Arrears Management in Social Housing – Solutions to Improve Rent Collection

Thursday 12th May 2005 • Central London

Chair:
Ann Roberts, Information Leader, National Housing Federation

Speakers Include:

Paul Howarth
Head of Housing Support Division
Department for Work and Pensions

Claire Turner
Assistant Rent Recovery Manager
Sheffield Homes
and
Associate
Rent Income Excellence Network

Cath Kemmar
Assistant Director - Repairs and Legal Services
Irwell Valley Housing Association

Sharon Heels
Senior Solicitor
Kirklees Metropolitan Council
and
Training Consultant

Richard Stephens
Tenancy Services Manager
Stevenage Borough Council
and
Associate
Rent Income Excellence Network

A Capita Conference
Arrears Management in Social Housing – Solutions to Improve Rent Collection

Chair: Ann Roberts, Information Leader, National Housing Federation

Programme

09.00 Registration and Coffee

09.50 Chair’s Opening Remarks

10.00 Rent Collection and Arrears Management: The National Picture in Councils and Associations
   - Why focus on arrears management?
   - The national context - the scale of the problem and current trends
   Speaker to be confirmed

10.30 Questions and Discussion

10.40 Working With the Benefits System
   - Improving performance
   - Maximising benefit take-up
   - How local authorities and housing associations can work together
   - The longer-term impact of the Standard Local Housing Allowance for social housing and rent collection
   - Benefit administration
   Paul Howarth
   Head of Housing Support Division
   Department for Work and Pensions

11.10 Questions and Discussion

11.20 Tea and Coffee

11.40 How the Benefits System Can Work in Practice For You
   Claire Turner
   Assistant Rent Recovery Manager
   Sheffield Homes

   and

   Associate
   Rent Income Excellence Network

12.10 Questions and Discussion

12.20 Providing Incentives: Encouraging Prompt Payment By Tenants
   - The Gold Service Philosophy
   - How does it work?
   - Generic v specialist
   - Rights and responsibilities - resident response
   - How has it impacted on arrears levels?
   - Plans for the future
   Cath Kemmar
   Assistant Director - Repairs and Legal Services
   Irwell Valley Housing Association

12.50 Questions and Discussion

13.00 Lunch

14.00 The Last Resort – Running a Possession Order Case
   - Suspended possession orders - are they a deterrent?
   - Legal action and the Human Rights Act
   - Licence and non-secure tenancies
   - Training staff in the legal process
   - The hearing
   - The link between nuisance and rent possession
   - Demoted tenancies
   Sharon Heels
   Senior Solicitor
   Kirklees Metropolitan Council

   and

   Training Consultant

14.30 Questions and Discussion

14.40 Top Tips To Take Home
   - Poems, posters and print
   - Cheap and cheerful chasing
   - Tricks to try tomorrow
   Richard Stephens
   Tenancy Services Manager
   Stevenage Borough Council

   and

   Associate
   Rent Income Excellence Network

15.10 Questions and Discussion

15.20 Chair’s Closing Remarks

15.30 Close of Conference
Arrears Management in Social Housing – Solutions to Improve Rent Collection

Improving the Rent Collection Process

Successful rent collection is key to a social landlord's housing management strategy. This conference will explore effective strategies and solutions to manage rent arrears, focusing on alternative methods to costly and damaging legal proceedings.

Although current thinking in arrears management advocates a move away from the increasing use of possession orders for non-payment, concern over the increasing possession actions taken by social landlords has prompted the Department for Constitutional Affairs to set up a housing working group who will develop alternatives to court action in possession proceedings.

A more preventative approach that recognises the success of incentivising prompt payment is needed. As social housing is, by its very nature, for those who are unable to afford private sector market rents, by developing strategies that recognise financial restrictions faced by some tenants, solutions can be devised that will maximise your rent collection.

The Reform of the Housing Benefit System

The effectiveness of the Local Housing Allowance pilots are currently being evaluated; if the findings are successful the new scheme could be extended to include the social housing sector in the future.

Theoretically the scheme would allow tenants to move into less expensive properties and keep the difference in rent. Controversially, it would also allow tenants to be paid their housing benefit directly, which many landlords fear will only increase the level of rent arrears.

Benefits of Attending:

This one-day conference has been researched and designed to address and examine all the available options open to you to ensure you maximise your housing rental receipts.

- Hear from leading practitioners who have implemented successful solutions, which can be taken back to your own organisation to assist you with the development of your own rent collection and rent arrears strategies
- Understand how to work with the benefit system and hear how the Department for Work and Pensions new approaches will improve rent collection
- Discover how to improve communication between all parties and develop a win-win relationship with tenants
- Recognise the importance of rewarding tenants for prompt payment and discuss the benefit of supporting tenants in rent collection
- Learn and understand the legal process as a last resort
- Discuss ideas and questions that arise during the day with our expert panel of speakers and network with fellow delegates

What delegates had to say about last year’s “Arrears Management” conference:

“Very well organised, speakers of high calibre and individual topics covered. Very informative, plenty of good food for thought”
Karen Platt, Fortunegate Community Housing (part of the Catalyst Housing Group)

“Good value for money. Each session was relevant and provided both theory and practical tips”
Asif Anwar, Sanctuary Housing Association

“Excellent day with some innovative and exciting speakers, plenty to take back and learn from”
Steven Gordon, Sunderland Housing Group

Capita’s Event Management Service

Our event management service offers you the opportunity to tap into the resources and skills of a renowned market leader in the UK conference business. With ten years event management experience, we have a proven track record in co-ordinating a diverse range of events, from breakfast seminars to large-scale national policy conferences.

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visit our website www.capita-ld.co.uk
Registration form

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Please use BLOCK CAPITALS and complete in full

Ref: L0551

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Delegate details Please use block capitals

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Special/Dietary Requirements/Other

Please photocopy this form for additional delegates

Book a third delegate at half price.
Call 0870 400 1020 for details

Address for joining instructions

Organisation
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Name and address for invoice if different

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Surname
Job Title
Organisation
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Postcode
Telephone
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Email

Payment details

Public Sector
@ £350.00 + VAT @ 17.5%
No. of delegates
TOTAL

Private Sector
@ £450.00 + VAT @ 17.5%
No. of delegates
TOTAL

Registered Charities
Charity No
@ £150.00 + VAT @ 17.5%
No. of delegates
TOTAL

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Documentation
If you are unable to attend the conference we offer the documentation on CD ROM or Paper Version. Please send or fax this form to us confirming contact and payment details as above:

Please send me ______ CD ROM set(s) @ £95 per copy + VAT @ 17.5%
Please send me ______ Paper set(s) @ £95 per copy (VAT exempt)

NB: Documentation will be sent out after the event and we are in receipt of payment.

Method of Payment

All payments must be received before the Conference date.

By Cheque: Payable to CAPITA BUSINESS SERVICES LTD. Please ensure delegate name(s) and organisation are written on the back.

By Credit Card: Mastercard and Visa are accepted.

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If payment is not received prior to the conference date there will be an additional administrative charge of £50.00 plus VAT per delegate. Please send payments to: Conferences & Training Customer Centre, Quadrant Court, 49 Calthorpe Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 1TH and quote L0551.

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Hotel Accommodation

The conference fees do not include hotel accommodation. For special accommodation rates please contact Londsdale Travel on 0870 241 6802 or email capitahotels@lonsdaletravel.co.uk. It is imperative to quote the following code - CAPEXT.

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Data Protection

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