

FURNITURE - PROCEDURE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The aim of this procedure is to detail how we manage the furniture element of our shared tenancies, ensuring that tenants have furniture that suits their needs, to replacing individual items of furniture or furnishings and ensuring that we provide value for money for both the tenant and the Association as well as minimising financial inequality between tenants living in shared properties.

1.2 This procedure complies with the Scottish Social Housing Charter:

Standard 13 – Value for Money;
Standard 14 and 15 – Rents and Service Charges.

1.3 Furniture will be provided as a **Shared Accommodation Package**: This package includes the main items for communal areas of the living room; dining room and kitchen.

In some of the cases above there may be a requirement to provide **Specialised Packages** to meet the needs of the service user. e.g. Jura, St Andrews and Southhouse Broadway. For example TOUGH furniture for individuals with autism and dementia friendly furniture provision or SLUICE machines for incontinence issues. These costs are individually calculated and will be charged over 5 years.

1.3 A standard inventory has been created (Appendix 1), along with a price list showing the maximum amount to be paid by ARK for each item. A copy of the inventory and current price list can be requested from the Housing Services Assistant (HSA)/ Officer (HSO).

1.4 This procedure has the following sections:

- Section 2 - Service Charge
- Section 3 - New tenancies
- Section 4 - Replacing items
- Section 5 - Reviewing packages
- Section 6 - Disposal
- Section 7 - Additional Expenditure
- Section 8 - Implementation and Review

2.0 SERVICE CHARGE

- 2.1 Where a shared furniture package is provided, a service charge will be made to the tenants involved. In general, the service charge will be based on repayment of the costs over a 5 year cycle. A charge of 10% for administration costs will be included. This is to cover the administration time that all staff spend on ordering the furniture/inspecting/updating records. A monthly charge based on the actual cost of the items provided will be calculated and added to the tenant's rent.
- 2.2 If electrical goods are provided, after the 12 months warranty period has ended, a monthly charge will be added to the total furniture charge to cover the costs of Portable Appliance Testing. This testing ensures that the item is safe to use. The Maintenance team will be notified in writing of the need to add the property to their PAT list.
- 2.3 Service charges for furniture packages are currently eligible for Housing Benefit. Under Universal Credit, there may not be an entitlement. In such cases the liability lies with the tenants.

3.0 NEW TENANCIES

- 3.1 Where a property is unfurnished but changing to a shared property, it will be necessary to provide furnishings in the communal areas. As these will involve considerable expenditure, they will be dealt with on an ad-hoc basis, following approval by the Head of Housing Services (HoHS).
- 2.2 When a new tenant is moving into a tenancy that is already furnished, the HSO will decide which items in the property need to be replaced and following approval of the purchase by the HoHS, these will be bought centrally and recorded on the Component Accounting Records on the computing package, Capita, by the HSA.
- 2.3 When a new furnished tenancy starts, whether in a previously furnished or unfurnished property, the HSO will compile an inventory of the furniture package and ensure that it is attached to the Tenancy Agreement prior to the signing of the agreement. The HSA will add it to the Capita records.

4.0 REPLACING ITEMS OF FURNITURE

General

- 4.1 When a tenant feels that an item of furniture or furnishings needs to be replaced, this should be discussed with support staff. Support staff/ tenant will submit a furniture request form to the HSO who, if satisfied that the item needs to be replaced, will either purchase the items identified or authorise support staff and/or the tenant to buy a replacement. In the latter case a refund will be paid on the production of original receipts. This refund must be claimed within 3 months of purchase.
- 4.2 Where the Support Provider feels that a tenant has been unnecessarily rough with an item of furniture, they should advise the tenant that the item may have to be replaced from their own funds. Alternatively upgrading to a specialised package may be considered in certain circumstances such as a change in support needs.
- 4.3 If the tenant's choice costs more than the amount budgeted for that item, the tenant may choose to make up the difference from their own funds, or choose a cheaper

option. If the tenant decides to make a contribution to the costs, it will be important that it is made clear to them that the item will still belong to ARK.

