



Contact us



Website: www.stokeontrenthousingsociety.org.uk

Email: info@stokeontrenthousingsociety.org.uk

Telephone: 01782 968566 (9am to 5pm Mon to Fri)

Out of hours: should you have an **emergency** repair or situation outside of normal office hours call **01782 968566** and then **press 1** on your telephone keypad to be put through to our emergency service.

Write to us:

Stoke on Trent Housing Society
The Trevor Jones Office
Hammond House
Ridgway Road
Hanley
Stoke on Trent
ST1 3AX



Living in your apartment

Information and advice for living in your home



This booklet has been produced to provide guidelines for residents living in Dickson and Hammond House. If you need help understanding the information or need more specific advice please contact us on 01782 968566

Abandoned apartments

If you suspect that an apartment in your building has been abandoned please call us on 01782 968566.

Please tell us if you are going away for more than 4 weeks so that we know you have not abandoned your home.

You may also want to give us next of kin or third party contact information for any emergency situations that might arise.

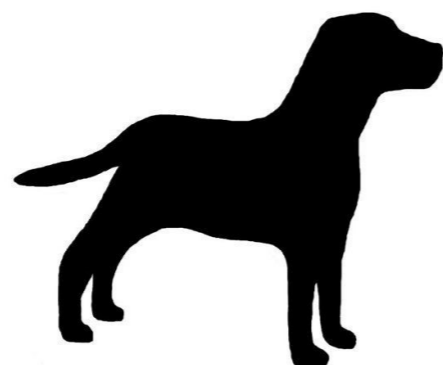
Animals and pets

Permission will not normally be given to keep any animals, including dogs and cats, in apartments.

Exceptions may be made for assistance dogs and for small pets that are kept caged at all times and that do not require any exercise or toileting outside of their cage, e.g. goldfish, canary, hamster .

There is an application form that must be completed before anyone can go ahead and acquire any pet.

Contact us on 01782 968566 for a form or to discuss your plans.



Anti-social behaviour

Anti-social behaviour or anything that causes harm or aggression towards others will not be tolerated.

Examples of ASB include:

- Using or allowing the property to be used for any immoral or illegal purposes, including using or supplying illegal drugs or substances, counterfeit goods and weapons.
- Causing nuisance or annoyance to your neighbours by, for example, playing loud music, arguing and slamming doors, offensive drunkenness and dumping rubbish.
- Harassing other neighbours or any other person in the community by, for example, using or threatening to use violence, using insulting words or behaviour, causing damage or threatening to damage another person's home or belongings, writing threatening, insulting or abusive graffiti.
- Harassing someone because of their race, colour, ethnic origin, religious or political beliefs.
- Harassing someone because of their sex, sexuality, age or disability.
- Behaving in an aggressive way towards our employees or contractors.

This list is not exhaustive and it is important to remember that ASB can impact upon an individual, their family and the community as a whole. It can make life unbearable and create an environment where serious crime can take hold.

If you experience any of the above problems, please contact us on 01782 968566

Visitors and unwanted visitors

You must only let genuine visitors into your block. If you don't know the person calling, do not let them in.

If you are worried or have suspicions about any caller you should contact the Society on 01782 968566 or contact the police if the person is engaging in inappropriate behaviour.

Talk to your visitors too if their behaviour is likely to cause a nuisance to other people.

Windows

In your home you have UPVC casement windows that are fitted with window restrictor devices. These window restrictors are lockable and can only be locked and unlocked with a special key that we have supplied to you.

For safety reasons you **should not interfere** with these devices. If there is a problem with any of the window restrictor devices in your home you should contact us immediately on 01782 968566.

