

WHITMORE VALE HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Tenants Handbook – The Old Manse

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About Whitmore Vale Housing Association

This is your copy of Whitmore Vale's service user's handbook which aims to help you enjoy living in your home. It contains useful information about the services we provide and your rights and responsibilities as a tenant. This does not form part of your tenancy agreement which is a legal document covering the terms and conditions of your tenancy.

If you have any queries which are not covered in this handbook, or wish to know more about any of the topics covered, please contact us.

Introduction

We provide good quality affordable homes for people with learning disabilities in a supported living environment.

Who are we?

Whitmore Vale Housing Association is a charity registered as a charitable and industrial provident society and a member of the national housing federation.

We are governed by a voluntary management committee. Management is the responsibility of our chief executive.

We have 5 registered care homes, each managed by a service manager and a team of support workers.

We also provide supported living services to people who live in their own flats/houses or in accommodation based services owned by the company.

Living at Whitmore Vale Housing Association

Moving in

The following is a list of things you might need to sort out when you move in.

Gas, Electricity, Water and Telephone

Let the suppliers of all these services know that you are the new tenant. The staff will support you to do this.

Letting people know

Make a list of people and organisations that should know you have moved. This may include your employer, benefit office, banks and building society, GP and Dentist.

Redirecting Mail

You can get the post office to redirect your mail from your old home to your new one but you may be charged for the service.

Keys

Whitmore Vale Housing Association will keep spare keys to your home so however if you lose your keys we will have to replace the locks for your safety and security.

Insurance

Whitmore Vale Housing Association only insures the fixtures and structures of your home. We advise you to insure your own possessions against fire, theft, flooding and accidental damage.

Smoke Alarms

Your home is fitted with a smoke alarm to give you an early warning if fire breaks out. You should never try to disconnect it. If a fire does start you should:

- Leave the building as quickly as possible, closing the doors behind you,
- Phone 999
- Inform Whitmore Vale by ringing the on call telephone

The staff will support you in familiarising yourself with the fire safety instructions.

Getting Benefits

If you are entitled to benefits, you should contact your local benefits office as soon as you move to ensure you do not miss out on any payments. You may be able to get housing benefit to help pay some of your rent. Your councils housing benefit office will give you a form. Staff will support you in applying for benefits.

Tenancy

All Tenants will be issued with an Assured Shorthold tenancy agreement. This is the document that you will sign on the first day you move in. It gives the details of the contract between you and Whitmore Vale Housing Association. Your rights are set out in your tenancy agreement.

Breach of Tenancy

This is the term used when you fail to keep to the terms of your tenancy, for example not paying your rent. If you break the agreement we will discuss with you how to correct it .Your main responsibility is to keep the property clean and tidy and free from damage.

We have the right to carry out inspections or repairs or to service appliances or to carry out improvements. We will give you at least 24 hours warning unless it is an emergency.

Rent Payment

It is very important you pay your rent on time .Your rent is due in advance and should be paid weekly. If you have problems paying your rent you should let us know. You will be given a receipt each time you make a payment.

Rent Arrears

If you have problems paying your rent we will do everything we can to help you catch up. Hopefully we can work out a regular repayment agreement based on how much you can afford to pay back.

Rent levels are reviewed once a year, if your rent goes up, we will write to you at least 4 weeks before it must be paid.

Maintenance/Repair Service

We know that tenants consider high quality repairs and maintenance of their home as a very important aspect of the service we provide. We will monitor our contractor's performance. We must by law keep in good repair the structure and exterior of your home and ensure services are in good condition. Your rent includes payments towards the cost of repairs and maintenance to your home

You can report any maintenance/ repair problem 7 days a week. You can do this by telephoning us or completing a job sheet and giving it to the staff.

When you report a repair, we will put the work into a response time category.

Urgent repairs – 2 working days

Routine repairs – 28 working days

Programmed repairs – plan in place

We must by law carry out an annual gas safety check in every property.

Safety and Security at Home

Make sure you know where the following may be found in your home,

Gas Meter and Gas Tap

Cold water stop cock

Electricity meter

Fuse board and isolation switch

If you smell gas or have a water leak you must ring the on call immediately

National gas emergency service **0800 111 999**

Use of your Home

Your home must not be used for any immoral or illegal purpose, for example storing stolen property or dealing in drugs or any controlled substances. We will seek to evict any tenant who is using their property for the above.

The Bills you will be responsible for:

Rent (you may be eligible for housing benefit)

Gas

Electric

Water

Council Tax

Telephone (for personal use)

TV Licence (Residential - which is £7.50 per year)

The Council that deals with your housing benefit is :

Waverley Borough Council

The address is:

The Burys

Godalming

Surrey

GU7 1HR

01483 523333

Moving On

If you want to move from your current home, we will try to help you. Whatever the reasons we will arrange to find another housing association or local council or you may want assistance to own your own home through schemes such as Homebuy, shared ownership.