- 4.4 In properties with four or more tenants, consideration should be given to buying “industrial” washing machines, from manufacturers such as Bosch and Meile. Also, in some cases, a combined washer/dryer may be more appropriate than a regular washing machine. In both cases this will depend on the needs of the tenants, and should be explicitly requested by the support provider and approval obtained from the Head of Housing Services.

Inventories

- 4.5 An inventory of each furnishing package will be maintained by Housing staff. Current inventories for each property can be found at: *General Drive/Housing/2018 Furniture /Updated Inventories*. These may be modified only by Housing staff, but are available to anyone on a ‘read-only’ basis.

5.0 REVIEWING FURNITURE PACKAGES

- 5.1 Furniture packages will be reviewed towards the end of the renewal cycle. If items need to be replaced a “Furniture Request” form should be completed and approved by the HSO.
- 5.2 If staff become aware that over time tenants have replaced items themselves, packages for existing tenants in sole tenancies can be downgraded from a full package to a part package, or, no package at all. No changes can be made to communal/shared packages in shared properties. The service charge will be recalculated to reflect the downgrading. Tenants will be made aware that this service cannot then be added back on at a latter date.
- 5.3 The process of changing furnished let status involves the responsibility for some or all of the items on the inventory passing to the tenant. We will allow tenants to retain as their own property items deemed to have little or no value, and to offer to sell to the tenant(s), items deemed to have value. This will apply to the main items only, and will be based on a depreciation formula. Capita will be updated to reflect the removal of these items.
- 5.4 The items to be valued for depreciation will be: lounge suite, dining table and chairs, white goods, floor coverings, and beds.

The depreciation formula will be based on a 5 year non linear model, as follows;

- within 1 year since purchase: 70% of new cost
- between 1 and 2 years since purchase: 50% of new cost
- between 2 and 3 years since purchase 25% of new cost
- between 3 and 4 years since purchase 15% of new cost
- between 4 and 5 years since purchase 5% of new cost

6.0 DISPOSAL OF FURNITURE

Tenant responsibilities

- 6.1 Furniture which is gifted or sold to the tenant (see above) becomes the responsibility of the tenant, as does its subsequent disposal.

ARK responsibilities

- 6.2 When an inventory item is replaced, we will dispose of the surplus item. Local staff should consider which of the following options is appropriate in the circumstances, with advice if required available from the HSO:

- Re-use in an existing furnished let;
- Donation to a furnishings recycling depot;
- Uplift by the refuse service;
- Removal to a public/private tip.

Any costs associated with these options will be met from the furnishings budget.

7.0 ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURE

The following items usually have additional charges associated with them. These costs should be factored into the service charge.

Item	Additional Costs
Floor coverings	Uplift of existing flooring Screeding Fitting Moving Furniture
Electrical Goods	Installation Connection Disposal of existing appliance(s)

8.0 IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

- 8.1 The Head of Housing Services is responsible for ensuring that this procedure is implemented by Housing staff when required.
- 8.2 Local Managers are responsible for ensuring that staff supporting tenants with a furnishings package are aware of this procedure and that they implement the relevant sections when required.
- 8.3 The Head of Housing Services will ensure that this procedure is reviewed at least every three years.