Window Safety advice:

- ◆ Never drop, throw or hang items out of windows
- ◆ Never lean out, hang out or climb out of windows
- ◆ Do not allow children to climb or play near windows
- ◆ Consider the layout of furniture in your home to prevent climbing on top and accessing a window
- ◆ Inform your visitors of the hazards associated with your windows
- ◆ Do not interfere with window restrictors and keep the key to these devices in a safe place and away from children or vulnerable adults
- ◆ Be careful when opening and closing windows, particularly in windy conditions. Do not leave windows open in high winds
- ◆ Report any defects with your windows immediately

Keeping your windows in good working order:

- Keep trickle vents permanently open at the top of the window frames to provide ventilation and to reduce moisture from collecting in your room
- Open bedroom windows for a few minutes in the morning to allow the room to air
- Never use any abrasive materials to clean window frames, use soap and water or a reputable cream cleaner
- Do not puncture the frame of the window or door in any way, we recommend using hooks with adhesive where attachment to the frame is desired, e.g. curtains / nets

If you need any advice on how to operate or maintain your windows please call us on 01782 968566.



Repairs

To help us identify the fault and to make sure we send the right people to your home to carry out the repair, you will need to provide a full description of the repair you need.

We categorise each repair by how urgently the repair needs to be carried out. Our targets for each category are:

- Emergency repairs will be completed within 4 to 24 hours of the defect being reported to the Society. (Emergency repair requests made **outside of normal office hours** will normally be attended to during the next working day unless there is deemed to be immediate danger to the health and safety of the occupant/s)
- Urgent repairs will be completed within 5 working days of the defect being reported to the Society
- Routine repairs will be completed within 20 working days of the defect being reported to the Society

You'll need to arrange to carry out any repairs that are your responsibility. Where there is damage or neglect you must also organise the repairs yourself. If you do not do this you will be asked to pay for the repair in full before we commit to carrying out any work for you.

Examples of repairs that are your responsibility include: lost keys, waste plugs, light bulbs, electric plug fuses.

You can report a repair by calling 01782 968566.



Rubbish disposal

There are refuse chutes on each floor in your block and they are provided to make life more convenient for you.

These chutes take small bags of rubbish (for example, carrier bag size). Please do not attempt to put large bags, boxes or items in the chute as this will cause a blockage. Any blockages that have been caused by inappropriate disposal will be recharged for the costs of the works involved where we are able to identify the offending resident.

Do not leave bags of rubbish or other items outside your door or in shared areas (for example in corridors, on landings or stairways or in entrance halls).

Never drop or throw items from your windows as this could cause injury to passers by below. Do not flush nappies, baby wipes and pads down the toilet as this will cause blockages.

If you require assistance in removing bulky items (e.g. TV, sofa) contact us on 01782 968566 as we can arrange disposal for a small charge. Alternatively you can contact Stoke on Trent City Council's waste services on 01782 234234 who will also collect items for a fee.

Satellite dishes and television

Installing structures such as satellite dishes, without our written permission, is against your tenancy agreement. Permission will not be given for satellite dishes to be installed in our flats. If you install a dish without our permission we may remove it and charge you for the cost of this.

All of our blocks have a digital aerial and you should have a digital socket in your flat, which allows you to receive a wide range of channels without a satellite dish. If you don't have a digital socket, please let us know.

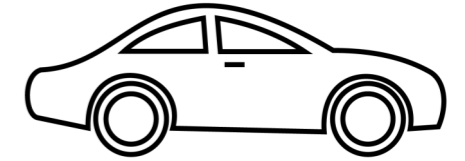
Car parks and vehicle access

The car parks on your scheme are non allocated parking bays. This means that you can park anywhere within the marked parking bays as long as your vehicle is taxed and roadworthy.

Roads and other areas outside your building are designed so that emergency vehicles and other service vehicles (e.g. refuse collection) can get as close as possible.

Please ensure that access is available at all times and do not park in restricted areas.

Do not park on grass verges or in disabled bays, unless you are a blue badge holder.



CCTV

CCTV is installed in the building that you live and in certain areas outside. We record and monitor this 24/7.

We use CCTV to manage non-residents attempting to gain access to the block and also to help us to prevent issues such as anti-social behaviour, fire safety, graffiti and litter.

Communal areas and cleaning

Residents are not permitted under any circumstances to store or display personal items, or dispose of items in the communal areas, this includes mobility scooters, bicycles, mats, carpets etc.

Smoking in communal areas is prohibited and against the law. You must not smoke in any areas of the building such as hallways, stairs, corridors, landings or lifts.

