

Rent



Myles Harding, Sully Primary School

Rent

Everyone who moves into a Council property has to pay rent. Your rent must be paid in advance. You can choose to pay your rent either every week, every fortnight or every month.

3.1 Paying rent

You can pay your rent in four different ways.

1 In a Council cash office

There are cash offices at:

- Civic Offices, Holton Road, Barry
- West House, Penarth
- 4 Barons Close, Llantwit Major
- 79 Eastgate, Cowbridge

These cash offices are open:

- 9.45 am – 4.30 pm Monday to Thursday
- 8.45 am – 4.00 pm on Friday

2 By standing order

through your Bank or Building Society
You will need to complete a Standing Order form to do this. A form is available from Income Assistants on 01446 709512/3. Or by calling into the office at 2-8 Holton Road, Barry.

3 Post Office

All Post Offices in the Country can accept rent payments, providing that you have your rent payment card with you. If you pay in the post office, your payment takes longer to reach the Council, so you will need to pay your rent at the beginning of each week that it is due.

4 By Credit/Debit Card

To pay in this way, you need to telephone the Council cash office on 01446 709239. The offices open the same hours as all other Council Offices.

3.2 How do I get help with my rent?

If you receive Benefits from the Department of Work and Pensions, (which used to be called the Benefits Agency or Department of Social Security), you may be eligible for rent rebate to assist with paying your rent. The amount of rent rebate received depends on what type and amounts of Benefit that you receive.

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If you want to apply for rent rebate, you will need to complete an application form and supply information about your personal financial situation to the Housing Benefit Section. This will enable them to calculate the amount of rent rebate that you are entitled to.

If you are a new tenant, your Housing Assistant will be able to give you a Housing Benefit application form and help you complete your application. You must return the completed form to the Housing Benefit Section immediately, as Housing Benefit can only be paid from the Monday following the date on which your application is received.

The address of your Housing Benefit Office is:

**The Vale of Glamorgan Council
The Civic Offices
Holton Road
Barry
CF63 4RU**

telephone: 01446 709244

Important notes

- You should always ask the Housing Benefit Section for a receipt for any information that you give them.
- Please remember that until the Housing Benefit section tells you how much Housing Benefit you will get, you are still responsible for paying the full amount of rent.
- Part of the rent that the Council charges includes elements for Water and Sewerage which are collected on behalf of the utility company. These parts of the rent are not eligible for Housing Benefit and must be paid by every tenant regardless of their income.

3.3 Rent statements

If you disagree with the balance of your rent account then you should contact us immediately. We will send you a copy of your rent statement detailing all the payments received onto your rent account. You should check any receipts that you have against this statement. You should always keep the receipts that you have, for rent that you have paid. Once a year the Council will send you a letter confirming the balance on your rent account.

3.4 What help can I get if I have difficulty paying my rent?

If at any time you fall into rent arrears for whatever reason, it is very important that you contact your Income Assistant immediately. They will be pleased to offer friendly, constructive and sympathetic advice, help you budget your money effectively and ensure that you are in receipt of all the Benefits that you are entitled to.

So that the Income Assistant can offer this help effectively, you will need to be completely honest about your income and any debts that you have with any other agencies.

Based on your ability to pay, the Income Assistant will discuss and agree with you, a weekly amount to be paid off arrears. You must make sure that you keep to the agreement and pay every week.

You can contact your Income Assistant on 01446 709512/513, or call into the Offices at 2-8 Holton Road, Barry.

In section 1, there are contact details for advice agencies who may also be able to help.

3.5 What will the Council do if I do not pay my rent?

The consequences of falling behind with your rent can be serious. As well as being a breach of your responsibilities in the tenancy agreement, having rent arrears will prevent you being registered for a transfer or exchanging your home.

The Council normally writes to tenants who have outstanding balances on their rent accounts every two weeks. If arrears continue or if they increase, this may result the Council issuing a Notice of Seeking Possession, and eventually taking legal action against you through the Courts for repossession of your home.

Notice of Seeking Possession

This is a legal notice which warns you that if you do not do something to sort out the problems with your rent account, then the Council is formally notifying you that they may apply to the County Court for a possession order for your home.

The Notice of Seeking Possession is normally hand-delivered to your property. If you receive a Notice, it is very important that you make contact with the Council to agree arrangements to clear any outstanding arrears. If you do not do this then the Council will commence proceedings in the County Court for possession of your home. At this stage, you will be summoned to appear in Court and provide information as to why you have failed to make payments to clear your rent arrears.

Court action

The County Court judge will decide on what action will be taken against you. The Court may award the Council immediate possession of your home or may suspend the possession order on condition that you pay the rent plus something from your arrears on a regular basis. If once you have been to court you break the terms of the Court Order, the Council can return to Court to request an eviction order to make you leave your home.

Any order made against you constitutes a County Court judgement. This may prevent you obtaining credit or a mortgage in the future.

The Council will also seek the costs of the action, which you will be responsible for paying. The costs are currently £130.00.

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Rent increases

The Council has the legal right to increase the rent for properties, or any other element of the rent (for example Service Charges) at any time, providing that you are given a minimum of 28 days notice prior to the proposed rise.

Any rent rise is normally scheduled to take effect at the start of the financial year (April). However, a rise can be made at any time providing the prescribed period of notice is given.

The Council has recognised that there is a need to support people both prior to and after the commencement of their tenancy to enable them to live a full and independent life and to ensure that they are able to maintain their tenancy with no difficulties.

The types of support that could be supplied include:

- assistance with the security of the property
- helping to maintain the safety of the home
- minor repairs to equipment
- arranging servicing to tenants appliances
- training in maintaining the interior of the home to an appropriate standard
- help arranging for Doctors, Social Workers etc to call
- advice on how to use the equipment in the home
- assistance/advice in personal budgeting/debt counselling
- dealing with neighbour disputes
- help with Benefit Forms
- move-on advice
- help to achieve independent living
- assistance with shopping, errands etc
- chatting and arranging social events

The type of support provided could mean the difference between someone being able to stay in their home or having to move because they cannot manage alone.

If you feel that you are unable to manage and may benefit from support you should contact the Supporting People Co-ordinator on 01446 709788.

Other Booklets:

- 1 Welcome to your New Home
- 2 Rights & Responsibilities
- 3 Rent
- 4 Housing for Older or Disabled People
- 5 Moving Home
- 6 Repairs & Maintenance
- 7 Safety in the Home