



<i>Title</i>	<i>RENT AND SERVICE CHARGE (AMENITY CHARGE) PAYMENT METHODS POLICY</i>
<i>Scope</i>	<i>This policy applies to Three Oaks Homes</i>
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**RENT AND SERVICE CHARGE (AMENITY CHARGE)
PAYMENT METHODS POLICY**

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AUTHOR: POLICY TASK GROUP**

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1.0 POLICY STATEMENT AND OBJECTIVES

1.1 The primary objectives of Three Oaks Homes (TOH) Rent and Service Charge (amenity Charge) Payment Methods Policy is to ensure that the opportunities for maximising income through the provision of a variety of payment methods is achieved.

To meet these objectives we are committed to:-

- providing clear information to residents on the variety of payment methods available
- having clear targets for maximising value for money in the provision of cost effective payment methods
- ensuring continuity of service by providing outreach payment collection points via partnerships with Blaby District Council
- regularly monitoring the cost and take up of the variety of payment methods available to ensure targeted promotion, regular review of options and value for money is achieved.

1.2 This Policy covers all tenants transferring from Blaby District Council to Three Oaks Homes and any subsequent new tenants of Three Oaks Homes.

2.0 PAYMENT METHODS

2.1 To ensure rent and service charge (amenity charge) income is received by TOH promptly and to give tenants ease of payment a variety of payment methods are available. These include:

2.1.1 Cheque payments – available by post and through cash offices.

2.1.2 Direct Debit and Standing Order – available through most banks and building societies. Monthly or weekly Direct Debit payments will be accepted.

2.1.3 Cash payments – through cash offices.

2.1.4 Telephone and Internet payment via debit cards and credit cards.

2.1.5 Post Offices.

2.1.6 Housing Benefit Direct Payments.

2.2 In addition to these methods, TOH will investigate the introduction of other payment methods.

2.2.1 In particular 'Allpay', a swipe card service enabling tenants to pay their rent at the post office and other outlets such as shops and petrol stations will be introduced within the first year of stock transfer.

2.3 Where proposals are developed to introduce or change the methods offered, residents will be consulted and their opinions considered before decisions are finalised.

2.4 Changes to the provision of payment methods will be publicised to residents through their newsletters, handbooks and displays in TOH reception areas. Information will also be published on the TOH website.

3.0 MONITORING AND TARGET SETTING

3.1 TOH will monitor the costs of providing a variety of payment methods on an annual basis. This information will be reported to tenants via their newsletter.

3.2 TOH will set targets for the take up of different payment methods and will proactively promote the methods which offer value for money. This may mean introducing incentives to encourage tenants to pay by certain methods which present cost savings to TOH.

5.0 POLICY REVIEW

4.1 This Policy will be reviewed on a three yearly rolling basis, unless changes are required as a result of resident feedback that prompts early review of the Policy or as a result of changes in the law or accounting practice.