


APPROVED
BY GHA RESIDENTS



Gloucestershire
Housing Association

A MEMBER OF THE GUINNESS PARTNERSHIP

TENANTS' HANDBOOK

A comprehensive guide to living in your new home



If you would like this information in any of the following formats or a different language please call 01452 529 255 / 08456 044 529 (local rate)

• Large print • In Braille • Audio • Face to face

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**Gloucestershire
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SECTION 1

Welcome to your new home

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Welcome to your new home!

How to use your handbook

In this handbook you will find lots of useful information. Please keep it for future reference. Please read the handbook and your tenancy agreement carefully so that you know your rights and responsibilities. You will also find a list of useful telephone numbers in the section at the back of this handbook. These should help you settle in to your neighbourhood.

Feel free to contact us if you need any help or further information on **01452 529 255** or **08456 044 529** (local rate). Your call may be recorded or monitored for training and quality control purposes.

About us

Gloucestershire Housing Association has been providing affordable housing for over 40 years. We have over 2,500 properties across Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Wiltshire, Warwickshire, Oxfordshire and Milton Keynes. We are a not-for-profit organisation. This means that the rent and service charges paid by you and our other residents pay for all the services we offer, including the repair and maintenance of your home. We receive no public money to help run these services. By always improving what we do, we aim to make every penny count and give you real value for money for your rent.

We are managed by a board of voluntary members including resident representatives. Our work is regulated and monitored by the Tenant Services Authority which is a government organisation.



In April 2009 we joined The Guinness Partnership. The Guinness Trust is the parent company of the Partnership and was founded in 1890. It has been providing good quality, affordable homes for well over 100 years.

In 2009 we adopted the strategic objectives of The Partnership.

Our number one priority is:

- Excellence in customer service

We are also committed to:

- Growth in homes and services
- Neighbourhoods to be proud of
- A great place to work

How to contact us

How to find us: map of our offices



Customer care

We strive to deliver services to the highest quality in ways that fully meet customer needs. Our objectives for delivering customer care are that:

- We will listen to our customers and develop our service to meet those needs.
- We will treat our customers with respect and integrity, making sure our people are responsible, accountable and customer-focussed in everything they do.
- We will offer choice of access to our services and commit to clear and consistent standards of service delivery.
- We will make sure that customer information is accurate, available and easy to read.

If you would like to find out more about our **Customer Care Policy** please contact us, and we will be happy to send you a copy.

Accessing our services

We aim to make it as easy as possible for you to access our services.

Our '**Accessing our services**' leaflet tells you how we are doing this, in particular for customers who have disabilities and customers whose first language is not English.

The leaflet tells you how we can help you access our services in the way that is best for you.

If you have a particular need or preference in the way we contact you, please call us on **01452 529 255** or **08456 044 529** (local rate) or email info@glosha.co.uk, and we will do our best to help.

Complaints

We welcome feedback from you, whether it is good or bad. If we make a mistake we will apologise and try to learn from it. If you are unhappy with our service please tell us, so that we have an opportunity to put it right and improve our service. We also like to know when we have done something well.

You will have been given a copy of our **Comments, Compliments and Complaints** leaflet when you moved in. If you have a comment, compliment, or complaint, you can complete the reply paid form at the back of the leaflet and return it to us.

For more information about making a complaint, our complaints process, or about the Housing Ombudsman Service, please refer to our **Comments, Compliments and Complaints** leaflet.

Equality and diversity

We will be fair when we deal with people, communities, employees and organisations with which we have relationships and will take into account their different cultures, backgrounds and circumstances. We have adopted the Guinness equality and diversity policy, which explains how we approach this.

All residents, customers, Board members, management, staff, contractors and partner agencies are expected to respect and uphold the equality and diversity policy and not to discriminate or encourage discrimination. Action will be taken against anyone who acts in this way. This could lead to the suspension of services, action against a resident in line with the terms of their tenancy, or other enforcement action.

We will respond quickly and fairly to any complaints regarding discrimination. Advice on how to complain is provided in our **Comments, Compliments and Complaints** leaflet. Further information can also be found in our **Anti-social behaviour** leaflets.

We will collect personal information about our residents and workforce. This information will be used to help us provide services that individuals need. In order to keep our records up-to-date, we may contact you from time to time, to ask you for more information.

If you would like a copy of our **equality and diversity policy** please contact us.

Customer service standards

We have set standards for the service we provide. We will work hard to make sure we meet these standards at all times. Please tell us if you think we are failing in any aspect of our work. The minimum standards of service you can expect to receive are set out in our **Service Standards** leaflet (you will have been given a copy when you moved into your home). The service standards were developed in partnership with our residents and they aim to meet your needs and expectations.

Telephone

We will try to answer calls within 20 seconds, and we will give our name. If you leave a message we will aim to get back to you by the next working day.

Written Communication

If you write to us by letter or email we will acknowledge your correspondence within 3 working days and respond in 10 working days. If for some reason this is not possible, for example because we are waiting for information from someone else, we will tell you who is dealing with the matter and when you can expect a reply.