol  it means that there is a separate information booklet available. If you would like any of these booklets, please contact your Neighbourhood Housing Office, or download if a link is provided.

We also provide information to tenants through the newsletter “Tenants News”; and all new tenants will receive a copy of the Tenant Handbook when the tenancy is signed. All tenants should also receive news from tenants via the “News4You” newsletter. See Section G “Being involved” for more details.

## Customer care and service standards

We believe that you, our customer, should receive an excellent service. We want you to benefit from our services, know what level of service you can expect and be happy to contact us: We have therefore adopted the following service standards for housing customers.

### We aim to improve how we handle your enquiries by seeking to:

- Answer your telephone calls within 5 rings.
- Deal with your enquiries in a pleasant professional manner.
- Reply to your letters within 10 working days.
- Resolve your enquiry when you first approach us and if this is not possible, we will tell you what will happen next.
- Keep the appointments we arrange with you and see you on time.
- Ensure all Council employees and other people carrying out work for the Council carry identification. If you are in doubt about a caller, do not let them in and contact the Neighbourhood Housing Office or the Police.

## **We will:**

- ◆ provide the same high standard of service wherever you live.
- ◆ not discriminate against anyone irrespective of race, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation or religion.
- ◆ provide wheelchair access at all council offices.
- ◆ provide an interpretation service for those customers who do not speak English.
- ◆ produce leaflets and letters in large type, Braille, audio tape form or provide translations through the language line facility if required.

These are our customer care service standards for tenants. We have also developed service standards for our main housing services. Leaflets covering all our housing service standards are available at the Neighbourhood Housing Offices and the Housing Needs Centre. The standards are also detailed on Harrogate Borough Council's website:

<http://www.harrogate.gov.uk/harrogate/ServiceStandards> 

## **Customer satisfaction**

Our standards will be reviewed regularly by the joint Councillor/Tenant "Performance Monitoring Group" and by the Cabinet Member (Housing) to ensure they meet the needs of customers.

We regularly consult you, our customers, through surveys to seek your views about our services. Every 2 years we undertake a general Tenant Satisfaction Survey.

Please respond to surveys. Your views help us to provide the services you want.

## **Website – [www.harrogate.gov.uk](http://www.harrogate.gov.uk)**

The Harrogate Borough Council website give useful information and contacts for all our services. The Housing section includes details of repairs, allocations (including transfers) garden maintenance, planned improvements, tenant involvement and housing benefit.

## **Putting Things Right**

We always try to provide the best service that we can. However, if you feel that we have not met your expectations or our service standards please tell your Housing Office. If you continue to be dissatisfied, we encourage you to complete a "Help us to Help You" form that are available at all Council Offices. **See Section G "Being involved" or visit the web page [Harrogate Borough Council - Tenant Involvement](#).** 