



Our services

A guide for residents

JRHT JOSEPH
ROWNTREE
HOUSING TRUST

This leaflet contains information and guidance on the following services:

1. Service standards for leaseholders and residents who rent
2. Estate management services
3. Snow clearing and gritting services
4. Our money and benefits advisers and the work they do

1. What standards you should expect from us

Our service standards

We will provide the best possible service, treating you fairly, equally, with respect, courtesy and consideration. We will provide a friendly and helpful service and ensure that information is treated confidentially, when appropriate.

We are committed to improving service standards and will regularly review these standards in consultation with you. In particular, we will:

Provide services that are accessible to all

This means fair and free from discrimination, with a professional translation and interpretation service; information in different formats including Braille, large print and audio; and we will respond to any specific communication or other needs you may have to ensure you receive equal access to our services.

Provide clear and easy-to-understand information

That means written communication that is clear, concise and uses plain English or other languages as required; comes in a range of formats; is easy to understand and complete; and has been

assessed by the Residents' Editorial Panel to ensure it is clear, jargon-free and easy to follow.

Respond to your enquiry in published timescales...

... within one working day of telephone calls; within five working days – or two working days if it is more urgent – of receiving face-to-face enquiries or written correspondence. We will also acknowledge receipt of enquiries, advise of action being taken when an answer cannot be given immediately, and strive to ensure that visitors to The Garth do not wait longer than five minutes to make an initial enquiry or payment.

If you are selling your property, we help ensure the sale completes as quickly as possible...

... by providing full sales advice; arranging for a valuation of your property if you are not satisfied with the sale price; providing new residents with a handbook; and contacting new residents within six weeks of the sale.

Re-let our rented properties as quickly as possible as set out in your tenancy agreement...

... by making sure all our properties meet the vacant property standard

before they are re-let; undertaking viewings with prospective residents; advising new residents about any outstanding repairs; providing new residents with a gas safety certificate and welcome pack; and contacting new residents within six weeks of the start of tenancy.

Allocate our properties fairly

We operate an allocations policy that ensures our properties are allocated fairly and in accordance with previously agreed criteria. To find out more about this, please contact our staff at The Garth. We will, as far as is reasonably possible, allocate you a property that matches your individual needs most appropriately.

Provide an efficient and effective housing service...

... offering support where appropriate and working in partnership with other agencies when required; responding to any breaches of lease or tenancy agreements, neighbour disputes and instances of harassment within specified times; undertaking any emergency repairs or any additional security measures within specified times (we try to respond within 24 hours for emergency repairs. Refer to our Repairs policy Leaflet for further details); responding to written requests

and reports of racial harassment and antisocial behaviour within specific deadlines (see leaflet 16; Antisocial behaviour, harassment and hate crime); providing additional services, from requests from residents to install satellite dishes, to enabling you to see your personal records within ten working days of any request.

Minimise rent and service charge arrears...

... by making sure you are aware of your rent and service charge obligations; by offering appointments with our money and benefits advisers; and offering an income collection service that focuses on preventing arrears and offers affordable options to reduce debt if you do fall into arrears.

Deliver an efficient and responsive repair and planned maintenance service...

... by ensuring our homes are maintained to a high standard with modern facilities, providing security and comfort for our residents; ensuring all staff and contractors employed on our behalf are competent and provide a consistently high standard of workmanship; and by asking our staff and contractors to provide proof of identity before entering your home.

Encourage your involvement and listen to you...

... by offering a range of ways for you to participate and have your say, including: resident groups, surveys, focus groups, residents' panels and residents' events. We will give you feedback and communicate the results from any consultation, focus groups or surveys that you take part in.

Provide a sheltered housing service that meets the needs of residents...

... by promoting the independence and security of all residents; offering a home visiting service to residents; providing support and working with specialist agencies to enable residents to remain independent; operating a 24-hour community alarm service; encouraging and facilitating social activities; and carrying out communal decorations in consultation with you.

Respond when things go wrong

We have procedures in place to ensure your complaint is dealt with fairly and promptly. There are three stages to our complaints procedure:

1. Contact your Neighbourhood Services Officer or other relevant member of staff.

2. All complaints are referred to the Service Improvement Manager at The Garth in New Earswick.
3. If you remain dissatisfied following this procedure you can take your complaint to the Housing Ombudsman.

Help us maintain our standards by getting in touch whenever necessary.

2. Keeping your estate clean and tidy

This section explains how we will deal with issues that affect the area you live in (such as graffiti, litter and abandoned cars) and what we will do to keep communal areas where you live clean and tidy.

