



## **Rent and Service Charge Policy Summary**

The GHA Rent and Service Charge Policy aims to ensure that the Association has enough rental income to fund its Business Plan whilst charging affordable rents.

Key aspects of the Rent Policy:

- At the time of stock transfer GHA agreed to charge tenants transferring to GHA the same rent as the Council charged before the transfer
- A guarantee to transferring and new tenants that the annual rent increase will not be more the rate of inflation (as measured by the Retail Price Index) up to 2008
- A further guarantee to transferring tenants that their rents will not increase by more than 1% above the inflation rate from 2008 to 2010
- GHA will restructure its rent and service charges in 2011
- All tenants and registered tenants organisations will be consulted about any rent or service charge changes

## **Annual Rent Review**

GHA will review its rents annually. Any increase in the rent will be notified to tenants in writing and will apply from 1<sup>st</sup> April each year.

GHA will consult with all tenants and Registered Tenants Organisations and LHOs about the annual rent review.

## **Rent Restructure**

We are looking at the rent structure and will consult tenants about this in 2009.

The key factors we are taking into account are:

- The need for rents to be affordable for tenants on low incomes
- The size and type of the housing
- The costs of managing and maintaining the properties
- The charges for any services that are provided
- The rents charged by other housing associations for similar housing in similar areas

The new rents will be phased in over a period of time, from 2011.

### **Service Charges**

Some tenants receive services such as stair cleaning, grass cutting and close cleaning.

In multi-storey flats and deck access, tenants receive a concierge service.

Tenants in sheltered housing also receive additional cleaning and maintenance services.

These costs are part of the rent for these properties.

Separate service charges are currently charged for the following services.

- Heating
- Furniture
- Garden Maintenance
- Tenants insurance

GHA guaranteed that these service charges would not increase annually by more than the rate of inflation up to 2008. However, after 2008, the charges will be reviewed annually.

Any new services introduced by GHA following transfer will be charged as separate service charges in addition to the rent.