

## **Garages and Stores Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

Derby Homes manage several garages at various sites around the city for rent on a weekly tenancy. They are available to Derby Homes' tenants and members of the public for storage purposes. We also manage a small number of stores that can be rented at Rivermead House.

**Garages are primarily let for the purposes of storing a vehicle, however tenants can also rent them to store personal items. There are certain restrictions which are detailed in the Garage Tenancy Agreement. For example, garages must not be used for the purposes of running a business.**

### **2. Derby Homes Liability for stored items**

We will make clear to tenants of garages and stores that we do not insure their property so they must either arrange their own insurance or store items at their own risk

### **3. Waiting Lists**

Each Housing Office will maintain a waiting list for garages and stores within their management area. Notices will be displayed at each garage site giving clear contact details on how interested parties can contact us to tell us they are interested in renting a garage. We will also publicise garage vacancies on our social media channels. Expressions of interest from people wishing to rent a garage can be received in a variety of ways, for example over the phone, by letter or email, via the Customer Service Team, our website or social media channels.

Waiting lists will be reviewed annually to check that all applicants on the waiting list are still interested in renting a garage or store.

### **4. Eligibility for Offers**

Any Derby resident may apply for and be offered a garage, however only residents of Rivermead House may be offered a store there. For Derby Homes tenants, offers of garages and stores are subject to a clear rent account.

### **5. Allocation of garages and stores**

Garages will be allocated by area of choice and in date order of application, but with the proviso that preference will be given to applicants who are Derby Homes tenants and leaseholders. The offer will be made to the applicant who has been waiting longest and will be kept open for a maximum of 3 days. If the applicant

does not respond in that time to arrange sign up, then the offer will be withdrawn and made to the next applicant on the list

## **6. Payment of Rent**

In line with our Rent in Advance policy the applicant must pay 4 week's rent in advance at sign up for the garage or store. Subsequent rent payments must be made by monthly direct debit.

## **7. Management of Garage sites**

Local Housing Office staff will routinely inspect garage sites as part of patch inspections. They will be looking for misuse including graffiti, fly tipping, vandalism and where people may be using garages for purposes that they are not intended for.

In addition, staff from the maintenance team will also carry out inspections of the garage forecourt areas to ensure they are in good condition.

The Garage and Store agreement sets out the conditions of tenancy which are expected. This includes payment of rent. If the conditions are broken or if rent is not paid, we will issue a warning before taking action to recover the garage by serving a letter giving 4 weeks' notice to quit.

## **8. Terminating the agreement**

**The Garage and Store Tenancy Agreements tell the tenant that they can end their rental agreement by giving Derby Homes four weeks' written notice.** This can either be by letter or via email from a verified email address. Likewise, Derby Homes can terminate a rental agreement by giving the tenant four weeks written notice. This could be because of a breach of the terms of the Tenancy Agreement or because we require the garage or store to be vacated as we want to use it for a different purpose.

The Garage and Store Tenancy Agreements tell the tenant that they must leave the garage or store empty when vacated. Any clearance costs will be recharged.

## **9. Local Housing Office Stores**

From time-to-time Local Housing Office staff are required to store tenants' personal belongings, for example following an eviction or for storing items removed in line with the Sterile Area Policy. Other sections of Derby Homes will at times need to store items.

Each Area Housing Office will normally keep 3 garages for this purpose. It will be the responsibility of the Area Housing Manager to ensure that those garages are managed so that they are used efficiently. This will include ensuring that an inventory of all items within the garage is maintained and that items are disposed of in a timely manner in line with procedural guidelines.

If those garages are full the Area Housing Manager may allocate a further garage for the purpose on a temporary basis. When identifying additional garages for store purposes the Area Housing Manager should be mindful of levels of demand to rent garages in a particular area.

There may be requests from other service areas, such as the Estate Response Officers or Contract Liaison Officers, for a garage to be identified for storage purposes. These will be coordinated by the Area Housing Manager and returned to stock as soon as they are no longer needed.

### 10. Use of garages by other parties

From time to time, we may receive requests from external bodies, such as community groups, charities, or other agencies. **Any such requests are processed in line with our grant approval procedure. Requests will be referred to the Operational Board for discussion and then to the Deputy Chief Executive (Communities & Place) at DCC for approval. Where a decision is needed urgently, the requests will be discussed with the Chair of the Operational Board before going to the Deputy Chief Executive (Communities & Place) at DCC for approval.**

### 11. Disposal and redevelopment

The Area Housing Manager has overall responsibility for managing garage sites within their management area. If demand is significantly low for a particular site, with occupancy less than 50%, the Manager will consider whether the site is still viable. In this situation the Area Housing Manager will refer the site to the New Build Team for possible redevelopment in the first instance. If the site cannot be re-developed, the City Council's Estate Department may wish to dispose of the site.