We pride ourselves on the high standards of maintenance of our open spaces. This means we guarantee to:

- maintain our estates to the highest possible standard;
- ensure your estate remains clean, well-maintained and safe;
- undertake a monthly community walkabout on our larger estates and publicise the dates in advance;
- deal with unkempt gardens, boundary hedges and fencing, and overgrown pathways within agreed times; deal with reports of rubbish within five working days or earlier if it poses a danger or risk. On some of our larger estates, you can report litter direct to our estate caretakers (contact details on the next page), who can quickly and easily arrange for its removal. Alternatively you can report it to The Garth;
- remove offensive graffiti or any other offensive material and other graffiti to specified deadlines. When reporting graffiti you can help us by giving us as much information as possible including:
 - the exact location of the graffiti;
 - if the graffiti is offensive or racist; and
 - if you know who has done it.
- deal with reports of parked vehicles within five working days or earlier if the vehicle presents a danger to other road users or pedestrians;
- getting abandoned vehicles removed. When reporting an abandoned vehicle you can help us by giving us as much information as possible including:
 - exact location of vehicle;
 - make and model of vehicle;
 - colour of vehicle;

- registration number;
- if there is a valid tax disc (date of expiry); and
- the general condition of the vehicle.
- respond to reports of unlawful occupation of one of our properties within one working day; and
- visit suspected abandoned properties within one working day.

Please contact The Garth if you have any queries about your estate.

3. Information about our snow clearing and gritting services in York and New Earswick

Roadways and pathways

We will continue to treat any roadways and pathways we own, within working hours, Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 3:30pm. Footpaths in New Earswick will be treated during working hours. For details contact The Garth.

Other areas

Specific areas and footpaths at Hartrigg Oaks will be treated by Hartrigg Oaks staff. Sheltered schemes in New Earswick and York and District will

continue to be salted during working hours. No out-of-hours service will be provided. All schemes are provided with grit bins and these will be filled weekly during winter months. The cost of this work is included within the rent or service charge payable at these schemes.

For details of the road salting policy for white frost and snow at other estates:

City of York Council:
www.york.gov.uk
 01904 551550

Scarborough:
www.scarborough.gov.uk
 01723 232323

Beverley:
www.eastriding.gov.uk
 0845 6001666

4. The role of the Money and Benefits Adviser

Based at The Garth in New Earswick, our Money and Benefits Advisers offer benefits advice and help you to assess your entitlement to benefits, and ensure you receive those benefits you are entitled to. They help you to make informed choices.

What the service offers:

- accurate advice and information on welfare issues;
- benefit assessments to identify benefits you are entitled to and to maximise your income;
- assistance with requests for equipment and adaptations;
- budgeting and debt advice and negotiating with creditors;
- help to access appropriate services;
- help in family crisis such as relationship breakdown, redundancy and illness, to advise of effects on benefits and help available;
- signposting and referral to other agencies.

You can contact our advisers at The Garth.

All information will be treated as confidential and will only be given to another person or organisation with your permission.

Where can I get further information?**City of York Council**

West Offices, Station Rise,
York,
YO1 6GA
Tel: 01904 551550

East Riding of Yorkshire Council

County Hall
Beverley
East Riding of Yorkshire
HU17 9BA
Tel: 01482 8877000

Scarborough Borough Council

Town Hall
St Nicholas Street
Scarborough
YO11 2HG
Tel: 01723 232323

Ryedale District Council

Ryedale House
Malton
YO17 0HH
Tel: 01635 600666

Hartlepool Borough Council

Customer Services
Contact Centre
Civic Centre
Victoria Road
Hartlepool
TS24 8AY
Tel: 01429 266522

Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust

Head Office

The Garth

White Rose Avenue
New Earswick
York
YO32 4TZ

Reception open Mon to Fri from 8.30 am to 5pm (Wed 10am to 5pm)

Tel: 0800 587 0211 (this line is diverted to the emergency call line outside the above hours)

Other offices where you can make enquiries or pay your rent/charges:-

Plaxton Court

Woodlands Drive
Scarborough
YO12 6QT

Reception open Mon - Fri from 9am to 5pm.

Weekends 10am to 2pm

Tel: 01723 340290 (this line is diverted to the emergency call line outside the above hours)

Hartfields Retirement village

Merlin Way, Bishop Cuthbert
Middle Warren
Hartlepool
TS26 0US

Reception open Mon - Fri from 8.15am to 12am and 6pm to midnight

Weekends 10am to 2pm and 6pm to midnight

Tel: 01429 855070 (during reception hours)

Tel: 07980 705713 (out of hours emergency line)

Email: information@jrht.org.uk

Visit our website: www.jrht.org.uk

JRHT is a registered housing association, managing around 2,500 homes, and is a registered provider of care services.

If you would like this information in an alternative format (such as large print, Braille or audio) please contact our Communications department at JRF, email info@jrf.org.uk or telephone **01904 615979**



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