

HOW TO PAY YOUR RENT



"Delivering Excellent Housing Services"

How to Pay Your Rent



Paying Your Rent

Rent is charged on every Ashfield District Council home.

The rent for your home is set by Ashfield District Council, following guidance from the government.



The Council will write to you at least four weeks in advance of any changes in the amount of rent that is charged, usually in April of each year.

Your rent is due on Monday each and every week. You are responsible for paying the rent due, or for securing Housing Benefit to cover your rent payments. If you owe money at the end of the week, we will class the outstanding amount as rent arrears and we will contact you by home visit, letter or telephone call to recover the monies due from you.

Please see our Service Standard or our 'Tenant's Guide to' leaflet for more information.

Other services that you may be charged for through your rent account include:

- Heating charges, if you live within certain blocks of flats and sheltered schemes
- Contents Insurance premiums, if you choose to join Ashfield District Council's Home Contents Insurance Scheme
- Supporting People charges, which you may need to pay if you receive one of our First 4 Support services

If you decide to rent a Council garage or garage plot through Ashfield Homes, we will set up a separate rent account for you.

How You Can Pay



Direct Debit

Payments can be made directly from your bank or building society weekly on a Monday or a Friday, fortnightly on a Monday or a Friday, or monthly.

Direct Debit payments can help you to stay in control of your finances as you know your rent will be paid on a regular basis at a frequency that suits you, without accruing unnecessary arrears. It also means there are no cheques to write, no postage costs, and no queuing, as payments are made for you direct from your Bank or Building Society.

If payments are made other than weekly e.g. fortnightly or monthly, we will normally expect you to pay in advance, or to pay an additional amount on top of your regular fortnightly or monthly payments until you are paying your rent in advance and there are no monies outstanding at the end of each week.

Standing Order

You can set up a weekly, fortnightly or monthly standing order with your bank or building society.

Please contact your Housing Management Advisor for more information.

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Telephone Payments

Rent payments can be made over the telephone by debit card (no charge) or credit card (1½% charge) via your Housing Management Advisor.

Contact the Housing Services Hotline

Tel- **01623 608999** Monday to Thursday
8.30am - 5.00pm, Fridays 8.30am - 4.30pm;
or via Ashfield District Council's 24 hour a day
automated payment line Tel- **01623 457231**.

Swipe Card

Cash, cheque, debit or credit card payments can be made at any Post Office branch, or at selected shops and garages displaying the PayPoint symbol.

Cash Office

Payments can be made in person at any Ashfield District Council Cash Office by cash, cheque, debit or credit card.

Ashfield District Council opening times:

Kirkby in Ashfield

Monday to Friday 8:30am - 4:30pm

Sutton in Ashfield

Monday to Friday 8:30am - 4:30pm &

Saturday 9:30am - 12:00 noon

Hucknall

Monday to Friday 8:30am - 4:30pm &

Saturday 9:30am - 12:00 noon

Selston

Monday to Friday 9.00am - 1.00pm &

Saturday 9.00am - 12.00 noon

Post

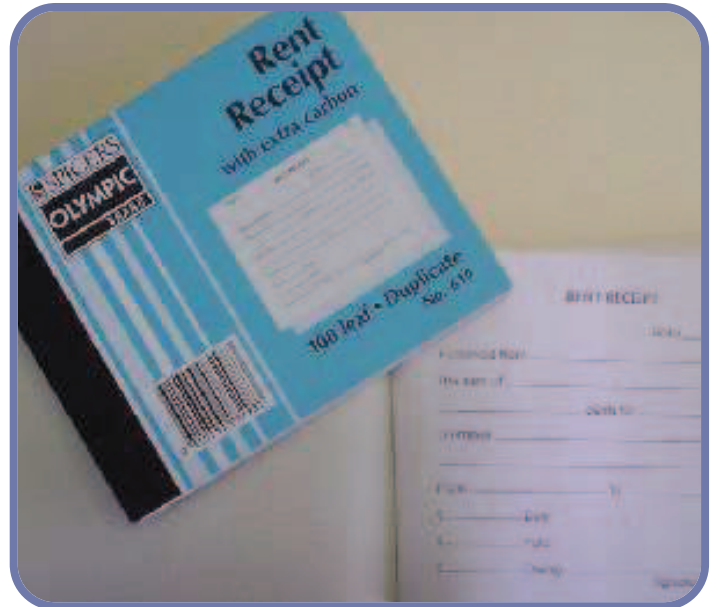
Send a cheque or postal order payable to Ashfield District Council to your Housing Management Advisor, or to any of the Cash Offices above.

You should write your name, address and rent account number on the back of the cheque.



YOU SHOULD NEVER SEND US ANY CASH THROUGH THE POST.

Housing Benefit



If you receive welfare benefits, or are working but are on a low income, you may also be entitled to Housing Benefit to help you pay your rent.

Pick up a Housing Benefit Application Form from any Ashfield District Council Customer Services point, or download one from our website at www.ashfieldhomes.co.uk.

You will need to complete the form, sign it, enclose proof of any benefits or other income you receive, and return it to the Council as soon as possible. Ashfield District Council will only consider paying benefit from the Monday after they have received your Application Form, so do not delay, otherwise you could miss out on benefit that you could have been entitled to, leaving you with arrears on your rent account that you will need to pay.

The amount of benefit you get will depend on how much income and savings you have, the size of your household and how much income and savings they have; and how much rent is charged for your home.

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Entitled to Housing Benefit

If you are entitled to Housing Benefit, Ashfield District Council will pay this directly to your rent account. We will notify you of any shortfall in the level of benefit you are receiving, and the amount of rent outstanding that you will need to pay each week.

Please see our Service Standard or our 'Tenant's Guide to' leaflet for more information.

Money Management Advice Service

Ashfield Homes offers a flexible, free service with the aim of helping you manage your finances more effectively.

Please make an appointment to see our Money Management Advisor via our **Housing Services Hotline** on Tel- **01623 608999**. They will help you to complete a budgeting plan to identify where you may be able to save money, and assess whether you have any money left over to offer to your creditors. They will also identify any benefits, tax credits, loans or trust funds that you may be entitled to in order to boost your income.

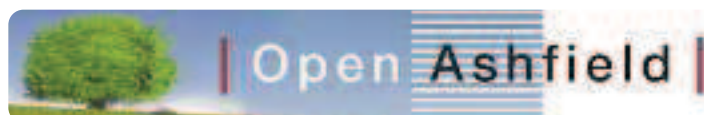
They can also put you in touch with specialist agencies who can provide more support and guidance, such as Citizens Advice Bureau.



Viewing Your Rent Account

Looking for an easy way to see your rent account? You can look up your balance or see an on-screen statement from the comfort of your own PC, with Open Ashfield, our free on-line facility.

To register for Open Ashfield, go to www.ashfieldhomes.co.uk and click the news article on the home page called 'My rent account'.



Please see our Service Standard or our 'Tenant's Guide to' leaflet for more information.