Moving Out

Before moving out you must give Whitmore Vale Housing Association four weeks notice in writing.

During this period you will be contacted to arrange an inspection of the property. This is to ensure that the property has been maintained in a satisfactory manner.

You must return your keys to the Service Manager.

Service User Participation and Consultation

Person Centred

We aim to deliver an excellent care and support service by putting Tenants at the centre of everything we do.

We are committed to encouraging tenants to take part in decision making to make sure we provide the service you want. We will assess your needs with you and support you to draw up a support plan to meet your needs. We will endeavour to be as flexible as we can about how and when you would like your support to be delivered.

We believe in the right of Tenants to influence decisions about their home. You will be informed of any plans that directly affect your home, which will include any changes in tenancy conditions or changes in rent. We will consult with you by the following,

Visits by staff

Letters

Meetings

Telephone communication

Whatever form of consultation we use, we will ensure that any explanatory information is easily understood.

We will ask for your comments and look into what you say before a final decision is made.

Comments, Compliments and Complaints

Satisfaction Surveys

We carry out surveys from time to time and would very much value your feedback. If you have any ideas that will improve our service please let us know. If you are dissatisfied with our actions or omissions or there has been a failure in our provision of service or an employees has been discourteous you may want to make a complaint.

How to make a complaint

If you experience a failure in service you should talk to your service manager or alternatively complete a complaints form which you will find at the back of this folder. If you are not satisfied with our response you are invited to make a formal complaint by letter, telephone, face to face, email or through your Care Manager or relatives written on your behalf.

We are committed to resolving problems as quickly as possible.

Service Reviews

We continuously look at how we can improve our service to our Tenants in terms of cost and quality.

A critical part of the review process is to involve our Tenants through meetings with service Managers and the senior management team.

The Service

Hindhead Supported Living Services provides housing related support and social care for people with learning disabilities. The Old Manse is registered by Care Quality Commission to provide personal care. The village that Hindhead Supported Living services are in is the Beacon Hill area of Hindhead, Surrey.

The office address for staff is:

The Old Manse
Churt Road
Hindhead
Surrey
GU26 6NL

The telephone number is: 01428 606664

On call: 07587 135423

An on-call service operates over 24 hours per day

There is also a senior on-call provision.

They are as follows:

Heidi Beech 07425 626946

Felicia Yarborough 07587 135419

Claire Gatum 07425 626964

Hindhead Supported Living Services has 3 houses

The Old Manse

Salima

The Ferns

The Old Manse - this is where you will be living.

- It is a six bedroomed house with a communal sitting room, dining room, kitchen, 2 bathrooms and a shared garden. It is registered by C.Q.C. for a regulated activity to provide personal care.

Who pays for the support you get?

The money for the staff to support and empower you will come from supporting people and /or Adult Social care. Supporting people provide funding for the housing related support element and Adult Social care provides funding for the Social care needs. The service manager will carry out a needs assessment along with you to determine the support you require per week. From this you will be supported to develop a support plan and any risk assessments if required.

Staffing

All staff are carefully selected through our recruitment and selection procedure, and prior to appointment are subjected to a Disclosure and barring service check and an occupational health check, and a requirement of two references.

On appointment all staff participates in an induction. This induction encompasses the philosophy of an ordinary life and safe working practices. The staff team have a suitable range of experience to provide the services needed by the Tenants.

They are not allowed to accept gifts from you or to borrow anything from you. They are not allowed to accept money from you and should never borrow money from you. They are not allowed to benefit from you by you paying for things for them.

What does the staff do?

Every tenant has a support structure which is agreed between the tenant and the Service Manager.

Staff will provide the support necessary to meet your needs. This may include some or all of the following

Support to claim benefits

Support to pay rent

Support to manage finance and set up a financial plan

Support to monitor health and Safety issues

Support around healthy eating

Support to pay bills

Support around health, GP appointments etc.

Support with managing post and paperwork

Support to set up a and maintain external structure i.e. to find a job

Support to monitor personal safety and emotional support.

Support to maintain keeping the flat clean and tidy.

Support to maintain personal hygiene

Staff are based at The Old Manse. Staff works from 7.30am in the morning to 10pm at night. At weekends staff work from 8am to 10pm.

At night there is an emergency on call telephone so you can speak to the Manager or Deputy Manager in an emergency for example if someone is very sick or there is a fire or if the Police need to be called. Staff will show you how to telephone the on call number.

The on call number is:

07587 135423

Who are the staff?

Manager = Caroline Sears

Deputy Manager = Alina Vrabie

The Community Support Workers are:

Christina Barker

Helga O'Donaghue

Phil Sharman

Rebecca Steele

Gill Thorn

Amanda Webb

Gemma Phillips is a Bank Community Support Worker.