Approved by SLT in:

January 2019

Review of procedure due by:

January 2022

APPENDIX 1

Items provided in a Shared Package for 2:

Lounge	Flooring	Carpet, Vinyl	£20sqm
	Seating	Sofa x 1 Armchair	£500 £250/item
	Window dressing	curtains/ blinds	
Kitchen/ Dining Area	Flooring	Vinyl	
	Dining Table	Seats 2	£100
	Dining Chairs	2 chairs	£50/chair
	Washing Machine		£250 + VAT
	Fridge/ Freezer	can be under counter models where required	£250 + VAT
	Electric Cooker	available where no integrated cooker is provided	£250 + VAT
Bathroom	Flooring	Vinyl	
Hall and Stairs	Flooring	Carpet / Vinyl	

Items provided in an HMO Shared Package:

Lounge	Flooring	Carpet, Vinyl	£20sqm
	Seating	Sofa x 1 Armchair x 2	£500 £250/item will depend on number of residents
	Window dressing	curtains/ blinds	
Kitchen/ Dining Area	Flooring	Vinyl	
	Dining Table	Seats 4 Seats 6	£200
	Dining Chairs	4 / 6 chairs	£50/chair
	Fridge/ Freezer	can be under counter models where required	Minimum £250 Maximum £1000 Will depend on number of residents
	Electric Cooker	available where no integrated cooker is provided	£250 + VAT
	Domestic Washer		£250
	Industrial Washer		£3000
	Industrial sluice washer		
	Tumble Dryer		£250
	Industrial Tumble Dryer		£2000
	Dish Washer		£250
	Industrial Dish Washer		£2500
	Bathroom	Flooring	Vinyl
Hall and Stairs	Flooring	Carpet / Vinyl	

APPENDIX 2



Furniture & Flooring Replacement Request

This form must be submitted to and authorised by ARK Housing Association Housing Services Department prior to any purchase.

To be completed by Tenant/Support staff:

Tenant Name:
Address:
Post Code:

Details of Item/s needing replaced

If white goods, please include the size of space for the item to fit into and whether gas or electric

Item	Size	Reason for Replacement	Uplift Required

Things to consider before submitting request:

- Have you provided measurements for the size of the space where you need the item to fit?
- Have you confirmed if you require existing item uplifted?
- **Be specific** with reason for replacement- simply stating “**not working**” could result in the request being placed on hold or refused.
- If ordering a **freezer** you will need to ensure that the current appliance is defrosted and dry for uplift
- If you are ordering a **washing machine** this will need to be drained and disconnected for uplift
- If you have ordered a **cooker** have you specified if you require **gas** or **electric and** is a **specialist installer** required.
- Does any of the furniture ordered need to be **attached** to a wall?

Please confirm if there are any delivery restrictions we should make delivery drivers aware of e.g.: stairs to and within the property, parking and narrow turning points.
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Who should we contact about the request? *This point of contact needs to be contactable at all times i.e. staff mobile number*

Direct Contact Name/s		
Contact Number & Email		Date of Request

To be completed by Housing Services Officer

	Yes	No	Due Replacement Date
Partial Furniture Charge			
Full Furniture Charge			

	Yes	No	Details <i>Specification of required items/reasons for requirements</i>
Specialist Flooring/Equipment			

Area(s) to be fitted				
Material to be used (please can you be clear about the specification of the material for all the companies that you are seeking quotes for)				

Quote	1	2	3	4
Company Name				
Amount (ex VAT)				
Amount (inc VAT)				

<p>Recommendation</p> <p><i>Eg. I would recommend that we use ** based on (the price, timescale they have had advised they can complete the work in 3 days and previous good service they have provided).</i></p>	
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For Specialist Flooring Equipment Only

Quotes attached: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Passed to SHSO : <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Date: _____	Approved : <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Signature: _____ Date: _____
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Supplier:	Cost:
Make & Model:	Warranty Details:
Date Order Placed:	Expected Delivery Date:
Project/Tenant notified of deliver date:	Receipt/Order attached: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Contractor arranged to carry out additional works:	Additional Notes:

Delivery confirmed by tenant/support staff: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No HSO Signature: _____ Date: _____ Passed to HSA: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Spreadsheet update: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

To be completed by Housing Assistant

Date Received: _____ Capita Updated: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No HSA Signature: _____	Filed in tenancy file: <input type="checkbox"/> Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Date Completed: _____
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