Communal areas must be kept clear and sterile at all times for fire safety reasons.

The communal areas in your building such as hallways, stairs, corridors, landings and lifts are cleaned on a regular basis.

If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of the cleaning services then please contact us on 01782 968566.

Concierge service and security

The site operates a concierge service for residents that includes:

- Reception service, including taking payment for rent. The reception office is located on the lower ground floor rear entrance of Dickson House and opening times are displayed there.
- Carrying out regular security patrols of the buildings and the site.
- Operating CCTV and managing access to blocks for residents and visitors.

Staff directly employed by the Society are on site Monday to Friday 8am till 5pm. A contractor provides this service on the Society's behalf for 10 hours each evening Monday to Friday and 12 hours per day over the weekend.

Door entry system



Everyone who lives in a high rise apartment will have been issued with a door key fob when they moved in. This key fob is unique to you and your building.

For security reasons please do not give it to anyone else.

If you lose or damage your fob please contact us on 01782 968566. There may be a small charge for replacing it.

Additional fobs can also be purchased for a charge.

Dry risers

A dry riser is a system of valves that and pipework which enables the Fire Service to pump water onto the upper floors of buildings. They are intended for the use of the Fire Service to provide a readily available means of delivering considerable quantities of water.

Dry risers are located in cupboards on each floor of the building.

We will arrange for risers to be tested periodically to ensure they are available for use in the event of an emergency. Never interfere with risers nor any other fire safety equipment in the building — this could cost lives.

Fire Safety

All of our high rise blocks are subject to fire safety inspections by our Estate Team on a weekly basis . It is important that you familiarise yourself with the Fire Action notices that are located on every floor in our buildings as you need to know what to do in the event of a fire.

✘ **Never prop open fire doors.** They are there for a reason and need to be kept closed at all times.

✘ **Never obstruct landings or fire exits.** This is extremely important and will ensure that all residents within the building have a safe escape route should they need to vacate the building.



If you are not sure what to do in the event of a fire or have any concerns about fire safety contact us on 01782 968566.

Lifts

Please use lifts responsibly . If you identify a problem with the lift in your building please contact us immediately on 01782 968566.

All lifts are monitored by our CCTV and so any damage caused by inappropriate use will be caught on camera and the cost of repairs recharged accordingly.

If you become trapped in a lift, press the emergency call button and this will take you through to a member of staff. We will do our best to free you from the lift and where this is not possible we will call a specialist lift engineer to come and free you and to rectify the fault. Please note an emergency engineer services operates out of office hours.

Neighbours

All of our residents are entitled to enjoy their home in peace, and living in high rise accommodation means that you need to be especially considerate to other people in the block.

The following advice will help you to be a good neighbour:

- ◆ Do not use power tools, vacuum cleaners and washing machines etc. after 9pm and keep the volume on your TV to an acceptable level.
- ◆ Consider using headphones to listen to music or the TV.
- ◆ Only use the bin chutes between 8am and 8pm.
- ◆ Co-operate if a neighbour asks you to reduce the noise.
- ◆ Try to be tolerant towards your neighbours and their lifestyle.
- ◆ Do not use your home for business or illegal purposes. If you need to work from home then you must speak to us first to gain permission.
- ◆ Report problems - contact us about any anti-social behavior, vandalism, graffiti, rubbish or repairs required in your home or in communal areas. All reports that you make will be confidential.

Rent Payments

Your rent is due weekly on a Monday. If you wish to pay monthly your payment must be in advance. You can pay you rent by direct debit, standing order, swipe card, in cash at our reception office or you can call 0844 557 8321 to pay by debit card.

You can obtain your account balance at any time by calling us on 01782 968566.

Contact us if you are having problems paying your rent and let us help you. We can talk over the phone, you can come to our office or we can visit you. Rent arrears can result in eviction and a court judgment to repay the arrears you owe. We can:

- ◆ Agree a plan with you to clear your arrears within a reasonable timescale.
- ◆ Sign post you to a service that can make sure you get the benefits you are entitled to.
- ◆ Help you to get Money Advice to help you to manage debts
- ◆ Explain what happens if legal action starts, what you need to do and where you can get help.