Holly Philips is a Bank Community Support Worker

The telephone number of Surrey Disabled Peoples Partnership is: 01483 750973

Visitors

You can have visitors or guests to come and see you whenever you like. You can spend time with them in your room. Your tenancy agreement says you are not allowed a lodger or anyone to live with you. You can have someone to stay the night in your flat for no more than 7 days. Please tell staff you are having someone to stay. You can have friends and family to visit you at any time. Staff will support you to make arrangements to see your family if you need help to see them.

Company Values

Equality and Diversity

We are committed to equality and diversity and our equality and diversity strategies are an integral part of all our activities.

We will ensure that no person or group is treated less favourably than any other person on the grounds of Age, Disability Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race ,Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation. In all its operations and services Whitmore Vale Housing Association will not discriminate against anyone.

Safeguarding Adults

Whitmore vale Housing Association endorses fully the Surrey Multi Agency Procedures for Adults at risk. A company policy has also been developed to protect all our service users from all forms of abuse. Training is provided for all staff in the recognition of abuse and the procedures to follow when abuse is suspected.

A Whistle blowing policy is in force for the protection of staff who feel that there may be any matter of concern in this respect.

Responsible Risk Taking

Risks exist in all aspects of daily living. In the process of providing a service where tenants are offered opportunities to participate in a wide range of activities there will inevitably be some element of risk. Where it is determined that the risk factor is too high a risk assessment will be undertaken.

Quality Assurance

Whitmore Vale Housing Association operates a comprehensive system of monitoring and assessment for the operation of its services. The Deputy Chief Executive is assigned specifically to ensure that all the care and support services consistently meet the high standards set out in our policies and procedures and working instructions.

We also comply with the Care Quality Commissions “Essential standards of quality and Safety” and the Supporting People standards of the “Quality Assessment Framework.”

Confidentiality

We treat anything you say to us with discretion. All information you give us is confidential, however we may have to share certain essential details with other public bodies. We will make you aware of what information is likely to be passed on.

Useful Information

What there is in the Beacon Hill Area

Doctor / Dentist / Optician

If you need to see a Doctor staff will help you register with the local Doctor’s Surgery. It is called Grayshott Surgery.

Grayshott is close to Beacon Hill and Hindhead. If you need an eye test there is Leightons Optician in Haslemere or Specsavers in Farnham. Staff will help you to

make an appointment. If you need to go to the Dentist staff will help you to find a local dentist and will help you to make an appointment.

Medication

The Service Manager will assess what support you will require if you are on medication. You may be able to administer your own tablets and only need us to remind you or you may need us to administer your medication or help you with your repeat prescriptions to ensure you receive the correct amount of medicines from the Doctor.

We will encourage you to store your medication in a dosette box.

We use the chemist in Beacon Hill to get our medication.

Local Shops

There is Jaycees in Beacon Hill. This is a general store where you can get food, newspapers, magazines and alcohol. There are restaurants and you can get a takeaway if you would like to. You can get a coffee at the Coffee Lounge or at The United Reformed shop. There is a post office, a hairdressers, a butchers/delicatessen and a British Legion club.

Clubs

There are clubs you can go to if you want to. The Harbour Discos are once a month with live bands and The Petersfield Society for Special Needs has monthly discos and outings. Link Leisure has events in a night club in Woking. Haslemere Hall has a pantomime once a year.

Things to do in Haslemere

There is a library, restaurants, coffee shops and pubs. There are 3 supermarkets in Haslemere, Tesco, Co-op and Waitrose. There are lots of banks and 2 leisure centres called The Herons and The Edge. There is also a gym in Bordon called The Mill Chase Leisure Centre. There are some very old buildings in Haslemere such as The Town Hall. The United Reform Church in Beacon Hill has an internet café and you can have a coffee there in the mornings. Hindhead is an area of natural beauty and there are some lovely walks around the Devil's Punchbowl.

Haslemere Hall has cinema showings with current films. It also has some shows with music or drama.

Places of Worship

There are churches in Beacon Hill, Hindhead and Haslemere. The United Reformed Church is next door to The Old Manse. You will be supported to pursue your faith or belief. There is a list of Christian, Muslim, Sikh, Buddhist, Hindu and Jewish places of worship on the tenants' noticeboard. Staff can show you how to get to your chosen place of worship.

Sexuality

Everyone is welcome to come and live at The Old Manse whatever your sexual preference whether you are homosexual, lesbian, transgender or heterosexual. Staff can help you find groups to meet people of your sexuality and can show you how to get there.

Review

This handbook will be periodically reviewed, taking into account the views and opinions expressed by tenants.

Signed:

Date:

Reviewed Jan 2015

Next review Jan 2016